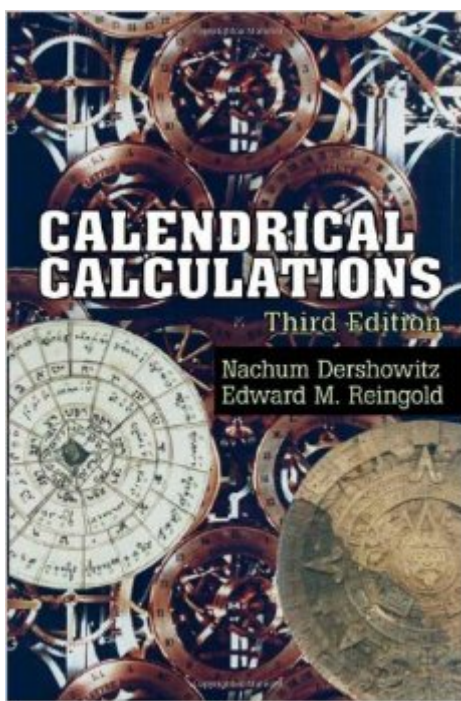


The book was found

Calendrical Calculations



Synopsis

A valuable resource for working programmers, as well as a fount of useful algorithmic tools for computer scientists, this new edition of the popular calendars book expands the treatment of the previous edition to new calendar variants: generic cyclical calendars and astronomical lunar calendars as well as the Korean, Vietnamese, Aztec, and Tibetan calendars. The authors frame the calendars of the world in a completely algorithmic form, allowing easy conversion among these calendars and the determination of secular and religious holidays. LISP code for all the algorithms are available on the Web.

Book Information

Hardcover: 512 pages

Publisher: Cambridge University Press; 3 edition (December 10, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 052188540X

ISBN-13: 978-0521885409

Product Dimensions: 6.1 x 1.1 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (13 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

The book explains the structure of 14 calendars, and gives easily comprehensible formulae for the conversion of a date in any of these calendars into a day count, and back to the calendar date. It also includes many holidays for these calendars. Rather than on the history of calendars or their cultural background, the focus is on a lucid, correct, and complete exposition of their functional principles. Extensive bibliographic references are given to the primary sources for each calendar. A highlight is the complete specification of several calendars depending on fairly precise timings of astronomical phenomena (Chinese calendar and some Hindu religious calendars). To make it self-contained, the book explains the necessary mathematical and astronomical background. The astronomical models are taken from the classic 1991 book "Astronomical Algorithms" by Jean Meeus. I especially like the presentation of the calendrical formulae in an essentially non-algorithmic

manner, using normal mathematical notation. This makes it easy to further analyze these formulae. For instance, if one wants to know how good an approximation to the spring equinox is March 21 in the Gregorian calendar, one finds from the formula on page 36 in the book that midnight of March 21 in Gregorian year Y is exactly $Y \hat{=} 365.2425 - (Y \bmod 4) \hat{=} 97/400 + (\text{floor}(Y/4) \bmod 25) \hat{=} 3/100 - (\text{floor}(Y/100) \bmod 4)/4$ days after midnight of March 21 in Gregorian year 0, which ranges from $Y \hat{=} 365.2425 - 1.4775$ up to $Y \hat{=} 365.2425 + 0.72$. Thus, even assuming the Gregorian approximation of 365.2425 days to the tropical year, spring equinoxes are distributed over at least three dates in March in the Gregorian calendar.

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