

# Isaac Beeckman Biography

## Isaac Beeckman

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# Contents

<a href="#">Isaac Beeckman Biography.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Biography.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>

# Biography

Born on December 10, 1588, Beeckman was a man of many talents. He studied theology, mathematics, nautical science, Hebrew, medicine, astronomy and experimented in combustion, pumping and hydrodynamics. He had also been apprenticed in a factory where he learned a great deal about building devices to perform experiments.

Beeckman strongly believed that hypotheses should be verified through experimentation, a feeling echoed by Galileo. Beeckman applied logical mathematical methods in his experiments in physics and deduced numerous principles.

In 1613 Beeckman put forward the concept of inertia : so long as no outside force acted on an object, the object 's velocity or direction should not change. (Beeckman reached this conclusion nearly 30 years before Isaac Newton was born.) Five years later he used his law of inertia to establish the law of uniformly accelerating objects. He discovered the distance that an object falls is directly related to the square of the amount of time it is falling, and used algebraic notation to express the law.

Beeckman believed that mechanical explanations for phenomena were more satisfactory than theories that had been accepted just because they were based on simplicity. He rejected the popular theory that an "internal magnetic force" was responsible for the movement of the Earth and suggested his concept of inertial motion was much more fitting.

Beeckman was also responsible for establishing in 1628 Europe's first meteorological station.