Preface

jQuery is a powerful, yet easy-to-use, JavaScript library that helps web developers and designers add dynamic, interactive elements to their sites, smoothing out browser inconsistencies and greatly reducing development time. In *jQuery 1.4 Reference Guide*, you can investigate this library's features in a thorough, accessible format.

This book offers an organized menu of every jQuery method, function, and selector. Entries are accompanied by detailed descriptions and helpful recipes that will assist you in getting the most out of jQuery, and avoiding the pitfalls commonly associated with JavaScript and other client-side languages. If you're still hungry for more, the book shows you how to cook up your own extensions with jQuery's elegant plug-in architecture.

You'll discover the untapped possibilities that jQuery makes available and hone your skills as you return to this guide time and again.

What this book covers

In Chapter 1, *Anatomy of a jQuery Script*, we'll begin by dissecting a working jQuery example. This script will serve as a roadmap for this book, directing you to the chapters containing more information on particular jQuery capabilities.

The heart of the book is a set of reference chapters, which allow you to quickly look up the details of any jQuery method. Chapter 2, *Selector Expressions*, lists every available selector for finding page elements.

Chapter 3, *DOM Traversal Methods*, builds on the previous chapter with a catalog of jQuery methods for finding page elements.

Chapter 4, *DOM Manipulation Methods*, describes every opportunity for inspecting and modifying the HTML structure of a page.

Chapter 5, *Event Methods*, details each event that can be triggered and reacted to by jQuery.

Chapter 6, *Effect Methods*, defines the range of animations built into jQuery, as well as the toolkit available for building your own.

Chapter 7, *AJAX Methods*, lists the ways in which jQuery can initiate and respond to server communication without refreshing the page.

Chapter 8, *Miscellaneous Methods*, covers the remaining capabilities of the jQuery library that don't neatly fit into the other categories.

Chapter 9, *jQuery Properties*, lists properties of the jQuery object that can be inspected for information about the browser environment.

With the catalog of built-in functionality concluded, we'll dive into the extension mechanisms jQuery makes available. Chapter 10, *Plug-in API*, reveals these powerful ways to enhance jQuery's already robust capabilities using a plug-in.

Chapter 11, *Alphabetical Quick Reference*, offers a handy list of all methods and their arguments.

Appendix A, *Online Resources*, provides a handful of informative web sites on a wide range of topics related to jQuery, JavaScript, and web development in general.

Appendix B, *Development Tools*, recommends a number of useful third-party programs and utilities for editing and debugging jQuery code within your personal development environment.

What you need for this book

This book is a reference guide, not a tutorial. As such, prior exposure to the jQuery library will be beneficial in navigating this reference. The book *Learning jQuery 1.3* is well-suited for this purpose.

To understand jQuery concepts, some knowledge of JavaScript is required, and familiarity with HTML and CSS is helpful.

The jQuery library itself can be downloaded from `http://jquery.com/`. The majority of examples in this book require only this library, a text editor, and a web browser. Some AJAX examples require web server software as well, such as Apache, but this requirement is avoided wherever possible.

Who this book is for

This reference is designed for web developers who want a broad, organized view of all that the jQuery library has to offer, or want a quick reference on their desks to refer to for particular details. Basic knowledge of HTML and CSS is required. You should be comfortable with the syntax of JavaScript, and have basic knowledge of jQuery to make best use of this book.

Conventions

In this book, you will find a number of styles of text that distinguish between different kinds of information. Here are some examples of these styles, and an explanation of their meaning.

Code words in text are shown as follows: "The `.removeAttr()` method uses the JavaScript `removeAttribute()` function."

A block of code is set as follows:
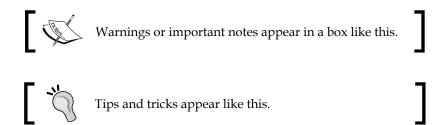
```
<ul>
  <li>list item 1</li>
  <li>list item 2</li>
  <li>list item 3</li>
  <li>list item 4</li>
  <li>list item 5</li>
  <li>list item 6</li>
</ul>
```

When we wish to draw your attention to a particular part of a code block, the relevant lines or items are set in bold:

```
<head>
  <meta http-equiv="Content-Type"
    content="text/html; charset=utf-8"/>
  <script src="jquery.js" type="text/javascript"></script>
  <script src="jquery.plug-in.js"
    type="text/javascript"></script>
  <script src="custom.js" type="text/javascript"></script>
  <title>Example</title>
</head>
```

New terms and **important words** are shown in bold. Words that you see on the screen, in menus or dialog boxes for example, appear in the text like this: "After this code executes, clicks on **Trigger the handler** will also display the same message."

> Warnings or important notes appear in a box like this.

> Tips and tricks appear like this.

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