Book Review

Practical Ultrasound: An Illustrated Guide, 2nd edition

By Jane Alty and Edward Hoey
Boca Raton, FL, USA, CRC Press, 2013
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Many established ultrasound practitioners will remember the effort and frustration involved in developing basic ultrasound competency during the initial stages of training. The first edition of this book was written by radiology trainees who had recently undergone this process and devised a text aimed at helping the new ultrasound practitioner to acquire the necessary skills to undertake ultrasound competently. The text has since been updated to include musculoskeletal, breast and FAST scanning but retains its commitment to this target group throughout.

The text assumes a basic knowledge of anatomy and pathology, but the practical techniques of ultrasound scanning are covered from first principles. Sections on basic ultrasound technique, ultrasound anatomy, image optimisation and terminology provide a solid foundation on which the rest of the text is built. The book is peppered with useful hints and tips which are usually only gained after many hours of ultrasound practice.

Application of theory to practice is evident throughout the text. Each chapter is dedicated to a particular anatomical area and contains a series of high-quality ultrasound images with accompanying line drawings, which demonstrate the standard ultrasound sections taken. These are accompanied by both pictorial and text information on how to obtain these sections. The result is a very structured step-by-step approach to undertaking an ultrasound scan. Common pathologies are also well described with

high-quality ultrasound images, line drawings and brief explanatory text. The book covers most common ultrasound examinations undertaken within a general ultrasound department.

Although the text is generally very well laid out, I did find the Doppler optimisation section a little 'cluttered' and difficult to follow. Additionally, it would be helpful to acknowledge that patients come in different shapes and sizes, meaning that standard ultrasound images are not always possible in every patient. This book should be used in conjunction with personal tuition to learn how to cope with the 'difficult to scan' patient.

Overall, this text offers a great introduction to those undertaking ultrasound training from a variety of clinical backgrounds. The authors have successfully balanced the provision of theoretical content with a very practical approach to ultrasound, which will be appealing to ultrasound trainees and established practitioners alike. The result is a visually attractive, easily readable book which will facilitate novice sonographers to rapidly acquire the skills to practice basic ultrasound accurately and safely. This text is highly recommended for all trainees in ultrasound and their clinical supervisors. It should find a place in most ultrasound departments, particularly those that provide ultrasound training, as well on university bookshelves.

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