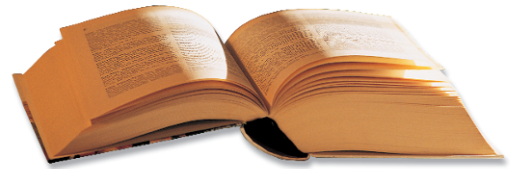
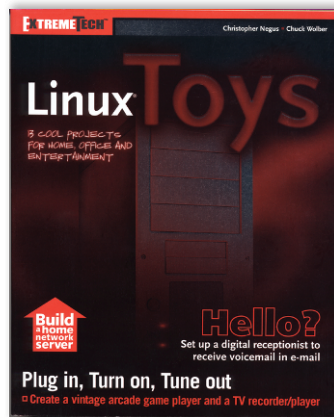


# Book Reviews



## Linux Toys

Linux Toys brings together a number of projects designed to make your life more interesting, or at least add some fun to the cold winter nights. Some of the projects you may have tackled already. For instance, many of us still play music on our computers that we have ripped from our CD collections, simply because we are too lazy to keep on changing the CDs or because we only like some of the songs on each album.



On the other hand, other projects were things that I had either never thought of or would not attempt because of the complexities involved. While I store digital photographs on the computer, I had not thought of using an old dedicated

computer as a “picture frame” to display an ever changing gallery of images, equally I had been put off trying to build a Linux video recorder as it seemed to be very complex. Both these tasks, and more, are covered in step by step detail and after reading the chapters, I was left feeling that maybe this was something I could try after all, during the next holiday break.

There are 13 projects covered in the book: Music jukebox, home video archive, TV recorder, arcade game player, home network server, home broadcast center, temperature monitor, telephone answering service, mini ISP, web hosting, Linux on a floppy, with

BSD games, toy car controller and the aforementioned digital picture frame.

Each project starts with a list of both the hardware and the software needed, most of the software is provided on the accompanying CD. All the projects are developed to run on Red Hat 9.0, but the source code is included on the CD, so if you wanted, you could compile to run under other distributions.

Useful websites are listed at the end of each chapter. I was disappointed to discover, when looking at the website for the temperature sensor, that the kits are no longer made, although information on how to make your own sensors was fully explained.

Overall the book was good fun, entertaining and thought provoking. One to add to your Amazon wish list. ■

**Christopher Negus and Chuck Wolber**  
**360 pages plus CD**  
**Wiley, 0-7645-2508-5**  
**£27.95, US\$ 29.99, EUR 44.40**

## Learning Red Hat Linux

Red Hat Linux is synonymous with Linux for the majority of the world. O'Reilly is synonymous with Linux handbooks. This book therefore has much to live up to.

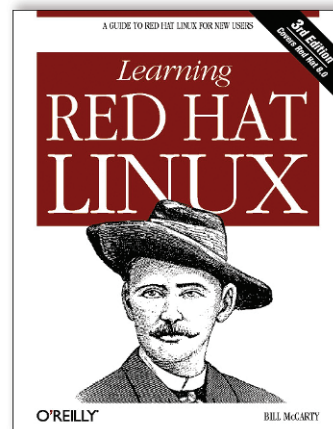
It is aimed at those who wish to set up a new Linux box and takes the reader through basic installation to internet connection and advanced shell scripts.

Now in its third edition, the book deals with Red Hat 8.0 as its foundation, and even supplies this on CDs, should you need it. The style is what you would expect from something that is now in its third version – simply to follow but not condescending. The reader is quickly taken through the basics with little time to become bored. Explanations on why things operate are written in a more normal explanatory format, though it does contain those little sidenotes so beloved

by publishers to indicate a useful tip, or where more care is required.

The book is exactly what you would expect from a guide to setting up a new box. This can be considered the standard reference in its field. Other authors aiming to write similar works should note that this will need something exceptional to surpass it.

Once you have a system up and running, installation guides are rarely used. Luckily this manual covers the use of scripts and how to write them. This chapter, along with the appendices, is



useful to have to hand as it always manages to produce something new each time I read it.

It would be nice to see the book updated sometime next year to cover the new changes, and possible cover some of the high availability functions. Having said that, even if you are used to working with Red Hat every day, you

should consider this as part of your bookshelf. ■

**Bill McCarty**  
**336 pages plus CD**  
**O'Reilly, 0-596-00469-9**  
**£28.50, US\$ 39.95, EUR 39.95**