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The Sextant Handbook: Adjustment, Repair, Use, And History



Synopsis

Loran and GPS notwithstanding, there will always be a place for the sextant aboard any blue-water boat, if for no other reason than the thrill and mystery of finding one's position on earth by gazing at the heavens. Here is the indispensable reference that should accompany the instrument aboard. Cmdr. Bruce Bauer, a professional navigator and master mariner with the U.S. Merchant Marine, has distilled years of hands-on experience into an eminently readable guide to buying, adjusting, using, and repairing sextants. The Sextant Handbook is dedicated to the premise that electronic navigation devices, while too convenient to disregard, are too vulnerable to rely on exclusively. The book is designed to make beginner and expert alike conversant with this most beautiful and functional of the navigator's tools. Topics include: Assembly and Disassembly Vital Adjustments Avoiding Problems Rough Weather Sightings Oiling and Cleaning Immersion Baths Emergency Silvering Finding and Buying Used Sextants And Much More You'll also find a list of distributors, manufacturers, and dealers worldwide, a discussion of future trends, and numerous helpful hints, including sighting with eyeglasses and using a Rude starfinder. All in a thoroughly revised edition of a book acclaimed by navigation professionals. --This text refers to an alternate Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

"It is an excellent book, unique in its field." -- The Ensign
"The wealth of useful material is prodigious and by the time one has reached the back cover, the sextant is an old friend." -- Yachting World
"This is a good book... The author writes clearly and knowledgeably." -- Sailing --This text

refers to an alternate Hardcover edition.

"The wealth of useful material is prodigious and by the time one has reached the back cover, the sextant is an old friend. Just as important, Cdr. Bauer deals comprehensively with maintenance and service, and his advice on how to select and assess a second-hand sextant is truly worthwhile.

Refreshingly, he writes in a friendly manner--almost as though he is chatting to a group of students. A thoroughly enjoyable book."--Peter Milne, Technical Editor, Yachting World Magazine (England)

"If this book is a highly detailed technical manual, the reader is hardly aware, so plentiful are the diversions into related topics. It makes great reading and virtually everyone . . . regardless of one's skill level with a sextant . . . will find new things to learn about sextants, their history, their future and their best use."--Ocean Navigator

"The sextant and Commander Bauer's handbook should be standard equipment on every seagoing vessel. It is a book that should be provided with every sextant and class in navigating."--R. J. Holt, Director, Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum

"One recognizes here a centennial Lecky on the sextant. There is plenty of new material presented in a manner that would make a stranger want to meet Bruce Bauer and converse with him face to

face."--Paul M. Anderton, Navigation Instructor

"Cdr. Bauer's book will become a standard reference on the sextant for professional and amateur navigators around the world. I have been doing celestial navigation since 1953 and have not, until now, been able to find so much information on the sextant collected in one place."--A. W. Fowler, Ocean Racing Navigator

"Bauer has succeeded in gathering a wealth of information from a multitude of sources and brought it all together into a fascinating book for the mariner. I recommend it to those who navigate the ocean's highways."--Warren P. Davis,

Colonel, USA (Ret.), Sextant Authority

"Insecurity is sitting on a boat in the middle of the ocean staring at an out-of-whack sextant and not knowing how to fix it. I know from experience. This book should be mandatory equipment on every boat that goes offshore."--Wayne Carpenter, Author, The Voyage of Kristina

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I bought a WW II vintage U.S. Navy Mark II Sextant made by David White Company on eBay. I got The Sextant Handbook from to learn how to maintain, adjust and use the sextant. I learned a lot from the book that applied to my sextant. I have made a number of repairs outside the scope of the book as well cleaning and lubricating as described in the book. I have done all of the checks and adjustments suggested in the book. It is now functioning quite well, thanks to Bruce Bauer's suggestions. I'm still learning and I'm having lots of fun. I'd have been lost without The Sextant Handbook. However, I do have questions about the sextant that aren't answered in the book.

I have GPS that I call "Gabby" but until you find your place on Earth with A Sextant, you haven't had the fun you want with a simple technical item like my Davis Mark 25 Master Sextant for about 100 bucks. This Handbook takes you to the front of the class. I've gone a couple of hundred miles from home and plotted within 70 yards from my actual location on Earth. I enjoyed the results from this particular Handbook. It doesn't go over my head with confusing information; Just to the point of what you need.

Learned a bunch. I now feel very competent to handle clean and adjust my sextant. The detail about how to adjust and clean the sextant is well worth the money alone. There is also some great information about the development of the instrument that really makes clear how it works, better than most books on navigation. I went from being a little scared to use it to feeling comfortable to disassembly and clean it.

For some reason I've always wanted to learn how to use a sextant. Which may prove difficult because I don't live near the sea! I have found this book to be very informative in this quest for learning and am hoping for a basic sextant as a Christmas present or will purchase one in the near future.

It provided a good history and understanding of the sextant. I was hoping that he would have also discussed the sextants that have been used for aircraft navigation.

Everything you ever wanted to know about sextants. A little dated. Some of the resources cited have gone out of business.

the descriptions are quite technical so I am learning what I wanted. the history chapter was fascinating.

Wanted to be able to understand and maintain my equipment. Worth it to me to know how these valuable, expensive and sometimes lifesaving instruments work. Had fun playing around too. Technical good, but not just a book I'd pick up to 'read', so just 4. If you gotta know, this is the book, and easy to understand with a little commitment.

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