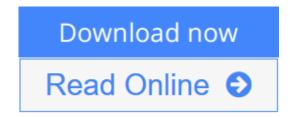# Professor Stewart's Cabinet of Mathematical Curiosities

By Ian Stewart

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Knowing that the most exciting math is *not* taught in school, Professor Ian Stewart has spent years filling his cabinet with intriguing mathematical games, puzzles, stories, and factoids intended for the adventurous mind. This book reveals the most exhilarating oddities from Professor Stewart's legendary cabinet.

Inside, you will find hidden gems of logic, geometry, and probability—like how to extract a cherry from a cocktail glass (harder than you think), a pop-up dodecahedron, and the real reason why you can't divide anything by zero. Scattered among these are keys to Fermat's last theorem, the Poincaré conjecture, chaos theory, and the P=NP problem (you'll win a million dollars if you solve it). You never know what enigmas you'll find in the Stewart cabinet, but they're sure to be clever, mind-expanding, and delightfully fun.

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Editorial Review

From **Booklist**
For an exceptional reader, this book could mean a million dollars. For among the many doors that Stewart opens into the wonderland of mathematics, one offers a tantalizing perspective on the Riemann hypothesis, a conjecture so rich with implications that philanthropists have offered a million-dollar prize to anyone who can prove it. Of course, armchair mathematicians are not likely to find the path to that money. But they are certain to find pleasure in this cornucopia of puzzles, brainteasers, and digressions. Readers will delight, for instance, in testing their wits against Euclid's theorems, in enlarging their understanding of geometry by constructing antigravity cones, and in allying themselves with an ancient genius by calculating just how much Archimedes could have moved the earth with his famous fulcrum. But besides inviting his readers to exercise their gray matter, Stewart initiates them into vertigo-inducing mysteries, including the wild dynamics of chaos and the unearthly beauty of logarithmic spirals. The ideal book for dispelling the supposed drudgery of mathematics with its real magic. --Bryce Christensen

Review

Booklist
"[Armchair mathematicians] are certain to find pleasure in this cornucopia of puzzles, brainteasers, and digressions.... The ideal book for dispelling the supposed drudgery of mathematics with its real magic."

New Scientist
"Stewart has a genius for explanation that allows details of the Poincaré conjecture and Riemann hypothesis to sit happily alongside a quip about a chicken crossing a Möbius strip.... Mathematics doesn't come more entertaining than this."

Chicago Tribune
"The exciting side of math – puzzles, games and thrilling oddities."

Science News
"What positive integer is equal to its own Scrabble score when spelled out in full? Stewart...offers this and a hodgepodge of other puzzles, paradoxes, brainteasers, tricks, facts and jokes, which he accurately calls 'curiosities.'."

IEEE Spectrum
"Open one of the 179 'drawers' in Professor Stewart's cabinet, and you might find just a one-liner...or a seven-page essay on Fermat's last theorem.... The book can be devoured in one giant gulp or savored, one curiosity at a time."

About the Author

Ian Stewart is Professor of Mathematics at the University of Warwick. He has written over seventy books, many of which are popular accounts of science and mathematics. His writing has appeared in *New Scientist*, *Discover,Scientific American*, and many newspapers in the United States and the United Kingdom. He lives in Coventry, England.

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