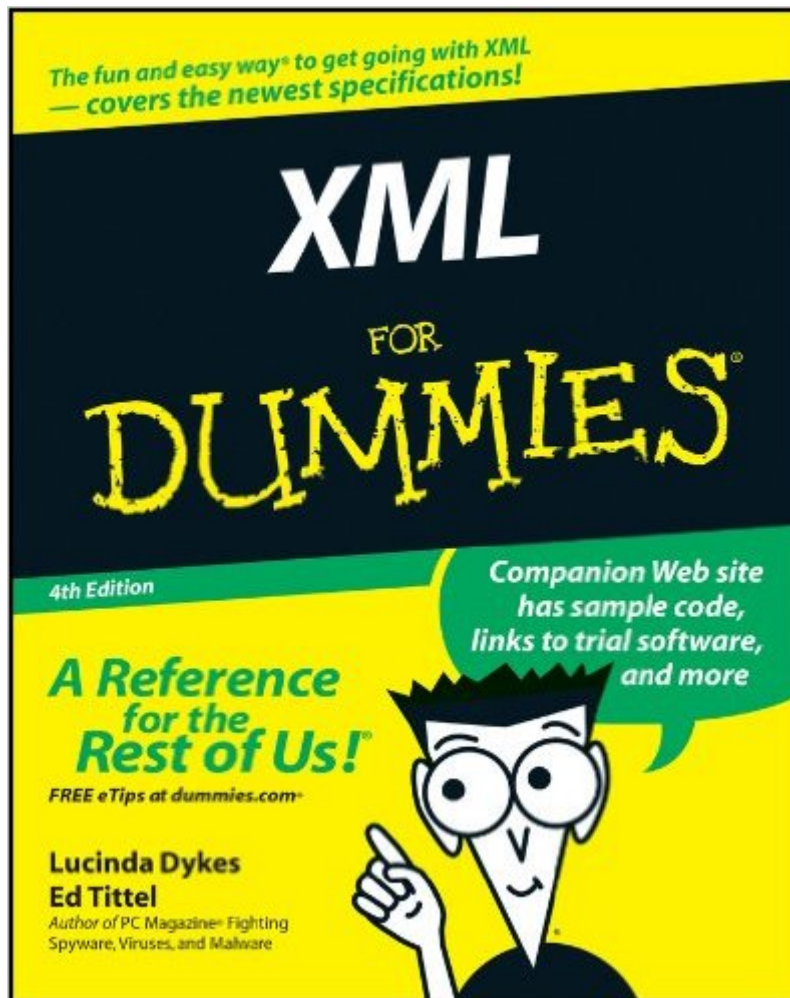


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XML For Dummies



Synopsis

See how XML works for business needs and RSS feeds Create consistency on the Web, or tag your data for different purposes Tag -- XML is it! XML tags let you share your format as well as your data, and this handy guide will show you how. You'll soon be using this markup language to create everything from Web sites to business forms, discovering schemas and DOCTYPEs, wandering the Xpath, teaming up XML with Office 2003, and more. Discover how to * Make information portable * Use XML with Word 2003 * Store different types of data * Convert HTML documents to XHTML * Add CSS to XML * Understand and use DTDs

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Customer Reviews

I'm usually not harsh about books, but this has got to be one of the worst computer books I've read. Admittedly XML is a complex topic to discuss, but another book "XML: A Primer" by St. Laurent does a much better job at showing the reader how XML works and is constructed. This book, in contrast, fails to show the poor reader what exactly XML is about -- and can do, and how one goes about developing actual XML applications. I mean, there are the code samples and explanations and everything, but after reading it I could not remember a single thing about XML. (I had to buy "XML: A Primer" to start all over again.) It's the rare kind of bad books that leave you unable to describe what you've just read. The book won't do as a primer, nor will it do as a reference. I suggest that you find a copy and read it first before deciding whether to buy it.

If you have any experience (even if it's only a tiny amount) with web development or programming find another book on XML. I bought this book not knowing anything about XML but knowing HTML and basic Javascript, VBScript, etc. I just wanted to understand what all the fuss was about concerning XML. I read the first 75 pages of this book before I even understood what XML was (that's about a fifth of the book). It took me many pages to understand that XML was designed for storing data (the same way a database is used) but you use other technologies/languages to present that XML data to a user on a web browser (for example, by using CSS, XSL, etc). Basically I had a lot of questions about XML and this book answered very few of them. The author repeats much of the information over and over but never goes into any depth on a particular subject. The first 125 pages could have been condensed to about 30. There are plenty of books out there on XML--some of those books have to be better than this one. It's a little cheaper possibly than some other books, but you get what you pay for.

I have read many computer books in my days and this is the worst, hands-down. It mentions topics in a seemingly random order, offers only the briefest of explanations when it does mention a topic, and never summarizes things in an understandable fashion. To top it off, the code from the book is NOT on the CD - in spite of page 355 which says it is in the xml4dum "directory" (I think they are called folders in Windows these days). Sorry, but this is a complete waste.

Maybe it's a problem with XML itself, because the book is a little thin. In practice XML works with other markup languages, XSL (extensible style sheets) and XSLT (extensible style sheet transformations), as well as a couple of other components. This book only covers XML so maybe the content itself isn't enough to sustain a single book. The book's a decent read but doesn't delve too deeply into the code. I know this is a primer book, but still it could have used additional info on how to implement XML in web pages. I would read another primer than this one and then move on to an O'Reilly book on XML (when one comes out).

If you are totally new to XML, this is the first book to read. It explains the basics of XML down to every command. Like most "for dummies books" it doesn't cover the application into the expert level, you would need to get one of those bibles for that. I liked the book and it gave me a foundation into XML. It does not give much help when it comes to using XML in real-world situations, but it will atleast prepare you for those "scary red books" (the one's with 10 faces on the front).

The book provided me with a high-level understanding, but it did not go into the level of detail I would have liked. A discussion of when to use XML vs. when not to would have been helpful. The lack of exercises guiding you through the process of authoring then transforming your doc into presentation-quality HTML is another glaring omission. If you want to get a good, basic understanding of XML--and you already have a solid foundation in HTML--I recommend this book. If you're looking for reference and how-to, look elsewhere.

I don't buy "...for Dummies" books to be directed to read some incomprehensible specification on the web! Seems like the authors' job should be to make the topic comprehensible. FOR A BETTER READ, try the "Project Cool Guide to XML for Web Designers." Even if you're not a Web Designer, it's still a better introduction to XML.

I wish I could have read reviews before buying this book. Then I would have looked for another title. The best of the Dummies coding books provide a soup to nuts process for building and implementing applications with the technology being discussed. This book doesn't come close to being that useful. At best, this book does function list descriptions of various pieces involved in XML communication. At best, this may increase your familiarity with the more in-depth concepts you will need to find elsewhere. The function descriptions are linked to each other solely by verbal transitional phrases. The book does not provide hands on tutorials on the core effort required to support XML. That is, the effort required to create and run the code and view the results. Even worse, the book sidesteps describing the infrastructure required to operate XML communication. There is really no discussion about how to automatically produce, transmit, receive, parse, and process the XML.

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