



# Stars: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

*Andrew King*

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## **Stars: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)** Andrew King

Every atom of our bodies has been part of a star. In this lively and compact introduction, astrophysicist Andrew King reveals how the laws of physics force stars to evolve, driving them through successive stages of maturity before their inevitable and sometimes spectacular deaths, to end as remnants such as black holes. The book shows how we know what stars are made of, how gravity forces stars like the Sun to shine by transmuting hydrogen into helium in their centers, and why this stage is so long-lived and stable. Eventually the star ends its life in one of just three ways, and much of its enriched chemical content is blasted into space in its death throes. Every dead star is far smaller and denser than when it began, and we see how astronomers can detect these stellar corpses as pulsars and black holes and other exotic objects. King also shows how astronomers now use stars to measure properties of the Universe, such as its expansion. Finally, the book asks how it is that stars form in the first place, and how they re-form out of the debris left by stars already dead. These birth events must also be what made planets, not only in our solar system, but around a large fraction of all stars.

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