



D Is for Digital: What a Well-Informed Person Should Know about Computers and Communications

Brian W. Kernighan

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Robert St.Amant says

My Amazon review: In the preface to this book, Kernighan poses a question: What should a well-informed person know about computing? He answers this question first by breaking the field down into hardware, software, and communications (with data a possible fourth category), and then by walking through some of the most important concepts in these areas, describing them in a lively, accessible way. The book is targeted at readers without a computer background, but it's a short, fun read for the more knowledgeable as well.

??? Park says

I just plainly LOOOOVE this book!

Kernighan mainly speaks about software, hardware, communication (and data), in a chronologically organized manner. The topics on communication were especially intriguing, and I think I was really fortunate to meet this book when my interests toward security peaked. Great for novices, but also very nice for digital experts.

Isaac says

This book is meant to be a primer to non-computer-science people on basic computer engineering concepts. As such, it largely succeeds, and though I am not the target audience, I enjoyed the overview of the internet, which I was less familiar with than the other sections (hardware and software). I enjoy Kernighan as a writer (this is the third of his books that I've read), but I think that this particular book could do with a few more slower paced examples for some of the concepts. Perhaps I'm underestimating the students of his classes (this book rose out of a class he teaches at Princeton on computers for non-computer-majors), but I think if I were explaining some of the concepts, I would spend some more time on each one. Likely he is constrained by a desire to have a shorter length book. This is a good book for anyone who doesn't know much about the inner workings of computers, and would like an overview of the field.

Philip says

Great overview of modern digital technology, talks about everything from bits and bytes to security and privacy to the protocols of the Internet and big concepts like Cloud Computing.

Would recommend for non-technical people working in technology, or just anyone who wants to know what software engineers work on/with.

The author is admittedly more paranoid about privacy than most of us, but for good reason. He talks about the many ways companies track our data and just how detailed it can get.

Young Ha says

K&R ???? ?? ?? (???? ??) ? ??? ????? ??? ????? ?? ??? ????? ??? ?? ????? ??? ??? ? ?? ?. D is for Digital ?????.

Vivek Tewary says

It's a serviceable introduction to the digital world. I have a fondness for the author since my first and one of the best introductions to programming was the cult classic book "The C Programming Language" that he co-authored with Ritchie.

In any case, the present book does what it says and that's enough.

I would be remiss if I did not mention that the author feels that Alan Turing's accomplishments are overestimated. That might be enough to not want to read this book because as a matter of fact, the book is only ever serviceable and does not rise above that.

Jeff Kim says

One of the most informative books I've read. It's well written and easy to understand. It's a good introduction to computers and communication principles to non engineers, but also a good refresher book for the engineers.

I highly recommend you read it.

Mbogo J says

With these kind of books you judge them on how they treated stuff that you had prior knowledge, I felt Kernighan did a good job so when he delved into areas I didn't know much about I trusted he was telling the truth. Like how the internet and world wide web are not the same thing, among other nuggets.
