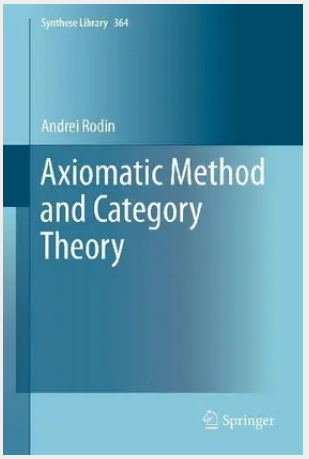
Rodin

Axiomatic Method and Category Theory



This volume explores the many different meanings of the notion of the axiomatic method, offering an insightful historical and philosophical discussion about how these notions changed over the millennia. The author, a well-known philosopher and historian of mathematics, first examines Euclid, who is considered the father of the axiomatic method, before moving onto Hilbert and Lawvere. He then presents a deep textual analysis of each writer and describes how their ideas are different and even how their ideas progressed over time. Next, the book explores category theory and details how it has revolutionized the notion of the axiomatic method. It considers the question of identity/equality in mathematics as well as examines the received theories of mathematical structuralism. In the end, Rodin presents a hypothetical New Axiomatic Method, which establishes closer relationships between mathematics and physics. Lawvere's axiomatization of topos theory and Voevodsky's axiomatization of higher homotopy theory exemplify a new way of axiomatic theory building, which goes beyond the classical Hilbert-style Axiomatic Method. The new notion of Axiomatic Method that emerges in categorical logic opens new possibilities for using this method in physics and other natural sciences. This volume offers readers a coherent look at the past, present and anticipated future of the Axiomatic Method.

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139,09 €
129,99 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9783319004037
Medium: Buch
ISBN: 978-3-319-00403-7
Verlag: Springer
Erscheinungstermin: 24.10.2013
Sprache(n): Englisch
Auflage: 1. Auflage 2013
Serie: Synthese Library
Produktform: Gebunden
Gewicht: 5738 g
Seiten: 285
Format (B x H): 160 x 241 mm

Kundenservice Verlag Dr. Otto Schmidt KG
Neumannstraße 10, 40235 Düsseldorf | kundenservice@otto-schmidt.de | 0221-93738-997 (Inland)