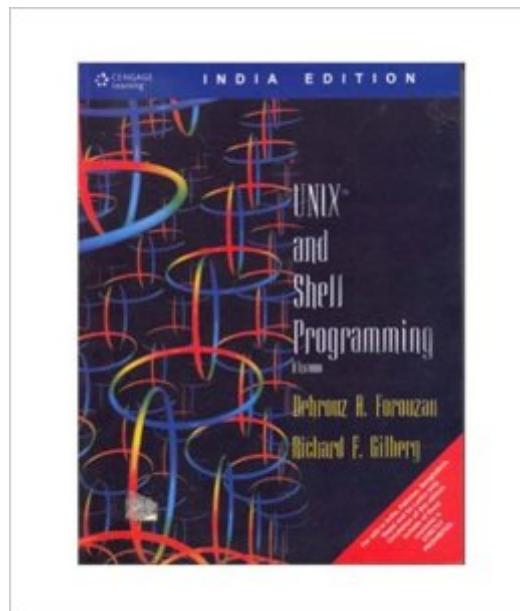


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Unix And Shell Programming: A Textbook



Synopsis

UNIX and Shell Programming

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Customer Reviews

Back when dinosaurs roamed the earth and NCR made Unix computers I first started to program for a living. Back then when someone said 'script' they meant a shell script, generally for a Bourne shell. Now that we have languages such as Perl and Python, much of shell scripting has been forgotten. The need still arises for the times and places where running Perl would be just that little bit too much overhead; cron jobs, process start and stop scripts, even machine start and stop scripts. For these we could best go back to the old ways. Combining the power of the common Unix tools, pipes and scripts in a fairly obscure and slightly arcane syntax is not easy to pick up, though the language's simplicity does, in some ways, make it easier than more complex ones such as Perl. Unix Shell Programming, Third Edition does a good job at introducing shell programming and I found it an excellent book when I needed a refresher. I don't want to sell this volume short: you won't just learn about shell programming. The first ninety or so pages provide an excellent guide to getting the best out of the shell, and the last chapter is devoted to the features specific to an interactive shell such as command-line editing and using the history. The authors have chosen to use the POSIX standard Bourne shell ('bash', available on many *nix systems, is a superset of the POSIX standard). That seems the right decision, given that it is so universally available and usually the default shell. The book is well structured, starting out with a brief look at *nix operating systems before introducing the shell followed by some basic tools; cut, paste, sed, tr, grep, sort and uniq.

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