PROGRAMMING GAMES WITH VISUAL BASIC EXPRESS BY PHILIP CONROD, LOU TYLEE
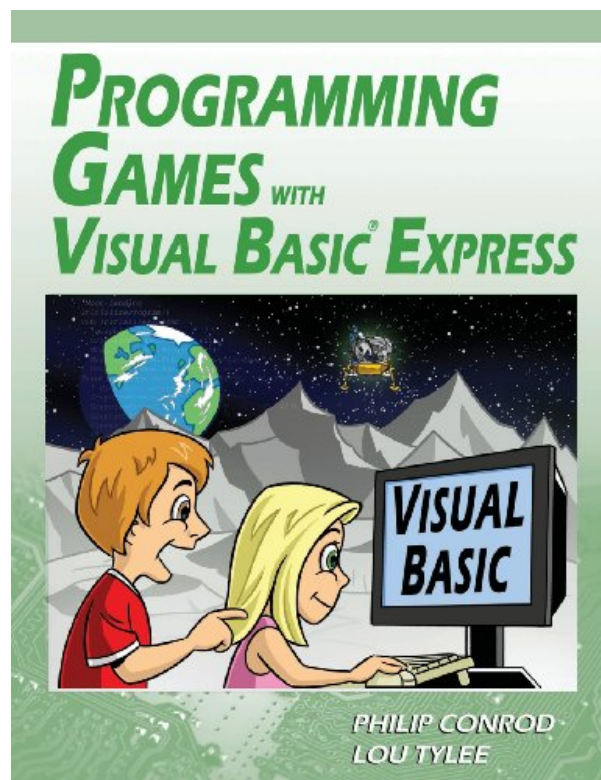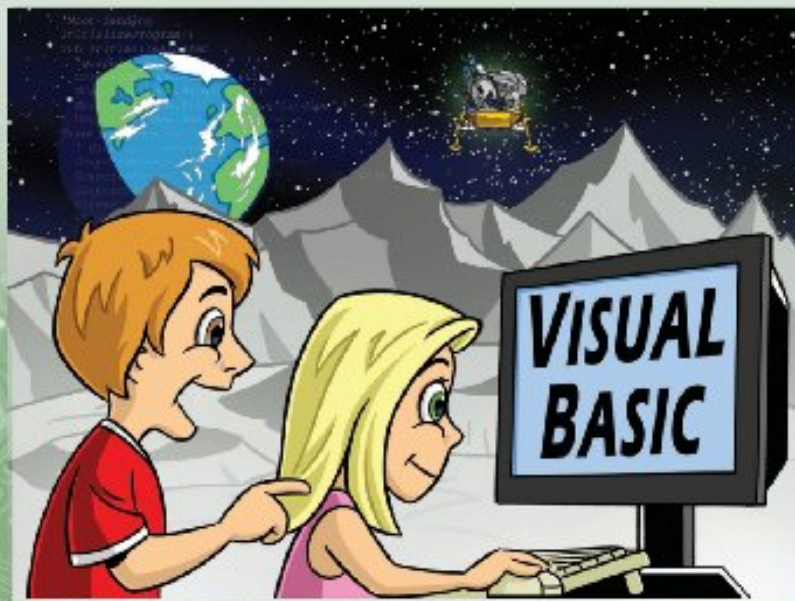
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Review
"I enjoyed Kid Games with Visual Basic Express. I really liked the step by step method. It was easy to understand and my students really enjoyed the examples, which all made a dry subject matter a fun and creative class. I also liked the format, as I can teach on my iPad. I'll be back for more next year." - Claudio Faenza, Teacher, Gainesville, FL "I was looking for some Visual Basic Express ideas and these books appeared to be just what I needed. I bought both Visual Basic books...great ideas and easy to read." - Andrew Zwelling, Math Teacher

From the Author
 N/A

About the Author
Philip Conrod has authored, co-authored and edited over two dozen computer programming books and tutorials over the past 30 years. Philip started programming in 1977 on a Commodore PET computer at the very young age of 13. Philip holds a Certificate in Computer Programming for Business from WarrenTech, a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Information Systems and a Master's certificate in the Essentials of Business Development from Regis University. Philip has held Information Technology leadership roles in companies like Sundstrand Aerospace, Safeco Insurance, FamilyLife, Kenworth Truck Company, and PACCAR Inc. Today, Philip serves as the Chief Information Officer for large manufacturing company based in Seattle, Washington. In his spare time, Philip still enjoys writing and publishing computer programming books for students and he serves as the President of Kidware Software. Kidware Software LLC publishes computer programming books and tutorials under the trade names of KIDware, Kidware Software, BibleByte Books and ComputerScienceForKids.com.
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aerospace firm.   Lou and his family live in Seattle, Washington.

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Programming Games With Visual Basic Express By Philip Conrod, Lou Tylee. In undergoing this life, many individuals consistently aim to do and also obtain the ideal. New expertise, experience, session, as well as everything that could enhance the life will certainly be done. Nevertheless, several individuals sometimes really feel perplexed to obtain those things. Feeling the restricted of experience and also resources to be better is among the does not have to have. Nevertheless, there is an extremely simple point that could be done. This is what your educator always manoeuvres you to do this. Yeah, reading is the response. Reviewing a publication as this Programming Games With Visual Basic Express By Philip Conrod, Lou Tylee and also other recommendations could enhance your life quality. Just how can it be?

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PROGRAMMING GAMES WITH VISUAL BASIC EXPRESS teaches Visual Basic Express programming concepts while providing detailed step-by-step instructions for building many fun games. The tutorial is appropriate for teens and adults. The games built are non-violent and teach logical thinking skills. To grasp the concepts presented in PROGRAMMING GAMES WITH VISUAL BASIC EXPRESS, you should possess a working knowledge of Windows and have had some exposure to Visual BASIC Express programming (or some other programming language). We offer two beginning programming tutorials (VISUAL BASIC EXPRESS FOR KIDS and BEGINNING VISUAL BASIC EXPRESS) that would help you gain this needed exposure.

PROGRAMMING GAMES WITH VISUAL BASIC EXPRESS explains (in simple, easy-to-follow terms) how to build a Visual Basic Express game project. The book includes over 700 pages of color self-study notes. Students learn about project design, the Visual BASIC Express toolbox, many elements of the Visual Basic language, and how to debug and distribute finished projects. Game skills learned include handling multiple players, scoring, graphics, animation, and sounds. The game projects built include, in increasing complexity:

- Safecracker - Decipher a secret combination using clues from the computer.
- Tic Tac Toe - The classic game - one of the first programmed by Bill Gates!
- Match Game - Find matching pairs of hidden photos - use your own photos!
- Pizza Delivery - A business simulation where you manage a small pizza shop for a night.
- Moon Landing - Land a module on the surface of the moon.
- Leap Frog - A fun arcade game where you get a frog through traffic and across a raging river.

PROGRAMMING GAMES WITH VISUAL BASIC EXPRESS requires either the Microsoft Windows 7 or Windows 8 operating system, and Visual Basic 2012 Express. The Visual Basic source code and all needed multimedia files are available for download from the publisher's website (kidwaresoftware.com) after you register the book.

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- Binding: Paperback
- 752 pages

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2 of 3 people found the following review helpful.
Visual Basic 2012 for kids, teachers, parents, home and school!
By paynea54
What is "Programming Games with Visual Basic Express" and how it works.

These lessons are a highly organized and well-indexed set of lessons in the Visual Basic 2012 programming environment. Visual Basic 2012 is a programming environment which allows the user to drag and drop buttons, text boxes, scroll bars, timers and dozens of other visual "controls" to make programs which look like "Windows" programs. They provide a graphical user interface to the user.

The tutorials provide the benefit of completed real-world game applications - fully documented projects from the teacher's point of view. That is, while full solutions are provided for the teacher's (and learner's) benefit, the projects are presented in an easy-to-follow set of lessons explaining the rational for the form layout, coding design and conventions, and specific code related to the problem.

The learner may follow the tutorials at their own pace while focusing upon context relevant information. The finished product is the reward, but the student is fully engaged and enriched by the process. This kind of learning is often the focus of teacher training. Every Computer Science teacher knows what a great deal of work is required for projects to work in this manner, and with these tutorials, the work is done by an author who understands the classroom experience. That is extremely rare!

Game projects are presented in an easy-to-follow set of lessons explaining concepts fundamental to all languages - data types, input and output, decision making, looping, built-in functions, the different types of errors (syntax versus logical), logical expressions, comparison operators, random numbers, string functions, arrays, and subroutines. Emphasis is placed on Visual Basic controls - naming conventions, coding practices, intellisense features and debugging techniques. While game programming holds a higher degree of interest for the young programmer, an experienced teacher would recognize all of the above as a substantive list of topics in any first secondary or post-secondary course in Computer Science.

Graduated Lessons for Every Project ... Lessons, examples, problems and projects. Graduated learning. Increasing and appropriate difficulty... Great results.

With these projects, there are lessons providing a rich background on the programming topics to be covered. Once understood, concepts are easily applicable to a variety of applications. Then, specific games are drawn out so that a learner can practice with the Visual Basic commands. A summative game program for the chapter is presented. Game design is broken down into manageable parts - the logical solution to the problem, the design of the user-interface and supporting sub-routines (code modules) come together in the finished product.

By presenting lessons in this graduated manner, students are fully engaged and appropriately challenged to become independent thinkers who can come up with their own project ideas, design their own graphical user interfaces, and do their own coding. Once the process is learned, then student engagement is unlimited! I have seen student literacy improve dramatically as they cannot get enough of what is being presented.

Indeed, lessons encourage accelerated learning - in the sense that they provide an enriched environment to learn computer science, but they also encourage accelerating learning because students cannot put the lessons away once they start! Computer Science provides this unique opportunity to challenge students, and it is a great testament to the authors that they are successful in achieving such levels of engagement with consistency.

My history with the Kidware Software products.

I have used single license or shareware versions for over a decade to keep up my own learning. By using these lessons, I am able to spend time on things which will pay off in the classroom. I do not waste valuable time ensconced in language reference libraries for programming environments and help screens which can never be fully remembered! These game-design projects are examples of how student projects should be as final products - thus, the pathway to learning is clear and immediate.

By following these lessons, I was able to come up with my own projects - An Equation Solver which allows a student to solve any equation that they are likely to encounter in high school, a dice game of Craps, a Financial Calculator covering all grade 12 Financial Math applications, and finally, the game of Mastermind - where I presently have a "Mastermind Hall of Fame" for the best solutions by students over the years. I have made several applications for hardware interfacing in Computer Technology class. I could do all of this only because of these lessons by Kidware Software!

The exciting thing is that all of the above could also be done in other BASIC or Visual Studio languages - such as QBasic, Small Basic, Visual C# or Visual C++, though I first learned to do the programming using Kidware Software's "Learn Visual Basic". For me to go from one language to another is now an inevitable outcome!

With these lessons, I am able to concentrate on the higher order thinking skills presented by the problem, and not be chained to a language reference in order to get things done!

If I want to have students use or expand upon projects, then I take advantage of site-license options. I have found it very straight forward to emphasize the fundamental Computer Science topics that form the basis of these projects when using them in the classroom.

Quick learning curve for teachers! How teachers can use the product:

Having projects completed ahead of time can allow the teacher to present the design aspect of the project FIRST, and then have students do all of their learning in the context of what is required in the finished product. This is a much faster learning curve than if students designed all of their own projects from scratch. Lessons concentrating on a unified outcome for all make for much more streamlined engagement for first-time students of computer programming, as they complete more projects within a short period of time and there is a context for everything that is learned.

Meet Different State and Provincial Curriculum Expectations and More

Different states and provinces have their own curriculum requirements for Computer Science. With the Kidware Software products, you have at your disposal a series of projects which will allow you to pick and choose from among those which best suit your curriculum needs. Students focus upon design stages and sound problem-solving techniques from a Computer Science perspective. In doing so, they become independent problem-solvers, and will exceed the curricular requirements of elementary, middle and secondary schools everywhere.

Useable projects - out of the box !

The specific projects covered in the Programming Games with Visual Basic Express tutorials are suitable for grade 10 and above:

Safecracker (a numeric version of Mastermind)
Tic Tac Toe
Match Game (Concentration)
Pizza Delivery - a game emphasizing business practices
Moon Landing - emphasizing trajectory physics
Leap Frog - emphasizing collision detection

As you can see, there is a high degree of care taken so that projects are age-appropriate, providing educational content in the finished games.

You can begin teaching the projects on the first day. It's easy for the teacher to have done their own learning by starting with the solution files. Then, they will see how all of the parts of the lesson fall into place. Even a novice teacher could make use of the accompanying lessons. The lessons will provide more than just the coding of the solution - they will provide the correct context for the coding decisions which were made, and provide help in the investigation of related functions. Students then experiment with projects of their own making.

How to mark the projects.

In a classroom environment, it is possible for teachers to mark student progress by asking questions during the various design and coding stages. Teachers can make their own written quizzes easily from the reference material provided, but I have found the requirement of completing projects (mastery) sufficient for gathering information about student progress - especially in the later grades.

Lessons encourage your own programming extensions.

Once concepts are learned, it is difficult to NOT know what to do for your own projects.

Once having done my own projects in one language, such as Visual Basic, I know that I could easily adapt them to other languages once I have studied the Kidware Software tutorials. I do not believe there is any other reference material out there which would cause me to make the same claim! In fact, I know there is not as I have spent over a decade looking!

Having used Kidware Software tutorials for the past decade, I have been successful at the expansion of my own learning to other platforms such as XNA for the Xbox, or the latest developer suites for tablets and phones. I thank Kidware Software and its authors for continuing to stand for what is right in the teaching methodologies which not only inspire, but propel the self-guided learner through what can be a highly intelligible landscape of opportunities.

Regards,

Alan Payne, B.A.H. , B.Ed.
Computer Science Teacher
T.A. Blakelock High School
Oakville, Ontario
[...]

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