

DUMMIES BOOKS

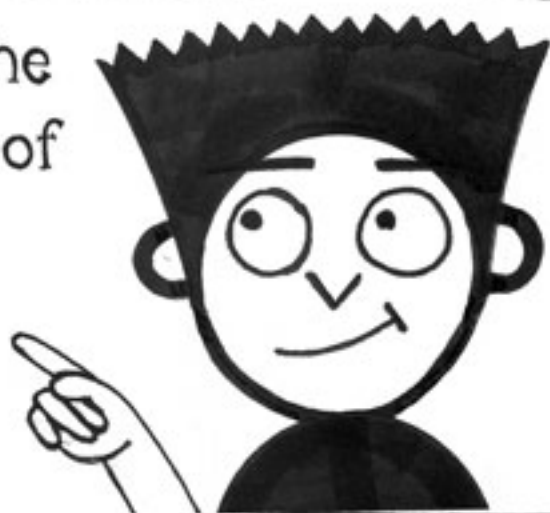
for

DUMMIES

**The Guide
to the Guides**

FOR the
REST of
US.

Featuring an
Expert Writer:
Andrew Hudgins



(binding this side)

Andrew Hudgins

DUMMIES BOOKS FOR DUMMIES

Cover:

Dummies Books for Dummies. The Guide to the Guides for the Rest of Us.

Place this book flat on a table, title side up, and spin it around until you can read the title. If your neck is painful or uncomfortable, try spinning the book around a little more. Or a little less. Experiment until you are comfortable.

The binding of the book should be on your left. Lift the cover as if you were opening a door and the binding is the hinge. Do not be alarmed if the binding makes a cracking noise. Some people might experience it as a “crunch” or a “snap.” This sound is natural and does not indicate that the book is defective or that it will not function.

It may be necessary to hold the book open as you read. If you own the book, it is acceptable to break the binding, so the book will lie flat without your having to force it into that position. To effect a broken binding (or “spine,” as it is sometime called), bring the two covers sharply together behind the spine, as if you were snapping the wings off a pigeon. You may want to do this when you are alone as many observers are troubled at the sound of a spine being snapped. Think of it as a “fingernails on a chalkboard” effect. Some people are bothered by the sound; others quite enjoy breaking the spines of books, as well as those of pigeons and other creatures with fragile bone structures.

As the cover is full of writing, you must now turn to the inside of the front cover for further instructions. The inside of the front cover is the back of the cover. Not the back of the entire book, but the back of the single hard-covered “page” you are now reading.

Inside Cover:

Proceed to page one of your *Reading Dummies Books for Dummies* book. To do so, you will leaf past various unnumbered pages: the so-called Title page, Acknowledgements page, Copyright page, and the Table of Contents. These contain technical information that enables your book to operate properly. They need not concern you unless at some time in the future you

wish to pursue specialized training. Even then, only the most advanced “readers” will need to decipher the data encoded on these pages.

Look for the number one (“1”) in the lower left-hand corner. It is usually four or five pages into the book. Do not be surprised or alarmed if you do not find page one (“1”) until page eight or nine by actual count. **It is confusing, but that is the way the book industry works, and there is nothing we can do about it.** Sometimes the number is in the upper right-hand corner. To confuse matters even more, some books do not put a one (“1”) on page one. If you find your self on page two (“2”), go back one page and you will most likely be on page one (“ ”).

Tip for more advanced readers: Though the location of the numbers varies, they are generally in the same place on each book. For instance, if the book has the number one in the upper right hand corner, all subsequent numbers (2, 3, 4, and so on) will also be in the upper right-hand corner.

Back Cover:

Turn this entire book over. The entire book. Not just the back cover. Do not spin the book around. Flip it over. Like a pancake. Follow the instructions printed on the front cover.

Page one:

You might want now to open the specific Dummies book that you have acquired, whether that is *Dogs for Dummies*, *God for Dummies*, *Self-Piercing for Dummies* or another title in the ever-expanding series that follows our proprietary system. Follow the same procedure outlined above for opening that book as you did this one. The two books should be lying side by side on the table in front of you. Remember that unlike this book, your specific Dummy book is not for absolute beginners, despite what its title says. It is not covered with a plastic laminate, as this book is, to protect it from unwashed hands, runny noses, drool, or any other soiling that might blur the letters and render them unreadable. These pages may be cleaned with a damp cloth and mild detergent. Practice reading them until they are as clean after a day of reading as they are when you begin. When you can do that consistently, you are ready to move on to the unprotected pages of our regular Dummies books.

FOLD HERE

Tip: Check the backs of pages:

As you turn each page, do not just look at the new page that is revealed underneath. Very often there is writing *on the back of the page* you have just turned. If you neglect to read it, you might very well overlook essential information and procedures.

Page two:

Turn page, read it. Turn page, read it. With time and practice the action will become such an integral part of your “muscle memory” that, like all great athletes, you will do it instinctively. Some readers report that they turn pages without thinking about it at all. That is a moment of oneness with the work that we can all aspire to. But for now, stick to the discipline of turning a page, reading it, then turning the next page and reading it. The methodical approach will serve you better than reading around randomly, which can lead to skipping important pages as well as to pointless re-reading. If you are having trouble mastering the practice, you might try counting along with the numbers on each page. (You may find it worthwhile to refer to *Counting for Dummies*.)

But remember: the numbers are like training wheels on a bike. They are useful when you are a beginner, but you will need to discard them to employ the bike to its fullest potential. With practice, soon you will be flipping from page to page as effortlessly as riding a bike around the block. If you can't ride a bike, please purchase *Bicycling for Dummies*. *Metaphors for Dummies* is also a helpful book, especially the chapter titled “Metaphors Have Limits.”

Before you know it, you too can be reading the words that every reader yearns for through hour after hour of arduous reading: “the end.”

Tip: Use Bookmarks.

Bookmarks are, as the name implies, useful to mark your place in the book any time you have to stop reading and want to return later to the place where you left off. Specific tools for bookmarking are for sale at nominal cost, or even free, at local bookstores, though free bookmarks tend to contain advertising. Those made of plastic or, at a higher price point, metal are very long lasting and can be moved from book to book for quite a long time before wearing out.

Page Three:

If you follow these simple procedures, the entire world of Dummies will soon be an open book to you! Literally! We can direct you through every field of human endeavor from human spirituality to common household plumbing and hairdressing. Why pay a spiritual advisor, plumber, or hairdresser—or travel agent to arrange a cruise or a realtor to buy a timeshare condo in Belize—when you can have the satisfaction of performing these simple actions for yourself?

Final Tips: Avoid Paper Cuts

The pain of paper cuts has been exaggerated in the media and by popular mythology. Still, it is worthwhile to avoid running your fingers down the edge of the pages as you turn them so they will not act as a blade and slice your finger. Though it is wise to be careful, it must be understood that paper cuts are very rare and, when they do occur, usually mild. Paper cuts are not a reasonable excuse to shy away from reading. The few people who died from paper cuts were almost all victims of secondary infections caused by older, unsanitary books that had not been properly maintained. All *Dummies* books have been tended by

highly trained bookstore personnel.

Dog-earing

Dog-earing is the turning over the top corner (or more rarely, the bottom corner) of a page to mark one's spot, so that the corner resembles to some extent the ear of a dog. Not a dog with erect ears like a German Shepherd, Corgi, or Doberman Pinscher, but the flopped-over ears of a Rottweiler, beagle, or most mutts. Border Collies are good examples of dogs that sometime have dog-eared dog ears and sometimes don't. For pictures, consult *Dog Ears for Dummies*. Dog-earing not only permanently damages the structure of the paper, it makes the page look sad. German Shepherds look proud and alert when their ears are erect, but sad when they are



flopped over. For pictures and a more thorough discussion of the issues involved in the shape of dogs' ears, consult my *German Shepherds for Dummies*. The accompanying CD will also help you distinguish the barks of various breeds so you too can develop "dog ears."

Index

You should have stopped at "The End." But now that you are here, you need to know that you are at the Index, which is a list of words in alphabetical order, followed by page numbers. If you have not arrived at the Index by skipping ahead, you have already read everything that the index refers you to, so it is of no importance. When the book says "The End," trust it and stop there. Or consult *Closure for Dummies*.

Closure for Dummies is a resource that should not be overlooked.