

Practical Prototype and script.aculo.us



Andrew Dupont

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About the Author

■ **ANDREW DUPONT** is a UI developer living and working in Austin, Texas. He is a member of the core development team for Prototype, the popular JavaScript toolkit. He has contributed to Prototype in many different ways: writing code and documentation, offering support, and evangelizing to colleagues. In addition, Andrew has spoken about JavaScript at South by Southwest Interactive and other tech industry conferences.

Andrew received liberal arts and journalism degrees from the University of Texas at Austin. He occasionally attended classes, but much preferred the time between classes, during which he experimented with web design and learned about the emerging web standards movement.

About the Technical Reviewer

After getting hooked on the Web in 1996 and spending several years pushing pixels and bits for the likes of IBM and Konica Minolta, **AARON GUSTAFSON** founded his own web consultancy: Easy! Designs. Aaron is a member of the Web Standards Project (WaSP) and the Guild of Accessible Web Designers (GAWDS). He also serves as a technical editor for A List Apart, is a contributing writer for Digital Web Magazine and MSDN, and has built a small library of writing and editing credits in the print world, including contributions to *AdvancED DOM Scripting* (friends of ED, 2007), *Accelerated DOM Scripting with Ajax, APIs, and Libraries* (Apress, 2007), and *Web Design in a Nutshell, Third Edition* (O'Reilly, 2006). Aaron has graced the stage at numerous conferences, including An Event Apart, COMDEX, South by Southwest, the Ajax Experience, and Web Directions, and he is frequently called on to provide web standards training in both the public and private sectors.

He blogs at <http://easy-reader.net>.

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Introduction

I wrote this book for people who have some experience with JavaScript and no experience with Prototype. I mean for “experience with JavaScript” to cast a wide net: you may love JavaScript, or hate it, or love the language but hate browser scripting, or love both, or hate both.

Because the book assumes some JavaScript experience, it does not cover the most basic parts of the JavaScript language itself, nor does it cover the DOM. There are many books that can get you started on that path, but the best free resource is Quirks Mode (www.quirksmode.org), the authoritative and exhaustive reference created by Peter-Paul Koch.

This book is also meant to appeal to those who have some experience with Prototype but don’t consider themselves experts. Many have worked with Prototype indirectly through Ruby on Rails or a similar framework. Many have used a third-party script that depended on Prototype, but treated the code as a black box.

In the first chapter of the book, we’ll look at some aspects of the JavaScript language that novice users may not know about. Feel free to spend as much time on Chapter 1 as you need, since it’s crucial that you understand these concepts if you want to use Prototype effectively.

The screenshots in this book show Firefox running on Windows XP, but the code examples are designed to work in all major browsers and on all major platforms. Prototype boasts official support for Firefox (versions 1.5 and above), Internet Explorer (6 and above), Safari (2 and above), and Opera (9.2 and above).

I welcome your feedback, observations, and ridicule. I can be reached at book@andrewdupont.net.

