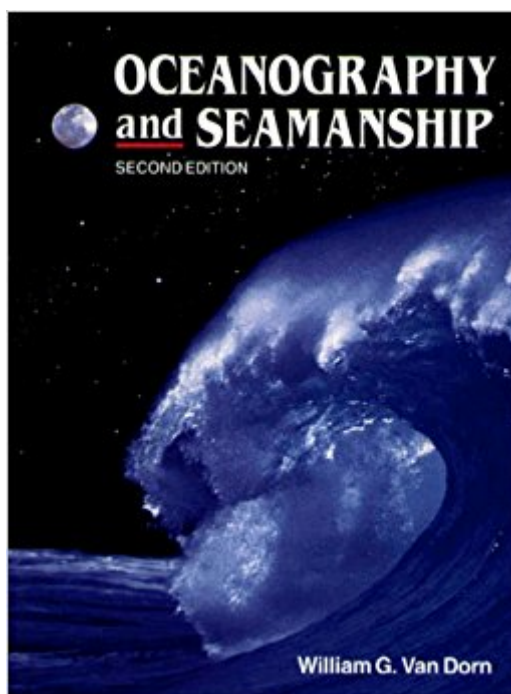


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# Oceanography And Seamanship



## Synopsis

William G. Van Dorn has gone to sea in everything from "two barrels lashed together to an aircraft carrier" and has spent a third of a century as a research oceanographer. Recognizing the advantages of combining the knowledge of oceanography and seamanship, he created the first edition of this book. Based on the premise that those who challenge the sea will have a better chance of survival if they have a knowledge of its characteristics, the author applies the science of physical oceanography to the practical needs of the seafaring community. The book begins with a complete discussion of the ocean's origin and nature and life at sea, and includes a discussion of meteorology, ocean currents and wave motion, and ship dynamics. The final sections of the book deal with strategies for heavy weather seamanship and emergency procedures. The second edition, building upon an already established reputation, has been revised to accommodate significant advances in expertise and technology. New topics include the influence of the 1979 Fastnet race disaster on racing rules and yacht design, construction, and performance; planing powerboats and open-ocean racing; ship routing for storm avoidance; search-and-rescue procedures; and cold-water survival techniques. Although the book is slanted toward cruising yachtsmen, commercial fishing and charter boat operators will also be among its audience, and even those who may never go to sea will find it fascinating.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 440 pages

Publisher: Schiffer Publishing; 2nd ed. edition (July 30, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0870334344

ISBN-13: 978-0870334344

Product Dimensions: 8.9 x 1.5 x 11.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (6 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #431,244 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #160 in Â Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Oceans & Seas > Oceanography #170 in Â Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Biology > Marine Biology #1032 in Â Books > Textbooks > Science & Mathematics > Earth Sciences

## Customer Reviews

Good diagrams, pictures, charts, etc. A picture being worth 1000 words certainly applies here.

Enough mathematics for the scientist, for the layman - the text makes perfect sense without the formulas.

Oceanography and Seamanship by van Dorn is so full of information that it's hard to know where to start. The book is quite technical, with lots of math, and even as a scientist, I found that I skipped over many of the formulae, yet still understood the underlying concepts of how boats and the water interact. Very interesting and useful.

Let me be frank... the beautiful cover of this book caught my eye while browsing a bookstore on vacation, but I didn't want to spend the money. A YEAR LATER, I had the cash, and remembered that this book contained so many topics that I wanted to learn more about. I didn't remember the title, nor the exact bookstore, but I tracked it down. The bookstore owner didn't have the book in stock, but by my description, remembered it, and I subsequently purchased it through . It's the kind of book you remember. If you're curious about the greater part of the earth which is covered with water, this book is a must read ! I'm slowly working through, cover-to-cover. Ocean currents, winds, and tides... climate, how various sized ships act in various conditions... calculating whether you have time to head to port or better get away from land when the wind starts blowing (how high will the waves get?) -- it's all here. I must confess, I've been glossing over the calculation aspects of wave propagation, but just reached the a-ha! point of why it's all very useful (and the graph is simpler than it looks once you get to the examples). If you want to better understand the oceans, from the north pole to the south, and all the winds, waves, ice bergs, and currents between, this is your book. The pictures and drawings are what caught my eye. Once you dig into the text (if you have a bit of science/math grounding), you'll find it as enjoyable as the graphics. Even if you don't have much science/math, there are great portions with enjoyable material that doesn't require heavy thought.

This book is terrific. A "must read" by any deepwater sailor, arm-chair admirals, or anyone else who loves the sea. Van Dorn has done an excellent job of combining practical sailing experience with remarkable scholarship. He covers many subjects.- Mast furling mainsails? A bad idea by putting too much weight aloft (not to mention the regular mechanical problems these systems have).- Use of drogues and sea anchors. How and when to deploy.- Stormsails, bare poles or heaving too?- Stormsail cut. Low foot and hoist reduces leverage, but is more prone to violent oscillation as the craft rises from wave troughs to tops.- What to do if you turn turtle and she does not right? Open a

sea cock and let out air of the hull allowing her to settle deeper and thereby alter the equilibrium.- Consider filling the mast with Styrofoam to deaden noise and increase righting ability (unless you have internal halyards). More, more, much more. Filled with amazingly practical and useful advice. The list goes on. Also packed with hugely useful and interesting facts about the ocean.- How and why waves scallop the seashore.- Big waves travel faster than little waves, announcing distant storms and allowing you to estimate its distance by period of the waves.- The top of each wave is moving forward at great speed (ask anyone who has surfed) while the trough is actually moving backwards (ask anyone who has tried to swim to shore in a big surf).- Fetch. Wind over water. What makes waves and makes them big.- Rogue waves. (The European Space Agency writes: "Severe weather has sunk more than 200 supertankers and container ships exceeding 200 metres in length during the last two decades. Rogue waves are believed to be the major cause in many such cases." Wiki reports "On 11 March 1861 at midday the lighthouse on Eagle Island, off the west coast of Ireland, was struck by a wave that surmounted a seaside cliff measuring 40 m (133 ft) and a further 26 m (87 ft) of lighthouse structure. That, dear friends, would have been a 220' wave. Wow.) But I digress. Just a few things I remember from reading this book 20 years ago. Gotta have. Gotta read. Great gift to the sailors in your life. Who knows, it might save them one dark and stormy night. PS. I write this on the 39th anniversary of the sinking of the "Edmund Fitzgerald" with the loss of her entire 29 man crew. She was only two hours from safety. Dang. Best tribute, I think, is still <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqUCHSkmUek>. Good article at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SS\\_Edmund\\_Fitzgerald](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SS_Edmund_Fitzgerald) More at <http://www.ssefo.com/> Many brave men are asleep in the deep.

I had this book years ago when I was cruising but gave it away when I came ashore. Now I do several ocean deliveries each year and this book, now in its second edition, is like an old friend. I think the sections on Heavy weather seamanship and emergency tactics should be read by every sailor.

I'm having a problem understanding the "scientist" below who skipped the formulas, since they're all extremely simple. Perhaps he's a biologist or works in some other area where math isn't really used, but the math in this book is strictly elementary. It's on the level of high-school physics, and not the AP/Honors type that utilizes calculus, either, since no calculus or differential equations are employed. If you know what a square root of a number and the cosine of an angle are, there will be no problem. As a physical oceanographer myself, the basic information about the physics of the

ocean was old news, to say the least, but I was interested in what the author had to say about applying these principles to sailing and boat-handling. I have to say there is some practical value here, but not as much as I'd hoped. For those without a background in ocean physics, however, it's a valuable reference.

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