

Get Free Sleep: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

Sleep: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

A lively introduction that combines the perspectives of philosophy, psychology and neuroscience - written by the top name in the field, Susan Blackmore.

Explores sleep disorders, describes breakthroughs in the study of sleep, and considers the impact of modern society on it.

In this 'Very Short Introduction' Robert Jones discusses the rising omnipresence of brands, and analyses how they work their magic. He considers the incredible potency of brands as a commercial, social, and cultural force, and looks at the many different kinds of brands that exist - from products, services, and artistic properties, to companies, charities, sports clubs, and political parties. Defining what we mean by the word 'brand', he explores both the positive and negative aspects of brands. Finally Jones considers the business of branding, and asks whether the idea of brands and branding is starting to decline, or whether it has a long future ahead.

The history of Ancient Babylonia in ancient Mesopotamia is epic. After playing host to three great empires, the Hammurabic and Kassite empires, and the Neo-Babylonian Empire ruled by Nebuchadnezzar, it was conquered by the Persians. Entered triumphantly by Alexander the Great, it later provided the setting for the Conquerer's deathbed. Squabbled over by his heirs, Babylonia was subsequently dominated by the Parthian and Roman empires. In this Very Short Introduction, Trevor Bryce takes us on a journey of more than 2,000 years across the history and civilization of ancient Babylonia, from the emergence of its chief city, Babylon, as a modest village on the Euphrates in the 3rd millennium BC through successive phases of triumph, decline, and resurgence until its royal capital faded into obscurity in the Roman imperial era. Exploring key historical events as well as the day-to-day life of an ancient Babylonian, Bryce provides a comprehensive guide to one of history's most profound civilizations. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Babylonia: A Very Short Introduction

History: A Very Short Introduction

World Music: A Very Short Introduction

Classical Literature: A Very Short Introduction

Dreaming: A Very Short Introduction

Nutrition is a topic of wide interest and importance. In spite of growing understanding of the underlying biochemistry, and health campaigns such as 'five-a-day', increasing obesity and reported food allergies and eating disorders, as well as the widely advertised 'supposed' benefits of food supplements mean that a clear explanation of the basic principles of a healthy diet are vital. In this Very Short Introduction, David Bender explains the basic elements of food, the balance between energy intake and exercise, the problems of over- and under-nutrition, and raises the question of safety of nutritional supplements. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

This Very Short Introduction presents a succinct and accessible guide to the key episodes in the story of life on earth - from the very origins of life four million years ago to the extraordinary diversity of species around the globe today.

The topic of stem cells has a high profile in the media. We've made important advances in our scientific understanding, but despite this the clinical applications of stem cells are still in their infancy and most real stem cell therapy carried out today is some form of bone marrow transplantation. At the same time, a scandalous spread of unproven stem cell treatments by private clinics represents a serious problem, with treatments being offered which are backed by limited scientific rationale, and which are at best ineffective, and at worse harmful. This Very Short Introduction introduces stem cells, exploring what they are, and what scientists do with them. Introducing the different types of stem cells, Jonathan Slack explains how they can be used to treat diseases such as retinal degeneration, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, heart disease, and spinal trauma. He also discusses the important technique of bone marrow transplantation and some other types of current stem cell therapy, used for the treatment of blindness and of severe burns. Slack warns against fake stem cell treatments and discusses how to distinguish real from fake treatments. He also describes the latest scientific progress in the field, and looks forward to what we can expect to happen in the next few years Very Short Introductions: Brilliant, Sharp, Inspiring ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Happiness is an everyday term in our lives, and most of us strive to be happy. But defining happiness can be difficult. In this Very Short Introduction, Dan Haybron considers the true nature of happiness. By examining what it is, assessing its importance in our lives, and how we can (and should) pursue it, he considers the current thinking on happiness, from psychology to philosophy. Illustrating the diverse routes to happiness, Haybron reflects on contemporary ideas about the pursuit of a good life and considers the influence of social context on our satisfaction and well-being. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The Eye: A Very Short Introduction

Dreaming

Myth

Music: A Very Short Introduction

Autobiography: A Very Short Introduction

This stimulating Very Short Introduction to music invites us to really think about music and the values and qualities we ascribe to it. The world teems with different kinds of music-traditional, folk, classical, jazz, rock, pop-and each type of music tends to come with its own way of thinking. Drawing on a wealth of accessible examples ranging from Beethoven to Chinese zither music, Nicholas Cook attempts to provide a framework for thinking about all music. By examining the personal, social, and cultural values that music embodies, the book reveals the shortcomings of traditional conceptions of music, and sketches a more inclusive approach emphasizing the role of performers and listeners. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

In this provocative but balanced essay, Kenneth Minogue discusses the development of politics from the ancient world to the twentieth century. He prompts us to consider why political systems evolve, how politics offers both power and order in our society, whether democracy is always a good thing, and what future politics may have in the twenty-first century. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Sleep: A Very Short IntroductionOxford University Press

Less than 450 years ago, all European scholars believed that the Earth was at the centre of a Universe that was at most a few million miles in extent, and that the planets, sun, and stars all rotated around this centre. Less than 250 years ago, they believed that the Universe was createdessentially in its present state about 6000 years ago. Even less than 150 years ago, the view that living species were the result of special creation by God was still dominant. The recognition by Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace of the mechanism of evolution by natural selection hascompletely transformed our understanding of the living world, including our own origins. In this Very Short Introduction Brian and Deborah Charlesworth provide a clear and concise summary of the process of evolution by natural selection, and how natural selection gives rise to adaptations and eventually, over many generations, to new species. They introduce the central concepts ofthefield of evolutionary biology, as they have developed since Darwin and Wallace on the subject, over 140 years ago, and discuss some of the remaining questions regarding processes. They highlight the wide range of evidence for evolution, and the importance of an evolutionary understanding forinstance in combating the rapid evolution of resistance by bacteria to antibiotics and of HIV to antiviral drugs. This reissue includes some key updates to the main text and a completely updated Further Reading section.ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, andenthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Nutrition: A Very Short Introduction

Artificial Intelligence: A Very Short Introduction

Sikhism: A Very Short Introduction

Choice Theory: A Very Short Introduction

Do you touch wood for luck, or avoid hotel rooms on floor thirteen? Would you cross the path of a black cat, or step under a ladder? Is breaking a mirror just an expensive waste of glass, or something rather more sinister? Despite the dominance of science in today's world, superstitious beliefs - both traditional and new - remain surprisingly popular. A recent survey of adults in the United States found that 33 percent believed that finding a penny was good luck, and 23 percent believed that the number seven was lucky. Where did these superstitions come from, and why do they persist today? This Very Short Introduction explores the nature and surprising history of superstition from antiquity to the present. For two millennia, superstition was a label derisively applied to foreign religions and unacceptable religious practices, and its primary purpose was used to separate groups and assert religious and social authority. After the Enlightenment, the superstition label was still used to define groups, but the new dividing line was between reason and unreason. Today, despite our apparent sophistication and technological advances, superstitious belief and behaviour remain widespread, and highly educated people are not immune. Stuart Vyse takes an exciting look at the varieties of popular superstitious beliefs today and the psychological reasons behind their continued existence, as well as the likely future course of superstition in our increasingly connected world. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The Sikh religion has a following of over 20 million people worldwide. However,events such as the verbal and physical attacks on Sikhs just after September 11, where Sikhs were being mistaken for Muslims, suggest that the Sikh faith still remains mysterious to many. This Very Short Introduction introduces newcomers to the meaning of the Sikh religious tradition, its teachings, practices, rituals and festivals. Eleanor Nesbitt highlights and contextualizes the key threads in the history of Sikhism, from the first Gurus to martyrdom, militarization, and the increasingly significant diaspora. Examining gender, caste, and the changes that are currently underway in the faith, Nesbitt considers contemporary Sikh identities and their role in our world. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

« For thirty years, Linda Greenhouse, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of The U.S. Supreme Court: A Very Short Introduction, chronicled the activities of the justices as the Supreme Court correspondent for the New York Times. In this concise volume, she draws on her deep knowledge of the court's history as well as of its written and unwritten rules to show the reader how the Supreme Court really works. »--

Why do we need sleep? What happens when we don't get enough? From the biology and psychology of sleep and the history of sleep in science, art, and literature; to the impact of a 24/7 society and the role of society in causing sleep disruption this introduction answers everything you've ever wanted to know about sleep.

The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction

Happiness: A Very Short Introduction

Unlocking the Power of Sleep and Dreams

Viruses: A Very Short Introduction

Politics: A Very Short Introduction

What is dreaming, and what causes it? Why are dreams so strange and why are they so hard to remember? Replacing dream mystique with modern dream science, J. Allan Hobson provides a new and increasingly complete picture of how dreaming is created by the brain. Focusing on dreaming to explain the mechanisms of sleep, this book explores how the new science of dreaming is affecting theories in psychoanalysis, and how it is helping our understanding of the causes of mental illness. J. Allan Hobson investigates his own dreams to illustrate and explain some of the fascinating discoveries of modern sleep science, while challenging some of the traditionally accepted theories about the meaning of dreams. He reveals how dreaming maintains and develops the mind, why we go crazy in our dreams in order to avoid doing so when we are awake, and why sleep is not just good for health but essential for life. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

This title introduces a wide array of approaches to understanding myth from varied disciplines. It uses the famous ancient myth of Adonis to analyse the ideas and individual approaches and theories of theorists such as Sigmund Freud, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Albert Camus, and Roland Barthes. This new edition considers the interactions of myth theory with cognitive science, the implications of the myth of Gaia, and the differences between story-telling and myth, as well as the future study of myth.

From popular histories through to reworkings of classical subject matter by contemporary poets, dramatists, and novelists, the classical world and the masterpieces of its literature continue to fascinate readers and audiences in a huge variety of media. In this Very Short Introduction, William Allan explores what the 'classics' are and why they continue to shape our Western concepts of literature. Presenting a range of material from both Greek and Latin literature, he illustrates the variety and sophistication of these works, and considers examples from all the major genres. Ideal for the general reader interested in works of classic literature, as well as students at A-Level and University, this is a lively and lucid guide to the major authors and literary forms of the ancient period. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Popular science at its most exciting: the breaking new world of chronobiology - understanding the rhythm of life in humans and all plants and animals. The entire natural world is full of rhythms. The early bird catches the worm -and migrates to an internal calendar. Dormice hibernate away the winter. Plants open and close their flowers at the same hour each day. Bees search out nectar-rich flowers day after day. There are cicadas that can breed for only two weeks every 17 years. And in humans: why are people who work anti-social shifts more illness prone and die younger? What is jet-lag and can anything help? Why do teenagers refuse to get up in the morning, and are the rest of us really 'larks' or 'owls'? Why are most people born (and die) between 3am-5am? And should patients be given medicines (and operations) at set times of day, because the body reacts so differently in the morning, evening and at night? The answers lie in our biological clocks the mechanisms which give order to all living things. They impose a structure that enables us to change our behaviour in relation to the time of day, month or year. They are reset at sunrise and sunset each day to link astronomical time with an organism's internal time.

The History of Life: A Very Short Introduction

From Aetiology to Public Health

Sleep: A Very Short Introduction

Free Will: A Very Short Introduction

Superstition

'World music' emerged as an invention of the West from encounters with other cultures. This book draws readers into a remarkable range of these historical encounters, in which music had the power to evoke the exotic and to give voice to the voiceless. In the course of the volume's eight chapters the reader witnesses music's involvement in the modern world, but also the individual moments and particular histories that are crucial to an understanding of music's diversity. World Music is wide-ranging in its geographical scope, yet individual chapters provide in-depth treatments of selected music cultures and regional music histories. The book frequently zooms in on repertoires and musicians - such as Bob Marley, Bartok, and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan - and attempts to account for world music's growing presence and popularity at the beginning of the twenty-first century. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Every day we seem to make and act upon all kinds of free choices - but are these choices really free? Or are we compelled to act the way we do by factors beyond our control? This book looks at free will.

Autobiography is one of the most popular of written forms. From Casanova to Benjamin Franklin to the Kardashians, individuals throughout history have recorded their own lives and experiences. These personal writings are central to the work of literary critics, philosophers, historians and psychologists, who have found in autobiographies from across the centuries not only an understanding of the ways in which lives have been lived, but the most fundamental accounts of what it means to be a self in the world. In this Very Short Introduction Laura Marcus defines what we mean by 'autobiography', and considers its relationship with similar literary forms such as memoirs, journals, letters, diaries, and essays. Analysing the core themes in autobiographical writing, such as confession, conversion and testimony; romanticism and the journeying self; Marcus discusses the autobiographical consciousness (and the roles played by time, memory and identity), and considers the relationship between psychoanalysis and autobiography. Exploring the themes of self-portraiture and performance, Marcus also discusses the ways in which fiction and autobiography have shaped each other. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Sleep disturbances and sleep deprivation are increasingly common in modern society. Epidemiological methods of investigation have shown that sleep deprivation is associated with a variety of chronic conditions and health outcomes. Sleep medicine is a rapidly growing field of clinical research, affecting people across their lifespan. Relevant to a wide range of specialities including respiratory medicine, neurology, cardiology, and psychiatry, sleep also has a significant impact on the study of epidemiology, public health, and preventive medicine. Sleep, Health, and Society presents epidemiological evidence linking sleep deprivation and disruption to several chronic conditions, and explores the public health implications with the view to developing preventive strategies. The new edition of Sleep, Health, and Society provides up-to-date information on recently discovered areas of sleep medicine. Fully updated to reflect new research and data, as well as additional new chapters exploring eating patterns, nutrition, pregnancy, cancer, pain, and CBT in relation to sleep. Written by leading experts in the field of sleep medicine, Sleep, Health, and Society is ideal for students and professionals in epidemiology and public health. The research presented would also be valuable to respiratory physicians, neurologists, cardiologists, and psychiatrists who are interested in the impact of sleep disturbances and disorders. Sleep, Health, and Society

Sleep

The Rhythms Of Life

Plato: A Very Short Introduction

Circadian Rhythms

Viruses are big news. From pandemics such as HIV, swine flu, and SARS, we are constantly being bombarded with information about new lethal infections. In this Very Short Introduction Dorothy Crawford demonstrates how clever these entities really are. From their discovery and the unravelling of their intricate structures, Crawford demonstrates how these tiny parasites are by far the most abundant life forms on the planet. With up to two billion of them in each litre of sea water, viruses play a vital role in controlling the marine environment and are essential to the ocean's delicate ecosystem. Analyzing the threat of emerging virus infections, Crawford recounts stories of renowned killer viruses such as Ebola and rabies as well as the less known bat-borne Nipah and Hendra viruses. Pinpointing wild animals as the source of the most recent pandemics, she discusses the reasons behind the present increase in potentially fatal infections, as well as evidence suggesting that long term viruses can eventually lead to cancer. By examining our lifestyle in the 21st century, Crawford looks to the future to ask whether we can ever live in harmony with viruses, and considers the ways in which we may need to adapt to prevent emerging viruses with devastating consequences. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Consciousness, 'the last great mystery for science', remains a hot topic. How can a physical brain create our experience of the world? What creates our identity? Do we really have free will? Could consciousness itself be an illusion? Exciting new developments in brain science are continuing the debates on these issues, and the field has now expanded to include biologists, neuroscientists, psychologists, and philosophers. This controversial book clarifies the potentially confusing arguments, and the major theories, whilst also outlining the amazing pace of discoveries in neuroscience. Covering areas such as the construction of self in the brain, mechanisms of attention, the neural correlates of consciousness, and the physiology of altered states of consciousness, Susan Blackmore highlights our latest findings. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Dictionaries are far more than works which list the words and meanings of a language. In this Very Short Introduction Lynda Mugglestone takes a look at how dictionaries are made, considering how they reflect the dominant social and cultural assumptions of the time in which they were written.

The earth's daily rotation affects just about every living creature. From dawn through to dusk, there are changes in light, temperature, humidity, and rainfall. However, these changes are regular, rhythmic and, therefore, predictable. Thus, the near 24 hour circadian rhythm is innate: a genetically programmed clock that essentially ticks of its own accord. This Very Short Introduction explains how organisms can -know- the time and reveals what we now understand of the nature and operation of chronobiological processes. Covering variables such as light, the metabolism, human health, and the seasons, Foster and Kreitzman illustrate how jet lag and shift work can impact on human well-being, and consider circadian rhythms alongside a wide range of disorders, from schizophrenia to obesity. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Ageing: A Very Short Introduction

A Very Short Introduction

Why We Sleep

Stem Cells: A Very Short Introduction

Anthropocene: A Very Short Introduction

Ageing is an activity we are familiar with from an early age. In our younger years upcoming birthdays are anticipated with an excitement that somewhat diminishes as the years progress. As we grow older we are bombarded with advice on ways to overcome, thwart, resist, and, on the rare occasion, embrace, one's ageing. Have all human beings from the various historical epochs and cultures viewed aging with this same ambivalence? In this Very Short Introduction Nancy A. Pachana discusses the lifelong dynamic changes in biological, psychological, and social functioning involved in ageing. Increased lifespans in the developed and the developing world have created an urgent need to find ways to enhance our functioning and well-being in the later decades of life, and this need is reflected in policies and action plans addressing our ageing populations from the World Health Organization and the United Nations. Looking to the future, Pachana considers advancements in the provision for our ageing populations, including revolutionary models of nursing home care such as Green House nursing homes in the USA and Small Group Living homes in the Netherlands. She shows that understanding the process of ageing is not only important for individuals, but also for societies and nations, if the full potential of those entering later life is to be realised. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The proposal that the impact of humanity on the planet has left a distinct footprint, even on the scale of geological time, has recently gained much ground. Global climate change, shifting global cycles of the weather, widespread pollution, radioactive fallout, plastic accumulation, species invasions, the mass extinction of species - these are just some of the many indicators that we will leave a lasting record in rock, the scientific basis for recognizing new time intervals in Earth's history. The Anthropocene, as the proposed new epoch has been named, is regularly in the news. Even with such robust evidence, the proposal to formally recognize our current time as the Anthropocene remains controversial both inside and outside the scholarly world, kindling intense debates. The reason is clear. The Anthropocene represents far more than just another interval of geologic time. Instead, the Anthropocene has emerged as a powerful new narrative, a concept through which age-old questions about the meaning of nature and even the nature of humanity are being revisited and radically revised. This Very Short Introduction explains the science behind the Anthropocene and the many proposals about when to mark its beginning: the nuclear tests of the 1950s? The beginnings of agriculture? The origins of humans as a species? Erle Ellis considers the many ways that the Anthropocene's "evolving paradigm" is reshaping the sciences, stimulating the humanities, and foregrounding the politics of life on a planet transformed by humans. The Anthropocene remains a work in progress. Is this the story of an unprecedented planetary disaster? Or of newfound wisdom and redemption? Ellis offers an insightful discussion of our role in shaping the planet, and how this will influence our future on many fronts. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Starting with an examination of how historians work, this "Very Short Introduction" aims to explore history in a general, pithy, and accessible manner, rather than to delve into specific periods.

Forensic science is a subject of wide fascination. What happens at a crime scene? How does DNA profiling work? How can it help solve crimes that happened 20 years ago? In forensic science, a criminal case can often hinge on a piece of evidence such as a hair, a blood trace, half a footprint, or a tyre mark. Complex scientific findings must be considered carefully and dispassionately, and communicated with clarity, simplicity, and precision. High profile cases such as the Stephen Lawrence enquiry and the Madeleine McCann case have attracted enormous media attention and enhanced general interest in this area in recent years. In this Very Short Introduction, Jim Fraser introduces the concept of forensic science and explains how it is used in the investigation of crime. He begins at the crime scene itself, explaining the principles and processes of crime scene management, and drawing on his own personal experience of high profile cases including, the murder of Rachel Nickell and the unsolved murder of Jill Dando. Fraser explores how forensic scientists work; from the reconstruction of events to laboratory examinations. He considers the techniques they use, such as fingerprinting, and goes on to highlight the immense impact DNA profiling has had. Providing examples from forensic science cases in the UK, US, and other countries, he considers the techniques and challenges faced around the world. This new edition has been fully updated to take into account developments in areas such as DNA analysis and drug analysis, and the growing field of digital forensics. Topical areas explored include the growing significance of cognitive bias in forensic science, and recent research that raises doubts about the validity of some forensic techniques. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Dictionaries: A Very Short Introduction

Circadian Rhythms: a Very Short Introduction

Evolution: a Very Short Introduction

The U.S. Supreme Court

Branding: a Very Short Introduction

We make choices all the time - about trivial matters, about how to spend our money, about how to spend our time, about what to do with our lives. And we are also constantly judging the decisions other people make as rational or irrational. But what kind of criteria are we applying when we say that a choice is rational? What guides our own choices, especially in cases where we don't have complete information about the outcomes? What strategies should be applied in making decisions which affect a lot of people, as in the case of government policy? This book explores what it means to be rational in all these contexts. It introduces ideas from economics, philosophy, and other areas, showing how the theory applies to decisions in everyday life, and to particular situations such as gambling and the allocation of resources. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

In this fascinating book, Harvard researcher Hobson offers an intriguing look at the nightly odyssey through the illusory world of dreams. Hobson describes how the theory of dreaming has advanced dramatically over the past 50 years, sparked by the use of EEGs in the 1950s and by recent innovations in brain imaging. 20 illustrations.

The eye is one of the most remarkable achievements of evolution, and has evolved up to 40 times in different parts of the animal kingdom. In humans, vision is the most important sense, and much of the brain is given over to the processing of visual information. In this Very Short Introduction, Michael Land describes the evolution of vision and the variety of eyes found in both humans and animals. He explores the evolution of colour vision in primates and the workings of the human eye, to consider how that contributes to our visual ability. He explains how we see in three dimensions and the basic principles of visual perception, including our impressive capacity for pattern recognition and the ability of vision to guide action. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

"Sleep is one of the most important but least understood aspects of our life, wellness, and longevity ... An explosion of scientific discoveries in the last twenty years has shed new light on this fundamental aspect of our lives. Now ... neuroscientist and sleep expert Matthew Walker gives us

a new understanding of the vital importance of sleep and dreaming"--Amazon.com.

Forensic Science: a Very Short Introduction

The Biological Clocks That Control the Daily Lives of Every Living Thing

Consciousness: A Very Short Introduction

This lively and accessible introduction to Plato focuses on the philosophy and argument of his writings, drawing the reader into Plato's way of doing philosophy, and the general themes of his thinking. This is not a book to leave the reader standing in the outer court of introduction and background information, but leads directly into Plato's argument. It looks at Plato as a thinker grappling with philosophical problems in a variety of ways, rather than a philosopher with a fully worked-out system. It includes a brief account of Plato's life and the various interpretations that have been drawn from the sparse remains of information. It stresses the importance of the founding of the Academy and the conception of philosophy as a subject. Julia Annas discusses Plato's style of writing: his use of the dialogue form, his use of what we today call fiction, and his philosophical transformation of myths. She also looks at his discussions of love and philosophy, his attitude to women, and to homosexual love, explores Plato's claim that virtue is sufficient for happiness, and touches on his arguments for the immortality of the soul and his ideas about the nature of the universe. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The earth's daily rotation affects just about every living creature. From dawn through to dusk, there are changes in light, temperature, humidity, and rainfall. However, these changes are regular, rhythmic and, therefore, predictable. Thus, the near 24 hour circadian rhythm is innate: a genetically programmed clock that essentially ticks of its own accord. This Very Short Introduction explains how organisms can "know" the time and reveals what we now understand of the nature and operation of chronobiological processes. Covering variables such as light, the metabolism, human health, and the seasons, Foster and Kreitzman illustrate how jet lag and shift work can impact on human well-being, and consider circadian rhythms alongside a wide range of disorders, from schizophrenia to obesity. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

Very Short Introductions: Brilliant, Sharp, Inspiring The Cold War dominated international life from the end of World War II to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. But how did the conflict begin? Why did it move from its initial origins in Postwar Europe to encompass virtually every corner of the globe? And why, after lasting so long, did the war end so suddenly and unexpectedly? Robert McMahon considers these questions and more, as well as looking at the legacy of the Cold War and its impact on international relations today. The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction is a truly international history, not just of the Soviet-American struggle at its heart, but also of the waves of decolonization, revolutionary nationalism, and state formation that swept the non-Western world in the wake of World War II. McMahon places the 'Hot Wars' that cost millions of lives in Korea, Vietnam, and elsewhere within the larger framework of global superpower competition. He shows how the United States and the Soviet Union both became empires over the course of the Cold War, and argues that perceived security needs and fears shaped U.S. and Soviet decisions from the beginning—far more, in fact, than did their economic and territorial ambitions. He unpacks how these needs and fears were conditioned by the divergent cultures, ideologies, and historical experiences of the two principal contestants and their allies. Covering the years 1945-1990, this second edition uses recent scholarship and newly available documents to offer a fuller analysis of the Vietnam War, the changing global politics of the 1970s, and the end of the Cold War. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.

The applications of Artificial Intelligence lie all around us; in our homes, schools and offices, in our cinemas, in art galleries and - not least - on the Internet. The results of Artificial Intelligence have been invaluable to biologists, psychologists, and linguists in helping to understand the processes of memory, learning, and language from a fresh angle. As a concept, Artificial Intelligence has fuelled and sharpened the philosophical debates concerning the nature of the mind, intelligence, and the uniqueness of human beings. In this Very Short Introduction , Margaret A. Boden reviews the philosophical and technological challenges raised by Artificial Intelligence, considering whether programs could ever be really intelligent, creative or even conscious, and shows how the pursuit of Artificial Intelligence has helped us to appreciate how human and animal minds are possible. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These pocket-sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable.