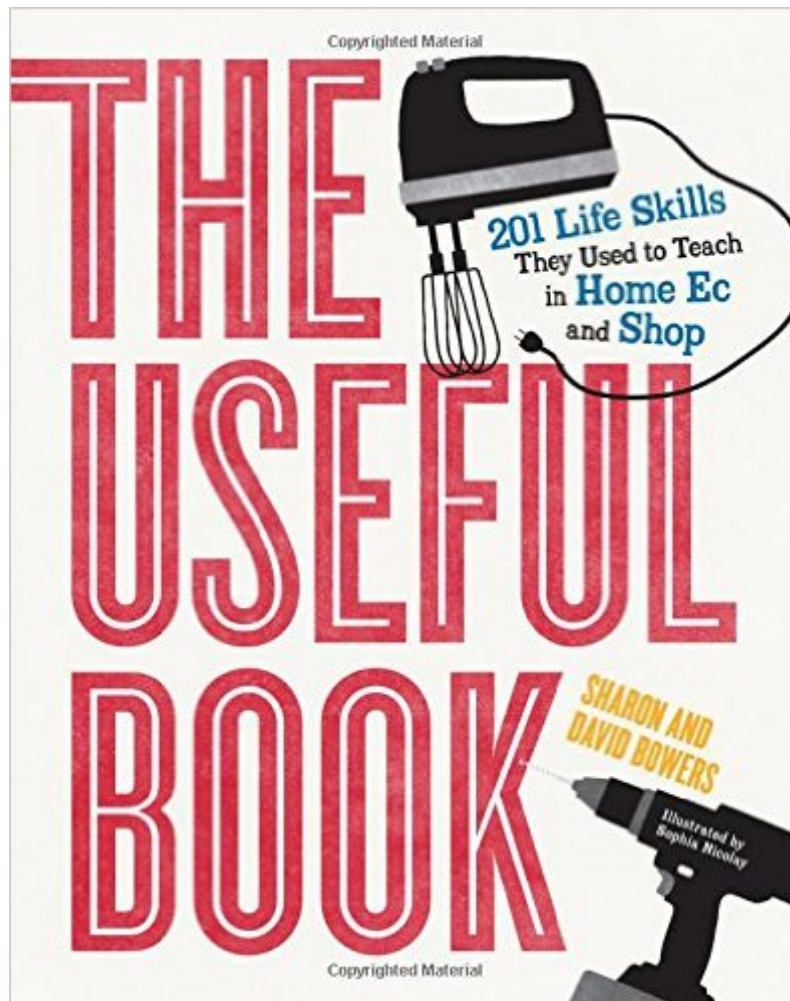


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# The Useful Book: 201 Life Skills They Used To Teach In Home Ec And Shop



## Synopsis

A modern and energetically designed encyclopedia of DIY with everything you need to know to roll up your sleeves and cook it, build it, sew it, clean it, or repair it yourself. In other words, everything you would have learned from your shop and home ec teachers, if you'd had them. The Useful Book features 138 practical projects and how-tos, with step-by-step instructions and illustrations, relevant charts, sidebars, lists, and handy toolboxes. There's a kitchen crash course, including the must-haves for a well-stocked pantry; how to boil an egg (and peel it frustration-free); how to grill, steam, sauté, and roast vegetables. There's Sewing 101, plus how to fold a fitted sheet, tie a tie, mop a floor, make a bed, and set the table for a formal dinner. Next up: a 21st-century shop class. The tools that everyone should have, and dozens of cool projects that teach fundamental techniques. Practice measuring, cutting, and nailing by building a birdhouse. Make a bookshelf or a riveted metal picture frame. Plus: do-it-yourself plumbing; car repair basics; and home maintenance, from priming and painting to refinishing wood floors.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

People know me as ScrappyMags "a DIY expert. I can refinish a table faster than a speeding bullet. I can wood fill and repair dog-eaten furniture legs in a single bound. But I will confess something embarrassing: My name is Maggie and I am a self-proclaimed moron when it comes to

many home-ec topics (Hello Maggie!). Case in point: I've called my mother no less than 10 times in the past year or so to remind me how to hard-boil eggs. Every. Single. Time. My mom? Knows EVERYTHING! However, something sad occurred to me " I won't always have mom. :( And darn it I'm an independent woman (Destiny's Child strong!) so I should be able to complete these simple tasks sans help. There's some mysterious reason my pea-sized brain isn't retaining this information (I blame Twitter and the Kardashian garbage stuck in there, kinda like the same phenomenon that allows me to remember every line from Ferris Bueller's Day Off). The table of contents in The Useful Book is genius and easy to follow based on general topics (Cooking, Sewing, Domestic Repair, Woodworking, etc.) so it's easy to find what you're searching for and hold any and every thing I can possibly think of that a person would need in her home. Then, each section begins with helpful hints, i.e. the ubiquitous "how to" monikers, from boiling water to washing laundry to performing more advanced mechanical repairs. The cooking section includes a list of kitchen staples and a description of different pots/pans, etc. Trust me, I didn't know what a Dutch oven was until I was almost 40, so this can be incredibly helpful to laymen, and fellow self-proclaimed morons like me. This book is a MUST BUY for:

1. Those moving into their first place after college or high school. Trust me parents, you will save TONS of phone calls and random texts messages!
2. Divorcees or widows/widowers who find themselves cooking, taking care of everything for the first time in a long time.
3. Retirees. When my parents retired, it was a massive adjustment, particularly as they come from a generation where women did most of the household chores. But as my mom had to define to my dad, she didn't retire to sit home and wait him (you go girl). Dad had to learn the performance of some simple tasks around the house to help out. Curmudgeon is a word that comes to mind. However, he now has jobs and it's good for him. He adjusted.
4. Anyone living solo or with a mate who doesn't have a handy bone in his/her body. I live solo " this book can be a lifesaver (and money saver) as it shows many simple activities that CAN be completely, easily and with clear directions. Being non-spatially minded, I COMPLETELY applaud this book's efforts. I see many wrench-clutching happy dances in my living room in the near future.
5. Those who secretly think they know everything but don't and no longer should have to fake it (err, I think we call this "husbands"). Take the "duh" out of "duh-know-how" and buy this book. Save yourselves. Save a loved one. Save your furniture and plumbing from a husband who refuses to read instructions. Save the power level on your phone and useless text messages that cause thumb pain. Now I have to leave as I have a bathtub to caulk, and thankfully a book that explains,

simply (THANK YOU), how to do it. Thanks to NetGalley and Workman Publishing for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.

The title certainly says it all. A practical, straight-to-the-point guide to doing just about everything, from fixing things around the house, car repair/maintenance, and even fun hobbies to do on your own or with kids. This book is full of clear instructions on important skills to know that are quickly (and unfortunately) becoming obsolete. The woodworking and metalworking section includes a nicely curated collection of 'how-to-build' items ranging from the timeless classics (e.g., creating a doghouse or a chessboard) to the practical and fun (e.g., picture frame, earrings and even a spoon ring). The fun facts and historical tid-bits dispersed throughout the book added a nice touch, serving both as interesting information and useful facts about an item, such as when the spoon ring came into popularity (I personally had never heard of these, so I found it exceptionally useful). This book is perfect for parents, new college students or anyone who simply wants to know how to get things done in the most practical way.

Let's face it... for a couple of generations now learning certain skills just hasn't been made a priority here in the US. We thrive on the convenience of paying others to bake and cook, sew and build, clean and repair. Awesome for those who have those skills but shouldn't everyone be able to sew a button or boil an egg? Thanks to my great-grandparents, grandparents, and parents as well as family friends, aunts and uncles, I learned a lot of the basics in this book like making a bed and basic sewing but there were other skills that no one saw fit to teach me because I was a girl. So I snapped a review copy of this book and spent many nights pouring over it discovering things old and new presented in ways that made sense, ways that I could apply without needing any more knowledge than what was provided within. Many are basics, some are a little more advanced, but all were things I was ecstatic to have learned to do... or at least, have accessible in one place when I needed them. If you're looking for a fantastic book for a curious tween or teen I would have devoured this enthusiastically at that stage. I think it's an amazing resource to give a new graduate or someone moving into their first apartment/house. Newlyweds. Friend who swears she burns water. Teen who just got their first car. Pretty much anyone and everyone can learn something here and I can't wait to pick up a hardcopy for those times when I really, really don't want to ask my husband to do it or call my father-in-law to ask how something is done. Two very big thumbs up! Notes: ARC received via NetGalley.

Some parts of this book is really basic, but very interesting at the same time. I think it would be the perfect book to give to your son or daughter when they first move out. I know most young people are pretty knowledgeable these days compared to my era. They can also find lots of answer for things on the internet, but not as well as in this book. It has tips on budget planning, buying food, why we put salt to boiling water (it's not only to season things). For me, some of the things were very new, such as some of the easy plumbing fixes, bike maintenance. All stuff that does not come under my personal knowledge base, and most people will be like me, not all knowing. Not sure about electrical things, for me best left to a professional. I think in all honesty, this book would be of value to a lot of people, easy to understand and well illustrated. This book was provided to me in return for an honest and unbiased review

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