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Mark Gruenwald, Peter Sanderson, Eliot R. Brown, more : Essential Official Handbook Of The Marvel Universe Volume 1 TPB (Essential (Marvel Comics)) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Essential Official Handbook Of The Marvel Universe Volume 1 TPB (Essential (Marvel Comics)):

5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Comic Styled Encyclopedia for the first 20-years of MarvelBy M. Mierzwa
About the Book:For those of you planning to buy something for a comic book fan, the "Marvel Essentials" series are black white trade paper back (tpb) reprints of what are considered popular and/or important Marvel Comics. They are printed on lightweight paper, and are designed to bring comics that may be hard to find back to new and old comic book fans. This particular tpb reprints a series of 15 comics that were originally released in 1982, 21-years after the first Marvel comic (Fantastic Four #1). Another (more detailed) version, called the "Deluxe Handbook" was released in the mid 1980s, and will be reprinted in a series of 3 tpbs this year.The series covers the major people, places, and things that make up the first 20-years of the "shared" Marvel Universe where Spider-Man, the X-Men, the Fantastic Four, the Hulk, etc. live. The black white reprint is designed to keep size and costs down.
Good Features:- Easy to store (book format)- Easy to read the text (the lettering is crisp and clear)- Easy to find information and flip around because entries are alphabetically arranged- Entire 15 comic run in one book- Detailed reference information w/ first appearance of people / places / things- Good artwork (even in black white)
Common Complaints- Original comics can still be found for cheap- Color is important, and not present in this book- Information is dated- The more complete "Deluxe Handbook" tpb 3-book series will be released in 2006
General Thoughts:I actually own about 11 of the original 15 comics from this series. It has taken me over 6-years to find them in cheap quarter bins at comic shows, but I know the color originals from this series are easy to find. I plan on getting rid of my originals, because I never really found myself reading the originals. I filed them away with the rest of my regular comic collection, which isn't really the point with this particular series. However, since tpbs, like the Essentials series, easily can be carried on a bus or plane, I tend to really enjoy reading them while commuting and traveling. And since this book is the ideal size for sitting on a proper bookshelf, I've found that unlike the originals, I'll pull it off the shelf when I'm curious about a comic person, place, or thing.
Do keep in mind that the larger and more complete Deluxe Handbook will be released in 3 black white volumes later in 2006. I plan on purchasing that series as well, but some people might want to wait to only keep and read that series.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. The Essential Handbook to the Marvel Universe Vol. 1...By Keith A. Kilburn
If you grew up in the eighties and you read Marvel Comics, then you may remember this series. This was the series to get and collect back then as you could get the skinny on all the characters and maps to all their headquarters and hidden cities. The fact that they have reprinted the original 15 issue run in one essentials edition is fantastic and you get it all here. The only reason this review isn't 5 stars is that the information is over twenty-three years old.
This book is great for general knowledge of the Marvel Universe, finding out who the characters are (in a general way...) and giving you all fifteen issues for a little over a dollar an issue. If you play role playing games based in the Marvel Universe (either TSR's original Marvel, the Saga system or the new Diceless system) than this book is a must as it not only provides an unparalleled source of information for you the buyer, but for your players in your game as well.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Lots of InformationBy CustomerI ordered this Graphic collection from the reviews and storyline provided by users. It was right on point and the book was great. It arrived quickly and in pretty good shape. I was surprised by the quick turnaround. Great Job !!!

A picture's worth a thousand words, and there have always been top supplies of both in the ever-moving manuals of marvels and miscreants! Now, witness first-hand the series that started it all in Mark Gruenwald's original fifteen issues worth of secrets, super-powers and schematics! About the best, by the best! Collects OHOTMU #1-15.