



The Original Hitchhiker Radio Scripts

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The legendary BBC series did indeed push back the barriers of radio comedy, and in so doing so spawned records, books, a stage production, a TV series, a computer adventure game, even a towel, and attracted a deluge of letters from curious audiences throughout the world.

To satisfy this curiosity, here are the twelve original radio scripts – Hitch-Hiker as it was originally written, and exactly as it was broadcast on Radio 4 for the very first time. They include amendments and additions made during recordings, bits which were reluctantly cut for reasons of time, and notes on the writing and producing of the series by Douglas Adams and Geoffrey Perkins.

For those who have always longed to know why, who, how, when, where, and what its all about, these scripts are essential reading.

The Original Hitchhiker Radio Scripts Details

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From Reader Review The Original Hitchhiker Radio Scripts for online ebook

Zoe's Human says

You really are missing out on part of the Hitchhiker experience if you haven't read this. There are (as per usual) bits that aren't in any other form of the story. Some of my favorite bits are from these scripts that weren't actually even in the radio show since they were cut. :D

FranklinTV says

I mean, at the end of the day, its just the scripts, so you might as well listen to the radio series supported by all the wonderful sounds. Still, this copy is autographed by Douglas Adams (at the Sydney Dymocks store I think in 1987. The signature is a terrible scrawl, and after the long wait, he seemed to be completely disengaged and not at all happy to be there - so hardly a great fan moment).

Kat says

I stumbled across this strange gem of a book when I was in high school. Being involved with the school radio station, I was looking for something to do as a project for a radio competition and found this book. Previous to this discovery, I hadn't known that Adams had originally created The Hitchhiker's Guide as a radio series before it was a novel. It blew my mind. There are some significant differences between the novels and the scripts, but that comes from this technically being the "first draft." I never did get to record any of the scripts for my competition, but a part of me still wants to take a stab at it someday.

James Cridland says

I never listened to the full series; and the radio scripts are interesting not just because of the deviation of the plot line from the books, but also for the notes from Geoffrey Perkins about how the programme was actually made. I can't help think that it must have been a nightmare to make.

TheIron Paw says

A very good read. Not only do we get to relive our favourite scenes in this weird galaxy of ours, but we get an inside look at how the radio programme was made. The sections detailing how sound effects were produced was particularly interesting, as were the details about the development of the storyline (did you know that Marvin, the paranoid android, wasn't originally meant to be a steady character?). Worth reading, if you can find it.

^ says

I shall never forget sitting on the school coach home one day, with my friend Becky telling me about this absolutely brilliant new radio programme on BBC Radio 4. So, although I'd missed the first episode, I caught the second, and immediately became completely and utterly hooked. I hadn't been much of a radio listener before that, but here was a series that had everything: the well-paced plot was imaginative yet believable, well-acted, very funny, and the sound effects were absolutely fantastic. Prior to HHGTTG the only space fiction I'd read much of came from the pens of HG Wells and Arthur C Clarke; both of whom now seemed so terribly serious!

Though I later bought and read all of the HHGTTG books, I eventually gave them away; because it's the radio scripts which I like to return to. Like Shakespeare, HHGTTG entered my stream of consciousness; quoting in everyday conversation such gems as "The Milliard Gargantuabrain? A mere abacus, mention it not" when (for example) talking about Fourier-Transform Infra-Red Spectroscopy! Another of my favourites, when problem solving was "We just have to sidle up to the problem sideways when it's not looking and ... pounce!" Even when I use that line today, very often someone will smile at me knowingly and say "Ford Prefect!"

The advantage of radio over television lies in, of course, the imagination of the listener. Reading and re-reading the HHGTTG scripts is almost as good as listening to a recording of the radio programmes again; better in some ways because the reader can pause on the page, and simply enjoy the sheer craftsmanship of it all.

Toby Paradis says

This book isn't for everyone. For example, people who own the CDs of the radio plays, or someone who read the series, thought, 'that was cute,' and never thought about it again. However, for diehard fans, this is a must have. It is notable a being one of, if not the only versions of the story that is exactly like another version. (Well, mostly) It also provides behind-the-scenes reminiscences from Geoffrey Perkins and Douglas Adams and details of changes made to each script. Plus a bonus lost script. Oooo.

John says

Anyone who has compared versions would, I think, agree, that the best expression of the Hitchhiker's universe is the original BBC radio productions. One should have that to listen to, but sometimes you're in a reading mood. These scripts are a great alternative. They are different enough from the novels that you want both (if this is the kind of thing you like), yet pleasantly reminiscent of both the books and the radio show. We will not speak of the recent so-called film.

Ian Lepine says

I expected these scripts to be exactly like the books, but was pleasantly surprised. I only read them to be a thorough Hitchhiker's Guide enthusiast, I did not expect to find new plots, characters, and yes, even Guide entries.

These are absolutely marvellous and hilarious beyond what the Geneva Convention would approve.

Tracey says

I picked up a copy of The Original Hitchhiker Radio Scripts several months ago, about the same time I was re-listening to the show tapes. I finished reading thru this just in time for the movie.

Arthur Dent, an unremarkable human on an unremarkable planet in an unremarkable part of the galaxy, is swept up in a wholly remarkable adventure when his planet is destroyed to make way for an interstellar bypass. He is rescued by a writer for The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy; they in turn are rescued by Zaphod Beeblebrox, President of the Galaxy who stole the ship Heart of Gold in order to search for a mythical planet. Things start getting complicated at this point.

Not only do the scripts replicate the radio shows, but some of the lines that were cut for time or other reasons have been restored. In addition, notes about each episode are included, as well as forewords by Adams and Geoffrey Perkins. Having first been introduced to the Hitchhiker universe via the novels, I found it quite interesting to see how the story evolved from this version to the novels, since a good chunk of the later episodes ended up in The Restaurant at the End of the Galaxy. If you're not used to reading scripts, sifting your way thru the directions can be a bit of a challenge at first, but worth the work.

Recommended to Adams fans, whether or not you already have the radio shows or not.

Dion F says

The Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy is the first of 5 books in the series by Douglas Adams

The novel features the disgruntled character of Arthur Dent an ordinary man with a rather bleak outlook on life.

That soon changed whence a long time friend, Ford Prefect reveals that the world is about to end and that he is in fact an alien who happens to be an expert at navigating the nooks and crannies of the galaxy. The book takes you through their various adventures throughout the galaxy.

The characters in the book were quite unique but a bit too outlandish and one dimensional. Douglas uses characters like waves in the ocean and it was quite annoying as a reader to constantly have to move planets and adapt to a new set of rules and people.

The plot has a similar vibe to this since the characters and their objectives are ever changing. Douglas proves to be humorous as promised however many of his ideas sound like something out of a comic drawn by an eight year old. The ending of the book was quite a good twist but it feels a bit anticlimactic and unsatisfying because of all the effort a reader puts to reading it.

Overall, this book is like a drug. Addictive. As soon as you get bored it drags you back in with a fresh and exciting twist. I can see why it is a bestseller and popular amongst teenagers but it is a bit childish for my liking. Personally I don't think it was worth the time and the overdue notice in my inbox. I would highly

recommend it to children below the age of 14 however not for older kids and adults.

Peter Clegg says

It was great to read the origins of the books. A lot of this was in the books but I don't think all of it is.

Anthony Strawther says

After reading a few plays by Stoppard and Sophocles, these Radio Scripts were quite a breeze-through!

It's great to find the beginning of a franchise that's spawned numerous incarnations (by the same, original author)--such as a television series, a movie, a five-book trilogy and a stage play--telling the same story in slightly different ways. Douglas Adams would write according to how the product would be presented; For TV he would re-write parts that would better translate (ie, could actually be done), but for radio when he got the green light he just had at it! No scenerio was too rediculous! No character too bizarre!

It was simple to read the pages and imagine the characters speaking. Douglas would explain what sound effects he'd want, how they should sound here and there, how an actor should speak their dialogue and what bits of music to use and it really showed his creativity attempting to convey what was in his head to others on the page. The end of every episode or "fit" had neat little trivia about it, including what music was used or how they achieved certain sound effects. Also, you'd get the background on classic Hitchhiker traits, such as the infamous obsession with towels (wasn't even introduced until episode seven!)

A great read for any Hitch-hiker fan, and hey, maybe now that I've READ the radio series, I'll have a listen!

Mike says

I love this. It's fantastic to have the original radio scripts and be able to read them at any time. I have done so on many an ocassion. And I directed the Infinite Improbability Missle into Whale chase scene for a directing class because of this book. Huzzah! Um... Yeah, it's basically a must have if you want to have the perfect Hitchhiker's Guide Collection but it's not needed unless you're a superfan. And if you choose not to get a copy tell me where I can find another one. Just in case. Also, the best thing about this is the notes after every episode. The insight into the mind of Douglas Adams is often really funny and it's great to see his thoughts on what he was trying to get and what he was able to get.

Chris Chinchilla says

25th Anniversary Edition of the scripts that launched a billion quips.

March 1978 saw the first ever transmission of "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" on BBC Radio 4; the

beginning of a cult phenomenon. This 25th Anniversary edition of the scriptbook includes a previously unpublished Hitchhiker script, 'Sheila's Ear'; a new introduction by producer Geoffrey Perkins; and a Who's Who of all those involved in the radio series.

As well as all the new material, of course there are the twelve original radio scripts - Hitchhiker as it was written and exactly as it was broadcast for the very first time. They include amendments and additions made during recordings and original notes on the writing and producing of the series by Adams and Perkins.

For those who have always loved Adams, as well as for his new generation of fans, these scripts are essential reading - with the previously 'lost' script making this edition a must-have piece of Adams memorabilia.

From the Inside Flap

The original, complete, and totally unedited scripts from the now famous BBC "Hitchhiker Radio Show." Join Douglas Adams on an epic adventure in time and space--including some helpful advice on how to see the universe for less than 30 Altairian dollars a day.

About the Author

Douglas Adams created all the various and contradictory manifestations of The Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy: radio, novels, TV, computer game, stage adaptations, comic book and bath towel. He lectured and broadcast around the world and was a patron of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund and Save the Rhino International. Douglas Adams was born in Cambridge, UK and lived with his wife and daughter in Islington, London, before moving to Santa Barbara, California, where he died suddenly in 2001. After Douglas died the movie of Hitchhiker moved out of development hell into the clear uplands of production, using much of Douglas' original script and ideas. Douglas shares the writing credit for the movie with Karey Kirkpatrick.

Ietrio says

A pleasant read. The usual amusing style of writing. And I have enjoyed the notes at the end of each chapter.

Ben Babcock says

I first fell in love with h2g2 through the books, then the movie, and finally these radio scripts--I'm too young to have ever heard the original radio series. I tried listening to the BBC "Quaternary" phase, but it just wasn't the same.

Reading the scripts can never fully approximate the feeling of a radio show, of course. From what I've read of it, the entire affair was zany. At times, apparently, the end of the episode wasn't even written before they began recording the beginning. This sort of thing is precisely the real-life craziness from which something like h2g2 can emerge and feel so appropriate.

Still, it was cool to read the radio scripts and see how the show differed from the books. The books will always be my favourite, partly because I am primarily a novel person, and partly because I read them first.

Joseph Ozias says

I technically listened to these rather than read them, but I own the book; this script is hilarious and just what I expect from Adams.

Jess says

I feel like I got this book from my mom's friend who was throwing it out or something. That is nuts. I will probably never get tired of this book... I'm enough of a Hitchhiker's nerd that it's fascinating to me to see the same jokes and ideas in different permutations or layered with new ones, and to see how the material originally functioned. The novel series, especially considering the later books, is a lot darker than the radio show (really!), but even the loopier material is going somewhere interesting. I really wish we'd gotten to see Adams translate the work for another medium, because I would have loved to see yet another alternate-universe version of the Hitchhiker's story.

Ian Wood says

I have tried to get into radio comedy at various times. I spent many an hour trying to discover what was funny about the Goon Show as to me it just sounded like allot of man talking in silly voices. I had discovered Hitch Hikers through the TV show and had subsequently read all the Hitch Hiker novels and thought Douglas Adams the greatest writer I'd ever read.

And then, one Christmas, nearly two thousand years after one man had been nailed to a tree for saying how great it would be to be nice to people for a change, BBC Radio 4 played the Hitch Hikers radio series on consecutive nights and I tuned in my portable hoping to change my opinion of Radio comedy by what was universally considered a ground breaking show.

Well I never got my epiphany, and still can't do Radio comedy, so buying this book is a difficult circle to square. I think I'd buy directions in the use of tooth picks if Douglas Adams had written them. Anyway it's got a nice cover.
