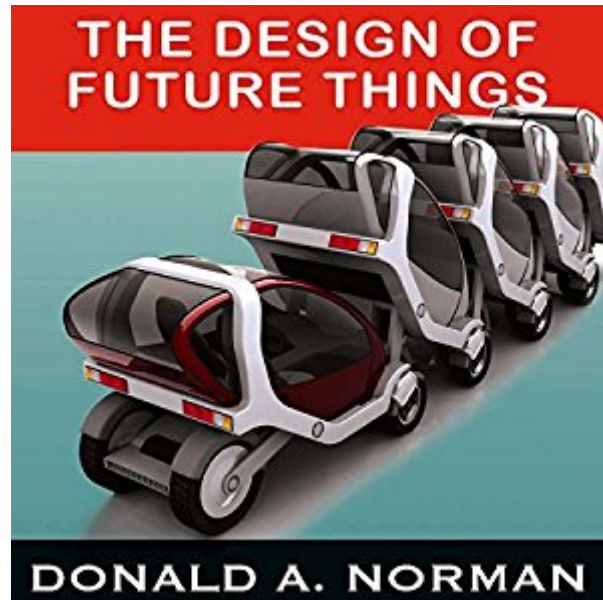




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# The Design Of Future Things



## Synopsis

Donald A. Norman, a popular design consultant to car manufacturers, computer companies, and other industrial and design outfits, has seen the future and is worried. In this long-awaited follow-up to *The Design of Everyday Things*, he points out what's going wrong with the wave of products just coming on the market and some that are on drawing boards everywhere—from 'smart' cars and homes that seek to anticipate a user's every need, to the latest automatic navigational systems. Norman builds on this critique to offer a consumer-oriented theory of natural human-machine interaction that can be put into practice by the engineers and industrial designers of tomorrow's thinking machines. This is a consumer-oriented look at the perils and promise of the smart objects of the future, and a cautionary tale for designers of these objects—many of which are already in use or development.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I did not expect to enjoy this book, but I did and I would highly recommend it. I wish more designers and engineers read it, even if I don't always agree 100% with Norman. Seller was great- product came on time/early and in perfect shape

Mixed with some really good ideas is mostly just pontification and droll explanation of things that already are. Many of the conclusions in this book can be reached much sooner on the reader's own

without the lengthy writer's passages that seem to only extend the book's length rather than open the reader's mind. Yes, machines now only signal us, not communicate with us, when the wash's cycle has ended or the microwave's 2 minutes are up, but then, what else do we need? I don't want my vacuum reminding me it's vacuuming or when it's finished. That's why it's automatic.

I bought this book as a required reading for one of my college courses. I am not an avid reader, but found this book to be incredibly interesting! I've only read a handful of books over the past several years, and this is one I definitely would have read even if it weren't necessary for my class. Some really intriguing selections, a quick read, and hard to close once you begin reading; would recommend to anyone!

This book was very interesting, as all of Don Norman's books are. In this book he goes into detail about how future designers will need to design future devices, how they can make them more useful and more human. He talks a lot about how what sounds like seemingly 'no-brainer' new features (radar-based minimum distance following cruise control) can actually cause problems (speeding up when you pull off the road, slowing down when you merge into traffic.) He gives suggestions to designers on how to avoid these types of issues and how to design things that are truly useful for humans. I thought it was a fascinating book and I learned a lot about design from it. He goes over the problems that making things too smart can cause and notes that when designing new devices the human interaction is the critical problem. A lot of future design will have to take into account how best to control human reactions in addition to providing the best features. Our devices are sometimes too smart (but not smart enough) and need to be designed to help humans in different ways than is first obvious. A fascinating description of what can go wrong and how to design around it using a system view.

Slightly different from his other books, this seems more a collection of musings about automation and human-machine interaction. Worth a read but perhaps a little more shallow than his other work.

Norman's book *Design of Everyday Things* had a profound effect both on the way I perceive the world and how I design. I have bought every consumer book he has written since then, and have always come away disappointed. I am giving this book only 3 stars because I felt it became repetitive after a while, having covered the points adequately in the first half of the book. Not up to the quality I expect of Norman.

All the books I've bought, are written very successful.

Thanks

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