# Biometrics: The Ultimate Guide to the Science of Identifying People

Biometrics is the science of using unique physical or behavioral traits to identify people. This Very Short provides a concise and accessible overview of the field, covering the basic principles of biometrics, the different types of biometric systems, and the applications of biometrics in a variety of settings.
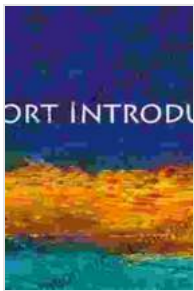
Biometrics: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions) by Ekbert Hering

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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The Basics of Biometrics

Biometrics works by measuring and analyzing unique physical or behavioral traits. These traits can be divided into two main categories:

- **Morphological traits** are physical characteristics of the body, such as fingerprints, facial features, and iris patterns.

- **Behavioral traits** are actions or habits that are unique to an individual, such as gait, voice, and signature.

Biometric systems can be used to identify people in a variety of ways. The most common method is to compare a biometric sample from an unknown person to a database of known biometric samples. If the sample matches a known sample, the person can be identified.

Types of Biometric Systems

There are many different types of biometric systems, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. Some of the most common types of biometric systems include:

- **Fingerprint recognition systems** use fingerprints to identify people. Fingerprints are unique to each individual, and they are very difficult to forge.

- **Facial recognition systems** use facial features to identify people. Facial recognition systems are becoming increasingly accurate, and they are now being used in a variety of applications, such as security and law enforcement.

- **Iris recognition systems** use iris patterns to identify people. Iris patterns are unique to each individual, and they are very difficult to forge.

- **Voice recognition systems** use voice patterns to identify people. Voice recognition systems are becoming increasingly accurate, and they are now being used in a variety of applications, such as customer service and security.

- **Signature recognition systems** use signatures to identify people. Signature recognition systems are not as accurate as other biometric systems, but they are still used in a variety of applications, such as banking and legal documents.

Applications of Biometrics

Biometrics is used in a variety of settings, including:

- **Security**: Biometrics can be used to control access to buildings, rooms, and other secure areas. Biometric systems can also be used to identify people for law enforcement purposes.

- **Convenience**: Biometrics can be used to make it easier for people to access services. For example, biometrics can be used to identify people for banking, shopping, and travel.

- **Healthcare**: Biometrics can be used to identify patients for medical treatment. Biometric systems can also be used to track patient progress and to prevent fraud.

- **Identification**: Biometrics can be used to identify people who are missing or deceased. Biometric systems can also be used to identify people who are trying to commit fraud.

The Future of Biometrics

Biometrics is a rapidly growing field. As biometric systems become more accurate and affordable, they will be used in an increasing number of applications. In the future, biometrics could be used to identify people for everything from banking to voting.

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For more information on biometrics, please see the following resources:

- Biometrics Institute

- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Biometrics

- ISO/IEC 19794-1:2011 Information technology – Biometric data interchange formats – Part 1: Framework

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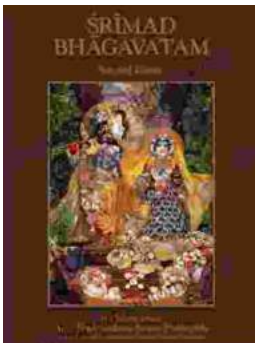
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