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The Intentional Spinner



Synopsis

Offering a blend of technical knowledge, history, and easy-to-use tips, this inspiring collection of spinning wisdom deftly explores the three fundamental areas of yarn production: understanding fibers, managing yarn structure, and making yarns that precisely meet the spinner's needs. The rich, historic traditions of plant and animal fibers are fascinatingly juxtaposed with recent advances in synthesized fiber and mankind's use of fibers in the past, present, and future, while detailed, image-laden instructions for four intermediate projects demonstrate the range of possibilities, from sturdy, plied yarns to playful, novelty yarns. Spinners are also offered guidance on planning a project from start to finish, as well as how to care for and store completed projects.

Book Information

Paperback: 152 pages

Publisher: Interweave; First Edition edition (December 1, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1596680806

ISBN-13: 978-1596680807

Product Dimensions: 8.8 x 8.4 x 0.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (27 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #497,320 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #35 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Crafts & Hobbies > Needlecrafts & Textile Crafts > Spinning](#) #203 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Crafts & Hobbies > Needlecrafts & Textile Crafts > Weaving](#) #643 in [Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Crafts & Hobbies > Needlecrafts & Textile Crafts > Needlework](#)

Customer Reviews

This is the second book by Judith MacKenzie McCuin. The first being, "Teach Yourself Visually Handspinning". The first book was a good overall introduction with many techniques that are touched on but was not intended to be an in depth study of spinning and fit the format of the Teach Yourself Series. With this new book the author's own voice is on every page and her hands are in the photos. This is a month long workshop in book form and not to be missed for new and advanced spinners alike. Sometimes one idea or photo is worth the price of admission and with this book there is something on every page that makes the book a worthwhile purchase. As from the title, Intentional Spinner, the information in this book seems designed to allow you to start from the raw fiber and to produce the yarn that you need for the project you desire to make. I have quite a few spinning books

on my shelves that are good books but too dense to get a good reading. This format is open and easily accessible for quick reference and later study. Many tools for spinning are shown and discussed. Fiber types and history are covered and the types of spinning used on each fiber is included. There is a wonderful chart on woolen vs worsted spinning that clarifies the characteristics of each type. I would like it engraved on my wheel! This may not be the last word on spinning but it is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in the use of fibers and using fiber for many purposes, from spinning to knitting to weaving. Anyone who is interested in how fiber is processed to become so integral in our daily lives will enjoy this book.

This book does a great job of taking the next step from the many beginning spinner books out there. She clearly addresses the technical/mechanical aspects of spinning and helped me understand how to step back from the "intuitive" yarn I've been making (which is pretty good yarn) and pay attention to the details so I can repeat my successes. A lot of the information she provided on fibers is excellent and the details there answered several questions I had. She has raised a storm in the spinning community with the sideways drum carding idea... but that is NOT addressed in this book.

This book will save you airfare and hotel costs. It discusses everything she teaches in her classes. You have to read it slowly and carefully because it is so packed with information. I don't recommend reading it from cover to cover...pick out the sections that are relevant to the spinning question you are asking, and read it at the wheel. Know also that there are other ways to do the things that Judith doesn't teach that are good alternatives. Most of us do a short woolen draw that isn't forward. She doesn't endorse that. But it works. She is one of the most knowledgeable spinners of our time. Her book is a necessary addition to the spinner's library.

I've been spinning for over 30 years and seldom purchase "how to spin" books anymore. But this one has found an honored place in my bookcase. And I've been recommending it to all my spinning friends, many of whom have taken classes from the author. I don't recommend it to absolute beginners, but to anyone who has been spinning for while and wants to get beyond being a purely intuitive spinner (which is where I am coming from).

I love this book. When I got it I read it cover to cover. I did have to get some wool out and play with the techniques in the book. The directions are well written and the photos are wonderful. Though I would not recommend this as a learn to spin book if you know the basics this book will help you take

your skills one step further. I have enjoyed all the info greatly.

I find it interesting that so many reviewers commented that this book is full of the author's voice, because to me the book read mostly like a technical manual, with very little personal feeling in the writing. In fact, the tone of the book seemed very "dry" to me. I bought this book after repeatedly seeing it described as a "must have" addition to everyone's spinning book library. I would classify myself as an intermediate spinner, someone who is proficient but still has plenty to learn. I thought this book would be perfect for someone with my level of experience, but didn't find that to be the case. I felt the author presented each topic in a very precise but very rigid way, ie there is one right approach for each part of spinning and if you don't do it that way then you're doing it the wrong way. That doesn't really mix well with my personal experience of spinning, which is that there are many different approaches and techniques and while some techniques are right for you, that doesn't mean they're right for everyone. The "one right way to spin" tone of the book was a real turn off for me personally and definitely reminded me of Alden Amos' Big Book of Handspinning. I have a feeling that if you are the kind of spinner who isn't a huge fan of the Amos book, you'll probably not enjoy this book either. I also felt the photos in the book were too small and were not good illustrations of what the author was discussing. There are tons of photos, but I didn't find the majority of them to be helpful.

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