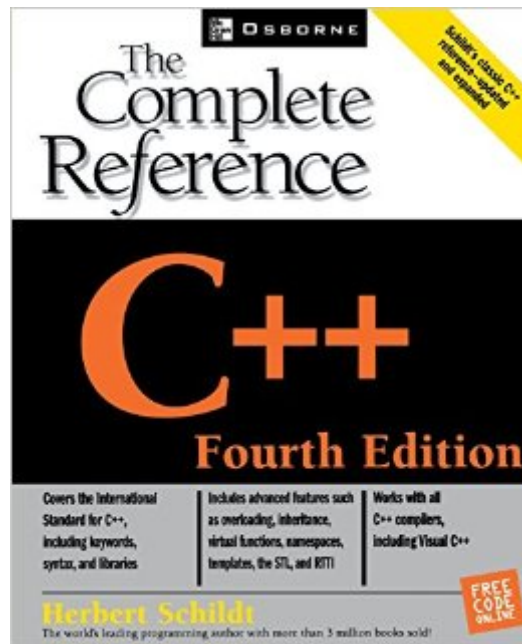# C++: The Complete Reference, 4th Edition

Synopsis

Best-selling genius Herb Schildt covers everything from keywords, syntax, and libraries, to advanced features such as overloading, inheritance, virtual functions, namespaces, templates, and RTTIâ •plus, a complete description of the Standard Template Library (STL).

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The first thing you should understand when approaching C++: The Complete Reference is that it is not intended to teach you how to program. As the title would suggest, this book is a comprehensive reference into the features of the C++ language. That is not to say that you can't learn C++ from this book, but if you are looking for an introduction to the language you would probably be better served with purchasing C++ How to Program or another book that adopts more of a teaching style than what you will find in Herbert Schildt's.However, if you are looking for a book where you can quickly refresh on a topic, find out syntax for a particular casting operator or how to initialize an esoteric function you thought you would never use, this book will never leave the side of your keyboard. I have owned two copies of the Complete C++ Reference. My copy of the third edition has been highlighted, dog eared and had pages copied so many times it's bindings are more or less gone(not that this is indicative of the books quality, just my frequent abuse of it). My 4th edition copy is well on it's way to looking like the other one as there is not a day that goes by I don't open it up for something.The book begins with a comprehensive overview of the C language, wholly separated

from any C++ concepts. This section concludes around one quarter of the way through and the real meat of the book begins. After giving a birds-eye view of the C++ language, Schildt dives straight into classes and doesn't look back. Every topic is hit with vigor and tenacity until the C++ section of the book is complete. The next three hundred pages are dedicated to the STL and standard function library.

I would give the book 3.5 stars, but we live in a world of integer stars so there goes a four star.This is a fairly good tutorial for C++, and it does also a fairly good job as a reference. Nevertheless it absolutely fails to be a complete reference.1. One *very important* weekness I see in this book is its utter lack of explanation on the compiler options, and how to link programs. It simply does not even mention how to create your own header files, or link libraries. This is unforgivable for a book that claims to be a complete reference.2. The repetition of the descriptions of STL libraries like vector, string and maps is completely unnecessary. In my opinion it would be much more efficient to first introduce in depth the concepts of the STL which are hardest to chew for beginners (i.e. iterators, containers, allocators, function objects, adaptors and binders) and then describe the container classes sequentially instead of scattering descriptions over chapters 24 to 38. Furthermore, the behavior of many members of the STL libraries are exactly the same (i.e. put_back() will do the same regardless of the container), synthesizing those common features in the introduction of the STL would be extremely beneficial and it would save at least 150 pages of this book.3. There is no mention in the book of important vanguard topics like using the BOOST library or how to include graphics libraries.4. No mention on how to embed code, except for how to use the keyword extern in one short paragraph.5. It would be nice if the book dedicated at least one chapter to good coding practices to improve readability (i.e. how to organize classes, aligning text in definitions, aligning parameters in functions, etc.).6.

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