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Book Review: How Do You Find an Exoplanet?

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How do you find an exoplanet?



Johnson, John Asher. Princeton, 2016

178p bibl index afp, 9780691156811 \$35.00, 9781400873999

LC Call Number: [QB820](#)

This little red book is a thorough yet very understandable introduction to one of the hottest topics in astronomy—planets outside the solar system. Johnson (Harvard), one of the leading scientists in the field, has created a great primer for undergraduate students wishing to gain enough knowledge to undertake a project or perhaps win an internship in the field. Suitable as an introductory text for a short undergraduate course or for advanced amateurs, the book uses elementary algebra, trigonometry, and a little vector notation to outline four of the most prominent techniques: radial velocity variations, transits, gravitational lensing, and direct imaging. Johnson purposefully focuses only on the detection methods and the historical background behind them. For those who want to delve into the technical aspects of extracting the properties of the planets and their atmospheres from observations, the book provides excellent references to more advanced information. This is an essential resource for students entering the field, as well as those with a college-level background in astronomy, physics, and math who, according to the author, just want to “bridge the gap between popular science and the details behind the press releases” about exoplanet discoveries. Part of the "Princeton Frontiers in Physics" series.

Summing Up: Essential. Lower-division undergraduates through professionals/practitioners; informed general audiences.

Reviewer: [T. D. Oswalt](#), Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Recommendation: Essential

Readership Level: All Readership Levels

Interdisciplinary Subjects:

Subject: [Science & Technology - Astronautics & Astronomy](#)

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