

# **World History in Brief - WHiB - Version 0.3**

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Available on GitHub at:  
<https://GitHub.com/nicholaskarlson/WHiB>



# Contents

1	Introduction to WHiB	9
2	Open-Source Ethos	11
3	Introduction to GitHub	13
4	Encouragement to Fork	15
5	Introduction to GitHub	17
6	Forking Process	19
7	Editing and Customizing	21
8	Engaging with the Community	23
9	Crafting Your Own Historical Narrative	25
10	Troubleshooting Common GitHub Pitfalls	27
11	Dawn of Hominins	29
12	Early Human History Key Discoveries	33
13	Evolutionary Path	35
14	Hominin Homo Erectus	37
15	Hominin Migrations and Discoveries	39
16	Importance in Evolution	41
17	The Neanderthals	43

18 Neanderthal Coexistence with Homo Sapiens	45
19 Neanderthal Extinction Theories	47
20 Emergence of Homo Sapiens	49
21 Global Migration of Homo Sapiens	51
22 Cognitive Revolution	53
23 Art, Culture, and Social Structures	55
24 Defining Civilization	57
25 First Civilizations	59
26 Sumerians, Egyptians, Indus Valley	61
27 Greek and Roman Epochs	63
28 Rise of City-States	65
29 Philosophy, Arts, and the Greek Spirit	67
30 Roman Republic and Empire	69
31 Roman Achievements, Decline, and Legacy	71
32 The Medieval Mosaic	73
33 Feudalism and Manorialism	75
34 Religion, Monasticism, and the Church	77
35 Key Dynasties and Kingdoms	79
36 Trade, Exploration, and Interactions	81
37 The Renaissance Rebirth	83
38 Renaissance Definition and Origins	85
39 Art, Science, and the Humanities	87
40 Printing Revolution	89

<i>CONTENTS</i>	5
41 USA History and the Industrial Revolution	91
42 Industrial Revolution Precursors and Causes	93
43 Key Innovations and Societal Impacts	95
44 Urbanization and Modern Business	97
45 Modern History, 1865 and Beyond	99
46 World Wars and Global Repercussions	101
47 The Cold War and the Fall of the Soviet Union	103
48 Technological Revolutions	105
49 Ancient Chinese History	107
50 Modern Chinese History	109
51 Ancient Indian History	111
52 Modern Indian History	113
A Basic GitHub Guide	115
B Basic LaTeX Guide	117
Bibliography	117
Index	119



# Preface

In the journey of exploring our past and understanding our roots, "World History in Brief - WHiB - Version 0.3" aspires to be more than just another historical account. This book strives to foster collaborative history-making, breaking the traditional mold and inviting readers to be active participants. With this preface, we delve into the essence of this project, its vision, and how it strives to redefine how we view history. Note that this book has very few references. The reader is encourage to use resources available on the Web to fact check. This book's view on "causation" and facts is heavily influenced by Mosteller and Tukey [MT77].





# Chapter 1

## Introduction to WHiB

### **Welcoming the World of Historical Investigation with GitHub**

World History in Brief, abbreviated as WHiB, isn't merely a passive read. It's an endeavor to reshape how history is written and understood. By presenting an open-source approach to history, we aim to be inclusive and diverse. This introductory chapter will orient you to the ethos of WHiB, helping you comprehend its significance and how it diverges from traditional historical narrations.



# Chapter 2

## Open-Source Ethos

### **The Spirit of Shared Knowledge and Collaboration**

History, like software, is better when it's open. Drawing inspiration from the open-source software movement, this section elucidates how a collaborative, transparent, and shared approach can enhance our understanding of history. Here, we unravel the philosophy behind open-source and how it beautifully marries with the study of our past.



## Chapter 3

# Introduction to GitHub

### **The Hub for Modern Collaboration**

At the heart of our collaborative historical endeavor lies GitHub, a platform traditionally associated with code but now repurposed for our narrative. This section provides a primer on GitHub, laying the foundation for those unfamiliar and offering insights into its transformative potential for collective history writing.



## Chapter 4

# Encouragement to Fork

### Invitation to Dive Deep and Make It Your Own

WHiB isn't a static entity. It thrives on evolution, adaptation, and diversification, much like history itself. We encourage readers to "fork" - a term you'll soon become intimately familiar with - and create their own versions of this book. Delve into this section to understand the essence of "forking" and how it can be the starting point of your unique historical journey.





# Chapter 5

## Introduction to GitHub

### Discovering the Power of Collaborative Tools

Diving deeper into the world of GitHub, this chapter provides a comprehensive overview. Beyond its technicalities, we explore how GitHub emerged as a revolutionary platform for collaboration and how it can be leveraged for historical research and narrative building.



# Chapter 6

## Forking Process

### **The Heart of Collaboration on GitHub**

The beauty of open-source lies in its democratization of content creation. In this section, we demystify the process of "forking" on GitHub, guiding you step-by-step on how to take WHiB and create a version uniquely yours.



# Chapter 7

## Editing and Customizing

### **Tailoring Repositories to Suit Your Needs**

Building upon the forking process, this segment delves into the next steps. How can you edit and customize your version of WHiB? What tools and techniques are available at your disposal? Embark on this informative journey as we guide you through the intricacies of editing on GitHub.



# Chapter 8

## Engaging with the Community

### Joining the Global Conversation

GitHub is not just a platform; it's a thriving community. Engaging with fellow historians, enthusiasts, and curious minds can amplify the depth and breadth of your historical perspective. This section provides insights into community engagement, from discussions and debates to collaborative content creation.





## Chapter 9

# Crafting Your Own Historical Narrative

### Blending Past Stories with Modern Technology

Your perspective matters. History isn't just about past events but how we interpret and present them. This section empowers you with the tools and knowledge to craft your unique narrative, ensuring that history is not just read, but lived and experienced.



## Chapter 10

# Troubleshooting Common GitHub Pitfalls

### Finding Your Way Out of Hiccups

Every platform has its learning curve, and GitHub is no exception. This segment aims to ease your journey by addressing common challenges users face on GitHub. From resolving merge conflicts to understanding pull requests, we've got you covered.



# Chapter 11

## Dawn of Hominins

### The Early Steps in Human Evolution

Let's start by tracing our lineage back to very early beginnings. This chapter dives into the world of hominins. Before *Homo sapiens* dominated the planet, several hominin species walked the Earth. The story of hominins begins millions of years back. In the paragraphs below, we will explore our most ancient ancestors.

The term 'hominin' refers to the evolutionary group that includes modern humans, our immediate ancestors, and other extinct species more closely related to us than to chimps. To truly understand our journey, it's crucial to start from the Miocene epoch, approximately 20 million years ago, when the ancestors of humans and chimpanzees, our closest living relatives, diverged from a common ancestor.

The discovery of *Sahelanthropus tchadensis* in Chad, dating back to about 6-7 million years ago, introduces us to one of the oldest known hominins. Though the precise position of *Sahelanthropus* in the human family tree remains debated, its discovery highlights the diverse features that early hominins possessed.

**Appearance and Physical Features:** *Sahelanthropus tchadensis* is known primarily from a single skull, which was discovered in Chad in 2001. Despite the limited material, several observations about its physical features can be made.

**Cranial Capacity:** The brain size of *Sahelanthropus* was small, akin to that of modern chimpanzees, with an estimated cranial capacity of around 320-380 cubic centimetres.

**Face and Jaw:** One of the most striking features of the *Sahelanthropus* skull is its flat face (orthognathic), which is more similar to later hominins than to apes. The prominent brow ridge (supraorbital torus) is another

characteristic feature. The teeth, especially the canines, are relatively small and more human-like than ape-like.

**Foramen Magnum Position:** Though *Sahelanthropus*'s skull retains several primitive features, the position of the foramen magnum (the hole where the spinal cord exits the skull) suggests it might have been bipedal. This position is towards the skull's base, typically seen in bipedal creatures, implying an upright posture.

**Behavior:** Given the scant fossil evidence, making definitive claims about the behaviour of *Sahelanthropus tchadensis* is challenging. However, certain deductions can be made.

**Bipedalism:** As mentioned earlier, the position of the foramen magnum suggests that *Sahelanthropus* might have been bipedal. If this is true, it would have walked upright, at least part of the time, which would differentiate it from other apes and make it more similar to later hominins.

**Diet:** The wear patterns and size of the teeth might suggest that *Sahelanthropus* had a varied diet, which could include both plant material and possibly some meat.

**Environment:** *Sahelanthropus tchadensis* lived during a time when central Africa, including the region of Chad, was transitioning from a closed forested environment to a more open grassland setting. However, the specific area where the skull was found, known as the Djurab Desert today, was likely woodlands and lakes around 7 million years ago. Such environments would have offered a mix of resources, allowing for a diverse diet. The presence of other animal fossils found alongside *Sahelanthropus*, like fish and antelopes, supports the idea of a varied environment with lakes or water bodies nearby.

Following *Sahelanthropus*, species like *Ardipithecus ramidus* emerged around 4.4 million years ago. "Ardi," as the most famous specimen is called, presents a mix of bipedal characteristics similar to humans and features more common in our primate ancestors. This indicates the early steps our lineage took towards bipedalism, a hallmark of human evolution.

The genus *Australopithecus*, spanning from about 4 to 2 million years ago, marks a significant point in our evolutionary journey. Notably, the renowned "Lucy" (*Australopithecus afarensis*) hailing from Ethiopia offers substantial insights. With her upright posture yet ape-like brain size, Lucy serves as a testament to the importance of bipedalism as an early evolutionary adaptation. Another species, *Australopithecus sediba*, unearthed in South Africa, has showcased a blend of *Australopithecine* and early *Homo* traits, suggesting a possible transitional species. The emergence of the *Homo* genus around 2.5 million years ago signifies a notable shift. *Homo habilis*, aptly named the "handyman," is believed to be among the first tool users. This adaptation, coupled with an increase in brain size, sets the stage for the

rapid evolution that followed. Species like *Homo erectus*, which emerged roughly 2 million years ago, are particularly significant. With their larger brain, *erectus* not only developed more sophisticated tools but also became the first hominin to leave Africa, spreading across parts of Asia and Europe.

The evolutionary journey of hominins is not a straight path but rather a branching tree with multiple species co-existing and possibly even interacting. Throughout this odyssey, certain traits like bipedalism, tool use, and increased cognitive abilities defined the human lineage. These adaptations, driven by both environmental changes and complex biological processes, paved the way for the emergence of *Homo sapiens*, i.e., us.

The Dawn of Hominins is a captivating story of resilience, adaptation, and evolution. By exploring our ancient ancestors, we not only uncover the roots of our species but also gain insights into the shared heritage that unites all of humanity. Every fossil uncovered and every bone studied adds a piece to the puzzle of our evolutionary history, reminding us of the remarkable journey that led to the world we know today.





## Chapter 12

# Early Human History Key Discoveries

### Landmark Finds that Shaped Our Understanding

The story of hominins is told through fragments - bones, tools, and fossilized footprints. Each discovery adds a piece to the puzzle of our past. This section highlights the groundbreaking discoveries that have reshaped our understanding of early human history.



# Chapter 13

## Evolutionary Path

### Tracing the Journey of Early Humanoids

From the first bipedal steps to the emergence of complex cognitive functions, the evolutionary path of hominins is a tale of adaptation, survival, and innovation. Dive into the intricacies of our evolutionary journey and discover the milestones that have defined us.



# Chapter 14

## Hominin Homo Erectus

### **The Emergence of a New Kind of Hominin**

Hominin Homo Erectus stands as a sentinel in the story of human evolution, marking significant strides in our developmental journey. As we delve into this chapter, we'll explore the emergence of this species, its distinct characteristics, and how it set the stage for subsequent human evolution.



## Chapter 15

# Hominin Migrations and Discoveries

### **Walking the Earth and Leaving Marks**

The wanderlust of Homo Erectus took them far and wide, making them the first of our ancestors to truly explore the world. Unearth the fascinating evidence of their migrations, the lands they conquered, and the traces they left behind for us to discover.





# Chapter 16

## Importance in Evolution

### **The Crucial Role of Hominin Homo Erectus in Our Past**

The evolutionary significance of the Hominin, Homo Erectus, cannot be understated. Here, we'll dissect their critical role in the grand tapestry of human evolution, from their survival strategies to their cognitive leaps, painting a vivid picture of their transformative influence.



# Chapter 17

## The Neanderthals

### Our Closest Extinct Relatives

Often misunderstood and shrouded in myth, the Neanderthals were much more than just 'cave people'. Journey with us as we dive deep into the world of these close relatives, understanding their culture, beliefs, and the world they inhabited.



## Chapter 18

# Neanderthal Coexistence with Homo Sapiens

### Sharing the World with Modern Humans

The narrative of Neanderthals and Homo sapiens isn't just about difference, but also about intersections. Unravel the entwined destinies of these two species, exploring periods of coexistence, mutual learning, and shared history.



## Chapter 19

# Neanderthal Extinction Theories

### Exploring the Reasons Behind Neanderthal Disappearance

The disappearance of Neanderthals remains one of history's enduring mysteries. Venture into the realm of scientific speculation and solid theories as we piece together the puzzle of their extinction.





# Chapter 20

## Emergence of Homo Sapiens

### **The Rise of Modern Humans**

Enter the epoch of us - Homo sapiens. Charting our own rise, this chapter offers a mirror to our earliest reflections, our triumphs, challenges, and the evolutionary quirks that make us uniquely human.



## Chapter 21

# Global Migration of Homo Sapiens

### Spreading Across the Continents

The innate desire to explore has always been a hallmark of our species. Track the grand migrations of early Homo sapiens as they ventured out of Africa, colonizing every conceivable habitat, from icy tundras to arid deserts.



## Chapter 22

# Cognitive Revolution

### The Leap in Thought and Culture

A spark in the human mind led to a firestorm of innovation. Dive into the cognitive revolution that endowed Homo sapiens with unprecedented abilities of abstract thought, planning, and complex communication.



## Chapter 23

# Art, Culture, and Social Structures

### **The Rich Tapestry of Early Homo Sapiens Life**

Beyond mere survival, Homo sapiens sought meaning, expression, and connection. Explore the blossoming of early art, the birth of diverse cultures, and the intricate social structures that became the bedrock of human societies.





## Chapter 24

# Defining Civilization

### What Makes a Society Advanced?

What makes a group of people a 'civilization'? Delve into the core attributes that define a civilization, from urban centers and written language to complex socio-political structures.



# Chapter 25

## First Civilizations

### The Dawn of Structured Societies

The dawn of civilization marked a pivotal shift in the human story. From nomadic tribes to settled societies, witness the birth of our first great civilizations and the profound legacies they left behind.



## Chapter 26

# Sumerians, Egyptians, Indus Valley

### Pioneers of Civilization

Embark on a journey through time, visiting the cradles of early civilizations. From the fertile crescent of the Sumerians and the majestic Nile of the Egyptians to the mysterious cities of the Indus Valley, explore their enduring contributions and mysteries.



# Chapter 27

## Greek and Roman Epochs

### Two Titans of the Ancient World

Two of antiquity's most influential empires come to life in this chapter. Venture into the world of ancient Greece and Rome, uncovering their philosophies, wars, innovations, and the echoes of their civilizations that still resonate today.





# Chapter 28

## Rise of City-States

### **The Power of Urban Centers in Antiquity**

The ancient Greek world was a tapestry of fiercely independent city-states. Dive into the intricacies of this fragmented landscape, with a special focus on Athens, the cradle of democracy and a beacon of ancient art and thought.



## Chapter 29

# Philosophy, Arts, and the Greek Spirit

### The Flourishing of Thought and Creativity

The Greek spirit was one of inquiry, reflection, and boundless creativity. Explore the luminous minds that shaped Western philosophy, the artists who redefined beauty, and the indomitable spirit that continues to inspire today.



# Chapter 30

## Roman Republic and Empire

### From City-State to World Superpower

From a small settlement on the banks of the Tiber, Rome grew to dominate the known world. Chart the rise and transformation of Rome from a republic to an empire, understanding its politics, society, and the forces that drove its expansion.



## Chapter 31

# Roman Achievements, Decline, and Legacy

### The Enduring Impact of Rome

The sun eventually set on the Roman Empire, but not before it left an indelible mark on history. Delve into the monumental achievements of Rome, the reasons behind its decline, and the enduring legacy it bequeathed to posterity.





# Chapter 32

## The Medieval Mosaic

### The Diverse Middle Ages

The medieval era, often referred to as the Middle Ages, was a period of profound transformation. Amidst a backdrop of chivalry, castles, and cathedrals, humanity grappled with both progress and strife. Delve into the intricacies of this multifaceted era, which bridged the ancient and modern worlds.



# Chapter 33

## Feudalism and Manorialism

### Structures of Medieval Society

Discover the societal and economic structures that underpinned medieval life. Feudalism, with its intricate web of loyalties, and manorialism, shaping the rural life of the era, played pivotal roles in the development of medieval European society.



## Chapter 34

# Religion, Monasticism, and the Church

### Spiritual Forces of the Middle Ages

Religion was the cornerstone of medieval life. Explore the towering influence of the Church, the spiritual allure of monasticism, and the interplay between faith, politics, and daily life during these times.



# Chapter 35

## Key Dynasties and Kingdoms

### **Rulers and Realms that Shaped the Medieval World**

The medieval world was a chessboard of dynasties and kingdoms, each vying for power and influence. Journey through the corridors of time to meet the iconic rulers, witness legendary battles, and understand the geopolitical shifts of the era.





# Chapter 36

## Trade, Exploration, and Interactions

### The Interconnected Medieval World

Beyond the shadow of castles lay a world of bustling markets, long voyages, and cultural exchanges. Unravel the intricate trade networks, the brave explorations, and the fruitful interactions that colored the medieval world.



## Chapter 37

# The Renaissance Rebirth

### A New Dawn of Thought and Art

A dawn of new ideas, art, and knowledge broke upon Europe, heralding the Renaissance. Delve into this luminous period, where humanity emerged from medieval constraints to embrace innovation, curiosity, and a rejuvenation of culture.



## Chapter 38

# Renaissance Definition and Origins

### Roots of the Renaissance

But what truly defines the Renaissance? Embark on a journey to understand the roots of this movement, its defining ethos, and the societal shifts that ignited this golden age of rediscovery.



## Chapter 39

# Art, Science, and the Humanities

### The Pillars of the Renaissance

The Renaissance witnessed the blossoming of genius. From the masterstrokes of Leonardo and Michelangelo to the revolutionary ideas of Copernicus and Galileo, explore the titans who shaped this era and their indelible contributions.





# Chapter 40

## Printing Revolution

### The Technology that Changed the World

The invention of the printing press was a catalyst that transformed society. Let's look at how this revolutionary technology democratized knowledge, reshaped cultures, and ushered in a new age of mass communication.

The development of the printing press in the mid-1400s (mid-15th century) by Johannes Gutenberg signalled the beginning of a transformative era; a period often dubbed the "Printing Revolution". Before its invention, books and written knowledge were the exclusive domain of a select few, mainly because of the tedious and labour-intensive process of hand-copying texts. With the arrival of the printing press, there was a dramatic shift; written knowledge became increasingly accessible and affordable.

The immediate consequence of this invention was the explosive growth in the production of books. The European world, in particular, witnessed the proliferation of printed materials, which led to an exponential increase in literacy rates. More people could read and, more importantly, write, leading to diverse voices and opinions in the public domain. This democratization of knowledge catalyzed intellectual movements like the Renaissance, Reformation, and Enlightenment.

One of the most iconic products of the early printing press was the Gutenberg Bible, printed around 1455. Not only was it a technical marvel at the time, but it also symbolized the shifting balance of power. The Church, which had hitherto monopolized the production and interpretation of religious texts, now faced challenges from other interpretations and translations of the Bible. The printing revolution thus laid the groundwork for Martin Luther's Protestant Reformation, a religious and political upheaval that would reshape the religious landscape of Europe.

Beyond religion, the accessibility to printed material fueled scientific ad-

vancements. Pioneers like Nicolaus Copernicus, Galileo Galilei, and Isaac Newton could share their revolutionary ideas with a broader audience, leading to rapid dissemination and collaboration. The standardization of knowledge, facilitated by print, allowed for consistency in scientific research and discourse.

Culturally, the printing press had profound impacts. Local dialects and languages were standardized, creating the linguistic foundations of modern nation-states. Literature flourished, giving rise to literary giants like William Shakespeare, whose works were widely circulated thanks to the press. Moreover, newspapers and pamphlets began to emerge, laying the foundation for modern journalism and establishing the role of the media as the "Fourth Estate" of democracy.

Yet, like all revolutionary technologies, the printing press had its detractors. Many feared that spreading "unfiltered" information could lead to societal chaos. There were concerns about the erosion of traditional values and the undermining of established institutions. However, over time, society adapted, creating new norms and standards to navigate this brave new world of information.

In hindsight, the printing revolution was more than just about books and pamphlets; it was about reshaping human thought and society. It decentralized knowledge, breaking down longstanding barriers and hierarchies. It set the stage for subsequent revolutions in communication, from the telegraph to the internet, emphasizing the power of information and the importance of its accessibility.

In a world where we often take the ubiquity of information for granted, it is essential to look back and appreciate the monumental shift ushered in by the humble printing press. It serves as a reminder of the transformative potential of technology and the indomitable human spirit to innovate and evolve.

## Chapter 41

# USA History and the Industrial Revolution

### From Colonies to Industry Leader

As the USA charted its unique path, the world was on the cusp of another profound transformation: the Industrial Revolution. Discover the intertwining narratives of a fledgling nation's quest for identity and the mechanical innovations reshaping the global landscape.



## Chapter 42

# Industrial Revolution Precursors and Causes

### The Catalysts of Industrial Change

What lit the furnace of the Industrial Revolution? Delve into the antecedents that set the stage for this unprecedented era of progress, from socio-economic factors to groundbreaking discoveries.



## Chapter 43

# Key Innovations and Societal Impacts

### The Machines and Ideas that Reshaped Society

Steam engines, mechanized looms, and railways—these weren't just inventions but forces that realigned civilizations. Explore the seminal innovations of the Industrial Revolution and their far-reaching societal consequences.





## Chapter 44

# Urbanization and Modern Business

### New Ways of Living and Doing Business

As factories rose, so did cities. Dive into the story of rapid urbanization, the rise of a new economic order, and the challenges and opportunities that a free market system for business brought to the fore.



## Chapter 45

# Modern History, 1865 and Beyond

### The World in the Recent Past

From the age of empires to the digital era, modern history from 1865 and beyond has been a whirlwind of change. Embark on a journey that traverses wars, revolutions, and innovations, painting a tapestry of the contemporary world and its myriad complexities.



## Chapter 46

# World Wars and Global Repercussions

### The Conflicts that Reshaped the World

The tremors of the World Wars were felt across continents, reshaping boundaries and destinies. Delve deep into the causes, the brutal conflicts, and the lasting repercussions of these global confrontations.



## Chapter 47

# The Cold War and the Fall of the Soviet Union

### New World Orders

The tussle between superpowers and the quest for self-determination marked the latter half of the 20th century. Understand the intrigues of the Cold War and the fall of the Soviet Union that redrew the world map.





# Chapter 48

## Technological Revolutions

### Innovations Driving the Modern Era

The silicon chip, the internet, and the smartphone—modern life is a testament to technological marvels. Explore the innovations that catapulted us into the digital age and their profound influence on every facet of our lives.



## Chapter 49

# Ancient Chinese History

### The Dragon's Ancient Roots

Steeped in millennia of rich traditions and groundbreaking innovations, ancient China stands as a testament to human civilization's brilliance. Embark on a journey back to China's cradle, where dynasties rose and fell, philosophies were born, and cultures thrived.



# Chapter 50

## Modern Chinese History

### From Dynasties to the Modern State

From the last imperial dynasty to the emergence of the People's Republic, modern China has witnessed tumultuous change and astonishing growth. Delve into the events, personalities, and socio-political transformations that have sculpted contemporary China.



## Chapter 51

# Ancient Indian History

### Land of the Vedas and Indus Valley

The Indian subcontinent, with its diverse tapestry of cultures, religions, and languages, boasts a history as old as the Indus Valley Civilization. Discover the empires, philosophies, and artistic achievements that defined ancient India.





## Chapter 52

# Modern Indian History

### From the Raj to the World's Largest Democracy

Chart the trajectory from the Mughal Empire's zenith to the rise of British colonialism and, ultimately, India's tryst with destiny. Explore the challenges, revolutions, and renaissance that have shaped modern India's unique identity.



# Appendix A

## Basic GitHub Guide

A Quick Start to Your GitHub Journey is next.

Dive into the digital realm of GitHub, the world's leading platform for collaborative projects. This guide will offer you the foundational steps to navigate, contribute to, and benefit from the vast universe of open-source collaboration.



# Appendix B

## Basic LaTeX Guide

A Quick Start to Your LaTeX Journey is next.

Dive into the digital realm of LaTeX, a major platform for scientific and professional document creation. This guide will offer you the foundational steps to understanding and working with LaTeX to create fabulous documents, such as this book.



# Bibliography

- [MT77] F. Mosteller and J. W. Tukey. *Data Analysis and Regression: A Second Course in Statistics*. Addison-Wesley Pub Co, Reading, MA, 1977.