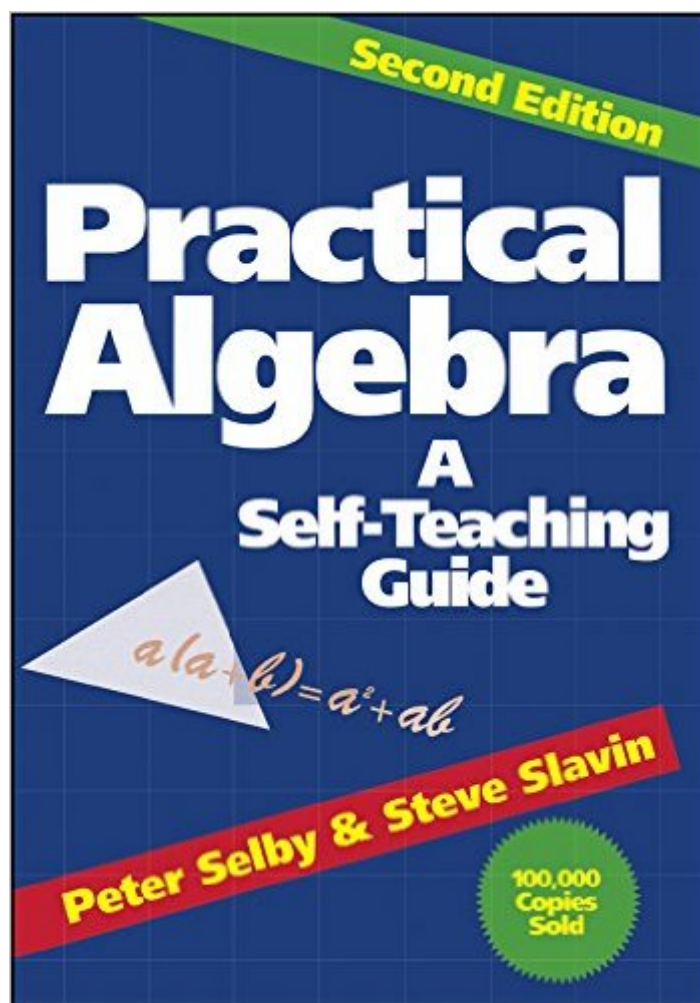


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# Practical Algebra: A Self-Teaching Guide, Second Edition



## Synopsis

**Practical Algebra** If you studied algebra years ago and now need a refresher course in order to use algebraic principles on the job, or if you're a student who needs an introduction to the subject, here's the perfect book for you. **Practical Algebra** is an easy and fun-to-use workout program that quickly puts you in command of all the basic concepts and tools of algebra. With the aid of practical, real-life examples and applications, you'll learn:

- \* The basic approach and application of algebra to problem solving
- \* The number system (in a much broader way than you have known it from arithmetic)
- \* Monomials and polynomials; factoring algebraic expressions; how to handle algebraic fractions; exponents, roots, and radicals; linear and fractional equations
- \* Functions and graphs; quadratic equations; inequalities; ratio, proportion, and variation; how to solve word problems, and more

Authors Peter Selby and Steve Slavin emphasize practical algebra throughout by providing you with techniques for solving problems in a wide range of disciplines--from engineering, biology, chemistry, and the physical sciences, to psychology and even sociology and business administration. Step by step, **Practical Algebra** shows you how to solve algebraic problems in each of these areas, then allows you to tackle similar problems on your own, at your own pace. Self-tests are provided at the end of each chapter so you can measure your mastery.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I'd certainly award them to Mr. Selby and Dr. Slavin's book. I'm not finished with the text, but I'm learning so well that I KNOW I will have mastered the material. In fact, I just ordered the book which they recommend as a follow-up, "Geometry and Trigonometry for Calculus." They start out with

baby steps -- literally simple addition and subtraction, and work up to fairly sophisticated algebraic expressions and problems. The student finds himself enjoying the material almost like it were a novel. Selby and Slavin give immediate answers for ALL the problems, so there's no frustration wondering if the problem is solved correctly. If the student misses a certain number of problems in a set, the authors recommend review of specific "frames" which cover the material. They treat the student with respect, making it clear that NO ONE (least of all someone who is motivated to study through their text) is a dummy. This is so much easier than trying to keep up with a math teacher who scribbles and then erases the material on a blackboard about as fast as he/she can write. I now know that self-paced learning is the way to go, at least for me. Many years ago, I failed calculus in college, and barely squeaked through college algebra and trigonometry. I fully intend to use this framework as a basis to repeat the course (even if via correspondence) and get this only blotch on an otherwise fine college career off my record. How sad that Mr. Selby has passed on, but how great it is that his books live still.

If you have been away from Algebra for a while or even if you have just started learning Algebra this book is for you. The authors have done a truly masterful job of explaining the basic concepts of Algebra. But more than that, the book has frequent tests and exercises which will help you to see if you are truly learning the stuff. Another great feature is that things are presented in a succinct and cogent manner. There is no patronizing prose or cute stories to bore you. One thing I recommend strongly. Get well versed with chapters 2 through 4. These are the "nail and hammer" chapters in the book. Techniques like factoring, exponent manipulations, and simplification are explained. If you do not get these techniques nailed down you will be hounded with difficulties in later chapters. I re-read the chapters 3 times as well as worked the problems. I also recommend that as you go along begin solving pertinent problems from "REA'S Algebra & Trigonometry Problem Solver". This may take some time but your efforts will be well rewarded. I highly recommend this text for anyone learning Algebra. But specially if you are like myself, just "doing" Algebra after a long hiatus, grab this book. A must have !

This book is the greatest thing since sliced bread. I am getting ready to start college, and I wanted to major in theoretical physics but all I had ever taken was basic math through school. This book helped me learn more in one week than a high school teacher could in a month. If you want to learn algebra, and are good in arithmetic buy this book and see for yourself.

This book helped me re-learn my algebra skills after 9 years, for a college placement test. I passed!!! I strongly recommend this book as a valuable tool to study algebra.

I recently had to get back into Math. I was not anxious since it had been about 10 years since I had to practice and test myself on Math. I asked my College Counselor (College of Marin) who recommended your book "Practical Algebra: A Self Teaching Guide". I was afraid!! But once I got into the book, from Page 1, I felt comfortable. I felt as if the instructor was there with me, supporting me and teaching me all at once. I felt completely at ease with the structure, the pace and the questions. Thank you so much for allowing my return to Math be so painless.

This book, together with Algebra Unplugged, has bolstered my confidence, as I return to school after many years, for my MBA. Not having taken a math class in 30 years, my skills were beyond rusty. Algebra Unplugged is a light-hearted look at algebra concepts and was a great start, but I needed a book that would give me sample problems to work on and this book fit the bill. I'm nearly done with it and feel just about ready to tackle the math challenges ahead of me. (But first, I need to re-learn more advanced material, like Trig, before I hit the Calculus for Managers class.)

For a book to be a good self teaching device it needs to:1.) Be clearly written2.) Provide copious and abundant examples/questions3.) Leave nothing to assumptionThis book is clearly written. Provides a minimal amount of examples and questions. And leaves much to be assumed.Having read the book I can easily see why it is well rated as the format and style is quite approachable. To an extent this is a problem when combined with the shallowness of the examples and test questions in the book, as this can lead to a false confidence. There is very little in the way of converse examples, and the examples to be found are about as basic as they can get. So as you're reading this book you're constantly making assumptions and if your assumptions are wrong there are not enough examples to know any better.I constantly found myself going online seeking clarity. And After finishing the book I did not feel confident in the subject and got another book. If you're looking for a good book on algebra pick up a Elementary Algebra with Applications by Wesner and Nustad; it covers the same range of material as this book, yet fills in all the holes.

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