

Synopsis

Programming Game AI by Example provides a comprehensive and practical introduction to the AI techniques used by the game development industry, leading the reader through the process of designing, programming, and implementing intelligent agents for action games using the C++ programming language. Techniques covered include state- and goal-based behavior, inter-agent communication, individual and group steering behaviors, team AI, graph theory, search, path planning and optimization, triggers, scripting, scripted finite state machines, perceptual modeling, goal evaluation, goal arbitration, and fuzzy logic.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have read many game development books, and this is definitely one of the best ones out there. Just by flipping through the pages, you can see right away how much care Mr. Buckland has taken in writing this book. There are a plethora of diagrams and code examples, and the layout and organization is excellent. The balance between theory and implementation is just right. The writing style is concise and the book covers a lot of material, yet it is enjoyable and painless to read. Personally I also like the fact that the book is physically compact so it fits easily on my desk :) By far though, my favorite aspect of the book is the "real-life" examples he gives. It's easy to skim over all the theory without really "absorbing" the material, but when you see the concrete examples, it jogs your brain and gets you thinking about how to actually apply it. For example, when discussing the

basic idea of "states", he doesn't just make up a contrived example and leave it at that; he gives several examples from actual types of games. For example, a Quake style bot might implement FindArmor, FindHealth, SeekCover, and RunAway. Even the weapons may implement mini state machines like Move, TouchObject, and Die. Digging deeper into the actual content of the book, it covers all of the practical topics an AI programmer should know, such as FSMs, pathing, group behavior, scripting, fuzzy logic, etc. All topics are explained in enough detail that you can incorporate them comfortably in your game, and if you want to learn more, you have a solid foundation to build on. As it says in the book, being an AI programmer isn't just about memorizing a handful of techniques, but also about how to apply them in combination.

Misleading Title This book has a misleading title. I think this book should be called "Fundamentals of Game Development" instead of Programming Game AI by Example. Sure the book delivers on what it promises, as so many reviewers have already mentioned, but I believe that his book teaches you something that no other book that at least I am aware of teaches - good software practices coupled with actual game development. There are dozens of books available in the market today claiming to teach you Game Architecture. I will not name the exact titles of such books but you know what I am talking about. I have read so many such books only to find myself becoming a graphics programmer. Not that I didn't want to become a graphics programmer, but even after learning all that stuff, there was "something" missing. That something turns out to be design patterns related to game development. In other words, how to combine various game components together into a working game. The last place I expected to learn it in such an elegant and easy to understand manner was in an AI book. It's my sincere belief that this is the best book on game development available in the market. Read that again, not just AI but Game Development. That's right, no matter which of the numerous disciplines of game development you wish to specialize in, no matter which platform or technologies you want to develop for, you need this book. Period. The book starts off with the most relevant mathematics chapter that I have found in any game development book. Maybe I'm stupid, but this was the only book that explained to me what a radian was!

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