



The Universal Computer: The Road from Leibniz to Turing

Martin Davis

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The breathtakingly rapid pace of change in computing makes it easy to overlook the pioneers who began it all. Written by Martin Davis, respected logician and researcher in the theory of computation, **The Universal Computer: The Road from Leibniz to Turing** explores the fascinating lives, ideas, and discoveries of seven remarkable mathematicians. It tells the stories of the unsung heroes of the computer age – the logicians.

The story begins with Leibniz in the 17th century and then focuses on Boole, Frege, Cantor, Hilbert, and Gödel, before turning to Turing. Turing's analysis of algorithmic processes led to a single, all-purpose machine that could be programmed to carry out such processes—the computer. Davis describes how this incredible group, with lives as extraordinary as their accomplishments, grappled with logical reasoning and its mechanization. By investigating their achievements and failures, he shows how these pioneers paved the way for modern computing.

Bringing the material up to date, in this revised edition Davis discusses the success of the IBM Watson on *Jeopardy*, reorganizes the information on incompleteness, and adds information on Konrad Zuse. A distinguished prize-winning logician, Martin Davis has had a career of more than six decades devoted to the important interface between logic and computer science. His expertise, combined with his genuine love of the subject and excellent storytelling, make him the perfect person to tell this story.

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