



It's ONLY Rocket Science: An Introduction in Plain English (Astronomers' Universe)

By Lucy Rogers

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Most amateur astronomers' and many of those with similar interests but who are not currently practising observers' have only a sketchy understanding of space flight. This book provides an introduction to its mechanics. The beauty of this book, written by an engineer who is also an accomplished science writer, is that it covers the subject comprehensively, and yet is almost entirely descriptive and non-mathematical. It deals with all aspects of space flight, from how to leave the Earth (including the design of the rocket, mission planning, navigation and communication), to life in space and the effects of weightlessness. The book also includes sections describing how an amateur can track satellites and understand their orbital parameters.

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Editorial Review

Review

From the reviews:

"This is a book I've really mixed feelings about – it does what it sets out to do very well. And it does what it says on the tin. It's a plain English introduction to rocket science. ... I would highly recommend it if you want to absorb all the basic facts about rocketry and space travel." (Brian Clegg, PopularScience, June, 2008)

"Lucy Rogers' book It's Only Rocket Science: An Introduction in Plain English tries to demystify what is a notoriously complicated subject. ... I have a feeling that students and young aerospace professionals will find this book useful. When they don't quite understand what their lecturers are trying to tell them, Rogers will be there to help them out." (Piers Bizony, BBC Sky at Night, September, 2008)

"The term 'rocket science' implies that one needs a very sophisticated level of technological and scientific knowledge to understand the principles of this field. However, Rogers (Isle of Wight, UK) attempts to explain these seemingly complex phenomena in relatively simple terms, i.e., without reference to mathematics. ... Rogers does a good job in explaining ... topics in accessible language. The chapters include line drawings and half-tone and color photographs; technical appendixes and a glossary augment the text. Summing Up: Recommended. General readers." (J. Z. Kiss, CHOICE, Vol. 46 (01), September, 2008)

From the Back Cover

"Well, it's not rocket science, is it?"

How many times have you heard people use that expression when they mean something pretty simple? There are other areas of science and technology that are arguably more challenging than rocket science, but no other (perhaps apart from brain surgery) has entered mainstream English vocabulary as a byword for 'difficult'.

But 'hard to understand' isn't the same as 'impossible to understand', as Dr Lucy Rogers – who is herself currently working as a rocket scientist – shows in this book.

She describes, in everyday terms and entirely without complex math, just what is involved in launching something into space, to explore the universe beyond our small planet. If you want to understand the fundamentals of space flight, from how to leave the Earth – including the design of the rocket and vehicle, mission planning, navigation and communication – to life in space and the effects of weightlessness, begin your journey here.

About the Author

Dr Lucy Rogers is a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and a member of the British Association of Science Writers. She is an engineer, and is currently working on the Launch Escape System propulsion unit for StarChaser, the UK's commercial space access company. She has published articles in The Guardian national newspaper, and on BBC Online.

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