

# 17 Equations That Changed the World

by Ian Stewart

1.	Pythagoras's Theorem	$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$	Pythagoras, 530 BC
2.	Logarithms	$\log xy = \log x + \log y$	John Napier, 1610
3.	Calculus	$\frac{df}{dt} = \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(t+h) - f(t)}{h}$	Newton, 1668
4.	Law of Gravity	$F = G \frac{m_1 m_2}{r^2}$	Newton, 1687
5.	The Square Root of Minus One	$i^2 = -1$	Euler, 1750
6.	Euler's Formula for Polyhedra	$V - E + F = 2$	Euler, 1751
7.	Normal Distribution	$\Phi(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}\rho} e^{-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\rho^2}}$	C.F. Gauss, 1810
8.	Wave Equation	$\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} = c^2 \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2}$	J. d'Alembert, 1746
9.	Fourier Transform	$f(\omega) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} f(x) e^{-2\pi i x \omega} dx$	J. Fourier, 1822
10.	Navier-Stokes Equation	$\rho \left( \frac{\partial \mathbf{v}}{\partial t} + \mathbf{v} \cdot \nabla \mathbf{v} \right) = -\nabla p + \nabla \cdot \mathbf{T} + \mathbf{f}$	C. Navier, G. Stokes, 1845
11.	Maxwell's Equations	$\nabla \cdot \mathbf{E} = 0$ $\nabla \times \mathbf{E} = -\frac{1}{c} \frac{\partial \mathbf{H}}{\partial t}$ $\nabla \cdot \mathbf{H} = 0$ $\nabla \times \mathbf{H} = \frac{1}{c} \frac{\partial \mathbf{E}}{\partial t}$	J.C. Maxwell, 1865
12.	Second Law of Thermodynamics	$dS \geq 0$	L. Boltzmann, 1874
13.	Relativity	$E = mc^2$	Einstein, 1905
14.	Schrodinger's Equation	$i\hbar \frac{\partial}{\partial t} \Psi = H\Psi$	E. Schrodinger, 1927
15.	Information Theory	$H = -\sum p(x) \log p(x)$	C. Shannon, 1949
16.	Chaos Theory	$x_{t+1} = kx_t(1 - x_t)$	Robert May, 1975
17.	Black-Scholes Equation	$\frac{1}{2} \sigma^2 S^2 \frac{\partial^2 V}{\partial S^2} + rS \frac{\partial V}{\partial S} + \frac{\partial V}{\partial t} - rV = 0$	F. Black, M. Scholes, 1990