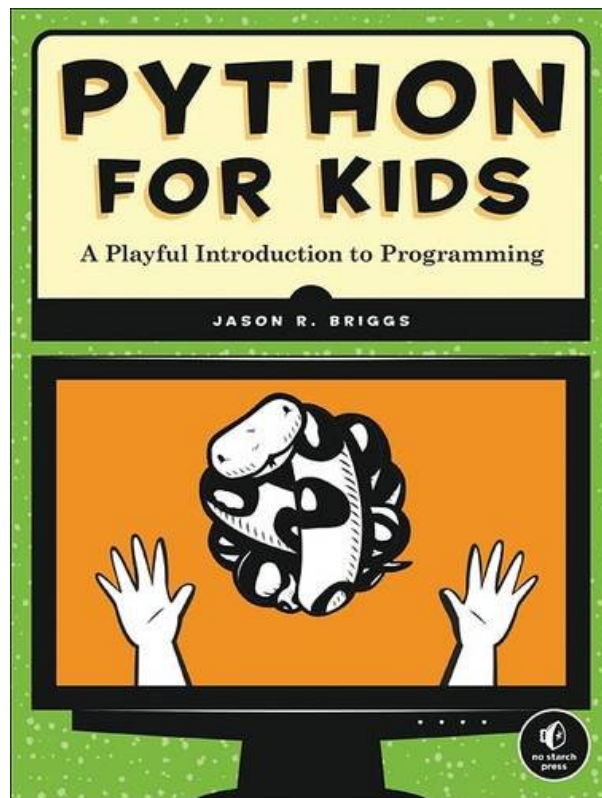
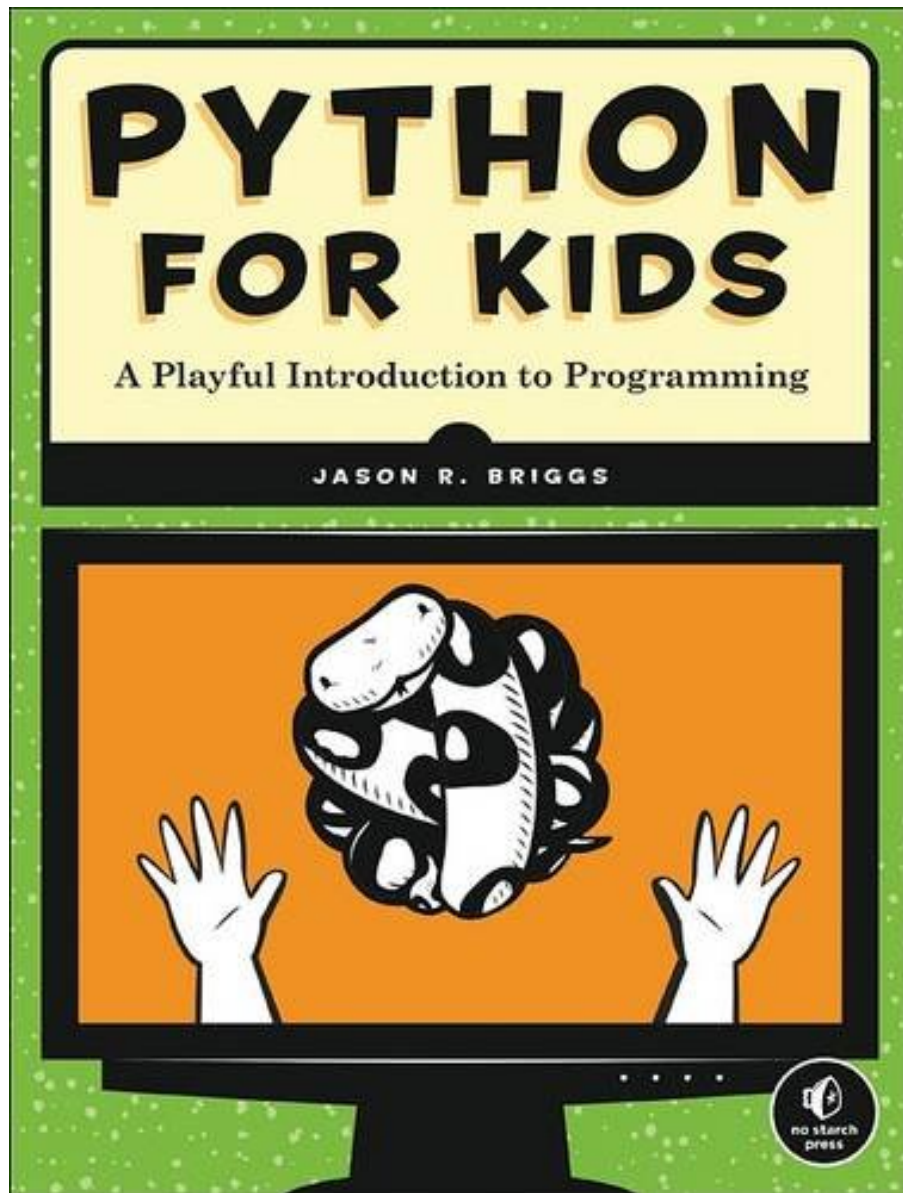


PYTHON FOR KIDS: A PLAYFUL INTRODUCTION TO PROGRAMMING BY JASON R. BRIGGS



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For Kids Aged 10+ (And Their Parents)

The code in this book runs on almost anything: Windows, Mac, Linux, even an OLPC laptop or Raspberry Pi!

Python is a powerful, expressive programming language that's easy to learn and fun to use! But books about learning to program in Python can be kind of dull, gray, and boring, and that's no fun for anyone.

Python for Kids brings Python to life and brings you (and your parents) into the world of programming. The ever-patient Jason R. Briggs will guide you through the basics as you experiment with unique (and often hilarious) example programs that feature ravenous monsters, secret agents, thieving ravens, and more. New terms are defined; code is colored, dissected, and explained; and quirky, full-color illustrations keep things on the lighter side.

Chapters end with programming puzzles designed to stretch your brain and strengthen your understanding. By the end of the book you'll have programmed two complete games: a clone of the famous Pong and "Mr. Stick Man Races for the Exit"—a platform game with jumps, animation, and much more.

As you strike out on your programming adventure, you'll learn how to:

- Use fundamental data structures like lists, tuples, and maps
- Organize and reuse your code with functions and modules
- Use control structures like loops and conditional statements
- Draw shapes and patterns with Python's turtle module
- Create games, animations, and other graphical wonders with tkinter

Why should serious adults have all the fun? Python for Kids is your ticket into the amazing world of computer programming.

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Most helpful customer reviews

81 of 85 people found the following review helpful.

Great Even for Adults!

By roro

I have the attention span of a goldfish. This book was easy to follow and many of the samples programs are fun. I am almost done with the book which is a clear sign of success. Its a good way to cover the basics.

99 of 109 people found the following review helpful.

Python and games development for kids

By mko

It's hard to say how should you teach kids programming. This is not an easy topic. Jason tries to make the subject as simple as possible, but this is really not that easy if you start looking at details. However, Jason makes his best and makes it really good, to give you plain and straightforward explanation of Python. First of all he tells you how to install and configure programming environment. And for those, who have never ever developed in the past, configuring Python may not be that straightforward. After you are ready to go, author takes you on the journey through the set of most basic constructs of the language. You will learn concepts of variables, classes, objects. You will get familiar with arrays, maps and constructs that let you create conditions and loops within the application. It would be fair to say, that half of the book is filled with these simple foundations of the development process. After all the basics are laid out you will be told how to use graphics in applications. How to combine the code and pictures and make them work for you. Do you recall famous LOGO? Yes, this "turtle like" computing language! You will find it here as well with all its simplicity. But this time, you are getting it in Python flavor.

After you have learned all the basics it's time to do some serious stuff. Jason guides you through the game development process by showing how to create simple games. What's really cool here is the fact you really do something. You will create simple games that do something. And this is the place where simple, boring "Hello world" strings are taken over by moving objects and graphics. If you have read carefully first part of the book you should be able to follow second part and be able to develop discussed games. Just one remark here. As reading first part of the book is rather easy, the leap between simple constructs and games is quite big. It may turn out that you will slow down with your reading and will have to focus more, but still you should be able to follow what author has to offer.

Last thing to discuss here is the definition of "kid". This book requires your kid to be able to read and to understand some basic concepts of mathematics like addition, multiplication, angles, length, width, measurement, etc. It's hard to judge, but in my opinion there is no point of buying this book unless your kid is 9-12 years old. Well, in fact, in case you have really smart kid, you can buy the book sooner.

Anyway. If you think about pushing your kid towards programming, buy this book together with Raspberry PI and you are ready to go :)

32 of 34 people found the following review helpful.

Clear, useful, impressive

By M. Helmke

Python for Kids: A Playful Introduction to Programming is the book that fills the hole in my Python library. It starts with a nice introduction and installation instructions for Windows 7, Mac OS X, and most importantly to me, Ubuntu (on which you are really only checking to make sure you have Python 3 installed, since Python is installed by default, although Ubuntu releases older than 12.04 may still have Python 2.x installed as default). Perhaps it is because we started in a similar era, but I found Briggs very easy to read and follow; like me, he started out by learning BASIC on a TRS-80. More likely, the clarity and tone are the result of an intentional focus so that kids can comprehend the complexities of the material. In either case, he did a wonderful job.

The book is broken down into logical chapters, each building upon the previous ones. It starts with foundational concepts like variables and calculations, adds types like strings and lists and tuples, then begins with an introduction to graphic interaction using the turtle module. This is much sooner than typical, and I think it is beneficial because it gives kids a quicker jump to that fun moment of power, "Hey! I just made that thing move on the screen."

Then the book builds understanding with explanations of if and else statements and loops. On top of that are added the concepts of functions, modules, classes, and objects. We are now a mere third of the way through the book.

From here on, the simple explanations given will be expanded upon in easily-absorbed chunks. Built-in Python functions and useful modules each get a chapter. Then, we revisit turtle graphics to play some more. Once the basic graphic concepts are taught with turtle, tkinter is presented.

The last third of the book is focused on games. Specifically, using some fun game examples to flesh out the concepts more completely, developing greater fluency with the concepts, grammar, and vocabulary already presented.

One weakness of many beginning programming books is that once you finish the book you have to do further research on your own to figure out what to do next. I love that Python for Kids does not end this way, but instead includes a useful Appendix titled Where to Go from Here. This Appendix is short, but gives enough information to help the reader learn just a little bit about some Python resources and other programming languages to make those next steps just a little bit easier.

This book is suitable for kids in upper elementary school and older. The only real prerequisites are the ability to read and understand the concepts and a computer that will run Python. While the book is clearly written using suitably simple vocabulary, it is not watered down and never talks down to the reader. For this reason, despite the title, this book could be just as useful for the adult programming novice, too.

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