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Designed to help students appreciate the beauty of abstract patterns and the thrill of modeling the "real" world, this versatile, time-tested, and widely used text requires only two years of high school algebra. Suitable for a traditional one-year course in linear algebra or a more streamlined single-semester course, it can also serve for courses in finite mathematics or mathematics in the contemporary world for liberal arts students. Carefully chosen examples and exercises form the basis of this treatment, in which students solve problems related to biology (nesting habits of birds), sociology (rural-urban migration patterns), transportation (traffic flow), psychology (verifying claims of ESP), business (maximizing profits), and other fields. Topics include matrices, Gauss-Jordan row operations, systems of linear equations without unique solutions, determinants, linear programming, the simplex algorithm, dual problems, probability, and game theory. Each chapter features sample tests with answers