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Nota di contenuto	Handlebodies -- Relative handlebodies -- Generalized one-relator 3-manifolds -- N-relator 3-manifolds -- The space of heegaard graphs.
Sommario/riassunto	This book is a study of combinatorial structures of 3-manifolds, especially Haken 3-manifolds. Specifically, it is concerned with Heegaard graphs in Haken 3-manifolds, i.e., with graphs whose complements have a free fundamental group. These graphs always exist. They fix not only a combinatorial structure but also a presentation for the fundamental group of the underlying 3-manifold. The starting point of the book is the result that the intersection of Heegaard graphs with incompressible surfaces, or hierarchies of such surfaces, is very rigid. A number of finiteness results lead up to a rigidity theorem for Heegaard graphs. The book is intended for graduate students and researchers in low-dimensional topology as well as combinatorial theory. It is self-contained and requires only a basic knowledge of the theory of 3-manifolds.