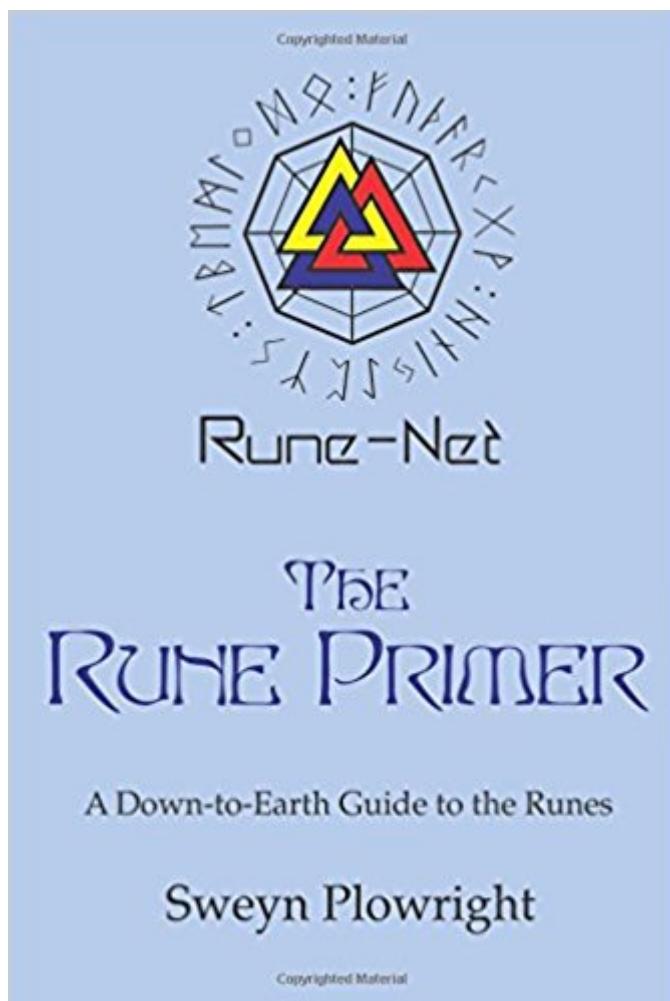


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The Rune Primer: A Down To Earth Guide To The Runes



Synopsis

Sorting fact from fiction about runes has become increasingly difficult in recent years. The number of rune books has multiplied, but the majority of them are based on speculation, or even complete fantasy, and are often contradictory and confusing. Some readers may be content to settle for these, but a growing number of rune students have been asking for a basic factual foundation so that they can judge for themselves the reliability of the information in the esoteric rune books. The Rune Primer at last bridges the gap between the dry, complex, and expensive academic works, and the less reliable esoteric and New Age books about rune magic and divination. This book makes the old sources accessible, with translations of the rune poems, and the historical information presented in plain English. It also traces many of the recently invented rune myths to their sources, reviews some of the most popular authors, and explains the ideas behind some of the modern esoteric rune systems.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is the absolute best, beginner, no nonsense book about the Runes that has ever been published. It gives you the basics and no fat. This is an awesome starting point to further delve into the Runes, and a useful base to return to when you inevitably run into confusion and speculation and fantasy. The only "negative" is the length of the book. It's a very quick read. And if you are interested in divination, it's probably too clinical and scientific to help much. He goes into literal meanings and some into speculation of what the divinatory meanings may have been, but these

can't be known for certain. But, that's why it's called a "Rune Primer" and not "The Rune Bible Of All Things" and somesuch. Kudos! I've bought both digital and analog copies of this work, as I think it's that valuable.

I bought this book primarily for its sections on other authors and the 'myth busting' section regarding the histories and origins of certain symbols and practices. I found the book to be very honest and straightforward, and refreshingly humble in tone. People new to the runes and the rune poems will find Mr. Plowright's interpretations and translations smoothly written and easy to understand. One thing I liked was the helpful footnotes added to some words and phrases that help your understanding by adding cultural or historic context, which is something often overlooked even by those of us who are long time students or consider ourselves well seasoned in the subject. I was not disappointed with the section on other authors. I've read a few reviews that presented this section as a way of being dismissive towards them, but I found the commentary to be objective and respectful. Not to mention often complimentary and positive as opposed to disdainful or negative. I've used Edred Thorsson's works since the late 90's, and I found the information regarding him to be thorough and accurate to the best of my knowledge, without any connotations of tension or rivalry. Also what was written regarding Freya Aswynn's history. I do hope to see mention of Diana Paxson in a third edition as she has become quite popular very recently. Overall this book accomplishes very well what it set out to, which was to be a simple rune primer that combined concise, practical material with an objective overview of other authors as potential teachers. Had it existed in my youth it would have been a very beneficial book to start with and I recommend it to newcomers. Others who have already been studying or practicing the runes for some time will find this to be a quick, fun read that may teach you a few new facts or give you perspective regarding other authors before adding it to your collection shelf or passing it along as a helpful gift to someone who's just getting started.

This is a lovely little book. I really enjoyed the way they encourage a more scientific approach and critical thinking. By scientific I mean the way in which they tackle different parts of lore etc. They use a method of attempting to weed out the facts and find original source material to back up what they can. It is very informative and presented in an easy to understand format. I really got a lot out of this book and appreciated it a lot. I bought several books pertaining to runes and this is the only one I have re-read several times and use as a reference guide.

Like many people interested in runes, I was first drawn to them (or, the "idea" of them) as they re-emerged via highly romanticized 70's vehicles ala Led Zepp's fourth album, and renewed interest in the works of J.R.R. Tolkien. Okay, I'll admit (secretly) my fascination was with the notion of their possible use in divination. But in the end, I was relieved and appreciative of the author's humble, scientific, and unbiased approach -- which places runes more squarely within their more likely and proper historical context as an alphabet employed for utilitarian purposes which probably had little or nothing to do with magic or seeing the future. In other words, the author eschews pop culture trappings in favor of encouraging analytical thinking, so those new to runes can avoid the trap of getting indoctrinated early into romantic interpretations and modern or new age inventions which may have no real basis in history. Appreciating language as key to understanding cultures both ancient and modern -- and being of northern European descent with a traceable genealogy from the mid-eleventh century -- I most enjoy this book because it provides an odd sense of connection in some small way, to a world and family long past. I claim to be no expert after having read *The Rune Primer* - nor is this book meant to provide such expertise. Instead, I now have an excellent introduction to runes, allowing the pursuit of further inquiry as a scholar and critical thinker: exactly as the author intended.

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