A Tour of C++

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In *A Tour of C++, Second Edition,* Bjarne Stroustrup, the creator of C++, describes what constitutes modern C++. This concise, self-contained guide covers most major language features and the major standard-library components--not, of course, in great depth, but to a level that gives programmers a meaningful overview of the language, some key examples, and practical help in getting started. Stroustrup presents the C++ features in the context of the programming styles they support, such as object-oriented and generic programming. His tour is remarkably comprehensive. Coverage begins with the basics, then ranges widely through more advanced topics, including many that are new in C++17, such as move semantics, uniform initialization, lambda expressions, improved containers, random numbers, and concurrency. The tour even covers some extensions being made for C++20, such as concepts and modules, and ends with a discussion of the design and evolution of C++. This guide does not aim to teach you how to program (for that, see Stroustrup's *Programming: Principles and Practice Using C++, Second Edition*), nor will it be the only resource you'll need for C++ mastery (for that, see Stroustrup's *The C++ Programming Language, Fourth Edition,* and recommended online sources). If, however, you are a C or C++ programmer wanting greater familiarity with the current C++ language, or a programmer versed in another language wishing to gain an accurate picture of the nature and benefits of modern C++, you can't find a shorter or simpler introduction than this tour provides.

A Tour of C++ Details

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Benjamin says

If you have no programming experience, this book won't teach it to you (read Programming: Principles and Practice Using C++ instead).

If you want to learn about every detail of C++, this book won't give it to you (read The C++ Programming Language instead).

If, however, you come from another language and want to get an overview of what's possible in modern C++, or if you're an experienced C++ programmer and want to know what's new in C++11, this is the book for you. Concise and following a "less is more" approach, it doesn't take long to finish yet still serves as a reference for the most important language features. Highly recommended.

Dave says

This is pretty good high level overview of C++. The author demonstrates the basic functions of the language and points the reader to his more detailed books for more information. I plan to keep this book handy, just as a quick reference.

Junsong Li says

I haven't looked at C++ for a few years. This book serves well for quickly getting my mindset into C++ programming.

Jakub says

Given that I've programmed in C++ before this book was perfect for me as a re-introduction.

It doesn't really explain things in depths, but it is rather just a very quick tour of the features. Perfect for someone who's an experienced programmer and has done some low level programming, but not very useful for beginners I'm afraid. Still I'd recommend reading this, if nothing it servers as a good motivational text to keep learning more.

Chris says

I recently started working on my first major professional C++ project, and this is the best introductory book

for the experienced programmer I have found. I plan to follow it up with Effective Modern C++, then the big one, Stroustrup's The C++ Programming Language 4th Ed. This is a great short overview from the person who invented the language. Strongly recommended, and notably clearer and more concise than most other programming books I've read.

Mark Sanchez says

Solid, but it could use some problems/answers to verify understanding.

John Whipple says

I haven't read a book about C++ in a long time because I mean I learned it in college and then I used it for work for so long that I figured I knew all about it and I didn't need to read a C++ book right? Well, this one is pretty short and it's written by the guy who invented C++ so I decided to give it a shot. It turns out it was pretty interesting. They came out with a new version of C++ in 2011 and they added some new keywords and features, so that was good to read about. Also, I never really used much of the standard library when I was programming before because I had always heard that the STL was too bloated and nobody should ever use it for a game ever. Well since then I have heard that it's gotten better, and I programmed a lot in C# where they have all the generic structures that the STL represents, and it's just really useful to be able to use something that already exists instead of having to write your own linked list every time you start up a new program. So I've started using the STL and it's not too bad. Whatever. I like C++ but probably not as much as I like C# still.

M. Cetin says

A Tour of C++ is an exceptional mid level C++ book. Rather than basic language features and step by step C++ teaching, Bjarne shares invaluable advises on developing good C++ code. Before reading the book I offer one to be familiar with standard library at least.

Antonio says

Very concise. Good introduction for those starting to learn C++

Jared says

Excellent overview of a variety of different modern C++11 topics!

Pavel Milchev says

It is a good way to get a short overview of the latest standard(C++11). There is not many details, but just enough to see the possibilities of the language.

Emad says

It was a good briefing to C++11. Short and concise.

Vladimir K says

This is a decent introductory book written by the language's creator himself. It is a good book, but by golly, how can you make SO MANY MISTAKES in such a short book? Stroustrup has a hefty errata page on his website, and it's not even complete.

The book is extremely concise. Sometimes the author manages to convey the condensed design choices and concepts very well, sometimes it leaves the reader scratching their head and googling the same concepts for more information on the topic.
While I do believe this might be the best introduction to the language that does not try to sacrifice its hidden depth for the sake of simplicity, I also think it was very hastily written, poorly typeset, and never fully fixed in the newer editions.

If you do decide to go with the book, read the first 6 chapters very carefully, for nearly every paragraph expands into a separate concept of the language, and you are risking to miss them if you don't pay enough attention expecting that everything will be explained in greater depth later, because it almost certainly will not.

Tread carefully.

Jonathon Jones says

Stroustrup gives a reasonable overview of C++ in this book. I can't take points off for not taking a long time explaining each concept, since there are other books with that job, including his own. But I did have some trouble with it. In particular, the examples left a lot to be desired - he would frequently use variables like "f", rather than something clearer. Indeed, in a particularly bad case, he has both "f" and "F" as variables (one is a function, the other is a function object).

Still, it's a useful, quick trip through the language.

James says

Stroustroup wanted to write his own K&R style book and here it is: A tour of C++. I think this is perhaps one of the best C++ books I have ever read. I had many big aha-moments while I was reading this. This book is a lot more clear and easy to understand than 90% of C++ books out there. The only downside is that the codes are a bit inconsistent and need some tweaking and modification to make them work. However, I found it a good exercise to fix the code. Overall, awesome book.