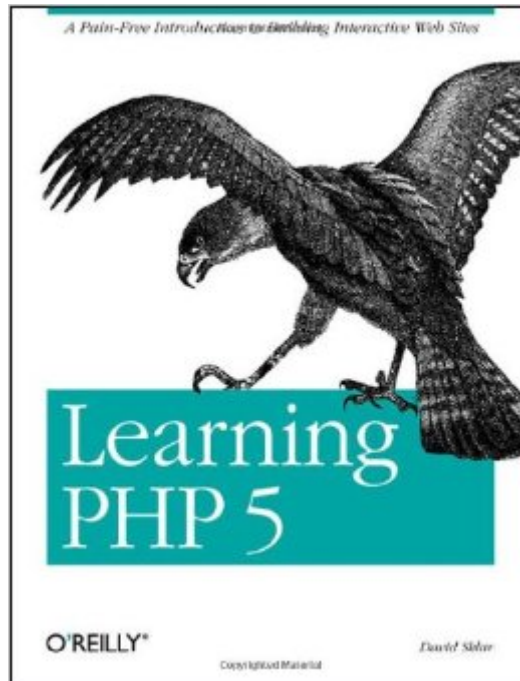


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Learning PHP 5



Synopsis

PHP has gained a following among non-technical web designers who need to add interactive aspects to their sites. Offering a gentle learning curve, PHP is an accessible yet powerful language for creating dynamic web pages. As its popularity has grown, PHP's basic feature set has become increasingly more sophisticated. Now PHP 5 boasts advanced features--such as new object-oriented capabilities and support for XML and Web Services--that will please even the most experienced web professionals while still remaining user-friendly enough for those with a lower tolerance for technical jargon. If you've wanted to try your hand at PHP but haven't known where to start, then Learning PHP 5 is the book you need. If you've wanted to try your hand at PHP but haven't known where to start, then Learning PHP 5 is the book you need. With attention to both PHP 4 and the new PHP version 5, it provides everything from a explanation of how PHP works with your web server and web browser to the ins and outs of working with databases and HTML forms. Written by the co-author of the popular PHP Cookbook, this book is for intelligent (but not necessarily highly-technical) readers. Learning PHP 5 guides you through every aspect of the language you'll need to master for professional web programming results. This book provides a hands-on learning experience complete with exercises to make sure the lessons stick. Learning PHP 5 covers the following topics, and more: How PHP works with your web browser and web server PHP language basics, including data, variables, logic and looping Working with arrays and functions Making web forms Working with databases like MySQL Remembering users with sessions Parsing and generating XML Debugging

Written by David Sklar, coauthor of the PHP Cookbook and an instructor in PHP, this book offers the ideal classroom learning experience whether you're in a classroom or on your own. From learning how to install PHP to designing database-backed web applications, Learning PHP 5 will guide you through every aspect of the language you'll need to master to achieve professional web programming results.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

There are more new books being published about PHP than you can shake a joystick at. PHP (along with program friends - MySQL and Apache) has become very popular among developers and web designers, and for good reason. As a programming language, it is particularly suited to web development projects, while being relatively easy to write, use and learn. More importantly, it's open-source and free, cross-platform, and widely supported. The book, "Learning PHP5", by David Sklar, is one of the latest volumes dealing with PHP. It describes itself as "a Pain-Free Introduction to Building Interactive Web Sites" and provides a gentle introduction to the latest version of PHP, which is version 5 and only recently available. This book is not particularly useful for those experienced already with PHP, nor for those wanting to upgrade their knowledge of PHP from versions 4 and earlier to the newest version. It probably is not particularly useful for those power programmers who need and want a deep and comprehensive coverage of the topic. But it is a very well-written and designed introduction to PHP 5 for beginning programmers or those experienced PERL, ASP, or Cold Fusion programmers who want to learn a different language. There are many illustrations and code samples sprinkled throughout the book. Sklar, however, occasionally skims over some topics in furtherance of the completion of some practical examples. The publisher is O'Reilly Media, Inc. which seems to have an editor's policy of covering complex computer-related topics in a comprehensive manner by publishing a range of volumes covering different aspects of a topic or from different angles or for different audiences.

There are several problems with this book that the author should fix for a future edition:1. He structures the pages in the examples and exercises such that they mix decision code with user interface code. That these two are not separated is a serious flaw; doing server side validation is different for pages where the different types of code are separated, and it is best to keep them separated when different people are working on each type of code.2. The part of the code (in code samples from chapter 6 onwards) that check for the presence of the `$_POST['_submit_check']` generates an error if you have apache set to show errors. The fix for this is to place the following

code before the "if(\$_POST['_submit_check']):if (array_key_exists('_submit_check', \$_POST)) { // print "\$_POST[_submit_check];} else { \$_POST['_submit_check']=false;}(the commented-out portion was for troubleshooting)3. In chapter 2, he goes about formatting output using printf(), \n, and placeholders to place leading whitespace in front of numbers to line them up in a column. However, HTML ignores excessive whitespace, unless such whitespace is enclosed in <pre> tags, which if used leads to some other problems. The result is that formatting and extra line breaks do not appear in the browser when testing the code. \n should be replaced by
, and a <table> should be used (with the align attributes of the elements set) to format output.4. He only touched on the "5" part of php 5, and for the most part this is restricted to the part of the book dealing with databases. The author would do well to go into creating classes.5.

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