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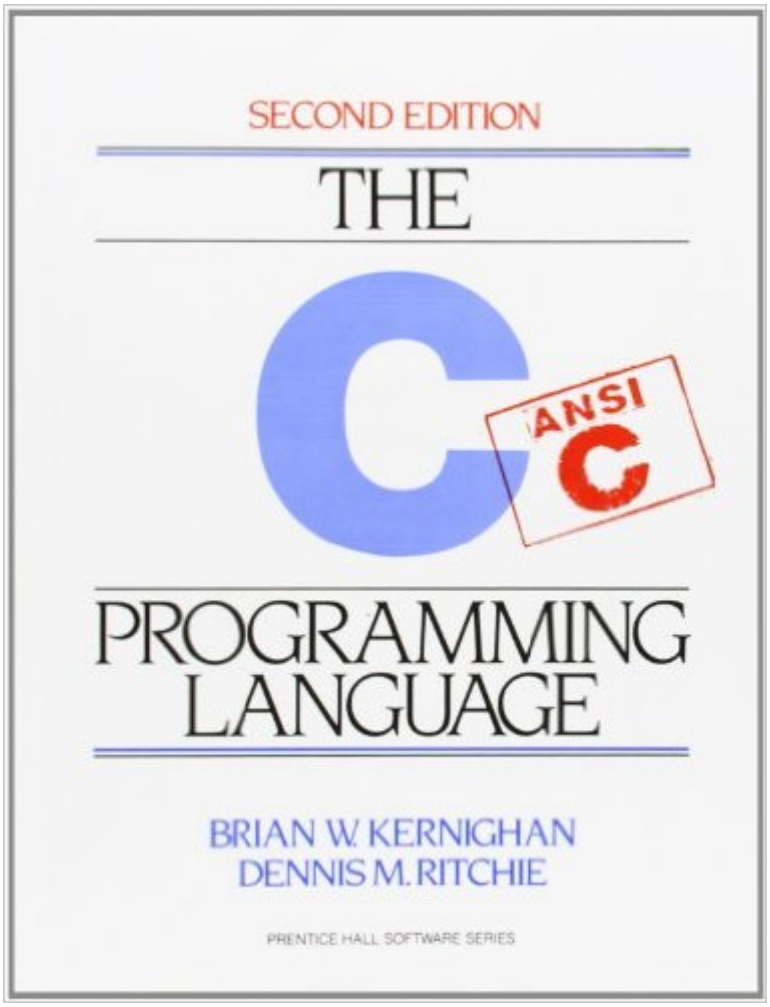
The C Programming Language



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Synopsis

The authors present the complete guide to ANSI standard C language programming. Written by the developers of C, this new version helps readers keep up with the finalized ANSI standard for C while showing how to take advantage of C's rich set of operators, economy of expression, improved control flow, and data structures. The 2/E has been completely rewritten with additional examples and problem sets to clarify the implementation of difficult language constructs. For years, C programmers have let K&R guide them to building well-structured and efficient programs. Now this same help is available to those working with ANSI compilers. Includes detailed coverage of the C language plus the official C language reference manual for at-a-glance help with syntax notation, declarations, ANSI changes, scope rules, and the list goes on and on.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book (widely known as K&R, after the authors' initials) has for over twenty years been the best way to learn C. When I got this book in 1980, I had access to a Unix system and worked through much of the tutorial material in it. On the way I learnt a great deal, not just about C, but about good programming style, code reuse, the value of clear comments--in short, I was introduced to the skill set of an experienced computer professional.The book was a trendsetter in several ways. For example, the very first exercise given is to print "hello, world"; this is now seen as the first exercise in innumerable other, more recent books, many of which may not realize that they are borrowing

from K&R. The rest of chapter 1 (there's a chapter 0, an introduction; another geek-cool change which has been widely copied) is a tutorial that takes you through assignment statements, data types, if/else, for, while, printf, function definitions, arrays, and variable scoping, in less than 30 pages. If you work your way through the embedded exercises you'll have written utilities to strip tabs, reverse input by lines, strip trailing whitespace from input, and several others. This is much more challenging than most tutorials, but the effect on the student is that you feel you are being treated as an equal. The book doesn't talk down to you; it gives you accurate and concise answers. It's written for programmers, in other words.The next few chapters go back over the elements of C in more detail, and should also be treated as a tutorial. Going through this material religiously will be far more valuable than any college class could possibly be.There is a reference section at the back, which is good to have. But the real value of this book is in the tutorial approach: it is a rare pleasure in the computing field to find a book that is simultaneously clear, stimulating and informative.

I've first bought this book when I started my academic studies, after 5 years of work with Fortran 77 & three years of work with Pascal.This small book (270 pages, including the index) served me well through my degree, and I still keep the dog-eared, yellowing, aged book with me at work.The book focuses on the language itself - this is no hands-on book (no explanations on how to use this compiler or that debugger, though it is a little biased toward Unix) - in a clear, concise, and thorough way covering all of the language and it's standard libraries.I especially liked the excercises (the solutions come in a seperate volume) and the C source code examples of how some of the library routines are (or may be) implemented.With this book I had no problem understanding the more difficult subjects (e.g. many people have problems with pointers, and this book makes the subject easy to understand) and avoiding pitfalls.I've read it in a week, and keeping it in hand's reach smoothly started programming in C.The only drawback I see in this book is it's price, it's a small book which sells *very* well, and I'd expect it's price to be lower. This book is *not* for people who study C as their first programming language (those would be better served with a pair of books - a first course in programming and compiler guide).

This book is not "for Dummies". It assumes that you already have some knowledge of structured programming languages (i.e. Pascal). For example, this book spends four well-written pages explaining everything you need to know about functions. If you don't know what a function is, this will clearly not be enough. However, if you do know about functions, this book will not drone on and on for an entire chapter or two on the subject like some of the foot-crunching tomes the size of an

encyclopdia. The book is expensive ($40) for its size (approx. 250pgs.), but it is worth every penny. To quote the authors: "C is not a big language, and it is not served well by a big book." As a bonus, almost anything you need to know about C can be found in seconds using the excellent index. It should be noted that this is a language reference and will NOT tell you how to use your editing environment or compiler. In summary, intermediate or advanced programmers should be able to learn C with reasonable proficiency in a short amount of time.

About 5 years into my programming career, I was mildly interested in learning C, so I picked up this book. At the time, I was deterred - it was very brief, terse, and confusing, so I put it back down again.But now, years later, with many more languages under my belt, I find myself again drawn to C. So I picked up this book again (2nd edition), and finally, I see the light! It is a wonderful book, I agree with all the glowing comments people have written about it, BUT! It is a book written by a computer programmer, for other computer programmers, not a book written by a teacher for a beginning student.C is alive and well, and still in use today - it lives "at the core" of most popular languages. You can see its influence on C++, JavaScript, even Visual Basic. If you are ready for it, reading and working through the examples in this book will provide you with a solid base for understanding an amazing variety of 'newer' programming languages.You have to work through the examples, though. If you 'just read' this book, you'll comprehend and retain close to '\0' (null) of the information presented. It's only by going through the examples, that you really nail the subject matter. Yeah, I know, some of these examples are tough - but they're also real-life, and typical of routines every programmer writes and uses. I myself sweated blood over exercise 3-3, but hours later when I was done, the satisfaction of comparing my answer favorably to others was worth it. :-)I have the C For Dummies books 1 and 2, and after going through them, I was still a Visual Basic programmer. ;-D If you already are a computer programmer, and want to obtain serious knowledge in C without wasting your valuable time, learn from this book.

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