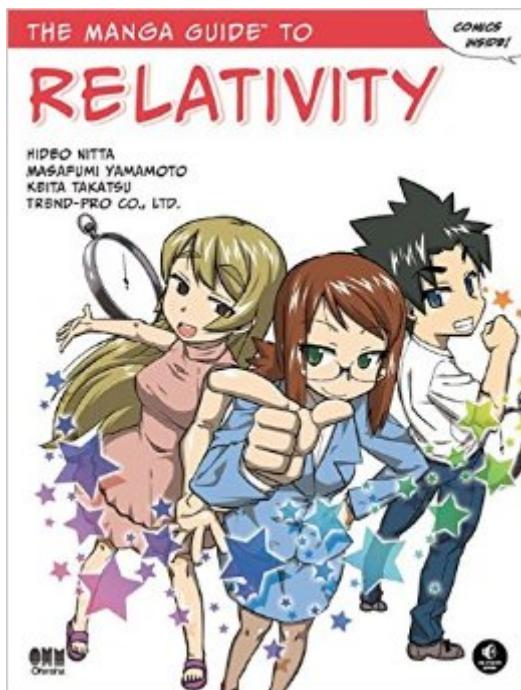


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# The Manga Guide To Relativity



## Synopsis

Everything's gone screwy at Tagai Academy. When the headmaster forces Minagi's entire class to study Einstein's theory of relativity over summer school, Minagi volunteers to go in their place. There's just one problem: He's never even heard of relativity before! Luckily, Minagi has the plucky Miss Uraga to teach him. Follow along with *The Manga Guide to Relativity* as Minagi learns about the non-intuitive laws that shape our universe. Before you know it, you'll master difficult concepts like inertial frames of reference, unified spacetime, and the equivalence principle. You'll see how relativity affects modern astronomy and discover why GPS systems and other everyday technologies depend on Einstein's extraordinary discovery. *The Manga Guide to Relativity* also teaches you how to:

- Understand and use  $E = mc^2$ , the world's most famous equation
- Calculate the effects of time dilation using the Pythagorean theorem
- Understand classic thought experiments like the Twin Paradox, and see why length contracts and mass increases at relativistic speeds
- Grasp the underpinnings of Einstein's special and general theories of relativity

If the idea of bending space and time really warps your brain, let *The Manga Guide to Relativity* straighten things out.

## Book Information

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: No Starch Press; 1 edition (April 25, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1593272723

ISBN-13: 978-1593272722

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.5 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (18 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #732,490 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #43 in Books > Comics & Graphic Novels > Manga > Educational & Nonfiction #103 in Books > Science & Math > Physics > Gravity #314 in Books > Science & Math > Physics > Relativity

Age Range: 9 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

First off, let me set the expectation here. I'm a software tester by trade. I'm fan of science (as opposed to being a scientist). I'm also a huge fan of Japanese animation, which is commonly referred to in America as "Anime" in its video format, and "manga" in its illustrated paper format. In

short, yes, I'm a grown man who enjoys comic books and I have absolutely no shame in saying that whatsoever ;). Anime and manga is used to reach many audiences in Japan; it's not just geared towards kids. Stories range from the fanciful to the dark and gritty. In between, every conceivable topic and interest is covered and illustrated in a way that grabs attention, entertains, and helps inform the readers on an emotional level. This combination of storytelling, emotion, quirky characters and an illustration style that's both cute and engaging helps lend it to the idea that "hard topics" can be discussed using manga, and that the topic will be much more engaging for the reader. "The Manga Guide to..." series is an example of this, and covers a broad variety of interesting, difficult and sometimes downright geeky topics. In some ways, "The Manga Guide to..." series can be seen as being on par with "Standard Deviants". The most recent title, "The Manga Guide to Relativity" (written by Hideo Nitta, Masafumi Yamamoto and Keita Takatsu) uses the classic story techniques common to most fans of manga; student body president Ruka Minagi takes on a challenge from Rase Iyaga, the sadistic and capricious school headmaster (who also has a penchant towards androgyny, but hey, for anyone with more than a passing familiarity with Manga titles, this is par for the course) to write a report about relativity, thus sparing the rest of the class from having to do it over summer break.

The Manga Guide to Relativity follows the actions of a high school class president who steps in to save the rest of the students at the school who were being threatened by the school headmaster with a punishment for their lack of scholastic success. To save them, the brave student leader agrees to take a special summer course on relativity and write a report for the headmaster. The student doesn't know what relativity is, but a kind and attractive teacher volunteers to teach him all about it. The story line is okay, but not as good as some of the other stories in the series. However, it still succeeds in its main task of easing the reader into the topic. The book covers all the main questions and topics you would expect such as the definition of relativity, the Urashima Effect (where time slows down as speed approaches the speed of light), mass and the contraction of length (again, as speed approaches the speed of light), and the difference between Special Relativity and General Relativity. Each chapter contains a manga section with an introduction to and discussion of the topic. This is followed in each chapter by a more detailed and technical section filled with equations and deeper explorations of the chapter's subject. I've studied physics, and although I am rusty, I believe the book is accurate and it is quite clear. The story created to assist with that presentation is kind of silly, but does fulfill its mission of making a difficult topic a bit more approachable and the science communicated in both the manga and the technical sections is clear.

and well expressed. My kids are too young to really understand all of the details of the topics covered in this series, but they continue to read the books with great interest.

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