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Programming Entity Framework: DbContext



Synopsis

In addition to Code First, EF 4.1 introduces simpler EF coding patterns with the DbContext, DbSet, ChangeTracker and Validation APIs. This second mini-book will take the reader on a tour of these new features and how to take advantage of them. These new classes and APIs let the user focus on the most common coding tasks with Entity Framework and streamlines access to patterns which are frequently used, but were previously non-intuitive and complicated to code. The Validation API that comes with DbContext leverages the existing .NET 4 IValidatableObject and ValidationAttributes as well as providing additional validation features. You will learn the ins and outs of getting the most from server side validation from the DbContext.

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Customer Reviews

DbContext is covered in extreme detail in this book. The pace is gradual but you will really know how to use DbContext after reading this. Given that DbContext is part of Entity Framework, I understand the need to make reference to other EF books. I think the book exploits this a bit and the numerous references to the authors' other books is annoying. The example code is also based on the authors' other books but, even if you have not read them, is understandable and useful. The coverage ranges from an introduction to what DbContext is and how it fits-in to Entity Framework, through how it works and on to the future vision for DbContext and Entity Framework. This book contains more than recipes for successful use. Great detail is given as to how DbContext and EF work with code to create database queries, track changes and manipulate data. In combination with

the supporting website, which is excellent, this book is a valuable resource for anyone really wanting to gain complete understanding of DbContext.

Julia Lerman is one of my go to people when it comes to Entity Framework. Between her several books, blogs and videos, she is one of the main sources for Entity Framework information. Julia and Rowan's writing style is easy to understand. The book is full of code examples without over doing it. The book is only a couple hundred pages, but covers the topic very well. DbContext is only a part of Entity Framework, but an important part. Understanding it will make using Entity Framework much easier and make the developer much more productive. Just understanding the differences between Lazy Loading, Eager Loading, Explicit Loading and understanding when your queries are querying against the database or local memory is worth getting the book. The authors have other books on programming Entity Framework, but this is the most in-depth book covering DbContext. Not the first place to learn about Entity Framework, but when it comes to DbContext, at the moment, there is nothing better.

I read the Entity Framework 2e book and I never felt I had a grasp on EF; in fact, I was even more confused. This book (DbContext) along with the Entity Framework: Code First gave me what I needed to competently develop in EF. DbContext and Code First are much more coherently laid out. You will want to read BOTH DbContext and Code First to get a complete grasp.

Every MVC book uses DbContext but none of them go into any detail. DbContext just works like magic with little or no explanation. That's fine, except when it DOESN'T work. Since you don't learn how it actually works, you don't learn how to fix issues. It either works, or it doesn't. That's where this book comes in. It goes into just the right amount of detail about what is actually happening under the covers. I have not made the switch to MVC because I wasn't confident I could work with DbContext reliably but after reading this book, I don't think I'll go back to the old way of doing things.

What a page turner! Couldn't put it down! Yeah, ok that's the kind of things you might hear about a good novel, but seriously the author has taken the deeply technical material and made it very interesting and relevant! The detailed handling of the capabilities of DbContext are superb and the examples used made it abundantly clear as to the best uses of the described features. I considered myself pretty knowledgeable with entity framework, but I found a great deal of new information stuffed into this relatively small book. The information in the first chapters of the

book get the basic user up to speed, while still pointing out tips to the advanced users. Going from the most basic differences between the older methods of using data with the entity framework to the new object description can be helpful to those with experience in the previous versions. I like the trick of setting up the context in a using statement to help to dispose the object. The section on LINQ to entities as a good tutorial, but I wish there was a link to a reference on performance versus other methods of querying. Her description of the different methods of loading the object tree was very useful and can be of immediate benefit to most readers. The book illustrates the advantages and disadvantages of each technique in simple terms. How EF handled change tracking was a mystery to me, but she clarified the methods used and techniques to enhance performance in a clear manner with great examples. The coverage of data validations was likewise technical but written in a very understandable way. The techniques found here will save me time and effort in the future. I had been looking for details of how to use the entity framework and DbContext in a disconnected and multi-tier environment and it was covered pretty well in this book although, I would have liked to see more than a couple of paragraphs on WCF Data services in a multi-tier environment. I would highly recommend this book for anyone from novice to expert in the use of EF.

I just finished this on my kindle and I have to say, well done. It is a great guided tour of the API and will help just about everyone in some way. I especially like the validation dive, as well as the detailed explanations of the change tracker API. When you get into distributed transactions and dealing with N-tier applications, this is required knowledge. Having this as a reference is invaluable and should be a reserved spot in the library for anyone writing Code First Entity Framework.

This book is well written and has excellent detail. The main issue is that much of the detail of the book relies on owning or having read the previous book *programming_entity_framework_2nd_edition*. Together they give very good insight into DbContext and Entity Framework. I'm not sure how much can be taken away from this text without *programming_entity_framework_2nd_edition* so that is the only reason for not giving a 5 star rating.

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