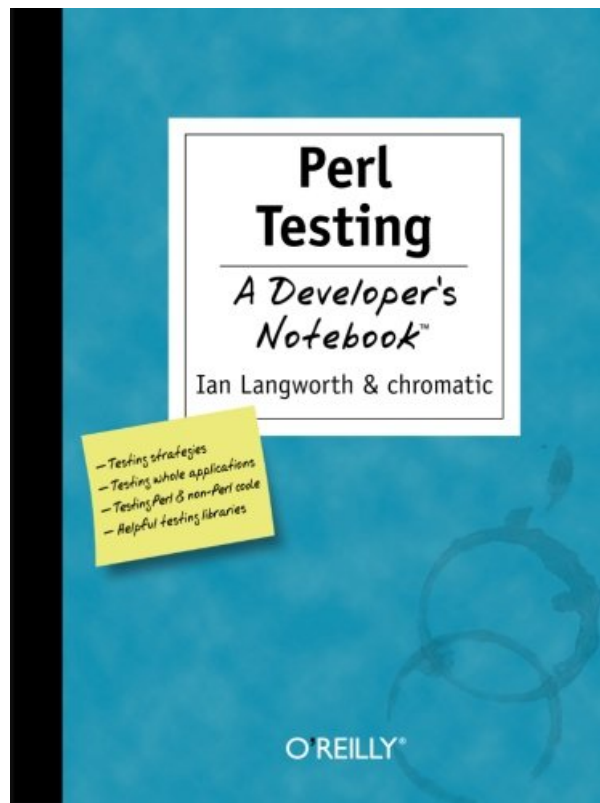
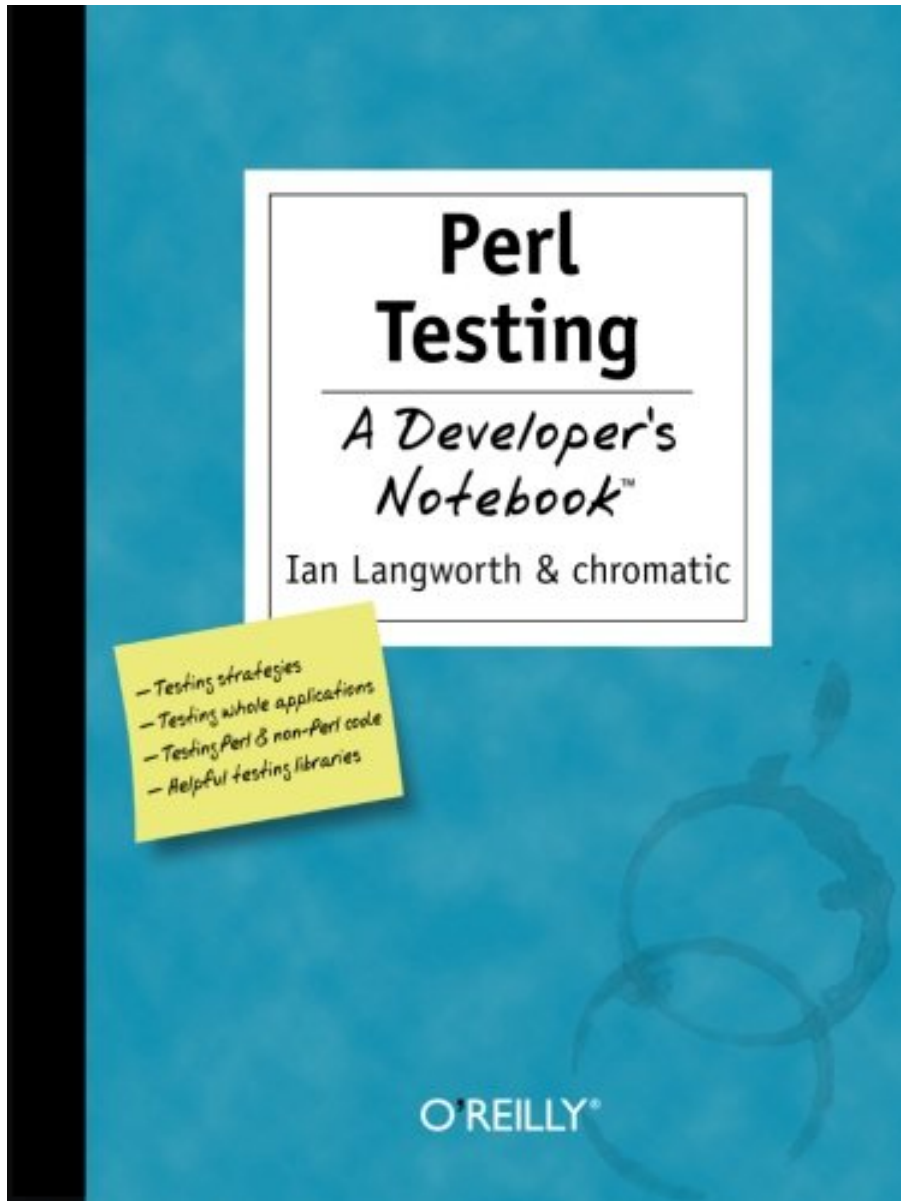


PERL TESTING: A DEVELOPER'S NOTEBOOK BY IAN LANGWORTH, CHROMATIC



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About the Author

Ian Langworth (<http://langworth.com/>) has been writing Perl for years and actively involved in the community since 2003. He has contributed a handful of modules to the CPAN, most of which are Kwiki-related. He has spoken at Perl-related conferences as LISA and YAPC. Ian is also the author of surprisingly widespread utility, Cadubi, which is packaged for many free operating systems. Ian is currently studying Computer Science and Cognitive Psychology at Northeastern University. Whilst pursuing a degree, he's participating in an volunteer systems administration group and working toward making higher code quality and robustness an easier goal to achieve. He currently resides in Boston, Massachusetts where he participates in the local Boston Perl Mongers group and lives precariously close to Fenway Park.

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Is there any sexier topic in software development than software testing? That is, besides game programming, 3D graphics, audio, high-performance clustering, cool websites, et cetera? Okay, so software testing is low on the list. And that's unfortunate, because good software testing can increase your productivity, improve your designs, raise your quality, ease your maintenance burdens, and help to satisfy your customers, coworkers, and managers.

Perl has a strong history of automated tests. A very early release of Perl 1.0 included a comprehensive test suite, and it's only improved from there. Learning how Perl's test tools work and how to put them together to solve all sorts of previously intractable problems can make you a better programmer in general. Besides, it's easy to use the Perl tools described to handle all sorts of testing problems that you may encounter, even in other languages.

Like all titles in O'Reilly's Developer's Notebook series, this "all lab, no lecture" book skips the boring prose and focuses instead on a series of exercises that speak to you instead of at you.

Perl Testing: A Developer's Notebook will help you dive right in and:

- Write basic Perl tests with ease and interpret the results
- Apply special techniques and modules to improve your tests
- Bundle test suites along with projects
- Test databases and their data
- Test websites and web projects
- Use the "Test Anything Protocol" which tests projects written in languages other than Perl

With today's increased workloads and short development cycles, unit tests are more vital to building robust, high-quality software than ever before. Once mastered, these lessons will help you ensure low-level code correctness, reduce software development cycle time, and ease maintenance burdens.

You don't have to be a die-hard free and open source software developer who lives, breathes, and dreams Perl to use this book. You just have to want to do your job a little bit better.

- Sales Rank: #1169511 in Books
- Published on: 2005-07-24
- Released on: 2005-07-21
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.19" h x .55" w x 7.00" l, .78 pounds
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- 202 pages

About the Author

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Most helpful customer reviews

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

no nonsense introduction to the important stuff

By Ricardo Signes

I was initially not excited by O'Reilly's "Developer's Notebook" line of books. A lot of things conspired to make me turn up my nose. The design looked too gimmicky, the first few books turned me off (I don't remember specifics, but it was something like Excel Macros, Java Networking, and some other crap), and something inside me just felt like it was a dumb idea. I don't know why: I used to use similar references all the time, back when the Linux HOWTOs weren't useless. Anyway, when I heard that the new Perl testing book was going to be a notebook, I sort of groaned, but I still made sure I got it as soon as it was out and dug in.

Testing is Really Important. It serves as a secondary form of documentation, it makes it easier to add new features, it makes it easier to fix broken features, and it makes your replacement's job a lot easier when you win the lottery and retire early. It's a sad fact that plenty of people don't test their code, and that many of those who want to just don't know how. PTDN is a crash course for those people. It gets right to the point: page one says, roughly, "You know you should be testing, so here's how you do it. First, run the CPAN shell and install Test::Simple."

The rest of the book sticks to that no-crap attitude. "You want to do X. Here's what you do, and here's what happens when you do it." There isn't much of "why should I do this" or "how does this work on the inside" and that's just right. The book isn't there to show you how Devel::Cover works, or to explain the ideas behind agile development. It's there to help you do the job you know you need to do. It's like an old-style HOWTO extracted back one level of abstraction, or a set of nice fat articles on a series of related topics.

In fact, I think it's safe to say that a more traditional technical book on this subject might have been just the sort of overblown self-important thing that would've kept more people scared of and away from testing. Instead, it's a great crash course for the uninitiated.

For the initiated, I'm not sure how useful it would be. I must say that I didn't find many new or esoteric things in PTDN, but I don't think I'm its target audience. I already use and love coverage reports, I aim for full coverage on my code, and I like keeping my eye on the Test:: namespace for neat new tricks. If I were to hire a lackey, though, who wasn't already familiar with testing, this book would be high up on his must-read list. Knowing how to test your software is vitally important, and this book provides a very short path to that knowledge.

15 of 17 people found the following review helpful.

Finally a Practical Guide to Perl Testing

By Mike Schilli

You'll read this book cover-to-cover. It's easy,

it's concise, it's fun and it will change your

testing attitude. You'll be inspired immediately,

roll up your sleeves and get started.

Sure, Ian Langworth and chromatic could have

written a 700-page reference tome on all the

different testing modules available and how to use

every single feature. Instead, they just show you

what expert perl programmers do when they're

testing their work.

They're getting you 90% there. If you need more,

it's easy to pick up the details from the manual

pages of the various testing modules, most of

which come with excellent documentation. The

value of this book is that it shows you what's

available and covers an astonishing amount of

different use cases.

O'Reilly's "Developer's Notebook" style is

somewhat unusual, very FAQ-like. The only gripe I

have with this series are recurring headlines like

"How do I do that?" and "What just happened?",

which I'd rather like to be replaced by

pictograms.

Summary: I strongly recommend this book if you

want to improve the quality of your code by

verifying it thoroughly. Using the recipes in

"Perl Testing" takes the unsexyness out of

Quality Assurance.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent book

By Eric J. Wu

Love this book, excellent intro to Perl testing. One of the few (or only) books on Perl testing out there. Not sure what the people who gave it a low rating would've recommended instead - there are some web docs out there but they are all by chromatic too.

Contents include the following:

Test::More, Test::Deep, test_ok, cmp_deeply, is, Devel::Cover, Test::Harness, Mock modules, program testing, testing databases and Apache, and much more.

Fairly easy to follow. If you program seriously in Perl, but need to learn more about testing, this is the book to have.

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