

The Second Law

Peter Atkins



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All natural change is subject to one law. It's the second law of thermodynamics. In this volume, the acclaimed chemist and science writer P. W. Atkins shows how this single, simple principal of energy transformation accounts for all natural change. Moving from the steam engine to the nuclear age, the narrative is full of vivid examples, ideas, and images - but virtually no mathematics.

The Second Law Details

Date: Published 1984 by W.H. Freeman & CompanyISBN: 9780716750048Author: Peter AtkinsFormat: Hardcover 230 pagesGenre: Science, Nonfiction, Technology, Physics

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From Reader Review The Second Law for online ebook

Bart says

An excellent and interdisciplinary introduction to thermodynamics, particularly as it applies to steam engines and disorder.

Tatiana says

Just reread this book from the early 80s, published as part of a series from Scientific American. I remember thinking it was super profound and important when I read it the first time. This time it seemed to go way too slowly and didn't contain anything surprising. So maybe I remember every single thing I learned from it and all of it stuck. I may also have a shorter attention span now after a decade or two of internet surfing. I do think I took time to enjoy a book more back then. Has anyone else noticed a change in their book-attention-span from being online a lot?

The cellular automata which were pretty cool back then seem much tamer now but still a great way to illustrate the principles involved. I probably would've given this book 4 stars, and maybe even 5, when I read it back when it first came out. The information in it is still true and still fundamental to an understanding of physics, cosmology, technology, and energy use. So it's still highly recommended to anyone who's interested in that sort of stuff. But I wasn't thrilled and riveted this time like I remember from before. Sad when that happens.

Brendan McAuliffe says

Just skimmed through

Jason says

Really accessible text on the 2nd Law and how it affects everything around us.

Danial says

Ali says

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Joe B says

There are some lovely colour illustrations here almost showing how it works (just imagine a planar Rubik Cube and its growth from perfect order to the partly random to .. total chaos!! He links it very early and comprehensively with heat engines. It is not too mathematical, and Atkins writes clearly enough.