

How this book works

This book is divided up for convenience and structure, but of course our experience is not. Above all else, the message here is that our experience of space is an integrative one; it is just that to understand it better we need to dissect it and observe and analyse the constituent parts. In doing this, however, the balance of importance can easily become distorted. I find that much architectural criticism does this by neglecting what we might call the human dimension of space.

Before we can discuss the rather more subtle elements of this language of space we need first to examine ourselves a little. We need to understand what drives us forward in life, and what our expectations and demands are from space. Then we shall explore how we see and understand space. The book will examine the mechanisms that such perception uses, and the ways in which it operates. Then we shall discuss the role of distance in space, our attitudes towards the space that we inhabit more permanently, and the space immediately surrounding us. After that we shall ask how well and in what circumstances we can indeed predict human spatial behaviour, and how we can measure both behaviour and spatial characteristics so their relationships can be investigated.

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