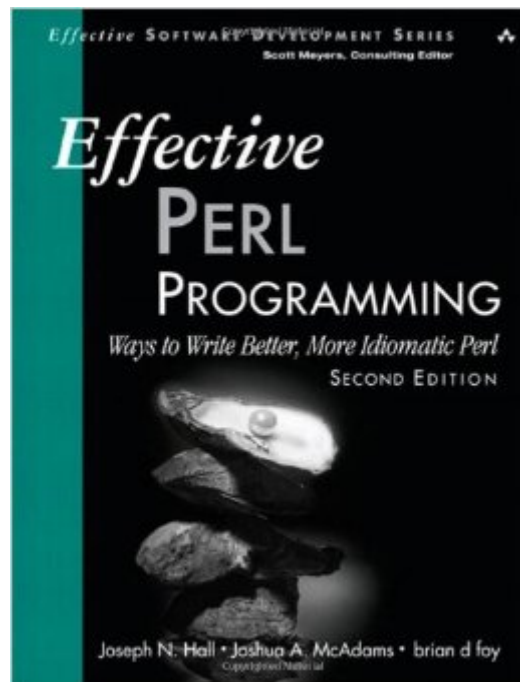


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Effective Perl Programming: Ways To Write Better, More Idiomatic Perl (2nd Edition) (Effective Software Development Series)



Synopsis

The Classic Guide to Solving Real-World Problems with Perlâ™ Now Fully Updated for Todayâ™s Best Idioms! Â For years, experienced programmers have relied on Effective Perl Programming to discover better ways to solve problems with Perl. Now, in this long-awaited second edition, three renowned Perl programmers bring together todayâ™s best idioms, techniques, and examples: everything you need to write more powerful, fluent, expressive, and succinct code with Perl. Â Nearly twice the size of the first edition, Effective Perl Programming, Second Edition, offers everything from rules of thumb to avoid common pitfalls to the latest wisdom for using Perl modules. You wonâ™t just learn the right ways to use Perl: Youâ™ll learn why these approaches work so well. Â New coverage in this edition includes Â Reorganized and expanded material spanning twelve years of Perl evolution Eight new chapters on CPAN, databases, distributions, files and filehandles, production Perl, testing, Unicode, and warnings Updates for Perl 5.12, the latest version of Perl Systematically updated examples reflecting todayâ™s best idioms Â Youâ™ll learn how to work with strings, numbers, lists, arrays, strictures, namespaces, regular expressions, subroutines, references, distributions, inline code, warnings, Perl::Tidy, data munging, Perl one-liners, and a whole lot more. Every technique is organized in the same Items format that helped make the first edition so convenient and popular.

Book Information

Series: Effective Software Development Series

Paperback: 504 pages

Publisher: Addison-Wesley Professional; 2 edition (April 29, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0321496949

ISBN-13: 978-0321496942

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.6 x 9.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (25 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #497,327 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #37 inÂ Books > Computers &

Technology > Programming > Languages & Tools > Perl #403 inÂ Books > Computers &

Technology > Programming > Web Programming > JavaScript #1410 inÂ Books > Computers &

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Customer Reviews

Effective Perl Programming packs a lot of useful information into a slim and manageable volume. There is no "filler" material in the book, which assumes you are already familiar with Perl. I have developed Perl software for more than fifteen years, and here are the aspects of Effective Perl Programming which struck me particularly: The book doesn't cover what has already been covered elsewhere, so the material is all fresh and the space is used to investigate topics in reasonable detail. The focus on idiomatic Perl - the authors say: "Although Perl's motto may be "There's More Than One Way To Do It," the corollary is, "But Most of Them Are Wrong," or "Some Ways Are Better Than Others."" The book illustrates how to write idiomatic Perl from the choice of language construct through to testing code and using CPAN (the Comprehensive Perl Archive) effectively. The authors demonstrate a deep understanding of Perl, and have clearly honed their examples and explanations. Well explained areas include: list vs. array, context, local vs. my, Unicode and utf8 handling, and which language constructs are appropriate where. Their experience with Perl in the real world shows in the explanations. The writing and examples are clear and concise. The book's web site has an errata section which is kept up to date so I could mark up the known errors. Effective Perl Programming revealed some of the features of recent Perl and new modules which I hadn't noticed or had time to internalize. Sometimes it is time to unlearn old habits and get up to date! The authors have clearly carefully selected which material to cover, and covered it well. Part of writing idiomatic Perl is to improve the way I think of writing in Perl, and the topics selected by the authors cover about 90% of the things I need to do in my software development using Perl. The book uses colour in the code examples to highlight the important bits. The quality of the book as a physical artifact seemed better than most "mass market" technical books I buy these days. The time I spent reading the book has already been handsomely rewarded. All in all the book is well written, accurate, and a delight to read. The authors know their stuff and provide pointers to resources which cover other aspects of Perl well.

Having purchased the first edition many years ago, I've found it probably the most useful Perl book I ever had - one of those that Internet somehow couldn't manage to replace. It showed how to think in Perl, often tackling problems in ways not possible in other languages. This book is an excellent sequel that I'd consider a must-have for any Perl developer. I routinely check almost every Perl book that comes out, and this is probably one in a dozen I've seen lately that could teach me something about the language itself. There couldn't be a better indication that Perl is alive and kicking.

I don't own the first edition, so I can't compare the two editions. I did read a review of the 1st edition that talked about how densely populated it was for a small book, well that certainly is the case for the 2nd edition. With 12 years of Perl growth since the 1st edition, there is a lot more density added to the book. It is not, as the authors state, the definitive guide on Perl, but it is well worth owning and covers a lot of topics (including Perl 5.12) in small concise sections or "Items" that end with a "Things To Remember" section which is a list of key points that the reader should "remember". I highly recommend this book for any perl programmer, even though it is geared towards the intermediate to advanced Perl programmer. I also recommend checking out the book's website ([effectiveperlprogramming dot com](http://effectiveperlprogramming.com)), which states "The Effective Perler is the online extension of the Effective Perl Programming, 2nd Edition." I try to visit the website every couple of days, it has more informative "Items" that did not make it into the book. It's worth a visit and there are fairly consistent posts.

This book essentially an excellent cookbook for Perl 5.10 with a lot of interesting material. Many recipes will be familiar to experienced Perl programmers, but I think everybody can find interesting bits to learn in this book. It reveals some features of Perl 5.10 that few people know about like "state" variables (alternative to "my" variables that keeps the value between invocations), extensions to regex including the ability to assign names to variables that contain matching elements of regular expressions (traditionally \$1, \$2,...), case statement (which uses the keyword "given") and so on and so forth...The authors love affair with idioms is a little bit unfortunate, because that is a dangerous path, but most recipes are solid and do not abuse Perl just in order to look clever. Still, what I hate about Perl and Perl book authors is that it looks like Perl attracts special type of people who love complexity for the sake of complexity: complexity junkers. And some pages of the book raised red flags for me. You need clearly understand that there is a danger with some of those idioms, and shorter is not always better. You better be clear then idiomatic ;-). Again, most of the book contains excellent recipes, but sometimes the authors lose the sense of reality as happened when they try to disprove valid recommendations by David Tiler: "Many Perl programmers write programs that have references to \$_ running like an invisible thread through their programs. Programs that overuse \$_ are hard to read and are easier to break than programs that explicitly reference scalar variables you have named yourself.")All-in-all this is a good collection of Perl recipes tuned to Perl version 5.10 and later. Some recipes are extremely valuable as they explain or clarify some less well known but useful Perl features or constructs introduced in version 5.10. The authors provide (mostly ;-) useful advice.

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