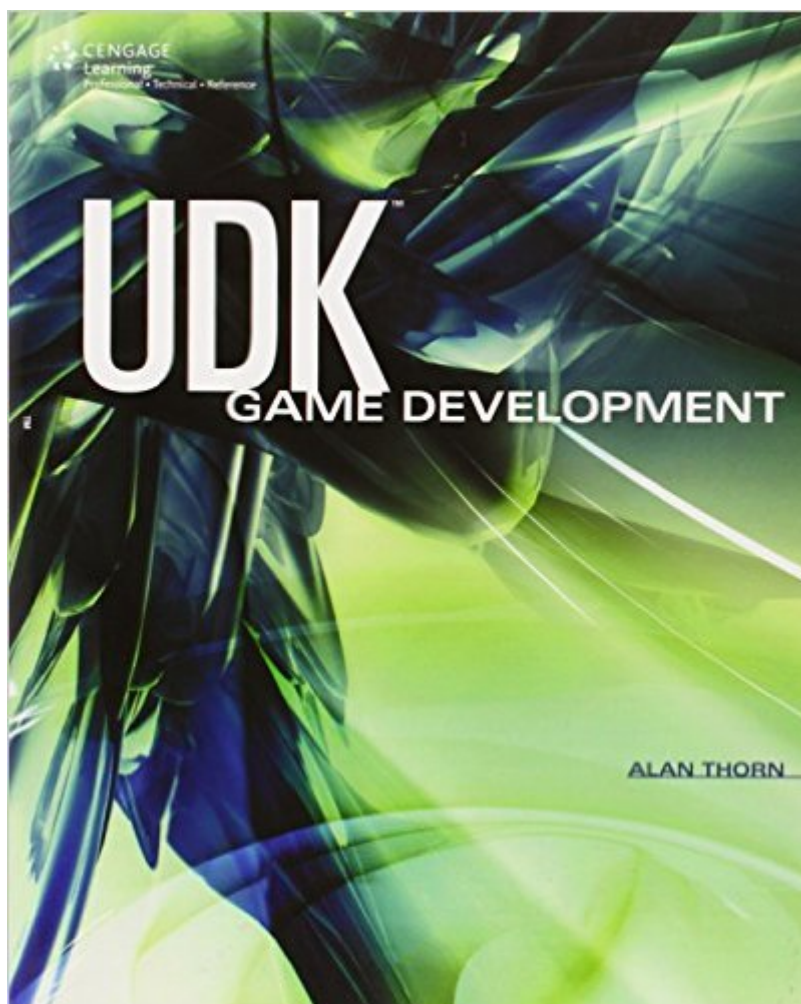


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UDK Game Development



Synopsis

These days, the games industry is a multi-billion-dollar business. In this competitive marketplace, developers seek to gain an advantage over the competition by using ready-made, third-party tools and engines that enable them to quickly design high-powered games. One such tool is the Unreal Development Kit, or UDK, created by Epic Games. With the freely downloadable UDK, game developers can turn their existing graphics, sounds, ideas, concepts, and plans into fully working and cohesive games. UDK & GAME DEVELOPMENT is written with newcomers to the UDK in mind. It is arranged so that each of the core foundational UDK components is considered in depth and one by one, in the best order in which to tackle them. Reading this book, you'll explore such key topics as meshes, materials, textures, sounds, and lights. As you do, you'll discover how to build a number of levels, or mini-games, that feature music, animated characters, weapons, destructible scenery, lighting effects, particle systems, and more. After reading this book from cover to cover, you'll have a firm grasp of UDK essentials. A companion Web site contains all the UDK levels constructed in this book, source code for the UnrealScript language, and material and mesh files.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have to say this book was a great buy, I absolutely love the writing style and I never felt lost through all the chapters. I just recently finished this book a couple days ago and I feel that I have a much stronger base with UDK. The chapter that dealt with Scaleform is unfortunately outdated and doesn't work 100% with Scaleform 4.0 and AS3. In the beginning of the book however the author

explains that this book is not future proof, but that the lessons taught can be used anywhere. This breaks down when he starts to go into Scaleform and teach the basics coding ActionScript. At the time of writing this book UDK was in Scaleform 3.x, which only supported AS2. Now UDK supports Scaleform 4.x and has AS3 support. Sadly this also means that the AS2 scripting taught in this book does not work with the new Scaleform. I'm using the UDN website to start learning about Scaleform and AS3. Another gripe I had about the writing was when he went into Unreal Script. He did however go into the basics, which helped me into the next book I'm reading, but the code he used for the camera placement breaks down. In the book I'm reading now the camera placement has been changed in only one place, and works perfectly fine, even after death. I do believe the lessons taught in the beginning of the chapter were great, but I would look elsewhere if you're looking for a book about Unreal Script. Other than that I had issues with the actual images printed. I ordered the Kindle copy and was disappointed that the images weren't in color. Even with the website hosting the images, I had to download them and had to still deal with black and white images. Don't get me wrong, this book is a terrific book for beginners, especially since I still am one.

If I had to describe this book in one word, it would be "painless". It is laid out in a very well thought-out, sensible manner. It was such a pain to go through the internet and find a Youtube tutorial here, an outdated walkthrough there, etc. Even Epic's documentation is very "jumpy". I decided to find a book about the UDK, and I bought this one almost blindly. I will update this review as I go through the book. A bit of background about me: I'm a Computer Science major. I mainly program, but I also have experience with software such as 3ds Max, Mudbox, and Photoshop. I'm also an avid gamer, and I've gone through a good deal of titles running on the Unreal Engine. Along with a general curiosity as to how some of these games ran, I have a few ideas for some games. I was originally interested in just using UnrealScript, but I realized that wasn't enough, and that I would need to learn the development tools as well. So, I bought this book. Just a small gripe before I begin: the main problem I had with this book was the pictures. They are in black and white, and not very high quality. While I found that the explanations were enough, it would have been nice to have the pictures both in color and in higher quality. The publisher has made the image files available on its website (search Google for "Delmar UDK Game Development"), though not in color. They are very high quality files, but it does get tiresome switching back and forth between book and computer monitor to look at the images. It's not a HUGE deal, but it would have been nice for the publisher to have gotten it right the first time. A small aside (last one, I promise): This book uses the May 2011 UDK. I'm currently using the December 2011 UDK, and I have not ran into any problems.

I would highly suggest this book to anyone who is serious about learning how to work in UDK. Mr. Thorne does an excellent job of explaining concepts clearly and the images and downloadable support files are icing on the cake. All the book's images are in B&W which, admittedly, isn't ideal, but is forgivable given the number of images in the book and the cost of color printing. Also, the images are available for download on his website, which I found useful. I have been learning to use UDK for roughly 6 weeks (after an 8 year hiatus from hobbyist game modifying) and have been using free online tutorials, the UDN, Epic forums and some game development training sites before having read this book and I find it to be as good as the best online tutorials I've come across so far [which, for the record, is everything on 3dMotive.com - those guys are great]. However, I could see how someone with no game development or programming knowledge would have a hard time with this book - it's not meant to be a primer or 'how to' for the complete novice. Instead, the author wisely focuses on UDK and admits that there are already enough sources to learn other skills such as programming, 3d modelling, game design, etc. If you are starting out brand new to game development, I would still suggest you get this book, but don't expect to be able to pick it up and work through chapters 1 - 14 immediately. That said, even a total novice could likely make it through the first few chapters with no issue. At the time of writing this review, I am using UDK version December 2011, which is slightly newer than the version the author uses throughout the book.

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