jQuery in Action

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A good web development framework anticipates what you need to do and makes those tasks easier and more efficient; jQuery practically reads your mind. Developers of every stripe-hobbyists and professionals alike-fall in love with jQuery the minute they've reduced 20 lines of clunky JavaScript into three lines of elegant, readable code. This new, concise JavaScript library radically simplifies how you traverse HTML documents, handle events, perform animations, and add Ajax interactions to your web pages.

"jQuery in Action," like jQuery itself, is a concise tool designed to make you a more efficient and effective web developer. In a short 300 pages, this book introduces you to the jQuery programming model and guides you through the major features and techniques you'll need to be productive immediately. The book anchors each new concept in the tasks you'll tackle in day-to-day web development and offers unique lab pages where you immediately put your jQuery knowledge to work.

There are dozens of JavaScript libraries available now, with major companies like Google, Yahoo and AOL open-sourcing their in-house tools. This book shows you how jQuery stacks up against other libraries and helps you navigate interaction with other tools and frameworks.

"jQuery in Action" offers a rich investigation of the up-and-coming jQuery library for client-side JavaScript. This book covers all major features and capabilities in a manner focused on getting the reader up and running with jQuery from the very first sections. Web Developers reading this book will gain a deep understanding of how to use jQuery to simplify their pages and lives, as well as learn the philosophy behind writing jQuery-enhanced pages.

jQuery in Action Details

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From Reader Review jQuery in Action for online ebook

Robert Muller says

jQuery in Action is a great user's guide for jQuery and jQuery UI. It explains things in detail, provides full reference material for the options and parameters, and covers the ground. What it does not do is provide explanatory code examples and tutorials. The "labs" are fine as far as they go, but they're not a substitute for actual coding as learning. I think this book would be best for people who have already learned the basics of jQuery (and thoroughly understand HTML and CSS and Javascript coding) who need more detailed explanations of things. Start with a tutorial, then use this book to dive deeper for specific things. Also, if you haven't got the CSS background, get it first before trying to use this book, because there is very little help on the CSS side of the equation and very little example CSS.

Jean Tessier says

At work, we use jQuery for client-side logic. Since we don't have a front-end engineer yet, I need to be able to maintain and extend this code. I like the other "... in Action" books and this one has good ratings on Amazon. Plus, I get the PDF of it so I can search through it for specific keywords.

Right off the bat, the introduction to jQuery really helped me make sense of the notation and some of the weird incantations. It also mentioned some DOM navigation methods that I will be able to apply immediately to our codebase to make it a little better.

Jeanne Boyarsky says

"jQuery in Action" (second edition) was a great book. It kept almost everything I liked in the first edition while adding new stuff I liked and updating the content for the latest version of jQuery.

Cool stuff that's new in the second edition:
1)More exercises than the first edition to try in the labs
2)The second half of the book on jQuery UI
3)This is the first print book I saw with references to HTML 5
4)Mine came with a paper giving free access to the first and second edition PDF – not sure if that was because I got a review copy or they all do
5)The last sentence made me smile - "We wish you health and happiness, and may all your bugs be easily solvable!

What I continued to like:
1)Screenshots of labs and reminders to do labs
2)Emphasis on common idioms, gotchas, etc
3)Casual style and cultural references – this time caught a reference to a Jimmy Buffett song
4)The PDF is in color
5)Showing the non-jQuery way first for things like AJAX

What I didn't like:
1)Ripping out the paper with free book codes damaged the binding a bit
2)Could really use a list of tables – they are such great references
3)The function syntax boxes look the same for custom written plugins and built in. Awkward for later when flip through for reference.
4)Would have liked more on how to use plugins and which are available
5)Could really use a list of tables – wait, I said this. Maybe I should make my own.

I read this book largely on the train and didn't get the full benefit from it. I need to go back and do the labs and exercises. These aren't optional!

Disclosure: I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for writing this review on behalf of JavaRanch.

Jon says

While I like a certain familiarity of tone in tutorial/reference books, the authors were a little too informal, and it got old reading sentence after sentence of just how great jQuery is. Also, the examples are contrived, without any apparent attempt at a real-world example. This book taught me what each jQuery command does, but I don't feel I learned anything about what jQuery can do for me.

Still, this is the book everyone seems to recommend, so I fear I would be even less satisfied by the other jQuery books on the market.

Syed says

I would like to add to the review as I progress in my reading. I want to try chapter by chapter review.

Part 1 has only chapter "Starting with jQuery". This covers the features of jQuery from high level and what are the current best practices and the features that are deprecated. It has been written crisply and covers what it takes to move forward. Also discusses about different versions and their support in various browsers.

Part 2 covers the core library in its entirety.
This starts with chapter 2, which covers the selection of elements in numerous ways. It covers the element selection using CSS Selectors and has in-depth coverage with simple samples, which helps readers to understand the selectors. Furthermore, this also covers the various types of filters supported in jQuery and completes the section by developing custom filters. This chapter closes with coverage of context as parameter in jQuery functions. Overall the coverage is complete and has a lab to verify understanding.

Taylor says

If you do any JavaScript programming, you should really check out jQuery. And if you are going to seriously use jQuery, this book is invaluable. (If you do neither, move along, nothing to see here...)

The documentation for jQuery, while rather good for an open source project, tends to be a bit scattered and some things can be hard to find. Also, trying to use some advanced idioms from the online documentation can be hard to figure out. Lastly, some of the reasons why jQuery was put together the way it was put together can be difficult to glean from the exiting documentation.

This book more than fills in these voids in the exiting doc. Like almost every Manning Press book I've read, this book is extremely well written. This is not just a regurgitation of the library APIs. It gives both context and background for each topic it tackles. The examples are non-trivial but easy to follow and understand while at the same time highlighting the point being made. The prose itself is extremely easy to read: no dry, dusty technical reading here.

In short, if you are using or are planning on using jQuery in one of your projects, you owe it to yourself to pick this one up.

Dan Stewart says

Read a little, code a little. That was my experience. I caught myself saying, "Wow, I want to try that" on almost every page. This was a great book to learn jQuery. Even though while I'm writing this review, jQuery has come out with a new version, the book's content is still relevant.

Ahmed Moniem says

I have just finished a Manning Book titled "jQuery in Action". I am here just to share my opinion with you about this book.

Really, it gives me a good starting point in jQuery commands and utility functions. Also, it demonstrated many practical examples to test the core API of jQuery. So, I think it is a good start for beginners who need to know what is the jQuery?!

Also, it gives me a very high level of the plugin capability in jQuery and introduced me with some famous plugins like forms plugin, UI plugin, Live query plugin, and dimension plugin.

But IMHO, I think it is just suitable to give you highlights about the core API of jQuery and it doesn't stand as a jQuery reference at all. So, if you are expecting when you read this book to be a jQuery guru then you are wrong.

Also, I have missed practical examples on the interaction of jQuery with ASP.NET and how we can use them efficiently together. The book didn't mention ASP.NET altogether because it is focusing on the core API.

So, it is a very basic jQuery book in my opinion suitable to learn how to write jQuery scripts and some basic concepts to give you a starting point to read more advanced materials.

Dejan says

An excellent guide to practical JQuery. The book lacks on JQuery internals (thus - in Action), so best read with JQuery sources open :)

Especially interesting chapters are: 6.3 Manipulating JavaScript objects and collections (if you learned about JQuery from tutorials, you probably don't know this stuff) and 4.1 Understanding the browser event models (won't give you much practical insight, but an interesting read).

Johan says

I have been using Javascript for some time, and I have realized long time ago how much jQuery can make the code much more effective. I should have read this book a long time ago, its a very good book for anyone who have been copy-pasting jQuery code from Internet and instead want to have the rules in the head. A Big Recommend. For those who already are quite fluent in jQuery I am not so sure though that this should be the pick.

Kevin says

Good coverage of jQuery in general; the first few chapters give you a solid framework of understanding from which to move through the rest of the library.

The second half of the book is really just a duplication of the jQuery docs, though, and not as necessary.

You won't find any tips or tricks with using jQuery with your server-side technology of choice, however.

Michael Economy says

This book is useless, it's the jquery docs with a bunch of useless jibber jabber.

If you're considering reading this book don't, just read the jquery docs (which have been kept up to date since this book was published).

Widi says

Good for javasript framework reference, but less practice example..

Daniel Dent says

Read 3rd Edition MEAP so there were fair amount of typos and some funkiness in examples. The book was quite a chore to get through as many parts read like a reference guide. There was enough there to keep me coming back. I would recommend the book to someone new to jQuery and I'd strongly recommend reading appendix first. I came to this book fresh off Bear Bibeault's Secrets of the JavaScript Ninja and having extensive experience with JavaScript mostly using core and Prototype. I'm looking forward to converting much of this code to jQuery and this book is fundamental step.

Kyle says

Good book and (from what I've heard) the defining read for those looking to become familiar with jQuery. Filled with great notation, and well written examples, this book served it's purpose. The last quarter of the book contained details on jQuery UI which I skipped.