Crystals have fascinated us for centuries with their beauty and symmetry, and have often been invested with magical powers. The development of X-ray diffraction heralded the scientific study of crystals, leading to an understanding of their atomic arrangements at a fundamental level. The new discipline—X-ray crystallography—has subsequently evolved into a formidable science that underpins many other scientific areas. Crystallography: A Very Short Introduction traces the history of crystallography and shows how the discoveries in this field have been applied to the creation of new and important materials, to drugs and pharmaceuticals, and to our understanding of genetics, cell biology, proteins, and viruses.