



iPhone Programming (Big Nerd Ranch Guides)

Joe Conway , Aaron Hillegass

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Based on Big Nerd Ranch's popular iPhone Bootcamp class, iPhone Programming: The Big Nerd Ranch Guide leads you through the essential tools and techniques for developing applications for the iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch. In each chapter, you will learn programming concepts and apply them immediately as you build an application or enhance one from a previous chapter. These applications have been carefully designed and tested to teach the associated concepts and to provide practice working with the standard development tools Xcode, Interface Builder, and Instruments. The guide's learn-while-doing approach delivers the practical knowledge and experience you need to design and build real-world applications.

iPhone Programming (Big Nerd Ranch Guides) Details

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From Reader Review iPhone Programming (Big Nerd Ranch Guides) for online ebook

Seth says

This is, hands down, the best introduction to language and framework of APIs that I have ever read. Including Aaron Hillegass's Cocoa Programming for Mac OS X. My students and I have been able to puzzle our way pretty deep into Cocoa and the iOS APIs with only the assistance of this book.

Stef says

I'm not really sure if the whole 'copy all the code and you'll eventually know how to program' really worked for me. The book needs more challenges. Not optional ones at the end of the chapter, but it needs to challenge you while you're reading. I finished it (without doing the optional challenges). I know now where I find stuff in XCode and if things are possible in Obj-C, but I have not learned how to actually do them.

Ken-ichi says

Good overview. Now I feel ready to get started and build something. I may have to update this review if I find some significant gaps in my knowledge.

Note that as of Feb 2012, the second edition of this book is somewhat out of date. Many of the templates the refer to are no longer in Xcode, and recent features like Storyboards and ARC are not covered at all. I believe the 3rd ed is coming out soon, though.

Aarti says

Fantastic book, covers the breadth of the subject, intro to the language, tools, libraries and design patterns. The challenge problems at the end of the chapters are well defined and build on content covered. The forums have good discussions regarding the challenge questions. By the end you have built more then 20 little apps. May be a hard book for new programmers, as there are many concepts.

Jory Anick says

This is a fantastic reference book for developers who want to learn Objective-C and Cocoa Touch with the intention of writing iOS apps. Concepts like ViewControllers, Views, and the peculiar syntax of ObjC are demystified, and the included sample apps are easy to understand. Whatever is missing from this book can be found on Ray Wenderlich's tutorials site as well as Stackoverflow, this book really is the best place to get started.

David Octavia says

Mike Roberts says

This book worked well for me. It's a lot of 'learning by doing', with completely led exercises. I'm ok with this since just the act of reading, typing and running is a lot of what I need to learn a new language, but I could see how others might not like something as prescriptive.

I have little to judge this by from a technical point of view since I'm new to Objective C and iOS development, but on the plus-side I liked how they erred towards code rather than UI wizards.

There was nothing on unit-testing, which I was disappointed by, nor anything on threading and very little on the bigger iOS environment (e.g. nothing on ad-hoc, or app-store, deployment).

As it was though it was a fast, engaging book and (let's be honest) the first time I've actually finished a software book in a long time.

William Cline says

At about halfway through, I feel like I'm spending more time typing in example code than I am learning things. I'm also finding it a little difficult to extract general lessons out of the specific coding exercises.

I'm going to set this aside and refer back to it as needed.

Linda says

This is a decent introduction to iOS programming. It is intended to be a "hands on" book, leading the reader through examples and concepts. It tries to introduce concepts as needed and not burden the reader with more than is needed at any point in time.

It's a decent intro though probably not worthwhile for intermediate to advanced programmers. Experienced programmers looking for knowledge on Objective C or iOS might find it useful (as I did) but there may be too much of the book that you end up skimming to get to the parts you care about.

Kevin Kirkhoff says

This is widely considered one of the go-to books on learning iOS development. For the most part, the authors do a great job of explaining the concepts presented in each chapter...in the beginning of the book. Towards the end, it seems like topics were rushed. In their defense, they did state in the last chapter (the best one IMO) that they didn't go very deep into topics and that we should go deeper when we started our own projects.

One thing people need to know (which I thought was very confidence-building for me) was that in that last chapter they said the good news is that you have the basics to be an iOS developer. The bad news is that you're probably not a very good iOS developer. Bingo! With all the information they presented and all that is out there in Apple's documentation, it's impossible to become fluent in it by following the book. It does provide a good starting point, but it was nice to read that I shouldn't expect to be a hot-shot developer right away, even though I've been writing software for 30+ years.

One other great confidence-builder is that they end most chapters with some challenges (Bronze, Silver, Gold). The Bronze were intended to use things we learned in that chapter and may take 10-30 minutes to do. Silver added content we had learned in earlier chapters. Those may take a bit longer. The Gold you could expect to spend the better part of the day doing. Those challenges (Bronze and a few Silver) gave me the confidence to know that I really did understand some or all of the chapter, even if it felt like I was zipping through with no clue what I was doing.

This will now be a great reference book when I get stuck on topics and concepts while working on my own projects. Plus, I'll be taking BNR's bootcamp in a couple of months which pretty-much goes through the book, but in one week. I'm now armed with questions and curiosities to hash out with the book's author.

Raj says

Great book to learn from if you prefer text to videos for learning coding.

flowtoolz says

- + broad range of topics
- + lots of material for the price
- + engaging writing style
- + nothing is used that hasn't been explained before
- + every discussed topic gets explained in detail
- + concepts are introduced when needed
- + practice and theory always go together
- + excellent layout

- the main problem that comes with this approach:
general aspects are heavily intertwined with api specifics,
so it's hard to look them up or learn both separately. if
you wanna get all the precious general advice, you have to
nibble through every part of iOS that you may not care about.

however, if read from start to finish, this is an understandable

and most rewarding read.

February Four says

I don't have the technical background necessary to do anything with this book, but what I saw was pretty neat. One day I might even be able to come back to it. My husband thought it was interesting just from looking at the cover, and he's the programmer, but he doesn't have time to read it now. Returning it to the library, and considering this one of those "I'm sure I'd like it if I understood it" sort of books. No rating because of this.

Kevin says

Great book that covers a fair amount of breadth and an interesting amount of depth around common iOS components. Probably not worthwhile for non-beginners since the book progresses in a tutorial-style presentation and doesn't serve too well for out-of-the-blue look ups if they haven't read this before. For folks with a bit of iOS experience, working through the book may fill in the knowledge and intent gaps of some things they might have used in the past.

Ettore Pasquini says

A really good introduction to iOS development. The style of this book is very much "learn by example", letting the code speak in place of lengthy explanations. It's a little more wordy than previous books by Hillegaas (a true Objective-C veteran from the NeXTSTEP days), but it's still nicely terse and extremely clear.

The only real requirement before reading this book is some knowledge of C, even superficial, and basic understanding of OOP. Other than that, you're pretty much taken by hand by Hillegaas and Conway across the most important iOS concepts and frameworks. There's even coverage of Core Data, Apple's own ORM system.

I only have 2 complaints: the biggest is that iPad programming is only mentioned in a 5 pages chapter, which does a good job introducing the topic but fails to discuss even the most important iPad-only APIs. The iPad is increasingly important today and I think it deserves more attention. Secondly, UITableView programming could have used a more in-depth look, since it's by far one of the most useful UIKit classes (if not *the* most).
