



A Guide to the Elements

Albert Stwertka

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Newly updated throughout, and now covering 118 elements, this crystal-clear guide to the periodic table illuminates the basic concepts of chemistry as it traces the history and development of our knowledge of the material world.

In this fascinating volume, Albert Stwertka makes complex ideas and terms easily understandable, drawing upon engaging historical anecdotes and everyday examples to clarify the text, which is complemented by numerous illustrations, many in full color. Since the second edition, many new elements have been named and discovered, including Darmstadtium, Roentgenium, and Copernicium, and the elements currently called Ununtrium, Ununpentium, Ununhexium, Ununseptium, and Ununoctium. The third edition provides thorough coverage of all these new discoveries. In addition to the new elements, Stwertka has brought the information about the elements in the second edition up-to-date, based on the latest research. He discusses a cylindrical molecule of carbon known as a "nanotube," which has become a do-all wonder substance, touted for use in everything from X-ray machines to paint. A new form of the element boron has been found that is nearly as hard as diamond. Its superior heat resistance could make it attractive for certain industrial uses. And a new particle detector using ultra-pure liquid xenon has been constructed beneath 5,000 feet of rock in Italy to detect dark matter. Stwertka also covers the 2010 Nobel-winning work on graphene, an ultrathin form of carbon that is vital for future generations of computers and touch screens, the discovery of new superconductors, and the development of new uses for the rare earth elements.

Bringing the periodic table into the 21st century, this engrossing guide to the elements will fascinate everyone curious about the basic building blocks of the material world.

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