

THE EASY WAY TO GET STARTED

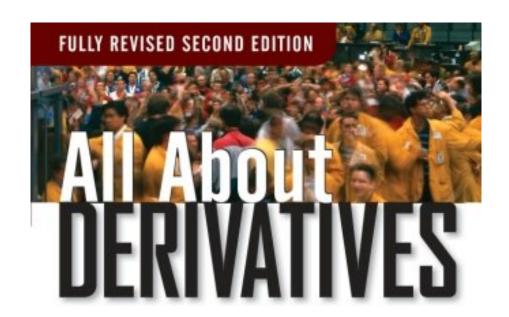
Everything You Need to Know, Including:

- The various derivative contracts traded today, including forwards, futures, swaps, and options
- Pricing methods and mathematics for determining fair value
- Hedging strategies for managing and reducing different types of risk

MICHAEL DURBIN

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From the Back Cover

Everything you need to know about derivatives--what they are, how they work, and how they can enhance profits and control market risk

Financial derivatives, from standard put and call options to more complex strategies and combinations, are among the most versatile, powerful, and valuable tools available to investors. All About Derivatives introduces you to the many different types of derivatives, providing simple explanations and easy-to-follow methods for using each.

This straightforward, up-to-date examination covers all aspects of derivative contracts, explains techniques for pricing and trading them, shows how to use each to hedge risk or increase profits, and more. Avoiding complicated formulas and theories to focus on the information you need, it shows anyone--from individual investors to corporate risk managers--how derivatives work, how they fit into the larger world of investing, and why they can be the ideal trading vehicle for improving the financial performance of yourself or your organization.

Whatever your level of investing expertise, from beginner to veteran, All About Derivatives will give you the information you need to know:

- Contracts--forwards, futures, swaps, options, and credit derivatives
- Terms--volatility, arbitrage, the greeks, and many more
- Key mechanics--storage, settlement, valuation, and payoff
- Pricing methods and mathematics for determining fair value
- Hedging strategies for managing different types of risk
- Leverage--why it can be your best friend or worst enemy
- And more

About the Author

Michael Durbin is a writer, educator, and financial technology consultant specializing in high-frequency

trading of financial derivatives. He has taught at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business and the University of North Carolina's Kenan-Flagler Business School and has helped numerous Wall Street firms develop derivative pricing and trading systems. Durbin lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DERIVATIVES

All About Derivatives, Second Edition, presents the complex subject of financial derivatives with a clarity and coherence you won't find in other books. Using real-world examples and simple language, it lucidly illustrates what derivatives are and why they are so powerful. This second edition of All About Derivatives provides a rock-solid foundation on:

- The most common contracts available to you in today's market
- Key concepts such as cost of carry, settlement, valuation, and payoff
- Proven methods for establishing fair value
- How leverage can work for you--and against you
- The various derivative contracts traded today, including forwards, futures, swaps, and options
- Pricing methods and mathematics for determining fair value
- Hedging strategies for managing and reducing different types of risk

INCLUDES A BRAND-NEW CHAPTER ON THE ROLE DERIVATIVES PLAYED IN THE 2008 FINANCIAL MELTDOWN

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Most helpful customer reviews

54 of 57 people found the following review helpful.

A Book for Those Who Need Somewhat More Careful Explanations

By John Williamson

I have been trading my own account for a while and got interested in trying to make a few options trades. I went looking for a book so that I could review the basics. I found one book which basically said, "Here is how these terms are defined, and here are some formulas which employ these terms and here are some examples." Well, that left me cold, because the author of that book made no attempt to make sure that I really understood the basic concepts. I "kind of" understood, but not really.

"All About Derivatives" by Michael Durbin is totally different. You can tell from the way he goes about explaining things that he really wants you to understand the basic concepts, and he doesn't want you to feel "dumb" just because he brings it down to a pretty basic level from time to time. What he's trying to do is make sure you don't get tripped up on important concepts at the early stages and he really does bend over backwards to clarify things to a very great degree. Whereas it was pointless to try to work my way through the first book, I read "All About Derivatives" pretty much from cover to cover and I think there were only a few places where I still got stuck. Still, that's a vast improvement over the other book and in fact it was only after reading Durbin's book that I was able to make sense of the first one.

Some people try too hard to impress you with how academic their approach is. Michael Durbin doesn't play that game. He really wants you to understand the concepts and I think that if he needed to do cartwheels to get the point across he would do it.

I wish this guy had written my calculus textbook when I took it in college; I wouldn't have had to take it over to improve my grade.

I hope Durbin makes enough money in the derivatives game to retire and write full time. He's quite a talent.

19 of 20 people found the following review helpful.

An Excellent Introduction to Derivatives

By David Wilusz

This is an extremely well-written introduction to derivatives. I used it as a supplement to a graduate course in Risk Management which had assigned Don Chase's classic book. I found this book to be much more readable, with less formal notation and fewer equations to wade through (not to mention being much cheaper and easier to carry around). Despite its small size, it still manages to convey the essential characteristics of the major types of derivatives (forwards, futures, swaps, options, and credit derivatives) and how they are priced, without getting bogged down in excessive theory. It's written in a pleasant, conversational style, with (horrors!) even a dash of humor thrown in. It contains the right amount of detail and math in the main text, with a series of appendices and nicely separated subsections for the more mathematically inclined. It's a great introductory text, and I strongly recommend it for anyone starting out in the subject.

17 of 19 people found the following review helpful.

The Book is OK, But Not That Great.

By Robert Gerovski

I picked up this book for two reasons. I wanted to learn what derivatives are, and I wanted to learn about the math around them. At first glance, in the bookstore, it looked like this book would meet my needs. Now, I have to say that this the first book I ever read about derivatives and have nothing to compare it against.

The first few chapters do a good job explaining what derivatives are and how they are used, though I found the chapter on swaps somewhat confusing despite reading that chapter twice. Additionally, I found the conversational nature of his writing, and the frequent drift into sidebar discussions, quite distracting. The chapters on pricing derivatives were worse.

In the pricing chapters I found the basic explanations ok, but there are a number of errors and typos that make those chapters confusing. The author also changes terminology occasionally and that is a little confusing. At one point I emailed the author in order to clear up my confusion, and he directed me to the errata list on his web site. I found I had to read the section on the Black-Scholes model backwards because the second half of that section gave me what I needed to understand the first half.

I found the explanation of the math most frustrating. The equations use symbols to mean something different than I would expect based on how those symbols are used in math and science texts. For example, he uses Greek delta to mean "amount of" instead of "change in." Now, perhaps this is the standard usage in the financial field, but that isn't explained very well. In many cases the author does not explain what the terms in the equations are, where their values come from, or what they are measuring. More explanation here would go a long way in helping the reader to understand the math better.

In summary, like my headline says, the book is ok, but not that great. Perhaps other books on the subject are very bad, but I would advise reviewing other texts for a bit before buying this one.

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