For homebrewers getting started on the tightest of tight budgets who don't want to spend the extra money on a book, there are two good options.

The fast option is to go to http://www.beernut.com/ and download their simple instructions.

http://www.beernut.com/Web_store/extract.pdf

It is a very good orientation to the major steps that matter in brewing.

The other really good "cheap" option is to pick up the free "Introduction to Homebrewing" magazine from Zymurgy, which should be at your homebrew store. http://www.beertown.org/homebrewing/beginning.html

These two publications can get anyone started. After that, you really should pick up the Complete Joy of Homebrewing to get a proper orientation. Once you've made it through that, you can pursue a ton of other good books. It is just a matter of what aspects you want to get into.