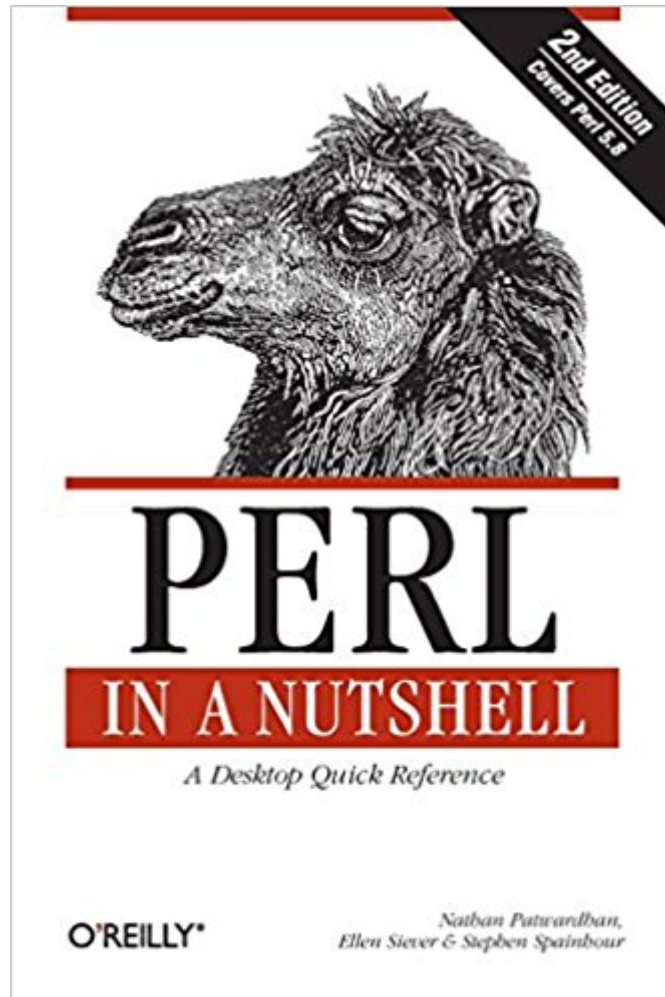# Perl In A Nutshell: A Desktop Quick Reference (2nd Edition)

Synopsis

This complete guide to the Perl programming language ranges widely through the Perl programmer's universe, gathering together in a convenient form a wealth of information about Perl itself and its application to CGI scripts, XML processing, network programming, database interaction, and graphical user interfaces. The book is an ideal reference for experienced Perl programmers and beginners alike.With more than a million dedicated programmers, Perl is proving to be the best language for the latest trends in computing and business, including network programming and the ability to create and manage web sites. It's a language that every Unix system administrator and serious web developer needs to know. In the past few years, Perl has found its way into complex web applications of multinational banks, the U.S. Federal Reserve, and hundreds of large corporations.In this second edition, Perl in a Nutshell has been expanded to include coverage of Perl 5.8, with information on Unicode processing in Perl, new functions and modules that have been added to the core language, and up-to-date details on running Perl on the Win32 platform. The book also covers Perl modules for recent technologies such as XML and SOAP.Here are just some of the topics contained in this book:Basic Perl referenceQuick reference to built-in functions and standard modulesCGI.pm and mod_perlXML::* modulesDBI, the database-independent API for PerlSockets programmingLWP, the library for Web programming in PerlNetwork programming with the Net modulesPerl/Tk, the Tk extension to Perl for graphical interfacesModules for interfacing with Win32 systemsAs part of the successful "in a Nutshell" book series from O'Reilly & Associates, Perl in a Nutshell is for readers who want a single reference for all their needs."In a nutshell, Perl is designed to make the easy jobs easy, without making the hard jobs impossible."-- Larry Wall, creator of Perl

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Customer Reviews

My 2-star review is from the perspective of an intermediate Perl user. From my exp. with 'Unix in a Nutshell', I expected this book to be all I needed in my briefcase at work. As it turns out, I'll take the "Camel" (Programming Perl) and leave this uninspiring book at home.Let me give you an example: I was poring over a (slightly) complicated regular expression, trying to figure out what was going on...there seemed no rhyme or reason to it.....there were way too many spaces and yet the pattern was matching!! I then noticed the "x" option on the end of it: /reg-ex/x Thinking this could be the culprit, I broke out Perl:NUTSHELL...I found the appropriate table and it said: this option used to Enable Extended regular expressions. Ah-ha! But wait, what are Extended regular Epressions, and what is the deal with all these extra spaces in my reg-ex? I forwarded a bit and found the section about Extended Regular Expressions. And I found.........nothing. As it turns out (after looking in the Camel), the "x" means that all whitespace in the pattern is ignored, hence all the darn spaces. I made a point to look (again) for this bit of syntactic info in Perl:NUTSHELL, and it is not there. So what is the use of this book then, considering it is missing such a BASIC SYNTAX rule? Good question.Another gripe: where's the freakin examples? While I don't expect NUTSHELL books to EXPLAIN the examples tutorial style, I do expect some basic usage examples to help me with commands I havn't used (again, see Unix in a Nutshell)!!Another quick example for you Perl non-gurus (like myself): I came upon the Perl "filetest" operator "-t"....but the test had no following argument (e.g. the file's name), so I was confused. Off to the Nutshell. Oops.

Exactly as advertised, "Perl in a Nutshell: A Desktop Quick Reference" is a great reference book if you already have a basic understanding of Perl. Although it does have a section that it refers to as an "Introduction to Perl" it is actually a pretty cursory introduction and there are better books for learning the basics of Perl.The book does have an excellent section on installing Perl including installation on both the Unix and Windows platforms. I've worked with both platforms and the installation process is well documented including how to install modules. This brings us to the large chapter on getting and installing Perl modules. I have spent hours sometimes trying to find an appropriate module for a special situation. This chapter lists all the most common modules and

includes descriptions of what they do. This alone makes it a valuable resource for anyone involved in Perl.The authors also include a lot of technical information including command line options and environment variables as well as a section on program structure, data types, special variables, operators, expressions, subroutines, filehandles, and just about anything else that you might need a quick refresher on.Functions are listed both by category and by alphabetical order with descriptions and syntax information. I had a couple of problems on a large project recently and it took three days to get an answer through the forums on the Internet. The answers to all of them are right here and I could have saved myself a lot of trouble if I had had this book then.

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