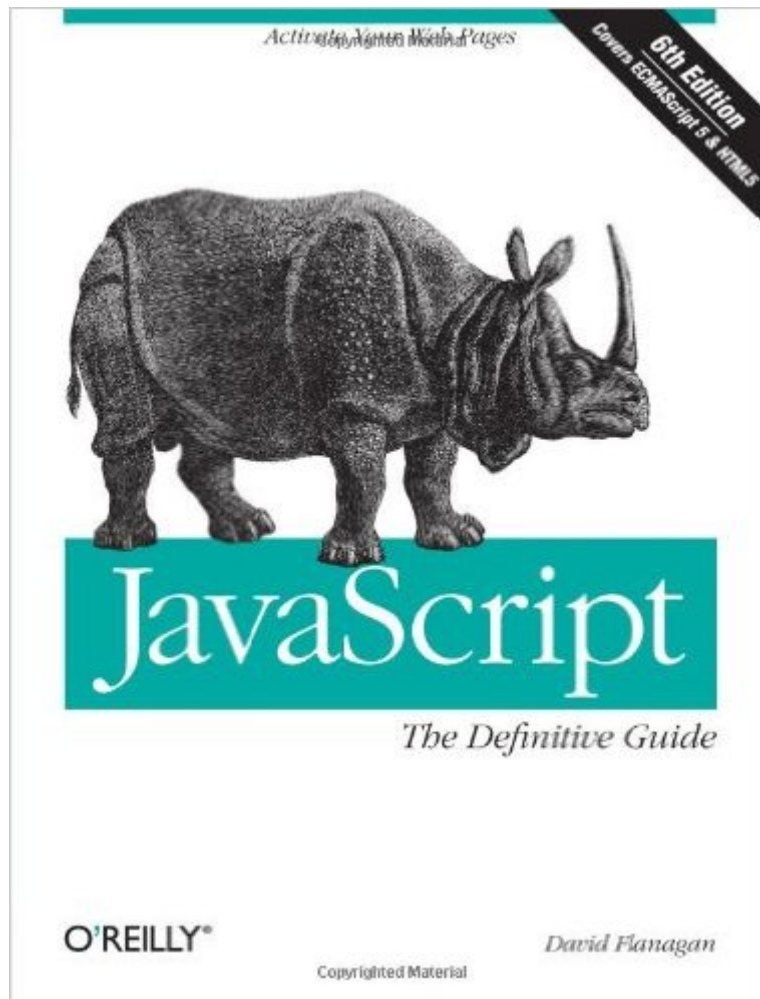# JavaScript: The Definitive Guide: Activate Your Web Pages (Definitive Guides)

Synopsis

Since 1996, JavaScript: The Definitive Guide has been the bible for JavaScript programmersâ ”a programmer's guide and comprehensive reference to the core language and to the client-side JavaScript APIs defined by web browsers.The 6th edition covers HTML5 and ECMAScript 5. Many chapters have been completely rewritten to bring them in line with today's best web development practices. New chapters in this edition document jQuery and server side JavaScript. It's recommended for experienced programmers who want to learn the programming language of the Web, and for current JavaScript programmers who want to master it."A must-have reference for expert JavaScript programmers...well-organized and detailed."â ”Brendan Eich, creator of JavaScript, CTO of Mozilla"I made a career of what I learned from JavaScript: The Definitive Guide.â •â ”Andrew Hedges, Tapulous

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I simply wanted to say how much David's book has meant to my learning and understanding of Javascript, and programming in general. I had initially tried learning through many free sources online, and while most were very good in tackling specific issues or illustrating solutions to esoteric problems, none gave me the confidence that I was getting a solid foundation in the language, or programming in general.In search of something better, I looked to stackoverflow which constantly recommended David's book. To be honest, I pirated it first. But after the first 3 chapters I went

straight to and bought it, as well as Javascript Patters from Stoyan and Douglas's Crockford book Javascript: the good parts (another big hit on the stackoverflow forums). I was dumbfounded at how easy and clear his book made the language. For the first time, ideas were presented in a logical order, with concepts obviously introduced to build on previous ones. Concepts I've been told are essential (hoisting, closures, etc) but were intimidating because I'd never seen them in a cohesive narrative, shocked me in how intuitive they actually were when written well and paired with succinct examples.I know this all seems overzealous enough to border on the insincere, but for someone who always had a passion for technology and wanted to create his own, but was beginning to be deterred from it all because I thought it was simply above my grasp, I want to say thank you to David and O'Reilly.They very may well have single-handedly created a new developer, and have dramatically changed my life in the process.Thanks again.

Readers should note that most of the reviews of this book refer to older editions which are -- due to the rapid evolution of javascript -- completely different books. I've spent a considerable amount of time the last few months reading the 6th edition of this book and have a number of complaints. But first, the kudos: this book is more comprehensive than any other javascript reference.Complaints:- the text is frequently non-linear in the sense that author will talk about undefined feature X, stating that feature X will be explained a couple of chapters later. Sometimes this is a good way to gradually introduce concepts, but it's used too much here. Some critics of this book have suggested you need to know javascript before reading this book, this might be why.- Almost every concept is followed with the caveat "but this feature doesn't work in Internet Explorer prior to version Z. For that you have to use this entirely different function f". This makes the text unnecessarily confusing. How about talking about *standard* ECMAscript and relegating the caveats to end of chapter notes, perhaps adding a superscript to alert the reader about version incompatibilities?- The examples are poor -- most show how to re-implement javascript 5 functions in javascript 3, or how to get a standard function to work in Internet Explorer 8. Who cares? This is why we have jQuery and Dojo -- in order not to worry about stuff like this. A few examples like this would provide welcome insight into dealing with compatibility issues, but in this case my eyes started to glaze over after a few hundred pages.Case study: Chapter 17, "Handling Events". After reading much of this chapter I realized I didn't know anything about how to use events in actual, practical code. I went back to re-read the chapter, which starts on p. 445. The first example "snippet" doesn't occur until p. 457 and the first real example is on p. 466, demonstrating a "whenReady" function which shows you how "you can improve the startup time of your web applications if you trigger your scripts on events

other than 'load'." Somewhat interesting, but is this really the best first example on event processing? The next example illustrates dragging an object, and is already quite complex and hard to follow.The beginning of Ch. 17 tells us "An event object is an object that is associated with a particular event and contains detailsabout that event. Event objects are passed as an argument to the event handler function (except in IE8 and before where they are sometimes only available through the global variable event). All event objects have a type property that specifies the event type anda target property that specifies the event target. (In IE8 and before, use srcElement instead of target.) Each event type defines a set of properties for its associated event." OK, how about an EXAMPLE illustrating how this works in real code? It's nearly impossible to get much out of this comment (and certainly impossible to retain anything) without an example. Only someone who already knows this stuff will follow that effectively, and if you already know the material, why read this chapter?Additionally, some standard methods appear not to be documented in the client-side reference. Unfortunately I can't recall which ones at the moment; just remember looking for them and not finding them.The "camel" book "Programming Perl" by Wall, Christiansen, and Orwant continues to be the gold standard for programming books by almost any measure, despite the fact that the current edition (3rd) is now terribly out of date. This book is readable, starts out with a good overview and then gradually dips the reader into the complexities of the language, included good examples, and frankly is an extremely enjoyable read. By comparison, this book meets none of these metrics. As a side note, O'Reilly (also the publisher of Programming Perl) used to be the dominant technical book publisher by huge margins, but in the past few years has begun to fall behind newer, more nimble competitors like Packt and Manning, who offer steep discounts on ebook editions and who appear to be taking greater care to maintain content quality. The affect is that at one time I would have simply assumed that the O'Reilly title was the highest quality text on any particular issue and now I'm finding this is not the case more often than not.I must also add that I'm a fairly experienced programmer with some prior javascript experience; hence presumably a member of the target audience for this book. Whatever it's shortcomings and merits, and as other reviewers have pointed out, this book is COMPLETELY inappropriate for novice programmers and beginners. Stay far away, newbies, lest you burn in the pit of doom.

JavaScript: The Definitive Guide is not just a complete reference of the language, like O'Reilly's other 'thick books,' but also provides a deep dive into JavaScript development. However, if you're just starting out and will be using one of the various libraries (like jQuery), this book may not (yet) be for you.First, the sixth edition is the first I've read, so I can't speak to any changes. Instead, my

review is focused on the book as a first-timer reader to the 'series.'JavaScript: The Definitive Guide is broken up into four parts; Core JavaScript, Client-Side JavaScript, the Core JavaScript Reference, and the Client-Side Reference. If you've ever picked up one of O'Reilly's other reference books, like Dynamic HTML: The Definitive Reference, you know about what to expect from those last two parts - a deep reference to the language.The first two parts, however, are a 'deep dive' into the actual language itself. Unlike a mere reference book, JavaScript: The Definitive Guide actually teaches you how to develop in JavaScript, starting at the core fundamentals, and working your way up to more advanced topics.Part of the 'deep dive' aspect also includes following best practices, making numerous references to Douglas Crockford's JavaScript: The Good Parts throughout the first part of the book, which is about 30% of the book. Alone, the first part of the book provides an excellent, near-complete, tutorial on the language.Historical information is also included, which I found to be very interesting when it came up, as well as implementation-specific functionality, that has limited use at this time (and as such, I personally found it distracting, and began skimming over later instances, but it's still nice that it's provided).The second part focuses on the Web aspects, which is quite honestly where most people will be making use of JavaScript. This part covers about what you'd expect, as well as jQuery, client-side storage, and HTML5 functionality.The jQuery information is around 60 pages of content, covers version 1.4, and also includes a bit about jQueryUI (a very little bit). It's quite refreshing to see jQuery included in the book, but as noted initially, if you're looking at focusing just on using a library, it may be better to get a resource focused on just that.The second part is approximately 40% of the book.The third and fourth parts are similar to O'Reilly's other reference books, and are therefore fairly detailed, with examples included. Depending upon your preference, you may find the reference valuable, or prefer searching online. The examples included give the book a slight advantage over the average Web site. Honestly, I generally prefer using online resources, so I don't see myself consulting these later parts very often, if at all.Finally we come to the actual book itself. I received an electronic copy of the book, through the O'Reilly Blogger Review Program, so I can't speak to the quality of a physical copy. However, in the past I have generally found O'Reilly books to be well made, with bindings that last.And now comes the rating.After the first part of this book I was impressed by JavaScript: The Definitive Guide, and could easily have stopped there and been happy. The jQuery inclusion was a nice touch, which may be sufficient to push people who weren't thinking about using a library in their development to doing so, and may actually provide enough information for someone who wants to start learning JavaScript via jQuery. It is, in short, a true guide to JavaScript, and not just a reference book.For these reasons, I must give JavaScript: The Definitive Guide, 5 of 5 stars.

JavaScript: The Definitive Guide: Activate Your Web Pages (Definitive Guides) Effective JavaScript: 68 Specific Ways to Harness the Power of JavaScript (Effective Software Development Series) Learning JavaScript: JavaScript Essentials for Modern Application Development Chakras for Beginners: How to Activate and Balance Your Chakras to Strengthen Your Character and Live a Better Life The Blood Sugar Solution 10-Day Detox Diet: Activate Your Body's Natural Ability to Burn Fat and Lose Weight Fast Active Server Pages How-To: The Definitive Active Server Pages Problem-Solver Kundalini Meditation: Guided Chakra Practices to Activate the Energy of Awakening Activate: An Entirely New Approach to Small Groups JavaScript: The Definitive Guide Programming the Web Using XHTML and JavaScript Web Development with Node and Express: Leveraging the JavaScript Stack High Performance JavaScript (Build Faster Web Application Interfaces) HTTP: The Definitive Guide (Definitive Guides) Web Publisher's Construction Kit With Html 3.2: Publishing Your Own Html Pages on the Internet HTML, XHTML, and CSS: Your visual blueprint for designing effective Web pages High Performance ISAPI/NSAPI Web Programming: Your Complete Guide to Creating Fast, Powerful Web Server Programs Coloring Books for Adults Geometric: Coloring Pages (Fun & Intricate Coloring Pages for Adults) (Volume 1) 100 Write-and-Learn Sight Word Practice Pages: Engaging Reproducible Activity Pages That Help Kids Recognize, Write, and Really LEARN the Top 100 High-Frequency Words That are Key to Reading Success The Internet Kids & Family Yellow Pages (2nd Ed) / The Internet Kids and Family Yellow Pages (2nd Ed) Blank Sheet Music for Guitar: Blank Manuscript Pages with Staff and Tab Lines, 100 Blank Staff and Tab Pages