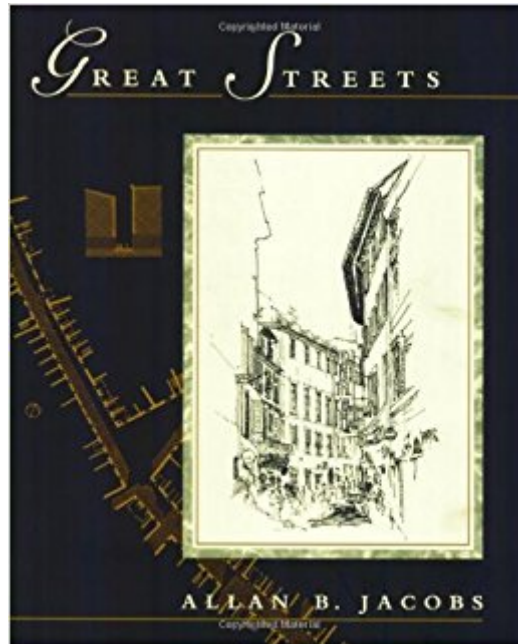




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Great Streets (MIT Press)



Synopsis

Which are the world's best streets, and what are the physical, designable characteristics that make them great? To answer these questions, Allan Jacobs has surveyed street users and design professionals and has studied a wide array of street types and urban spaces around the world. With more than 200 illustrations, all prepared by the author, along with analysis and statistics, *Great Streets* offers a wealth of information on street dimensions, plans, sections, and patterns of use, all systematically compared. It also reveals Jacobs's eye for the telling human and social details that bring streets and communities to life. An extensive introduction discusses the importance of streets in creating communities and criteria for identifying the best streets. The essays that follow examine 15 particularly fine streets, ranging from medieval streets in Rome and Copenhagen to Venice's Grand Canal, from Parisian boulevards to tree-lined residential streets in American cities. Jacobs also looks at several streets that were once very fine but are less successful today, such as Market Street in San Francisco, identifying the factors that figure in their decline. To broaden his coverage, Jacobs adds briefer treatments of more than 30 other streets arranged by street type, including streets from Australia, Japan, and classical antiquity in addition to European and North American examples. For each of these streets he has prepared plans, sections, and maps, all drawn at the same scales to facilitate comparisons, along with perspective views and drawings of significant design details. Another remarkable feature of this book is a set of 50 one square-mile maps, each reproduced at the same scale, of the street plans of representative cities around the world. These reveal much about the texture of the cities' street patterns and hence of their urban life. Jacobs's analysis of the maps adds much original data derived from them, including changes of street patterns over time. Jacobs concludes by summarizing the practical design qualities and strategies that have contributed most to the making of great streets.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

With its thorough chronicling of building heights, tree spacing, relative widths of streets, sidewalks and cartways, this book will undoubtedly serve as a welcome reference tool for designers and urban planners. But for the lay reader, it is also an oddly poetic attempt to capture the undefinable quality that makes a street truly "great." To make his point, Jacobs, chair of the department of city and regional planning at UC Berkeley, uses text and 242 graceful line drawings to explore the magic of some 15 great streets, most of them European, including Barcelona's Ramblas, the Boulevard Saint-Michel in Paris, Via dei Giubbonari in Rome and even Venice's Grand Canal. Other well- and lesser-known examples appear in a second section comparing types of streets--boulevards, commercial strips, small-town main streets and residential roads. Finally, Jacobs analyzes those factors that make streets great: buildings of similar height, interesting facades, trees, windows that invite viewing, intersections, beginnings and endings, stopping places and, to be sure, space for leisurely walking. These are necessary qualities, but, as Jacobs warns, do not ensure a great street. "A final ingredient--perhaps the most important--is necessary . . . the magic of design." Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Jacobs presents an insightful, richly illustrated compendium of the best examples of streets from all over the world. The streets, both ancient and modern, are analyzed and presented as an instructional sourcebook for the architect, urban planner, and civic-minded reader. Jacobs (city & regional planning, Univ. of California, Berkeley) devotes the first part of the book to 15 of the finest manifestations, ranging from European medieval streets to the grand boulevards of Paris; from the network of finely scaled streets of Bath, England, to Richmond's (Va.) Monument Avenue, a tree-lined residential thoroughfare punctuated with fine civic sculpture. Examples are presented in plain-language text and rich line drawings, supplemented by street plans and sections all drawn to the same scale. One chapter, illustrating one-square-mile maps of street patterns in 50 cities, offers a fascinating comparison of urban fabric literally from Ahmedabad to Zurich. Recommended for

architecture and urban planning collections.- Thomas P.R. Nugent, New YorkCopyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Happy with purchase.

This wonderful book considers the civic street from many perspectives and describes it with poetic attention. The author has spent days on these great streets and brings careful measurement and observation to his carefully crafted text. If everyone planning streets and highways in America read this book and visited one of two of these great streets, it would enable a huge improvement. This book studies the street not from the simple American perspective of high velocity traffic sewer, but from the realities of a place to hang out. eat lunch, shop, socialize, people watch, court, celebrate and be. The read how these places work in this book is to realize how much our desperate focus on the automobile costs us. Buy this book and photocopy some of its illustrations for your next public hearing on town planning.

I was really very impressed with this book! It's an exceptional insight into what really makes for a pleasant, people-friendly street! I loved it so much, when I finished it, I immediately went back to the beginning and read it all over again! Really, really very good work! You will very much enjoy it if you love planning, architecture, landscape design, or just livable, beautiful neighborhoods!

Like the book a lot. Great illustrations.

great condition, just as noted

This is a great book for all those interested in understand the full sense of the street. Full of handmade extraordinary drawings. Not technical definitions. Enjoyable and easy to read.

I like this book, both for the beautiful illustrations and for the international view. The drawings and the text works very fine together and give a great value into understanding why some streets work better than others.

I love this book! The drawings are amazing and they really help backup what the author is saying, regarding density and proportion of streets.

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