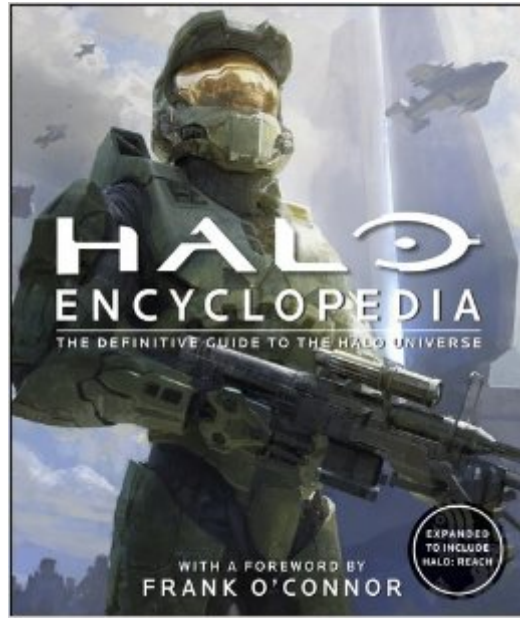


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Halo Encyclopedia: The Definitive Guide To The Halo Universe



Synopsis

FOREWORD BY GAME DEVELOPER FRANK O CONNOR!A comprehensive guide to one of the most successful video game franchises in history, the Halo Encyclopedia details the origins of the game along with the characters, weapons, vehicles, equipment and locations from Halo, Halo 2, Halo 3, Halo 3 ODST and Halo Wars. Created in full collaboration with Microsoft, Halo Encyclopedia is packed with hundreds of images, illustrations, and technical drawings that highlight all the information fans and newcomers to the game need to know. © 2009 Microsoft Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

I've spent a couple of weeks reading the Halo Encyclopedia in drips and drabs. I've read chapters in a sitting and only a few pages in another. In the end the book lives up to it's title in a lot of ways that were intended and in ways it might not have been. It's intended as a book for the holiday season but it's also a reference work for one of the most successful video game studio's master creation. For the hard core, mildly obsessive lovers of all things Halo there's new material here to spur discussions while walking paper routes with friends or arguing in dorm halls. Be warned that it draws heavily from the fiction and backstory already published in the licensed novels of the Halo universe. (The author of the encyclopedia is also the author of one the novels.) There are new nuggets here

and there so Halo scholars will have new things to ponder. With detail dripping off of every page it can be mildly overwhelming to those just dipping their toe in the water but pictures go a long way to breaking up the text. For the more casual Halo fan the book offers deeper glimpses into what goes on behind the scenes without completely tearing down the curtain. Humor goes is applied in the right spots to break the sometimes serious tone of the plight of humanity as it faces extinction before the Covenant. (There's a wickedly funny exploration of Grunt strategy that's someone what Sun Tzu like.) It's easy to explore as much as you want without feeling overwhelmed and that's a good median for casual enthusiasts. This is a lot of book for it's current price on . Expect people who receive this on Christmas to curl up on the couch at some point and not want to be disturbed for a while. In the book industry's 30+ year history of publishing tomes of detail heavy books for science fiction enthusiasts this may easily be one of the best. Unlike so many bland books that have come before it where brilliant illustration was accompanied by horrible text, Bungie/Microsoft have picked one of the SF genre's brightest new talents for wrestling what could have been dry copy into something enjoyable and readable. This isn't a book someone should foist on their grandmother to convince her of John 117's merits and strengths. (Odd's are she would collapse from the weight.) It is a book that will be read again and again as details slip away and the desire to explore one of the most well thought out and well developed intellectual properties in several decades. I debated giving this 4 stars because I wouldn't recommend it as a gift to the long suffering girlfriend, the confused and slightly worried parents or anyone else who really has no interest in Halo. A 4 star rating would also be insulting to the people who worked so hard on this book. (10 years worth of effort from Bungie, Tobias Buckell's writing, etc.) If you know someone who has endured midnight launches of the game surrounded by the stench of men enjoying themselves, gone back to complete the game on Legendary, screamed "Skull, skull, who's got the skull!" while playing oddball or still laughs when they hear the word "Chupathingy" then get it sooner than later. They'll thank you for it for years to come and you'll win a spot in their heart as the friend/loved one/parent who, despite not loving Halo as much as they do, understood that this book is something they needed to have. Isn't that what gift giving is all about?

This is a nearly complete listing of everything found in the Halo Universe - of that I was very happily surprised. There are a few timelines that are completely astounding with the level of detail they go in, as well as the linearity that they follow in the often-confusing details and stories littered throughout the creatively crafted Universe. This is a great, interesting read for any Sci-Fi junkie and any level Halo fan. Don't go too far into that though - I am [admittedly] a giant Halo nerd who has the

fan website, on forums, and constantly debates with friends regarding minute details and dark corners of the franchise. This book, however, does not go into the level of detail I was hoping for in a lot of categories. It has pretty visuals, some new concept art, but it just sometimes slaps a few text blocks of commonly-known facts about something without creative insight. Some of the entries (the engineers for one) almost word for word copied and pasted from the Halo Beastarium that came with Halo 3, and if you feel like you know a lot about the Halo Universe, this feeling will become quite common the more pages you turn. On a side note: this book is somewhat difficult to read in a plane - it is almost too wide to fully open up. But that's a great thing when reading in my living room. I have to give this 5 stars simply because of the craft and history involved and because of what another reviewer stated - all the years of work put in here would be a shame to see anything less. It IS nearly complete of facts *near* the time of Halo 3: ODST coming out, but offers relatively little NEW information beyond that. Don't hope for Reach spoilers.

While the content of this book is fine, what especially shines is the incredible, paradigm-shifting foreword. The author manages to encapsulate, in a few hundred words, the most profound, resonant and ultimately chilling snapshot of the human condition in literary history. As a piece of writing, it spans the semantic gulf between prose and poetry and ultimately confounds our understanding of both. It takes words and uses them as daubs of color with which to paint a Sistine Chapel - a work of art that literally forces us to look up, beyond the restrictive gravity of our own humanity, and gaze directly into the divine, with only motes of sparkling brilliance to obscure the view. I gasped the first time I read this foreword and in that seemingly endless pause for breath, I realized that oxygen was a pitiful replacement for the atmosphere of wonder within those all-too-brief paragraphs. These heights, they dizzy us. Read this, or choke on the wan, thin air of lower literature.

It's great that they fixed all the major errors from the first edition of the encyclopedia and replaced a lot of the images with better quality ones from Reach. But there still seems to be a lack of effort in some areas. My big problem with the book is that the info was not thoroughly updated. I noticed the ship section in particular does not include any of the ships or ship classes introduced in Reach except for the Sabre and that space station, which are on new pages. No Night of Solace, UNSC Savannah, or any of those listed anywhere in the book as far as I can see. For whatever reason, they left out a number of the Covenant weapons from Reach as well. I also noticed that i343 seems to be entirely ignoring the revelations in Greg Bear's Forerunner Saga. I'd still say it's a pretty good

reference book and more or less worth getting at 's price if you're a Halo fan, more so if you haven't purchased the previous edition.

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