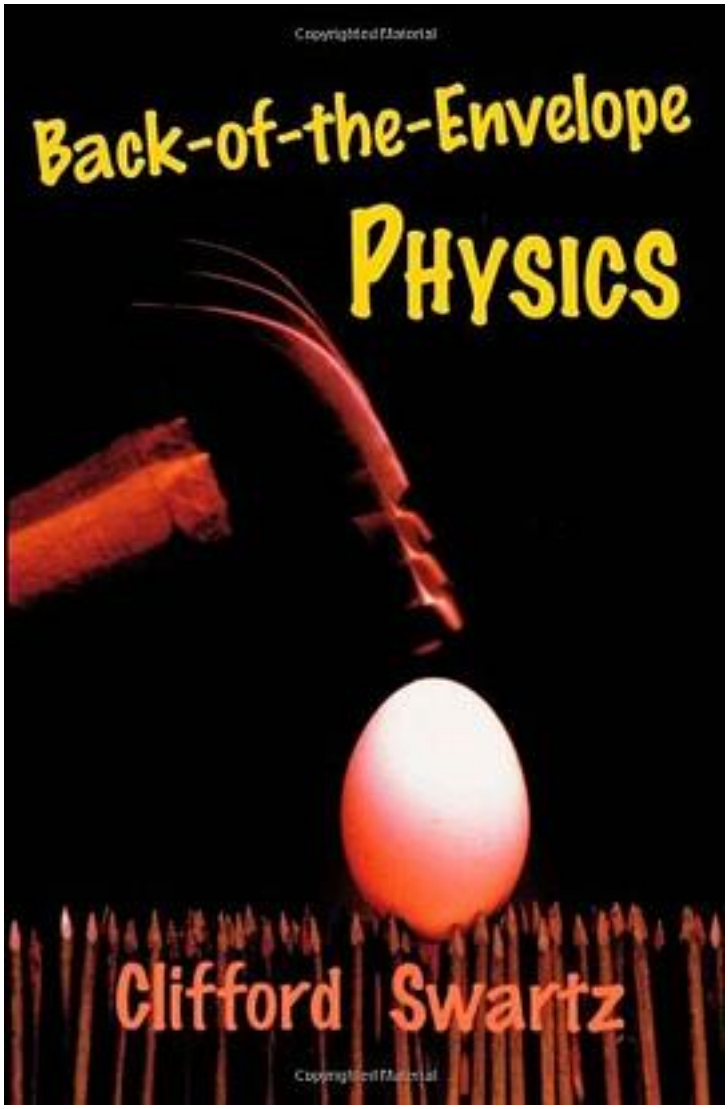
Back-of-the-envelope Physics



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Physicists use "back-of-the-envelope" estimates to check whether or not an idea could possibly be right. In many cases, the approximate solution is all that is needed. This compilation of 101 examples of back-of-the-envelope calculations celebrates a quantitative approach to solving physics problems. Drawing on a lifetime of physics research and nearly three decades as the editor of The Physics Teacher, Clifford Swartz provides simple, approximate solutions to physics problems that span a broad range of topics. What note do you get when you blow across the top of a Coke bottle? Could you lose weight on a diet of ice cubes? How can a fakir lie on a bed of nails without getting hurt? Does draining water in the northern hemisphere really swirl in a different direction than its counterpart below the equator? In each case, only a few lines of arithmetic and a few natural constants solve a problem to within a few percent. Covering such subjects as astronomy, magnetism, optics, sound, heat, mechanics, waves, and electricity, the book provides a rich source of material for teachers and anyone interested in the physics of everyday life.

作者介绍:

目录:

Back-of-the-envelope Physics_下载链接1_

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