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The growth of inorganic chemistry during the last fifty years has made it almost impossible for the student to assimilate all the factual information available. This book is designed to help the student begin to tackle this task by showing exactly how a chemist uses the Periodic Table to organize and process this mass of information. After opening with a clear description of the quantum mechanical basis on the Periodic Table, the author goes on to illustrate how a modern inorganic chemist uses the Periodic Table to interpret a wide range of chemical phenomena. Rather than giving the descriptive properties he illustrates how the variations are interpreted. Thus he describes vertical trends, horizontal and diagonal trends, and then isoelectronic relationships. The latter provides a basis for developing bonding models which account for the structures and reactivities for molecules. Finally he describes the horizontal and vertical relationships associated with the transition metals, the lanthanides, and the actinides. The basic methodology developed in Essential Trends in Inorganic Chemistry will enable the student to apply these basic principles to other problems and to assimilate more detailed accounts of modern inorganic chemistry in a structured way.