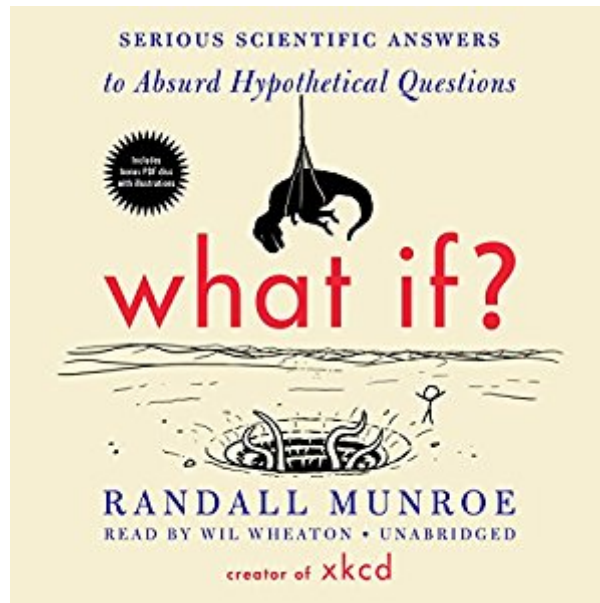




The book was found

# What If?: Serious Scientific Answers To Absurd Hypothetical Questions



## Synopsis

From the creator of the wildly popular webcomic xkcd comes this hilarious and informative book of answers to important questions you probably never thought to ask. Millions of people visit xkcd.com each week to read Randall Munroe's iconic webcomic. His stick-figure drawings about science, technology, language, and love have a large and passionate following. Fans of xkcd ask Munroe a lot of strange questions. What if you tried to hit a baseball pitched at 90 percent of the speed of light? How fast can you hit a speed bump while driving and live? If there were a robot apocalypse, how long would humanity last? In pursuit of answers, Munroe runs computer simulations, pores over stacks of declassified military research memos, solves differential equations, and consults with nuclear reactor operators. His responses are masterpieces of clarity and hilarity, complemented by signature xkcd comics. They often predict the complete annihilation of humankind, or at least a really big explosion. The book features new and never-before-answered questions, along with updated and expanded versions of the most popular answers from the xkcd website. What If? will be required listening for xkcd fans and anyone who loves to ponder the hypothetical.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 6 hours and 36 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

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Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

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## Customer Reviews

Munroe has a great sense of subtle humor and irony and his stick-figure drawings are so simplistic and understated that they add fun to the text. While the textual answers to the posed questions are fairly in-depth and scientific in nature, they are understandable for the non-scientific reader. And there is so much interesting data and other factual information that one learns a lot while marching

through the book. When I got to the end, I was disappointed that there were no more questions and answers. It was learning and fun at the same time. I found myself saying, "Oh Yeah, HmMMM" and "Wow, I didn't know that!" or "Really?!" a fair amount of the time and I often quoted things I learned - choosing to read this book was a great decision!

I love the blog and was really looking forward to this book, but buying the kindle edition was a mistake. There are a lot of missing images, and many of them are also strangely enlarged or shrunk. I'll probably buy the hardcover edition later, anyone looking to buy this stay away from the kindle.

This was much more detailed and advanced than I thought it would be. It popped up when I was searching for books for my son, books that had to do with subjects like anatomy and maps and other "intelligent" topics (vs. picture books and character stories). It's way too advanced for my son, but my husband will love it and perhaps can simplify the ideas for my son. The book itself is very interesting, but might be a bit much for those not too mathematically inclined.

About half (51%, according to the book, which seems about right) of the questions answered in this book are original, and have never been posted on the xkcd what if? website (<https://what-if.xkcd.com/>). Even though I'd already read the other 49%, I re-read them and was glad I did, as Munroe has added a few things here and there; plus, this stuff is just eminently re-readable. It's the perfect combination of irreverent, rigorous, technical, and fascinating. I look forward to every new "What If" (he posts them each Tuesday or Wednesday) and am always delighted to read the latest. Even if you've read every "What if" ever posted to the website, this book is still for you - it's especially for you! This is a great way to enjoy older questions and answers over again, updated, and to share them with new people, and the new questions and answers - never featured on the website - are delightful; I won't spoil it for you, but my favorite has to be the answer to "If a bullet with the density of a neutron star were fired from a handgun (ignoring the how) at the Earth's surface, would the Earth be destroyed?" If you have even a passing interest in science and ever enjoy daydreaming about the fantastic or the ridiculous, this book is for you. If you don't think that you enjoy those things, this book will prove to you that you do. Also, this is a really great gift idea for basically anyone in your life who can read. Kids will love it, adults will love it (I'm ordering a copy for my dad's birthday), and they will be hooked from the first page (who hasn't wondered what would happen if the Earth suddenly stopped spinning?) Gift season is coming up; thanks to this book my

Christmas shopping will be a great deal easier. I don't usually write reviews, but I logged in and made an exception here. I cannot offer higher praise. Enjoy!

Some of the most interesting and entertaining learning I've ever done. Randal Munroe illustrates the beauty of science in this book by showing how it all still applies even in ridiculous situation leading to hilarious results. I love this book and had the e-version for a while but really just wanted to be able to put it on my shelf and thumb through it while feeling the pages.

If you have read *\*ANY\** of the xkcd website by Randall Munroe, you know what you are getting into here. As the title says, it answers serious scientific answers to absurd questions. Want to know if you can use a balloon to paraglide? Drop from the top of a building and grab a flagpole to launch yourself back up? xkcd is the place to find all that. Some of the questions answered here are on the website, but that shouldn't stop you from buying this book. If you don't appreciate the effort to research the gravitational force of an apple (either the fruit or the electronic gadget), you may not fully appreciate this book. However, if you get a kick out of nerdy minutia (and know what minutia means), this is DEFINITELY the book for you. Will any of this new knowledge save you, or your loved ones? Probably not. However, you can have the satisfaction knowing that you have researched what the earth would look like if all the water drained down the Mariana Trench. And have cute stick-figure drawings to show people, in case they, too, want to know this information.

This book is fun to read and will also help you understand the way the physical world works... well, in very extreme situations. It's also a good example of what you can find out if you are just willing to do some research and use some math. You can read most of it online for free, but I think it's still worth buying your own copy.

If you enjoy Randall Munroe's webcomic, XKCD.com, you will love this fun compilation from his blog- What if? Readers present him with absurd questions such as: What would happen if everyone on earth was in the same place and they all jumped simultaneously? Or Could you make a periodic table with actual pieces of each element? Or What would happen if you went swimming in the containment pool of a nuclear reactor? Munroe applies his extensive knowledge to each question- with unexpected and entertaining results. I bought this book after thoroughly enjoying another of his books- Thing Explainer. I purchased both because I have enjoyed XKCD for years and wanted to support his efforts. I'm glad I did, because I will enjoy sharing both with family and friends!

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