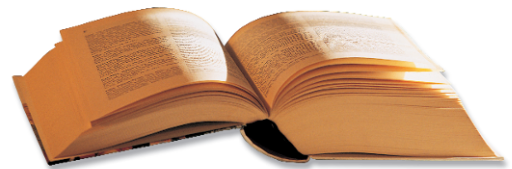


# Book Reviews



## Perl Template Toolkit

This book deals with the Template Toolkit which is probably the easiest and most powerful templating system, and gets around the problem of mixing Perl code and HTML mark-up code on websites.

Any Perl monger worth his salary will have already heard of templating, as this can produce a simple method allowing you to create a code snippet that can easily be changed by someone who has never come across Perl before. Real Perl mongers will already be using template toolkit and this book is aimed at proving the system is perfect for all templating needs.

The layout and sections of the text are nicely collated. The first half of the book, with easy to follow examples, takes you



gently through all of its features. The second chapter is a complete tutorial for building a website. Showing some of the power that the system allows. Following on from this are chapters that build on directives and filters. Midway through the book we are shown the insides of the toolkit so we understand how it works.

The latter half of the book deals with extending function and features of your toolkit, as well as the all important accessing of databases. This is really aimed at those who know a little Perl beforehand. The final two chapters on Advanced static web page techniques and Dynamic web content deserve to be made into a book in their own rights. These prove to be a

compulsive read and re-read and contain many useful techniques to put into practice.

If I have one criticism, it would be the lack of tests and problems at the end of each chapter. The book makes you want to try things straight away. This is due to the building enthusiasm that the authors put into the text. Although other books on the subject exist, this one benefits by having some of the main developers as authors.

It is clear in its examples and possibly the best buy for anyone wanting to produce useful and more importantly, maintainable websites for clients. Now if only I could find a book by the same authors on security techniques, life would be far simpler. ■

**D Chamberlain, D Cross & A Wardley**  
**592 pages**  
**O'Reilly, 0-596-00476-1**  
**£28.50, US \$39.95, EUR 38.00**

## Linux Programming by example: The Fundamentals

The best way to learn is by example, and this book seeks to teach Linux programming in this way. All major topics are covered – files, directories, permissions, interfaces etc. – and each topic has numerous example programs to give a good feeling of what is possible, using genuine sections of source code from popular Linux programs.

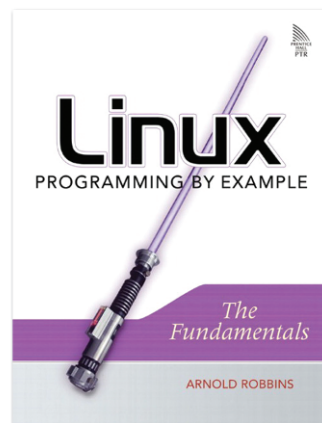
Each chapter then ends with a series of exercises to work through to give further practice. Particularly tough questions are labeled, so that you know you are not just being a little stupid, if you have difficulty working through the question. The book is aimed at those new to Linux programming but requires a good working knowledge of C programming skills. It would be useful to anyone making the switch from Windows programming or contemplating

their first Open Source project.

*It is not designed for the complete novice.*

The book concluded with a useful section on debugging – which, as everyone knows, is what really takes the time. If something you have spent ages crafting fails to work, you need to find out why, and this section contains a number of tools and techniques to help. Most aspects covered by the book are relevant to Unix, as well as Linux, and apply to all flavors of Linux. Any exceptions should be noted as such.

A section in the book asks why you would want to learn in a short space of time, and explains that you need time to



learn from your mistakes. Short cuts are not available.

Appendix B is a printed copy of the Caldera Ancient Unix license, thus letting you see the Unix sources used as examples in the book. This is a good primer for

learning programming, although maybe not as clearly set out as some similar titles have been. ■

**Arnold Robbins**  
**752 pages**  
**Prentice Hall, 0-1314-2964-7**  
**£31.99, US \$39.99, EUR 53.07**