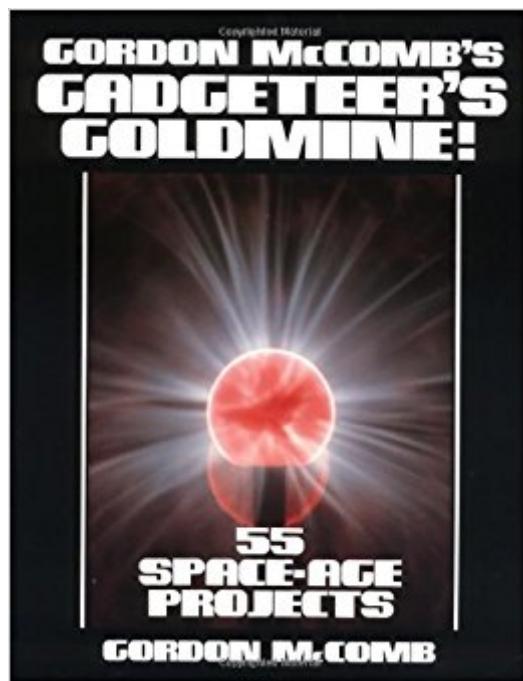


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# Gordon McComb's Gadgeteers Goldmine



## **Synopsis**

Gordon McComb's Gadgeteer's Goldmine is one of the most exciting, well-rounded collections of electronic projects available anywhere, featuring experiments in everything from magnetic levitation and lasers to high-tech surveillance and digital communications. Hobbyists and garage-shop tinkerers will find instructions for building such useful items as a fiberoptic communications link, portable He-Ne laser pistol, laser alarm system, ultrasonic pest deterrent, solar batter recharger, wireless sound transmitter, IBM PC control interface, and many others.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Gordon McComb is an avid electronics hobbyist and is the author of 50 books and over thousand magazine articles. He wrote the best-selling Robot Builder's Bonanza the most popular book on amateur robotics, as well as Robot Builder's Sourcebook

In typical TAB fashion, this book is a real find IF you can locate the materials used in these projects. I suppose an electronic experimenter that has a large outbuilding loaded with ancient parts could do well with this information, but I don't see where any of these projects is worthwhile to someone looking for something fun to do. Sorry TAB,,, I should have known from past experience.

Exactly as presented in the add at a very good price. Has all the things I was looking for including a gold mine of sources for the projects in the book.

Perfect gift for the tinkerers out there! AND it's a \*great gift\* for "Tech-minded" folks from 5-90 years of age!

Very interestingAnother great book by master McComb. A must have if you follow Gordon. It may not be new, but it's valuable.

As an individual with some background in electronics, this book was disappointing. Speaking from an engineer's standpoint, the book lacked everything that could have made it so good.

This 16 year-old book is a cut above most electronic hobby books that are published today. Many of the newer volumes appear to be rushed out the door and either are constructed for children or for very advanced hobbyists. This is an "intermediate" hobbyist book in that the author expects that you have some experience in tinkering with electronics, but does not necessarily expect that you have an engineering degree. Like the other reviewers, I found some errors in the instructions and parts lists in this book, so be very careful, especially since the first chapter of this book is dedicated to the danger of working with high voltages! This is not a book that merely involves some LED's and 555 timer devices. Instead, the author's projects include a high-voltage Van de Graaff generator, a tesla coil, and several projects involving lasers. Therefore, for safety's sake you should not just turn your high-schooler loose alone in the garage with your credit card number, the number to the closest wholesale electronics warehouse, and these projects. The final projects in the book are the tamest and safest. These involve a custom robot entitled "Scooterbot", designed long before the age of Lego Mindstorms. There are significant mechanical component assemblies involved in most of these projects, so the reader should be comfortable with mechanical as well as electrical tinkering, and most of all have a strong penchant for safety. However, if you are careful, I think you will find this book's projects both interesting and educational. Plus, it is a real bargain at its very low cost.

At first glance, this book seems to be a necessary addition to the average tinkerer's library. However, after purchasing the book I found little inconsistencies between the schematics and the text, typos, or something else which led to confusion and apprehension--as the book starts out by warning of the risk of death with most of the projects if the instructions and safety precautions aren't followed exactly, and repeats the warning with almost every project. Before buying this book I'd suggest becoming very familiar with high-voltage circuits (to the point where you can design your

own), otherwise you won't get as much out of it as you should. For example, the first project I tried was the variable xenon strobe, because I found all the parts in a \$3.50 kit online, and it's actually two projects in one. The first thing I noticed before building it was that the parts list (the book lists all the components you'll need to build each project) didn't match the schematic--the 555 IC isn't listed. The text says it's the heart of the circuit. Not a big deal, but then the text refers to a third diode, which is neither in the parts list nor the schematic. If this is a necessary part you could blow other components and/or, as the book warns you several times, kill yourself. As an intermediate-level "gadgeteer," I can't figure out if the text is wrong or if the schematic is wrong, and if the schematic is wrong (the text sounds correct) what to do about it. This book isn't really to teach how things work, it's more for an advanced gadgeteer to put his or her knowledge to use. There is a basic explanation of how each project works, but not to the point where you could go in not knowing anything and come away a rocket scientist. Overall I'd recommend this book only to an advanced gadgeteer, or someone who's very serious about learning these types of applications of high-voltage circuits. Once you do understand what's happening, though, this book shows you how to build the coolest things, either from scratch or by rewiring things you'd find at a junk shop, and for that, if you are at that level, I recommend it highly.

I love do-dads, thingamagigs and gizmos, and this book is just chuck full of them! Even better, the writer doesn't assume you're an utter moron, or that you have an advanced degree in Electrical Engineering. Fun and challenging, I highly recommend it.

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