



The Universal Computer: The Road from Leibniz to Turing

Martin Davis

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One of the world's pioneers in the development of computer science offers a mesmerizing history of computers.

Computers are everywhere today--at work, in the bank, in artist's studios, sometimes even in our pockets--yet they remain to many of us objects of irreducible mystery. How can today's computers perform such a bewildering variety of tasks if computing is just glorified arithmetic? The answer, as Martin Davis lucidly illustrates, lies in the fact that computers are essentially engines of logic. Their hardware and software embody concepts developed over centuries by logicians such as Leibniz, Boole, and Godel, culminating in the amazing insights of Alan Turing. *The Universal Computer* traces the development of these concepts by exploring with captivating detail the lives and work of the geniuses who first formulated them. Readers will come away with a revelatory understanding of how and why computers work and how the algorithms within them came to be.

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