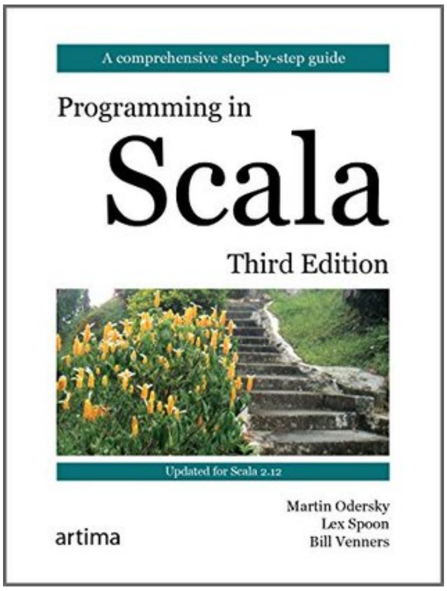

Programming in Scala: A Comprehensive Step-by-Step Guide, Third Edition

Martin Odersky , Lex Spoon , Bill Venners

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Scala is an object-oriented programming language for the Java Virtual Machine. In addition to being object-oriented, Scala is also a functional language, and combines the best approaches to OO and functional programming.

In Italian, Scala means a stairway, or steps. Indeed, Scala lets you step up to a programming environment that incorporates some of the best recent thinking in programming language design while also letting you use all your existing Java code.

Artima is very pleased to publish a new edition of the best-selling book on Scala, written by the designer of the language, Martin Odersky. Co-authored by Lex Spoon and Bill Venners, this book takes a step-by-step tutorial approach to teaching you Scala. Starting with the fundamental elements of the language, Programming in Scala introduces functional programming from the practitioner's perspective, and describes advanced language features that can make you a better, more productive developer.

Programming in Scala: A Comprehensive Step-by-Step Guide, Third Edition Details

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From Reader Review Programming in Scala: A Comprehensive Step-by-Step Guide, Third Edition for online ebook

Dmitry says

Ok, just finished reading this book, well, I agree with those majority of readers that this book is "must read" for every Scala dev. Even it is written by creator of Scala, the guy with pure and strong scientific and theoretical background, the book is read quite easy, trust me, I am a C++ dev, I've read corresponding C++ Stroustrup's bible, it is nightmare, this Scala book is just a teenage comics
comparatively to C++ sibling book.

Yamir Encarnacion says

After completing about 40% of the book according to my Kindle for iPad this is what I have to say.

Things I love about the book:
(1) the Kindle for iPad edition was very well formatted (has a hyperlinked table of contents, hyperlinks throughout the book, chapters start on a new page, well formatted and easy to read code examples)

Things I like about the book:
(1) thorough (the book covers a lot of material)
(2) clearly written with no obvious typos/errors
(3) liked the way each chapter was organized. An Introduction followed by a more thorough discussion of the topic at hand followed by a summary of what was covered
(4) This book will work well as a reference after reading it as it is organized well enough that you can jump straight to a particular topic

Things I dislike about the book:
(1) choice of chapter order was not apparent to me. The book feels more like a lot of very well written tutorials, each covering a well defined topic, instead of a single unified tutorial (which is what I was expecting) with the goal of taking the reader from novice to a more advanced level.
(2) code examples are more complicated than they need to be
(3) the Kindle ebook does not have page numbers

Other thoughts:
I am of the opinion that this book will not get you up and running quickly. You have to read quite a bit before you get to a point where you can write useful code (I would suggest reading at least up to and including chapter 17 -- My Kindle tells me this is 38% of the book -- when you consider that the paperback version has 852 pages, 38% translates to around 320 pages of book material). Also, I believe that Scala is different enough from other languages I have used or studied that I think that (at least parts of) the book would have required a second reading or I would have to have followed up this book with a different book (I did something similar -- see More on getting up to speed quickly below) before I could be effective with the language.

More on getting up to speed quickly:
Before writing this review I also started taking the Coursera course (www.coursera.org) on Functional

Programming using Scala taught by one the authors (Odersky). The course material is available even though the class has ended. There are only 7 days of college course style lectures with each day's lecture lasting between 1 and 2 hours. If you want to get up to speed quickly, I highly recommend that course. I was up and running after the first day's lecture. The course is a good way to follow up on the material in the book.

Finally:
I gave this book five stars because this book is superior to other programming books I have read in terms how it is written (format), the material it contains (quantity and quality), how clearly that material is presented (readability), and how long I think the material will remain useful for (durability). I do not rank a lot of my books with 5 stars. I believe that I got a very good bang for the buck.

Paul says

Not a lot to say here, other than: not optional if you're a Scala developer!

Rod Hilton says

I've heard a lot of people refer to Programming in Scala as "dry" or "boring". I think this description is not accurate, and a more accurate description is "thorough".

Programming in Scala is not a book to get you up and running in Scala quickly, writing good Scala code as soon as possible. This book is about UNDERSTANDING Scala, and not just how to use it, but how it works internally, what aspects of it are merely syntax sugar, and what that sugar is converted to under the hood. It covers aspects of the compiler, the equivalent Java that Scala is being converted to, and virtually everything else. Programming in Scala puts you in the mind of the designer (no surprise, since most of the book was written by Scala's designer).

No stone is left unturned, no aspect left unmentioned. Programming in Scala is everything you would ever need to know about Scala and more. In fact, I wound up skipping a few chapters at the end, because I don't particularly care about GUI programming or parsing XML. This is THE Scala Bible.

If you're looking to get up and running in Scala soon, understanding enough to be a really good programmer with Scala, you want Scala for the Impatient by Cay Horstmann. But if you're the type of person who sees "magic" in programming languages and wonders why the hell that works at all, Programming in Scala is your book. It helps establish the underlying RULES of the language, the kind that, once you understand them, you can PREDICT how Scala would probably implement something.

The book is very long, and very dense, but it is not dry. Really good examples throughout, though sometimes the examples are so complex that the reader's brain devotes more time to understanding the examples than to learning the principles they wish to establish.

Overall, a very good Scala book, but perhaps not an ideal FIRST Scala book.

Andy says

This is how a book about a programming language should be written. It gives you the basics, but also provides details that you should know to be effective and efficient using Scala. What makes the book really great is that it is useful even if you aren't planning on writing a line of Scala. There are a lot of good programming practices and patterns that are given in the book (both explicitly and implicitly).

Rahul Phulore says

Still the best book to get into Scala. A few complaints:
1. A lot of it needs to updated to the current language version.
2. Some examples in the book are mentally taxing and drive attention away from the main topic.
3. Type classes deserve more attention.
4. Their should be a greater emphasis on language philosophy.

Johnny says

Woah. Amazing! This is a great book. Excellently written. Of course it couldn't be a great book if it weren't for the fact that Scala is a totally awesome language. When I was teaching myself Perl, I had to read the book (*the* Perl book, _Programming Perl_), two times in order to get it. It was just so different from any programming language I had previously known, that I just couldn't get it the first time. I knew pretty early on into the Scala book that I would have to read it twice, for the same reason. This has never happened to me besides with Perl and Scala. Most programming languages are, well, pretty similar to some other programming language I already know. Scala is revolutionary. Don't mis-take me; I've done plenty of functional programming before. Perhaps if I had used Erlang before instead of Scheme, Scala might seem a bit easier. But in any case, wow. Everything about it just feels so awesome. Like if you just figured out how it was supposed to work, programming would be so easy, without any painful boilerplate, with language features to address scalability design problems that more traditional languages like Java just cannot handle. Of course, learning how to use it right is not going to be easy. If it were, it could never be so powerful. This is clearly a very carefully designed language, and designed by some very thoughtful and intelligent people with lots of experience in both programming and language design. All this, and the whole Java runtime at your fingertips. I am sold, 100%.

Rutvik Patel says

val book: String = "Programming in Scala"
s"one should keep it (${book}) around as long as he/she is doing ${book}"

Imran Kazi says

Odersky is a poet of computer language and Scala is his haiku.

Vitor Cavalcanti de Albuquerque says

TL;DR: This is the book to go if you want to feel comfortable about Scala, but it takes time and patience from the reader. The examples in this book won't teach you how to build complex systems. The Kindle version is perfect.

This book will teach you all the magic behind Scala. I liked this book a lot because it's simple to understand and clearly explain why some things happen in Scala. If you want to feel comfortable working with Scala, then this is the book to go.

However, it requires some effort and patience from the reader. For instance, I was expecting to learn about case classes, implicits and for comprehension right off the bat, but it took me 15, 20 and 23 chapters, respectively, before deep diving in it. I had to read about things that usually don't matter at first (but as important) such as Packages and Imports, Abstract Members, Scala's Hierarchy, Unit testing, etc. I felt that the chapters could have been sorted differently.

Another down side of this book is that most examples don't follow software engineering good practices and the reader has to be really careful about it. I strongly suggest reading this after you finish this book. If you are looking for a book that will teach you how to build complex systems in Scala, this is not the book you want to read. The author is really clear about having short and concise examples to save the trees, so don't expect to see beautiful and clean code here.

To sum up, this is a really good book and you'll finish it feeling prepared to work with Scala, but it requires patience and time from the reader.

Eric Casteleijn says

Scala is probably the worst programming language I've had the misfortune to use. The syntax and the way the compiler works make it feel like a rushed experiment. This book either flaunts the flaws of the language, or jokingly dismisses them. If you're forced to program in Scala, don't buy this book. I hear "Scala for the Impatient." is better, but best of all just try to avoid it altogether.

Daniel Korzekwa says

From http://blog.danmachine.com/2009/12/ti...

"...
For those, who want to learn more about Scala, I'd like to recommend very good book, actually one of the best books I read this year. Despite the fact it's a technical book I would compare it to reading Harry Potter. Simple language, easy to understand, short chapters and can't stop reading it. Here is the link: Programming in Scala by Martin Odersky
..."

Keith says

Pretty good fuckin' programming book, okay?!

Scott Shipp says

If you're going to be doing Scala every day, buy it now!

Siobhán says

Tips for learning Scala from someone who did it against their will and is now the senior most Scala engineer in their office somehow*:

1. Google around for Twitter's material on Scala (specifically this and this) and work through it.
2. Attempt some Scala. Be bad at it. Hate Scala. Swear it's the dumbest language ever invented and what on earth is functional programming doing.
3. Return to the Twitter material vaguely understanding better what Scala is and why it's the way it is.
4. Make peace with Scala.
5. Read this book, cover to cover — and I mean cover to cover.
6. Conquer the world.†

Now for the actual review

I just realized while cleaning up my CS shelf that I'd never marked down this book as having been read. And what a shame! Of all the books I read while starting to learn Scala and functional programming, this is the *only* one that was worth reading and the *only* one that was helpful.

Because honestly reading this book, written by the person who created Scala, really helped me grasp the language, see how I can use it, see where I can play with options, and get really into the nitty gritty as much as I wanted to.

You do not need any other book to learn Scala beyond this one. I read so many before this that were all meh at best, but this one was nothing like the rest.

*Yeah, I don't know either, but I've made it to step six so maybe that's why.

† Not optional. Sorry.