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The Boy Mechanic: 200 Classic Things To Build (Boy Mechanics Series)



Synopsis

It's vintage boyhood and a miscellany of marvelous ideas: from kites and toboggans to workbenches and birdhouses, this collection of projects from Popular Mechanics's issues of long ago captures all the appeal of American ingenuity at the start of the last century. With the rawest of materials, a minimum of technology, and a maximum of ingenuity, men and boys in the early 1900s dedicated themselves to crafting wonderful items, both practical and fanciful. It was a highly valued skill that revealed the measure of a man, and Popular Mechanics honored it and led the way in instructing these handy creators. Take a look back at those simpler, good old days; and at what we may have lost in our high-tech era; through these engaging projects, all published in the magazine during the first two decades of the 20th century. The range is simply amazing, and bound to appeal to woodworkers who love classic ideas. They include tools, like T-squares and sawhorses; an animal-proof gate latch and a birdhouse made from an old straw hat; household gadgets and handcrafted furniture; camping gear (including a screen door for a tent); and toys and games. And many of these appealing trellises, decoys, puzzles, and tents are quite doable today. Inveterate do-it-yourselfers will be astonished at the resourcefulness required to build a stove for a canoe and even a houseboat.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 1290L (What's this?)

Series: Boy Mechanics Series

Turtleback: 272 pages

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Product Dimensions: 7.3 x 5.2 x 0.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars See all reviews (21 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #128,435 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Children's Books > Activities, Crafts & Games > Crafts & Hobbies > Woodworking #145 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Home Improvement & Design > How-to & Home Improvements > Woodworking > Projects #431 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Boys & Men

Age Range: 9 and up

Grade Level: 4 and up

Customer Reviews

This is a wonderful look back into the pages of Popular Mechanics Magazine as it was in the early 1900s. It consists of reprints of how-to articles for boys. (Back then, girls just didn't read Popular Mechanics or get their hands dirty building furniture.) The striking thing is the difference between what was considered appropriate and realistic entertainment for kids then and what is now. For example, today a kid who wants to build a model train layout has an enormous range of often enormously expensive equipment from which to choose. Then, a kid would literally build the train layout; that is, he would wind the motor, machine the track, etc. I have mixed feelings about whether that was a better day for kids, but it sure was a different day, and this book is a look back to it.

I almost didn't get this book because of the negative reviews but then I saw it at the library and found it is a very good book for kids who like to build things. Sure it doesn't always give detailed plans (buy 5 #3 screws...) but they assume a kid who gets this book likes to tinker and try things and work some stuff out for himself. There are two kinds of pride in building things - one kind you get by following instructions to the letter and getting an exact replica of what the instructor has, the other is from using your ingenuity a bit and adding your own personal touch - figuring out how somebody else did something and making one of your own. That second is what users of this book will have if they do the projects in this book. It tells enough to get you started - an idea for a cool gadget like a hidden lock, so you can play around with that new idea and use it when you have a need. Personally I think the ideas in this book are wonderful and creative - from homemade boats to all the different types of camping shelters to the writing desks and secret hiding places. Lots of kids (and adults) would love this book!

I found a lot of interesting things in this book. I think it is a great reference for any parent that has boys and enjoys spending time with them with projects that capture their attention and curiosity.

4 stars: b/c the projects are fun, involved, and challenging
not 5 stars: b/c the projects are a bit too challenging for most, and many of the materials are not readily available
parents: be prepared to participate (wood cutting, glueing, etc.)
i ordered this for my oldest son (10 years of age) who is quite

crafty, and, though he is capable of some of the projects, the majority are beyond his skill level (read: age). I ordered the girl's version for my 6 & 8 year-old girls: mistake. The projects are too involved for them. They grew disinterested quickly.

Bought as a holiday gift for my dad, interesting and informative. I read it when I visit.

As a kid my dad gave me a Popular Mechanics compilation from the 30's. They had projects that were amazing and challenging. My dad and I did a ball building stuff out of this old book. This is the same sort of book.

This is a great book for any boy! It's got great projects, most of which you can do together as a family or just for some time with dad. Recommend it to anyone with a boy!

I like this book because it turns back the clock to a different time and also gives a lot of interesting projects for those interested in building things. This is one of my favorite books.

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