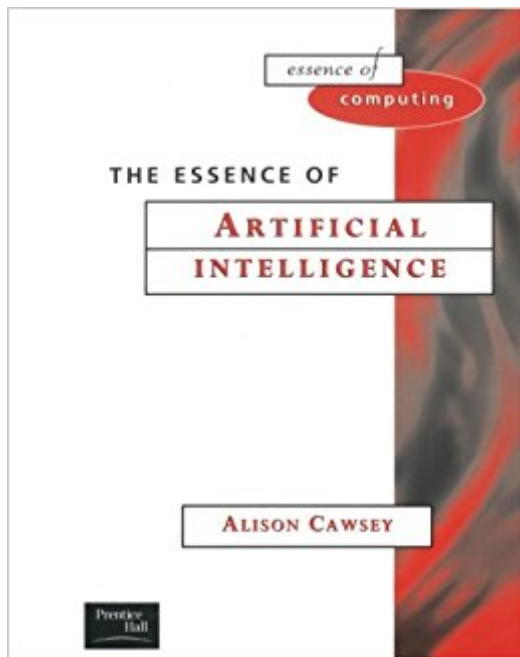


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# The Essence Of Artificial Intelligence



## Synopsis

The Prentice Hall Essence of Computing Series provides a concise, practical and uniform introduction to the core components of an undergraduate computer science degree. Acknowledging the recent changes within Higher Education, this approach uses a variety of pedagogical tools - case studies, worked examples and self-test questions, to underpin the student's learning. The Essence of Artificial Intelligence provides a concise and accessible introduction to the topic for students with no prior knowledge of AI. Taking a pragmatic approach to the subject, this book de-mystifies and makes AI concrete and transparent. Examples and Algorithms are given throughout and can be sensibly implemented in a range of different languages. Offering a less formal/mathematical treatment of the subject than many of its competitors, The Essence of AI provides an overview of all the key subjects covered in one semester.

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## Customer Reviews

The Prentice Hall Essence of Computing Series provides a concise, practical and uniform introduction to the core components of an undergraduate computer science degree. Acknowledging the recent changes within Higher Education, this approach uses a variety of pedagogical tools - case studies, worked examples and self-test questions, to underpin the student's learning. The Essence of Artificial Intelligence provides a concise and accessible introduction to the topic for students with no prior knowledge of AI. Taking a pragmatic approach to the subject, this book de-mystifies and makes AI concrete and transparent. Examples and Algorithms are given

throughout and can be sensibly implemented in a range of different languages. Offering a less formal/mathematical treatment of the subject than many of its competitors, *The Essence of AI* provides an overview of all the key subjects covered in one semester.

**Target Reader:** If you don't know anything about AI and are looking to understand how the problem space has traditionally be divided this is a good book to start with. After reading this book you'll have a feeling for the major problems and the vocabulary associated with their solutions. If you have any formal AI background you should skip this book.

**Anecdotal Description:** I would say this book is clearly rooted in the pre AI winter era with a major slant towards strong AI. It is largely silent on the recent big data weak AI machine learning movement. (If that is meaningful to you I'd look at a different book.)

**Next Steps / Alternatives:** If you accept my premise about the books contents I'd suggest considering three additional or alternative books.

- *Introduction to Artificial Intelligence: Second, Enlarged Edition* is similar but in much greater depth for those who are primarily interested in the computer science angle to AI.
- *Artificial Intelligence: A Philosophical Introduction* is also a "kick back and flip pages" style book for those more interested in the philosophical angle on AI.
- For those interested in the cognitive science angle I'm less confident on a recommendation but I've heard good things about *The Emotion Machine: Commonsense Thinking, Artificial Intelligence, and the Future of the Human Mind*

**More Advanced Books:**

- *Paradigms of Artificial Intelligence Programming: Case Studies in Common Lisp* Pure gold for those interested in actually building strong AI and anyone interested in Lisp.
- *Artificial Intelligence: A Modern Approach (3rd Edition)* A recently updated classic, deserving of its status as the gold standard but a tedious textbook read.
- *Artificial General Intelligence (Cognitive Technologies)* (Full disclosure I'm reading this one now so this is an incomplete opinion...) This is really the odd man out and belongs somewhere between these two lists. Unlike Norvig's book and like those on the first list read this book leaning back and flipping the pages. That said it is a good bit more advanced than anything on the top list. It is very current and a great refresh on the fundamentals for those with some background.

**Bottom Line:** If you are totally new to AI and looking for a quick place to start I'd recommend this book.

Very basic introduction to AI. Focuses mostly on supervised algorithms.

This is a wonderfully compact introduction to the basic concepts of Artificial Intelligence. You probably aren't going to be able to go and write your own AI after reading this but at least you'll have

enough background to read a more detailed text and some of the scientific literature out there. If you've picked up other AI books and felt lost then start here, you won't regret it.

This book is a great starting point for studying Artificial Intelligence. For those with a Computer Science background, the book is a quick read that will show how theories such as data structures and search algorithms apply to the different areas of AI. For those without a background in computers, the book will take longer to read and for deeper understanding of some subjects other texts may need to be consulted. However, it is still one of the easiest-to-understand books on AI as most are extremely lengthy and detailed beyond the scope of what most beginners are able to understand. The book is well written and explains complicated topics in plain English. Figures are used effectively to explain certain concepts. An extremely helpful feature is that every chapter is summarized and further references on that topic are given with a short description of the strength and weaknesses of each reference. I would definitely recommend this book to those who want to learn about AI. It's a great starting point that can lead you in the right direction if you want to study a particular topic in further detail.

This is a very readable introductory text. Its coverage of topics is surprisingly good for such a slender volume. I especially liked the chapter on searching--the examples are very clear.

This book is a fine introductory text on AI. It covers all major subjects in the field and it is very clear and elaborates on the problems in a very direct and simple manner. If you are looking for an introductory text, then you found it by now.

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