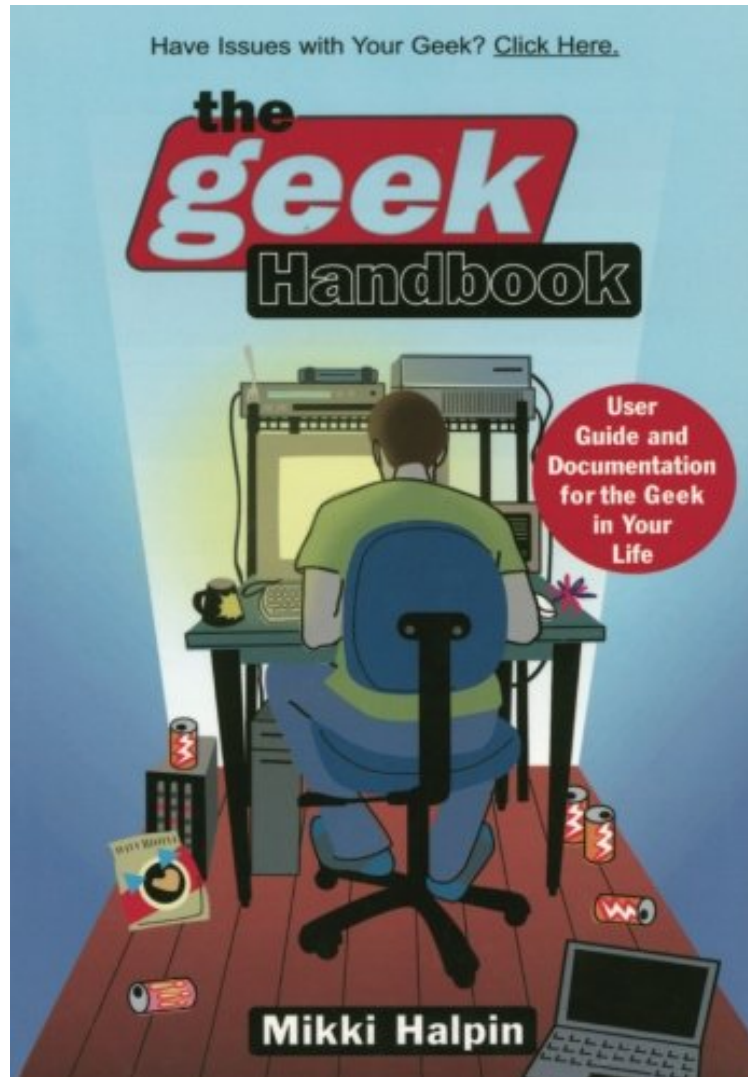


(Ebook pdf) The Geek Handbook: User Guide and Documentation for the Geek in Your Life

The Geek Handbook: User Guide and Documentation for the Geek in Your Life

Mikki Halpin

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Mikki Halpin : The Geek Handbook: User Guide and Documentation for the Geek in Your Life before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Geek Handbook: User Guide and Documentation for the Geek in Your Life:

9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Now I can use my geek wisely! By J. Davidson I have a geek, and thought Ms. Halpin's book would help me utilize him more effectively. I made a small mistake, though, and read the book in a public place before going home to apply its wisdom. You know those people laughing very very loudly and

uncontrollably on the bus? That was me! Very, very funny book. Ms. Halpin really nails the geek type while, at the same, time, expressing deep respect and affection for geek culture and tendencies. The Geek Handbook is one of the funniest books I've read this year and of itself, and truly does shed light on the possibly misunderstood or suboptimally applied geek in your life. Great book - recommend highly!

6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Nothing like Stereo Instructions
By S. Donohue This is a great book, I got one for my girlfriend and she loved it so I got additional copies for the wives and girlfriends of some of my friends. Thus far, everyone has enjoyed it. The book is well-written, with a light, almost chatty style that really ropes you in and makes you keep reading. It also has an excellent and consistent format, something us geeks love. Buy it for your non-geek friends so they can better understand you, then buy one for yourself so you can see when they're using the techniques in the book to manage you.

9 of 16 people found the following review helpful. Really bad book
By Ali Lemus This is the worst book i've read almost on any subject especially on geeks, first off you can read it in 20 minutes, it has almost no text in it, the size of the margins along with text size gives you from 5-8 words per line with an average of 13 lines per page (did i mention the images?) and 110 pages! (just for kicks check your favorite book and compare) Not only are there very few words, but the content is so bad, it hardly says anything, it reminds me of some people who are trying to explain something they dont understand, so the say 1,000 words which make no sense... and then spit on your face how knowledgable they are. For example seccion "1.4.5 Your Geek Child" is 20 lines long (which include 3 sections... features, known bugs and tips... in 20 lines) i'm sure you need more than that to raise your geek child, the worst thing is that later on the book she say's "on how to educate your child go to seccion 1.4.5"... like if it actually said something!

He has reached every level of Myst. Her room is littered with soda cans. He idolizes Data from Star Trek. But all your favorite geek really wants is to be understood.... Whether you're friends with a geek, work with one, love one, or hate one, The Geek Handbook provides handy instructions for analyzing and understanding all things geek, including: How Your Geek Relates to Others Geek organizations and gathering spots Getting Your Geek to Exercise Klingon martial arts as workout strategy The Geek Diet Soda, pizza, and other geek food groups; how to help your geek thrive

Jon Katz author of *Geeks: How Two Lost Boys Rode the Internet Out of Idaho* Timely, funny...genuinely useful...I laughed out loud.
Eric S. Raymond author of *The New Hacker's Dictionary* This book may save your relationship. Better yet, it may help you get in touch with your own inner geek.
Jon Katz The Geek Handbook has a vey helpful, even touching, quality to it. Geeks are now running the systems that run the world, and this handbook will help you live with them, work with them, and sometimes even love them. As Halpin points out so skillfully, that isn't always easy.
About the Author Mikki Halpin wrote the essay "A Girl's Guide to Geek Guys" for Bunnyhop, and it quickly became an Internet classic, earning Mikki a special place in geekdom. She was editor in chief of the online magazine Stim; co-founded the classic 'zine Ben Is Dead; and has written for many publications, including Wired, BookForum, Studio Mix, The Independent, and BUST. Currently she is a senior editor at Oxygen, a cross-media network for women. She lives in New York City.
Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.
Chapter 1: Getting Started
1.1 The Conventions Used in This Handbook The subtitle of this book is User Guide and Documentation for the Geek in Your Life. The term "user" is an artifact from other manuals of this type. Of course you don't want to think about "using" your geek, and "owning" or "operating" your geek doesn't sound much better. Geeks, more than anyone else, are their own people. A geek cannot be purchased, leased, or rented, although time-sharing is an option. Geeks are not available on the stock market (their companies are). When The Geek Handbook speaks of owners, it refers to anyone who has a relationship with a geek "Your" geek is the geek who matters to you. Whether your geek is your boss, your parent, your child, your coworker, your lover, or your friend, you can improve the relationship by reading this book and understanding your responsibilities in the geek/nongeek dynamic. If you are baffled by the geek in your life or if your geek breaks down, you will gain many of the necessary skills to help your geek grow and thrive. Historically, geeks have been feared and ostracized because they are containers of exotic, arcane knowledge unavailable to ordinary humans. Because of this persecution, many geeks have gone underground, often forming secret societies in order to pass on their rituals and codes. With the rise of computer culture, geeks are emerging from the shadows, and reengaging with mainstream culture. The Geek Handbook will help demystify your geek and allow you to better understand him or her.
1.2 How to Use This Handbook Finally, full documentation is available for geeks and all their variations. In the same way that you use software manuals or guides to work with your computer, The Geek Handbook will help you to interact with your geek. Geeks are important assets and, properly maintained and modified, your geek can last well into the twenty-first century. Understanding your geek is a social skill no one can afford to do without. This handbook offers a competitive edge in an increasingly competitive world. The handbook will provide step-by-step instructions for communicating with your geek, handy geek features, geek maintenance, and fixes for common geek bugs. Many geek behaviors are baffling, with no apparent evolutionary advantage. The Geek Handbook will explain these behaviors to you, help you cope with them, and, when necessary, provide suggestions for curbing them. (We call this "upgrading your geek.") A geek spouse, parent or neighbor will easily be able to find such topics as "Your Geek's Diet" or "Grrr! The Hostile Geek." The dawn of the Geek Age is upon us, and the correct

programming knowledge is essential. With proper use, The Geek Handbook can produce both immediate and long-term effects, resulting in healthier, happier geeks and owners. Even if you have experience dealing with geeks, The Geek Handbook will alert you to common geek bugs, and suggest both quick and long-term solutions. This handbook can significantly improve your geek's performance, and prepare you for any modifications the future holds. The next chapter, Chapter Two, will give you general geek background, and some helpful tools for communicating with your geek. As you will see, there are features common to all geek models, but no two geeks are the same. It's important to use this handbook as a guide, not a blueprint. Individual variations are what make geeks unique and adaptable to so many applications. Spend time with your geek, get to know his or her history, and don't make changes just for the sake of change. Respect your geek. Chapter Three is the core maintenance section of the handbook, with tips on keeping your geek healthy and at peak performance levels. Use this section to evaluate your geek, and to obtain the necessary skills that will help your geek lead a healthy, happy, and productive life. Chapter Four looks at geeks in the world at large, and the way they are affecting (and affected by) global economics and social shifts. The final two sections of this chapter contain a diagnostic exercise and a guide to how geeks may enter your life.

1.3 Do I Have a Geek?

1. If you mention the Y2K bug he:a. Says he thinks Volkswagens are terrible cars. b. Proudly displays his food stockpile, and explains that he has written a program which stalls all of the household chips in the last minute of 1999. After that date, time will cease to exist, but all of the computers will work.

2. When a new Star Trek movie opens she:a. Wonders if the franchise isn't played out. b. Has saved a place for you in line, because she camped out over night. During the movie, she gets really worked up when the crew in engineering does something with the warp core that she's sure isn't possible.

3. When playing Scrabble he:a. Forgoes actual competition to spell out cute things like Kiss Me and Be Mine. b. Keeps muttering that the on-line version is better and frequently consults his PDA, until finally admitting that he has programmed it with an algorithm which prompts him with the most fruitful letter combinations. Uses words like "subroutine."

Answers In each case, the answer b indicates a strong tendency toward geekiness. The more b answers, the more pure your particular geek is. If after taking this quiz you still aren't sure, read through the rest of the handbook for more clues.

Analysis In question 1, your geek is trying to show you what a good provider he is. This is his retirement plan, his 401(k), his nest egg. If you want to gently suggest that the two of you address the Y2K issue in a different way, proceed with caution. Your geek has thought long and hard about this. He has carefully considered the options: a possible life without computers, as the millennium clock ticks over, or a life frozen in time, eternally 1999, but with all the computers working. He has chosen the latter. And he has already written the code. Asking him to change the plan is asking him to change the future. You might just want to resign yourself to the fact that at least you won't get any older.

In question 2, you are indeed loved if your geek will include you in her Star Trek experience. Treasure this time with her. If you cringe when she shouts out "Live long and prosper" you will gain nothing. Instead of pointing out that none of the technology on the Enterprise is real, so she couldn't really know the capacity of a dilithium crystal, ask her to explain further. Act interested.

In question 3, you have a highly socialized geek. Be happy that he will play analog Scrabble. Do not mock his geeky words.

1.4 You and Your Geek

Now that you know you have a geek, how does your geek function in your life? A few possibilities are outlined here, but what's important is that you study your own geek, and learn your geek's idiosyncrasies. While most geeks will have more in common with one another than they will with nongeeks, there are many variations on the basic model. Add this to the countless personae in the nongeek population, and the number of possible combinations is staggering. (As the Vulcans like to say, "Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combination.")

1.4.1 Your Geek Coworker

Features Everyone has a geek coworker. Even if you don't work in the tech industry, there's a geek or two somewhere in your organization, keeping the whole place up and running (in their eyes at least). These geeks are often the most underappreciated of all geeks, and they long for recognition of their role in whatever your company does, whether it's cosmetics shipping or UN translation services. Once you've wooed your geek coworker to your cause, there'll be no stopping you. Known Bugs They're often entranced by meaningless upgrades which will leave you unproductive for weeks. May be highly resistant to any suggestions of your own, and intolerant of idiosyncrasies. Your desire to use an Internet browser other than the one which your geek feels is morally and ethically correct counts as an idiosyncrasy. Tip Document, document, document. If you are able to tell your geek precisely what is wrong and to replicate the problem when you call for help, your geek will be extra motivated to help. He may attempt to bond further with you. Prepare to receive unasked for and unauthorized hardware, as well as lengthy expositions on the merits of proxy servers.

1.4.2 Your Geek Boss

Features More and more geeks are ending up in management, taking on responsibilities for which they are ill-prepared. The geek boss has suddenly been tasked with coordinating the working processes of a group of high-performing eccentrics, when yesterday he was one of them. The geek boss is highly tolerant of offbeat working behaviors and will rarely ask you to neaten up your office or conform to any kind of dress code. He can be counted on to take the team out for a matinee on the day any good science fiction or action movie opens. NOTE: attendance is mandatory. Known Bugs Looks at you with deep suspicion if you go home at a normal time, even if all he has been doing for the past five hours is playing Diablo and surfing through Slashdot and Linux Daily News. The worst bug will appear when your geek boss is called upon to enforce the status quo, a behavior deeply alien to his geek roots. He will not perform this task well and it will be you, the underling, who pays for his ambivalence. Just as you feign wild

humor at his killer Bill Gates impression, you must also learn to look humble and appreciate his occasional rambling lectures. Don't point out that it's obviously taken from the management book he read on the plane. TipRemember that geeks love to solve problems. There is nothing your geek boss will enjoy more than looking at something which has completely baffled you, immediately pointing to the problem, and outlining a solution. Use (or manufacture) these situations to engage with your geek boss and make him feel good about himself. But don't play too dumb -- geek bosses have high expectations.

1.4.3 Your Geek Spouse or LoverFeatures

Although the geek relationship does pose challenges in formation and in practice, it can be a very rewarding one for both parties. Geeks are loving and supportive partners, they can fix things, and they rarely stray. They love children and often share their interests. Watch your geek at the next family gathering: he'll head straight for the play room, especially if there are Legos involved. Geeks are open to interfaith marriages and generally won't rule you out for using a PC instead of a Mac or vice versa.

Known Bugs

Your friends may be taken aback initially. If fashion is important for you, think long and hard about dating a geek. Some mullets are a badge of honor. Geeks have been known to date nongeeks for less than honorable reasons: a nongeek lover can provide many excuses for equipment purchases ("to get you up to speed") and are easily technically snowed.

Tip

You have to realize that the computer will be a vital presence in your relationship without allowing it to become a threat or a rival. Keep your Geek Handbook near, and learn to tune out your friends.

1.4.4 Your Geek ParentFeatures

There are few things as terrifying as the newly hatched geek parent. It's a two-stage development. In the first, or "tech support" phase, the parent will call frequently with such questions as "My printer is out of paper. What do I do?" In the second or "autopilot" phase, the parent develops his or her own netlife, and you will be left with a silent sense of foreboding, knowing they are out there somewhere. Phone calls decline as E-mails proliferate, including numerous virus alerts and the Neiman-Marcus cookie recipe.

Known Bugs

Stage Two often spirals out of control as the geek parent takes to forwarding lengthy cat haikus, URLs of their bingo web ring, and news of your high school nemesis. Keep an eye on parental daytrading.

Tip

Doing a search on your name in every major search engine before your geek parent figures them out can give you a leg up on explaining some of those Usenet posts you made in college. Putting up your own home page will give them hours of fun as they scour it for typos.

1.4.5 Your Geek ChildFeatures

The parent of a geek child faces many challenges. You must honor your child's abilities and native culture, while preparing your young geek for a world which may mock and exploit him. The geek child will provide excellent tech support and has a high-paying career in store; he or she will rarely miss curfew, unless curfew includes turning off his machine.

Known Bugs

Tendency to cracker rebelliousness may lead to criminal exploits. Parents often depend on the geek child for family finances and other technical chores, then are left in the lurch when the geek child leaves home for college or Seattle. Geek children have the irritating ability to research and debunk long-held family myths. Getting them to go on vacation can be a problem.

Tip

It's OK that your geek child never leaves the house. The successful parents of a geek child know when to urge social interaction and when to allow the geek child to withdraw. Those who provide refreshments and the necessary technology for LAN parties may find themselves extremely popular.

1.4.6 Your Geek NeighborFeatures

The geek neighbor is the most low maintenance geek. Your geek neighbor will have all of the latest yard gadgets and satellite hookups, and is eager to share this knowledge. Geek neighbors rarely travel (except to cons and Comdex) and will happily watch your house and feed your pets while you are away. If you need ISDN or other tech solutions for your home office, stock up on soda and invite your geek neighbor over.

Known Bugs

The geek neighbor's infatuation with technology can lead to unexpected civic changes. Don't be surprised if you suddenly learn that your streets are being torn up for an experimental fiber-optic network.

Tip

Don't underestimate the geek neighbor as baby-sitter. As noted above, geeks share many of the interests of children and usually love to interact with them. Ordering a pizza and setting up a bowl of ooblick in an easily cleaned area will keep your kids and your geek neighbor busy for hours. Copyright 2000 by Margaret Halpin