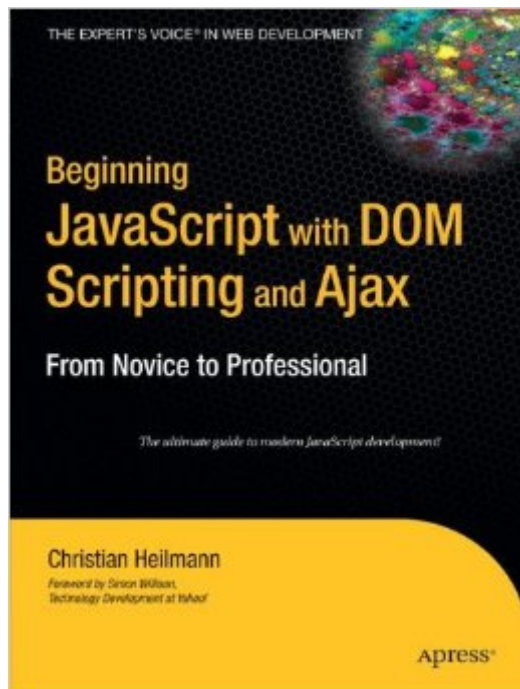


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# Beginning JavaScript With DOM Scripting And Ajax: From Novice To Professional (Beginning: From Novice To Professional)



## Synopsis

This is the most up-to-date book on JavaScript available, covering current standards, techniques, and practices. It provides all you need to know to hit the ground running, without making you trawl through hundreds of pages of syntax. The book contains multiple chapters on Ajax and DOM Scripting, which are two of the hottest web development and design tools available today. Using a pragmatic and thorough approach, the book ensures that even the most novice JavaScript programmers will become familiar and comfortable using the tools presented.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (19 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

This JavaScript tutorial is a bit different than most I've had the opportunity to review over the years... Beginning JavaScript with DOM Scripting and Ajax: From Novice to Professional by Christian Heilmann. It will probably play well to the serious developers who want to come at JavaScript from an object-oriented background...Contents: Getting Started with JavaScript; Data and Decisions; From DHTML to DOM Scripting; HTML and JavaScript; Presentation and Behavior (CSS and Event Handling); Common Uses of JavaScript: Images and Windows; JavaScript and User Interaction: Navigation and Forms; Back-End Interaction with Ajax; Data Validation Techniques; Modern JavaScript Case Study: A Dynamic Gallery; Using Third-Party JavaScript; Debugging JavaScript; IndexMost JavaScript books that try and teach the language usually do the "Hello World" approach, have you put a date on the web page, etc. All OK stuff, but pretty common fare. Heilmann seems to

treat JavaScript as a legitimate coding language, with plenty of power and features to allow you to code solutions based on current accepted techniques. For instance, he dives into DOM manipulation pretty early, so you end up seeing quite a bit of material using `document.getElementsByTagName` statements. In most JavaScript books, that's either relegated to the later chapters, or skipped altogether. Breaking up the learning by presentation and behavior also helps those who are more in tune with MVC-style design. JavaScript *can* be built in such a way that it's maintainable and segmented, and Heilmann does a very nice job in teaching that style. I also really liked the chapter on debugging, as that's one of those things that I find extremely frustrating about JavaScript. He presents some great options that top my normal "scan the code and see if anything looks wrong" method of finding JavaScript errors...My only "quibble" with the book is that I don't think I'd recommend it for the pure novice. Perhaps a novice JavaScript developer with solid development skills in other areas... I think a pure novice to coding in general AND JavaScript in particular would quickly get lost here...Definitely a good read if you have the basics down, and it will likely improve your JavaScript skills and coding techniques...

Just be aware of what you're getting into when you buy this book. It is *for beginners*, not for experienced developers. It spends the first 90 pages covering for- and while-loops, if-tests, and the rest of the machinery that you already know if you're an experienced programmer. It is the fate of most computer books, I'm afraid, that they either address rank beginners or professional software developers, with few addressing those in the middle. After every chapter, I had to take a second to recapitulate what I had just learned into the terminology that I'm aware of from my experience with other languages. One large section, for instance, is devoted to namespace-collision issues -- but the word "namespace" appears nowhere in the index. If you need a book that will jumpstart to "Here's how you solve the namespace-collision problem in JavaScript," this book is not for you. I had lots of specific questions, having just come to JavaScript. How do I set up a callback *chain*, for instance, on something like the `window.onload` event? This book is not at that level. It will be unable to answer that question for you. It spends so much time on beginners that it doesn't have enough time to help with best practices or common, cookbook-type programming problems. And yet it does seem confused about exactly who its audience is. Right after a chapter on basic flow control, Heilmann tosses off "XSLT" as though he expects his readers to know what that is. I submit that those who needed the first chapter will not need the XSLT bit, and conversely. So just be aware what you're getting into. I'm actually not blaming Heilmann, though I do blame whoever gave the book its title; it's much more about novices than professionals. If you look on the back of this book, you'll see the

flow chart that Apress recommends: start with Heilmann's book, and progress into "Pro JavaScript Techniques" and "Pro CSS Techniques." "Pro Javascript" will be my next step.

I've had very positive experiences with Apress in the past, but I was really disappointed with this book....and it sounds like some of the other reviewers share my frustrations. The example programs are sloppy and have errors (yes, the versions posted online work, but it's a massive pain in the a\$\$ to stare at the book for twenty minutes only to realize that there's an error in line x and line y doesn't even need to be there...and it's a bit unfair to expect the reader to know when to stop staring at the book and check the online version to see if it looks any different). Additionally, the author frequently dumps large amounts of code on the reader and instructs them to ignore parts (or to "ignore everything except for"). It happens over and over, and it gets annoying. Also, from the beginning of the book, there is a heavy emphasis on web accessibility standards. Ensuring that your site can be accessed by visually impaired or otherwise disabled users is fine and great, but the examples get bloated because of it and, imho, it really gets in the way of learning the basic concepts. If you want to learn Javascript and DOM, I'd recommend that you go to the Mozilla online docs for Javascript and DOM. The documentation and examples there are first rate. If, after learning Javascript and DOM, you want some recipes that \*might\* be helpful in ensuring compliance with accessibility standards, this book may be for you.

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