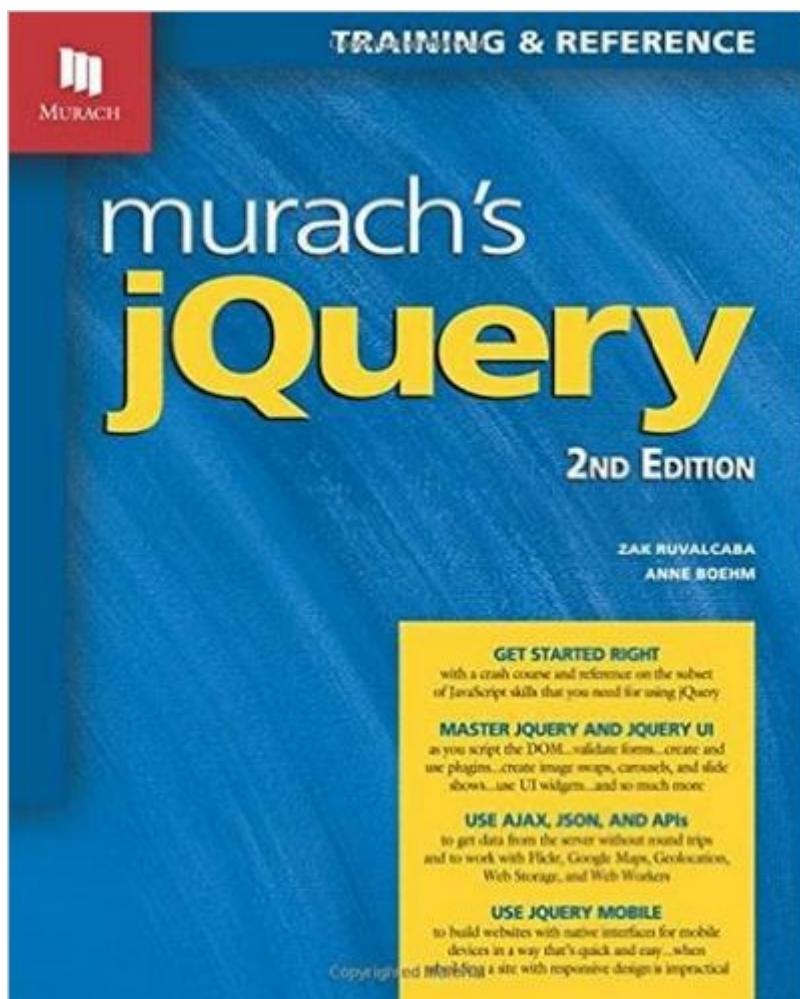


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Murach's JQuery, 2nd Edition



Synopsis

Today, jQuery is used in over 60% of the million most-visited websites, and that makes it one of the technologies that every web developer should master. The problem is that jQuery is difficult to learn, especially for those with limited programming experience. But now, this new edition of our jQuery book makes it easier than ever to learn how to use jQuery to create the dynamic user interfaces, fast response times, and special effects that today's users expect. In brief, sections 2 and 3 of this book present the essential jQuery and jQuery UI (User Interface) skills for developing professional jQuery applications. With those skills, you'll be able to add all of the popular jQuery features to your web pages: image swaps, image rollovers, slide shows, accordions, tabs, carousels, and much more. Then, section 4 shows you how to use Ajax and JSON to get data from a web server and add it to a web page without reloading the page. It also shows how to use Ajax and JSON with the APIs for websites like Flickr and Google Maps and with HTML5 APIs like Geolocation, Web Storage, and Web Workers. What about section 1? It provides a four-chapter crash course in the JavaScript skills that you need to use jQuery. That means you don't need to know JavaScript before you start using this book, and that makes this the right book for programmers who aren't familiar with JavaScript, as well as for programming novices. This section also becomes the ideal reference for the JavaScript that's used for the jQuery applications in this book...or for any jQuery application. The last section of this book shows you how to use jQuery Mobile to develop mobile websites. This requires little or no programming, and it's a great alternative when it's impractical to rebuild an established website with Responsive Web Design.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Murach's jQuery is a good hands-on introduction for readers who are new to JavaScript and jQuery. This book employs the paired-pages format that Murach is famous for: For each topic the right page contains a figure with example code, diagrams, tables and bullet points, and the left page contains the explanatory text. I like this format because it keeps the book well-organized and makes it easy to refer back to as a reference. Section one of the book covers just enough JavaScript so you can understand jQuery and work the exercises. One criticism I have is that I wish the chapter on how to test your application included unit testing, not just how to use the developer tools in the web browser. Section two covers the main core of jQuery: how to work with selectors, use effects and animations, create and use plugins, how to validate forms and how to manipulate the DOM. The order of presentation in this section seemed a bit odd. I would have covered selectors, DOM manipulation, form validation, effects and animation, and plugins in that order, but the essentials are covered. Section three covers jQuery UI. It covers how to use the theme roller and a variety of different widgets such as accordions, tabs, buttons, datepickers, auto-complete, sliders and menus. It also covers interactions and effects including draggable, droppable, sortable and selectable. This section includes great sample code and screenshots illustrating how they all work. Section four begins with coverage of the AJAX capabilities of jQuery to communicate with web APIs such as Flickr. It also has a very nice chapter on how to work with the Google Maps API. Unfortunately, the coverage of the Blogger, YouTube and Twitter APIs was dropped from this edition, and I hope they bring it back. This section also mentions how you can look at the response from a web API using your web browser. The problem with this approach is that the response might all be on one line or otherwise difficult to read. I wish they had mentioned other tools like jsoneditoronline.org that was mentioned in the first edition, or others such as SoapUI, the Postman plugin for Chrome, or even the curl command line utility. Section four ends with a chapter on the HTML5 APIs for geolocation, web workers, and web storage and an example application that uses them. Section five consists of two chapters on jQuery Mobile with example code. One of the things I like about the book are the hands-on exercises at the end of every chapter that let you practice the concepts that were just covered. It is important to actually do the exercises, because it is not enough to simply read about it—*you have to actually try it out so you can learn by doing*. At the end of the book is an appendix that explains how to download and install the free Aptana Studio on Windows and Mac OS so you can do the exercises. Murach provides practice code that you download from their website.

The end-of-chapter exercises involve modifying and then testing the code in your web browser so you know if you got it working. If you get stuck, Murach also includes the solutions in the download so you can compare the solution to your approach. The paired-pages format and the end-of-chapter exercises are the main reasons why I use and recommend Murach books for people looking to learn a new technology. I have the same criticism of this book that others have noted. It appears the “crash course” in JavaScript at the beginning of the book is intended to make it approachable for people who don’t know JavaScript. The problem I have is that most of that content appears to be lifted directly from Murach’s JavaScript. I would make the suggestion that there would have been more value if the book omitted the JavaScript “crash course.” It stated that the prerequisite was a basic understanding of JavaScript and HTML5, and mentioned Murach’s JavaScript as a suggested reading. Then the book would have had room to cover Bootstrap which is often used together with jQuery. The book could have been called, Murach’s jQuery and Bootstrap. I think a combination jQuery and Bootstrap book would be quite popular. Another criticism I have is that the DRM format Murach uses on their ebooks is only compatible with a few devices. There is no LockLizard viewer for Linux, so I would recommend Linux users get the physical book. All-in-all the book succeeds as a hands-on tutorial introduction to jQuery, and I would recommend it for people who are new to it.

"Murach's jQuery" assumes you know nothing about HTML, CSS or JavaScript. It starts from the beginning. The first section of the book covers the JavaScript you need to know in order to use jQuery including the DOM. I like that the book showed how to debug/troubleshoot a web app. There was good coverage of the APIs including mobile and HTML 5 web storage. I like the highlighting in longer code examples to see what is important. I learned about JavaScript strict mode and look forward to trying that in a real application. So why did I only give the book four stars? I had a few issues that got in my way of reading. The book started using \$ syntax in non-jQuery JavaScript before defining it. I also thought it was odd that creating a plugin is covered before forms given that forms are common. I don't think the book was bad, but it's not my favorite Murach book or my favorite book on jQuery. ---Disclosure: I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for writing this review on behalf of CodeRanch.

As I have said before, I have always been impressed by the quality of the books from Mike Murach's publishing company - this book, Murach's jQuery by Zak Ruvalcaba and Anne Boehm, follows a familiar path. It is good to know that I can send professional peers as well as

friends to such a well written text which uses common language and a useful format with that famous paired-page layout of all Murach books - yes, I know, I need to say that about each of the Murach books (because it's so good)!The primary focus on this book is the core jQuery library; however, several other compatible topics are also explained well. This is important to acquire a comprehensive view of the growing fundamentals of using JavaScript, including JQuery UI, Ajax, and JSON, plus how to use some APIs. You will need all that and this provides a good introduction to useful code. As a bonus, and another good introduction, this book includes jQuery Mobile.I suggest you download the complete code examples and work through the exercises to get a better total education. Within the review portion of each chapter, you will be presented a perspective. This is a helpful few lines written in a conversational-like manner to help you understand where you should be in the learning curve up to that point. Don't underestimate the importance of those few lines, something that is totally missing from most books (why is that?).In the review portion of each chapter you will also see a list of terms used (quiz yourself to explain each one) and a list of summary points as well as the exercises to build upon. Excellent and complete code examples are provided throughout the book to help you learn JavaScript along with HTML and CSS. Here you will clearly learn the how and why things work the way they do in hands-on exercises. The free software tools you need to work these exercises are provided via download along with solutions for you to compare. The review questions at the end of each chapter help you point to the most important areas of knowledge covered.As with all of MurachÃ¢Â™s books (again, as I have written before), this one uses their paired-page format. Here a narrative on the left of each pair of pages is coupled with the corresponding code example for you to easily follow on the right. This should be trademarked by Murach. It works so well, that I wonder why other publishers donÃ¢Â™t do it. Writing this way is more difficult than you might at first think. The writer needs to be judicious with their words and thoughts while crafting the topic being taught in bite size segments. At the same time the words need to be paired with the code on the right side. The reader gets this advantage without even thinking about or realizing it. This makes it easy to use each paired-page set as a reference later on for that material. For the printed book, larger than usual page size, paper quality, and type face makes it easy to read as you bounce from the written word to your execution of the exercises. An ebook is also available.Don't be confused by the title of "2nd Edition." The first edition was a similar book titled JavaScript and jQuery. With this 2nd Edition, jQuery has been expanded into this separate book, with the JavaScript portion also expanded with a 2nd Edition title. If you are quite familiar with JavaScript, you can skip that book (there is some overlap) or read it first and then this jQuery book to fit the pieces together properly (particularly the sequence of learning jQuery is

enhanced by knowing more JavaScript features). If you skip right to this jQuery book, there is an extensive well done section explaining the JavaScript fundamentals that you need to move onto jQuery in this book. Read the JavaScript book first for more complete knowledge of JavaScript. Beginners should start with the JavaScript book. If you are truly a beginner (or need a refresher), to round-out your professional library, you will also want to add the companion book, Murach's HTML5 and CSS3. I suggest this, since once you have picked up the format of learning with any one of these books, you will find it easy to speed through additional Murach books as well, since the structure and format makes it easy to focus on what you need in a familiar setting. I have several books which include jQuery, usually included in a single book with other topics, but this separate devoted jQuery book lets you get a better understanding right from the beginning. The text, examples, descriptions, and even the layout all bring you, the learner, an ease of use that is missing in other books. I highly recommend this book, particularly for beginners through intermediate learners - this is the place where Murach's books are really beneficial.

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