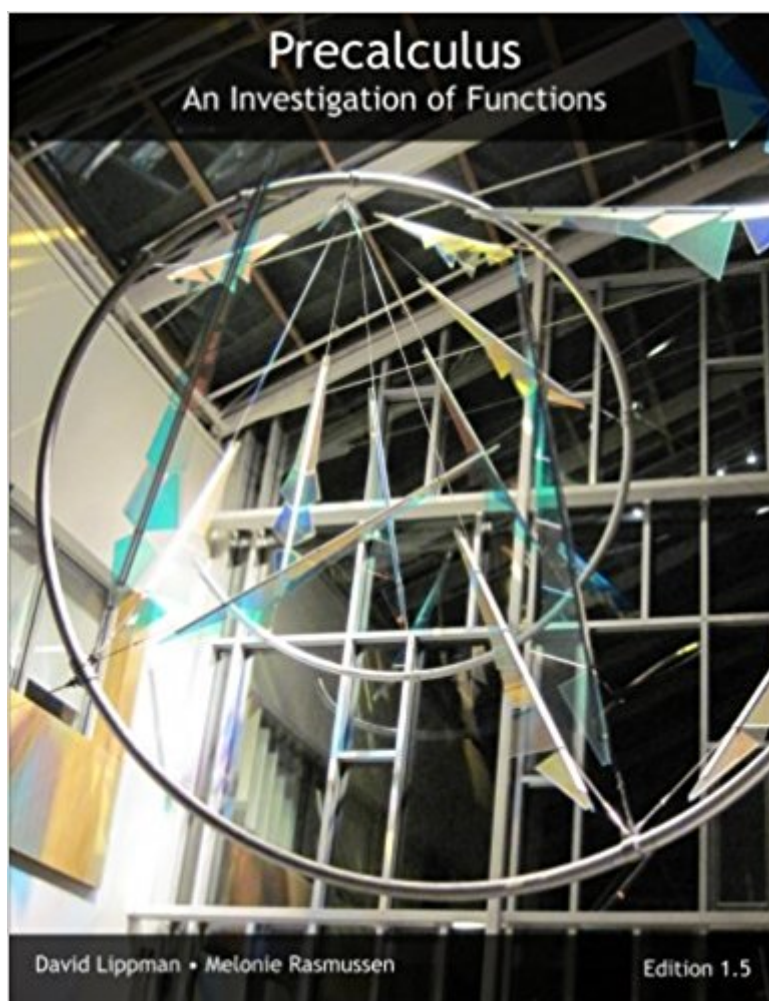


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# Precalculus: An Investigation Of Functions



## Synopsis

Precalculus: An Investigation of Functions is a free, open textbook covering a two-quarter pre-calculus sequence including trigonometry. The first portion of the book is an investigation of functions, exploring the graphical behavior of, interpretation of, and solutions to problems involving linear, polynomial, rational, exponential, and logarithmic functions. An emphasis is placed on modeling and interpretation, as well as the important characteristics needed in calculus. The second portion of the book introduces trigonometry. Trig is introduced through an integrated circle/triangle approach. Identities are introduced in the first chapter, and revisited throughout. Likewise, solving is introduced in the second chapter and revisited more extensively in the third chapter. As with the first part of the book, an emphasis is placed on motivating the concepts and on modeling and interpretation.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

David Lippman received his master's degree in mathematics from Western Washington University and has been teaching at Pierce College since Fall 2000. Melonie Rasmussen also received her master's degree in mathematics from Western Washington University and has been teaching at Pierce College since Fall 2002. Prior to this Melonie taught for the Puyallup School district for 6 years after receiving her teaching credentials from Pacific Lutheran University. We have both been long time advocates of open learning, open materials, and basically any idea that will reduce the cost of education for students. It started by supporting the college's calculator rental program, and running a book loan scholarship program. Eventually the frustration with the escalating costs of commercial text books and the online homework systems that charged for

access led them to take action. First, David developed IMathAS, open source online math homework software that runs WAMAP.org and MyOpenMath.com. Through this platform, we became integral parts of a vibrant sharing and learning community of teachers from around Washington State that support and contribute to WAMAP. Our pioneering efforts, supported by dozens of other dedicated faculty and financial support from the Transition Math Project, have led to a system used by thousands of students every quarter, saving hundreds of thousands of dollars over comparable commercial offerings. David continued further and wrote his first open textbook, Math in Society, a math for liberal arts majors book, after being frustrated by students having to pay \$100+ for a textbook for a terminal course. Together, frustrated by both cost and the style of commercial texts, we began writing PreCalculus: An Investigation of Functions in 2010.

This book, Precalculus: An Investigation of Functions, was a required book for my son in college this year, and I had some gift cards to spend, so we bought it on . Since it was a book he needed, there wasn't really any choosing this book over another. He has been using it for his homework this past week, and since he always has to check his work anyway, any wrong answers in the book don't really affect him, but I think someone should look into getting some of the wrong information corrected. Overall, it's nice that we were able to get what he needed for his class.

This textbook is unlike anything I have ever seen before. Math has never been my enemy before either, it's usually been one of my favorite and comforting subjects, rare for an autistic like me. It is now the bane of my existence and I feel genuine hatred towards my professor for changing texts on us at the last minute, from the usual college algebra w/ trig and functions focus to this ... whatever this is. I actually have trouble stepping foot in the classroom because I dread how frustrated and exhausted I will become very quickly in the class period. This text is quite hellish for me to glean info from, there is a lot of subtleties in the language and seemingly deliberate attempts at being cryptic and obscure with methodology. Maybe it just seems worse to me because as an autistic I require very straight-forward, explicit instruction, and literal use of language in academic material. I do need that extra spoonfeeding but only initially; after seeing clear examples just a few times, it all suddenly clicks and I can extrapolate the concepts to a wide range of subjects, which is typically very difficult for autistics due to our penchant for uber-compartmentalization of learned material. And once it's there, it stays. I'm also afraid that I took the textbook's introduction a little personally, I understand and respect the authors' goal to make students actually *\*think\** and *\*reason\** through problems, but the introduction seemed to say "if you can't handle the way we teach math, then oh well, that's too

bad, we don't care." This is intended to be a textbook for a gatekeeper class, and they make no attempt to hide their intentions. Which is fine I suppose, as a physical science major I understand the need to graduate students who are actually competent ... but damn, you don't have to be that. The tutors and teachers in the math lab avoid this text at all costs and I typically cannot get help from them, when I ask questions they tend to scratch their heads and then reach for other precalc textbooks for help and clarification. But it does not compare to the staggering amounts of error in the solutions sections, even the updated ones on the website. This is something that truly drives me batsh\*t since there are so few practice problems and I have to expend twice as much time and energy, and a few hundred dollars on college algebra, trig and calculus books just to keep performing at my usual level (I have a strong and somewhat unhealthy drive to maintain my 4.0). The \*only\* reason I give three stars instead of one is the quality of practice problems, what precious few there are. These are some of the best math word problems I've seen so far (I'm sure I'll see more later since I'll be taking at least another 3 semesters of math for my major's requirements). I only realized and appreciated this after all of the other real textbooks (7 precalculus/college algebra textbooks, 8 calculus textbooks) and supplemental material (AP study guides, etc) I've had to go through (because I learn almost nothing from this textbook; it's only good for these practice problems). Do all of these problems, and do them over again in a couple of weeks. And copy them into your regular notes, make them part of your regular course notes. If you know you're going on to calculus for at least one more semester, invest in these practice problems and file them away for long-term keeping and future reference. And gawd help us all.

I bought this book for my pre-calc class, I'm not native english speaker. This book is very difficult to follow, even teacher in class hard to follow it. My wife is math minor, very difficult to read and understand and she is american with college GPA 3.8, previous class I had blitzer I easily could follow it, get 95+% in class. that book very difficult to follow!

This book explains and gives examples of how to do each of the types of homework problems well enough, but so many of the answers in the back of the book and solutions manual are wrong. Otherwise, I'd have given it a 4 star for being so cheap as well as available online.

It's a textbook.....what else can I say.

Cheapest text book I've ever bought. A perfect example of getting much more than you paid for.

This book is very poorly written. I came across many incorrect answers in this book, which was frustrating. It's an inexpensive book, but you get what you buy. Unfortunately it was a required text for my class.

A lot of typos and everything is more complicated than it should be. I could teach myself algebra in high school from the textbook. I have taken two algebra classes since. Then I was forced to take it again at a different college and we used this book. I had a hard time reading the things I already knew it made it so unnecessarily complicated. It is a horrible foundation book. I felt so bad for the students starting on this book. Even when we got something wrong we never knew if it was because the answer was wrong because of a typo, the question was wrong from a typo, or if we genuinely were having problems. I would rather have paid more and gotten something that helped me learn the new material better.

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