

# **The Racecar Book: Build and Race Mousetrap Cars, Dragsters, Tri-Can Haulers & More (Science in Motion)**

*by*

**MaryAnn F. Kohl**



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## Synopsis

You may not be old enough to drive, but that doesn't mean you can't satisfy your need for speed. Author and physics teacher Bobby Mercer shows how to use mousetraps, rubber bands, chemical reactions, gravity, and air pressure to power fast-moving vehicles. Each of the 25 easy-to-build racecars is constructed for little or no cost using recycled and repurposed materials. Retrofit a toy car with a model plane propeller to make an air-powered Prop Car. Turn a potato chip can, a rubber band, and weights into a Chip-Can Dancer. Or use an effervescent tablet in a small canister as an impressive rocket engine for a Mini Pop Car. Every project in *The Racecar Book* contains a materials list and detailed step-by-step instructions with photos for easy assembly. Mercer also includes explanations of the science behind each racecar, including concepts such as friction, Newton's laws of motion, kinetic and potential energy, and more. These projects are perfect for science fairs or design competitions, or just having fun!

## Sort review

"Highly recommended." —Midwest Book Review  
"Edible racers would be a smash hit at learning co-ops classes, science competitions and birthday parties. Who will win the main event: Chocolate Thunder, Spud Racer, Mallow Magic, Bun Fun, or Rice Car? Start your engines!" —Practical Homeschooling  
About the Author Bobby Mercer has been a high school physics teacher for more than two decades. He is the author of *The Flying Machine Book* and *Smash It! Crash It! Launch It!*

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## Junk Drawer Physics: 50 Awesome Experiments That Don't Cost a Thing (Junk Drawer Science)

## What people say about this book

Consci, "Thorough and clearly written. I have been using this book with a middle schooler that is obsessed with cars. I was looking for some free time activities that would occupy the child with something useful, rather than his daydreaming. This book was excellent in that regard. The materials needed for the projects were easy to obtain. Most items were things that could be harvested from your recycling...cereal boxes, water bottles etc. There are cars that use mousetraps and even ideas to make cars out of food, like pretzel rods (as an axle) and hot dog buns, or another with candy bars and peanut butter cups (you'd have to use an alternative if you have students/kids with an allergy). Some use dowels, floral foam and fishing line. I think those are the most difficult to obtain items. The fact that the materials were very easy to obtain was a huge bonus. I can't stand it when books say that the crafts use "easy to find materials" and then you have to search in several stores to find the material. Some cars are as simple as using straws and balloons. That said a couple of the cars do need drills and may require parental supervision. What really impressed me about this book, though, is that there is actual teaching happening alongside all these activities. The author puts bite-sized bits of knowledge in with each car. You will touch on types of energy, law's of motion, friction and more. For an unmotivated child that loves cars, this is an amazing way to teach them the concepts and have them feel that the knowledge is useful. The student I purchased this for is hoping to make every single car in the book. Your child/student might not be so enthusiastic, but it would be easy to find activities that suit your purposes and complexity level. You could even turn some of these into science projects. I downgraded one star because of the photography. It is adequate, but the pictures are a bit hard on the eyes. They appear to be color photos that were printed in black and white. The photos needed some adjusting to get the contrast right. That said, it is still a fantastic book that I would recommend for teachers and parents alike. It says on the back cover that the author is (or was) a high school physics teacher. I used the book for a middle school classroom, but I can see how many of these cars could be used in a high school classroom to supplement the curriculum and help the students really grasp the concepts. I sure wish my physics teachers had done that for me."

Ebook Library Reader, "Wonderful for little builders.. My son loved receiving this book, right up his alley."

Stacey, "Great reference for cub scouts. My stepson loves this book! Great reference for cub scouts!"

The book by MaryAnn F. Kohl has a rating of 5 out of 4.1. 12 people have provided feedback.

## **Book Information**

Language: English

Paperback: 216 pages

Item Weight: 14.5 ounces

Dimensions: 8 x 0.5 x 8 inches

Reading age: 9 years and up

Grade level: 4 - 6

Hardcover: 96 pages

Spiral-bound: 64 pages

Lexile measure: 880L

Library Binding: 32 pages

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