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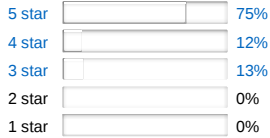
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by Philip C. D. Hobbs

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##### For anyone working with optical systems

By Paul Moskowitz on June 23, 2000

Phil Hobbs has written an in-depth practical study of the field of optics and electro-optics. The book covers subjects including: sources, detectors, lenses, prisms, mirrors, coatings, gratings and exotic components, fiber optics, electro-optical systems, signal processing, and electronics. It is no surprise that it runs to over 700 pages. It is an excellent reference book for anyone working with optical systems. The material is presented in a straight-forward manner using equations only

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##### Excellent but sorely needs references!

By K. Ferrio on April 28, 2004

This is an excellent how-to book. It's the Home Depot of optics. But the almost complete lack of references (at least in the edition I reviewed) is a HUGE disappointment. This general text could have been so much more useful with a few selected hooks into the specialized literature. I hope the author and publisher consider this seriously for future editions.

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13 of 14 people found the following review helpful

##### Lots of info and to the point

By A customer on February 25, 2001  
Format: Hardcover

This book is loaded with formulae, tips, and encyclopedic descriptions of optical phenomena. It includes several chapters on building electronic instrumentation for optical systems that serve as useful advice about electronic prototyping in general. The writing style mimicks that of a wise, experienced expert passing on practical knowledge (and opinion) to a favored student. In a few cases, this style goes too far, particularly when formidable equations are quickly presented and dismissed, leaving the reader to be impressed, but wonder "what was the point of that?". The author has tried to pack in as much technical meat as possible while still retaining an informal feel. It's a difficult style to write but Hobbs, for the most part, pulls it off. I would recommend the text to readers with some familiarity of optics.

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**Instant Classic**

By [John Quinlan](#) on June 14, 2000

Format: Hardcover

This book has achieved instant classic status around our electronics and optics labs, and sits prominently on my bookshelf along with Horowitz & Hill, Gray & Meyer, Dostal, Johnson & Graham, some other highly-valued technical texts and app. notes. The amount of knowledge packed into it is truly intimidating. It covers both the electronics and optics parts of electro-optical systems, from the practical perspective of someone who obviously has had a lot of hard-core experience in designing, constructing and "making them work." Besides the basic theory, there are a lot of tricks, techniques and technical lore that I've never seen in other textbooks. As an EE-type thrust into the world of electro-optics when I started a new job, I found the section on low-noise photodiode amplifiers to be particularly valuable. Its common-sense approach to performance and component tradeoffs is the best I've come across.

One warning: this book is not for beginners - it's aimed mostly at the graduate or senior undergraduate level, although an advanced technician would probably gain something from it.

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13 of 15 people found the following review helpful

**One of the best**

By [John Lester Miller](#) on August 1, 2002

Format: Hardcover

When I meet someone new-to-me in the field, I have taken to the habit of eyeing up their bookshelf, looking for the books that they use. Whenever I see this incredible tome from Phil Hobbs, I know they have an excellent resource. Frankly, I believe that you should be embarrassed if this book is not on your shelf. This book is simply too good to miss. I recommend that you stop reading this review and buy it!

Phil has managed to cram information of a 100,000+ academic pages into this 727 page gem. His mastery of separating the chemical from the root of the information is truly amazing. This guy understands what it takes to make a system work and astutely put it into this work. He gives pointers for lab rats as to the number of "post-it" notes to use to elevate an optical component, as well as detail theoretical discussions of detector sensitivity and the practical impact of the electronics.

The writing is sometimes folksy and hip. I find this an incredible relief from the academic 3rd person passive forced by many publishers. Phil occasionally gets funny and at least a few times, his folksy style is only used to clearly underscore the salient point that he is making.

My negative criticism of Hobbs is primarily why it took him until 2000 to publish this book--I could have used it 25 years ago, and whis I had this book in college! Also, a glossary would have been nice to include.

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5 of 5 people found the following review helpful

**Useful, hard to come by lessons**

By [Jason Merrill](#) on March 22, 2007

Format: Hardcover

I've had this book for around a month, and I've already been able to apply its lessons in the lab on several occasions. Hobbs has a way of anticipating the things that will trip you up ahead of time, allowing you to learn lessons the easy way instead of the hard way. Some of the stuff in here would probably have taken me a decade to realize on my own (i.e. how bad etaloning can be in a polarizing beam splitting cube.) He covers many topics in just enough detail to make we want to find out more.

[...]

Occasionally, Hobbs offers advice without making it obvious why you should follow it. Most of it can be cleared up by a careful rereading or consultation of references, but one would do well to avoid following advice without understanding it. Hobbs advocates "dead bug" circuit prototyping, but provides only the the vaguest description of how to do it (and one crummy picture). I googled the subject and found very little useful supplemental material, and I'm not sure how to research the topic further.

Overall, it's hard for me to imagine someone who works with optics who wouldn't benefit from carefully reading this book. A real gem.

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9 of 13 people found the following review helpful

**Wow!**

By A customer on August 28, 2003

Format: Hardcover **Verified Purchase**

I believe I have one of the largest personal libraries on electro-optics, how in the heck did I miss this book? Highly recommended!

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5 of 7 people found the following review helpful

**Best buy for practical optics perston: Buiding Electro-Optical Systems: Making It All Work**

By [Vladimir V. Shkunov "Vlad"](#) on September 4, 2005

Format: Hardcover

Briefly speaking, everybody dealing seriiously with optical design, or even doing academic research, should keep this book on the desk all the time.

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