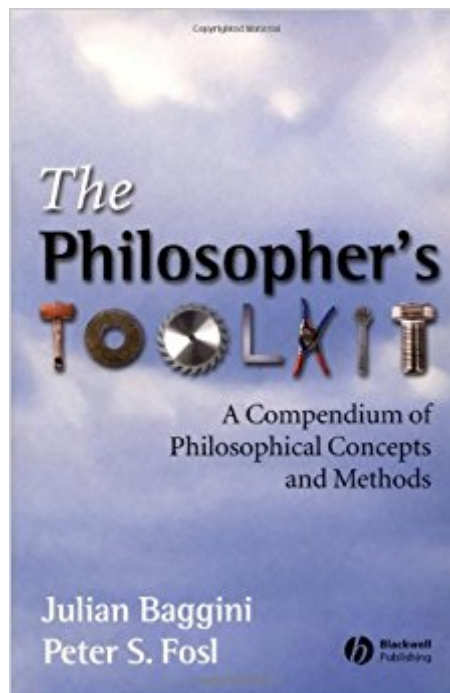




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# The Philosophers Toolkit: A Compendium Of Philosophical Concepts And Methods



## Synopsis

The Philosophers' Toolkit provides all the intellectual equipment necessary to engage with and participate in philosophical argument, reading and reflection. Each of its 87 entries explains how to use an important concept or argumentative technique accurately and effectively.

## Book Information

Paperback: 232 pages

Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell; 1 edition (2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0631228748

ISBN-13: 978-0631228745

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #384,939 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #58 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Methodology](#) #167 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > Reference](#) #910 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Philosophy > History & Surveys](#)

## Customer Reviews

"The Philosophers' Toolkit is a very good book. It could be highly useful for both introductory courses in philosophy, or philosophical methodology, as well as independent study for anyone interested in the methods of argument, assessment and criticism used in contemporary analytic philosophy. It is unique in approach, and written in a pleasant and considerate tone. Its authors are both competent philosophers, and the book visibly reflects their deep sympathy to the discipline and their appreciation of its unique character. This book will help one to get going to do philosophy, but more advanced students might find this text helpful too. I wish I had had access to this book as an undergraduate." Teaching Philosophy "...the average person who is interested in arguments and logic but who doesn't have much background in philosophy would certainly find this book useful, as would anyone teaching a course on arguments, logic, and reasoning. Even introductory courses on philosophy in general might benefit because the book lays out so many of the conceptual "tools" which will prove necessary over students' careers." About.com "The Philosophers' Toolkit provides a welcome and useful addition to the introductory philosophy books available. It takes the beginner through most of the core conceptual tools and

distinctions used by philosophers, explaining them simply and with abundant examples. Newcomers to philosophy will find much in here that will help them to understand the subject."David S. Oderberg, University of Reading "Its choice of tools for basic argument ... is sound, while further tools for argument ... move through topics and examples concisely and wittily... Sources are well chosen and indicated step by step. Sections are cross-referenced (making it better than the Teach Yourself "100 philosophical concepts") and supported by a useful index." Reference Reviews "This book is ... an encyclopedia of philosophy. It should be of great use as a quick and accurate reference guide to the skill of philosophy, especially for beginners, but also for instructors ... highly recommended." Choice

The Philosopher's Toolkit provides all the intellectual equipment necessary to engage with and participate in philosophical argument, reading and reflection. Each of its 87 entries explains how to use an important concept or argumentative technique accurately and effectively. Beginning with the basics of argumentation, the book moves on to deal with tools for assessment and criticism, as well as the limits of argumentation and some of the radical critiques of standard philosophical methodology. Written in an engaging style, the entries are brought to life with vivid and colourful examples and are accompanied by suggestions for further reading. This ingenious compendium of the methods and techniques of philosophy can be used in a variety of ways; as an introduction to the essentials of philosophical reflection, as a comprehensive course on philosophical method, or as a reference book to which readers can turn to find quick and clear accounts of key concepts and methods. The Philosopher's Toolkit is essential reading for anyone who wants to philosophise well.

This Toolkit is such a good, smart idea, I wonder why nobody wrote a book like this before. Consisting of a series of connected brief entries (many of them quite witty), it explains important philosophical concepts and shows how we can use them to help us make sense of life's big questions. It makes an excellent dictionary of basic philosophical concepts, but, unlike a dictionary, it is also designed to be read straight through. And it practices what it preaches: The Principle of Charity, for instance, is consistently applied. The Toolkit, along with Simon Blackburn's delightful dictionary and Roger Scruton's lucid (if rather biased) Short History, got me through several tough college philosophy courses. If you're new to modern philosophy and want to know what it's about, read Baggini & Fosl's "Philosopher's Toolkit" (along with Thomas Nagel's "What Does It All Mean?") and you'll have a very good idea of the basic questions & methods involved. (Be warned: philosophy is highly addictive stuff and you might find that it changes the way you see everything.)

It encourages you to think about how you think and why you might think certain ways. It was a good introduction to how philosophy works and how to do philosophy.

I'm satisfied.

**REVIEW:** This book, while sometimes reading like a condensed encyclopedia, is an excellent resource for anyone interested in Philosophical thought and Logic. It is an excellent introduction as well as a reference book. And while the title and binding may detract from its apparent academic credibility, I assure you it is there. The book covers several sections, beginning with basic argumentation (Fallacies, Premises, etc...) and expanding out into complex ideas such as Hume's Fork, Leibniz's Law of Identity, Ockham's Razor and similar concepts. It is also very well cross-referenced, providing an almost instantaneous ability to further investigate topics. Additionally, it has a section devoted to Philosophical Resources on the Internet. While this might not be of use in a few years, it definitely is of use now. Finally, the book also includes a small section of "Recommended Readings" at the end of every section that is very useful.

**STRENGTHS:** Excellent content and superb explanation of the content. The author does a wonderful job of explaining complex philosophical ideas in a clear and concise manner. It also very well thought out, cross-referencing and suggesting additional readings on every topic.

**WEAKNESSES:** The book is not exactly stimulating in any contemporary manner. It is written more like an encyclopedia rather than a novel and is therefore a bit dry. Also, its appearance detracts from the seriousness of its subject matter.

**WHO SHOULD READ THIS BOOK:** Those interested in understanding philosophical arguments and/or logic. This book is also helpful to Philosophy Majors/Minors as a refresher or a reference book.

**FOR SIMILAR/RELATED TOPICS, CONSIDER:** Informal Logic: A Handbook for Critical Argument by Douglas Walton and A Rulebook for Arguments by Anthony Weston

I had completed a bachelors in philosophy when I read this book, and I have to say it is simply the best text around:-as a prerequisite for anyone who wants to dabble in philosophy or is thinking about doing it as a major-for understanding how to apply philosophy; since this is a compilation of all the basics, it is an useful means of understanding analysis and argumentation, even if you are familiar with it. This book was great in addition to or without my logic class.-for anyone who wants to review the breadth of philosophical subcategories. I think as people tend to go through their academic (personal or professional) career they forget to justify to themselves, what they are

studying and why. This text gives a clear putline to the question of 'What exactly is philosophy?'. By the way the answer is not the 'love of wisdom'! That is a translation not an answer, anyone who uses that as a definition obviously does not understand the subject-matter.

This is an excellent introductory text for neophyte philosophers as well as a decent resource for those who have more experience in philosophy. It has a unique format among introductory books, one which is better suited to the material. This book could be used as a reference guide, introductory text, or as a textbook for a philosophy class. Lets you know everything you need to get started with philosophy. This book starts with the simple concepts and moves on to continually more advanced ideas.

Baggini and Fosl have provided an excellent reference resource for those interested in Philosophy and also those who wish to argue better. The presentation of the "tools" aids the clear understanding of each of the concepts, with examples that are easy to comprehend. One of the few books around that gives a comprehensive and readable account of these "tools". A must buy.

I have read many books on argumentation, rhetoric and reasoning but this book encapsulates the most comprehensive presentation yet. It is a gem of a guide to effective reasoning which applies to more than just philosophy. Some of the ideas presented are ones I have experienced in arguments but this author was the first to explain them.

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