



A Gentle Introduction to Computer Programming Fundamentals

By Steven Shaffer



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Programming is fast becoming a basic literacy. Software is pervasive in society and therefore it is needed in virtually every occupation. But for some people, programming feels very unnatural; that's where this book comes in! This book is written in a step-by-step, tutorial style that makes programming available to pretty much anyone who cares to take the time to learn. It's the result of my years of experience and research into teaching introductory programming. In addition, I've used versions of this book in my distance education programming classes for years, which has given me the advantage of optimizing it based on student comments and suggestions.

You can start using this book right away, without buying anything else and without having to install anything on your computer! Within a few days, you will understand the basics of how computer programs work.

C++ is used in this textbook because the syntax is almost exactly the same as C, Java, Javascript, PHP and many other popular programming languages. If you master the concepts in this book, they will transfer to many other languages. In addition, C++ does not require a lot of "scaffolding" to set up. For example, Java requires understanding classes right from the beginning, and PHP requires understanding html. With C++, you start with four standard lines at the top of your program, and you're into the program. Note that I really like Java and PHP, and write in these languages myself quite often; however, for a basic introduction to programming, C++ is the way to go!

When you're finished with this book, the world of programming will be opened up for you; from here, you can go in any direction you wish.



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A Gentle Introduction to Computer Programming Fundamentals By Steven Shaffer Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #339588 in eBooks
- Published on: 2013-08-04
- Released on: 2013-08-04
- Format: Kindle eBook

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