

Learning Ruby on Rails

Asked 16 years, 3 months ago Modified 11 months ago

Viewed 192k times

241

votes



Locked. This question and its answers are [locked](#) because the question is off-topic but has historical significance. It is not currently accepting new answers or interactions.

As it stands now, I'm a Java and C# developer. The more and more I look at Ruby on Rails, the more I really want to learn it.

What have you found to be the best route to learn RoR? Would it be easier to develop on Windows, or should I just run a virtual machine with Linux?

Is there an IDE that can match the robustness of Visual Studio? Any programs to develop that give a good overhead of what to do? Any good books?


Seriously, any tips/tricks/rants would be awesome.

[ruby-on-rails](#)

[ruby](#)

community wiki
4 revs, 3 users 78%
Christian Fazzini

For an IDE Aptana works great for Windows with Git support (for windows). However, it will give you major headaches in that the Rails community doesn't care much for Window and it tends to need a lot of work-arounds or hacks of Gems. I would just say go the PHP route...runs on everything, much more stable, much more flexible, and less of a headache on upgrading systems. – [Travis Pessetto](#) Aug 16, 2011 at 18:18

To anyone else who comes here now, I am just like the OP, a C#/asp.net-mvc dev, trying ruby. It was really hard trying to work in ubuntu so I got everything installed on windows. A few people have told me so far it might be an issue but today I pushed a simple app on heroku.com from windows no problems. As for an IDE, I believe a good one really helps you learn the framework. [RubyMine](#) compares to visual studio and you set it with the predefined VS shortcuts and you can hit F12 and inspect and learn the ROR framework. =) – [gideon](#) Dec 20, 2011 at 17:37 

Comments disabled on deleted / locked posts / reviews

56 Answers

Sorted by:

Highest score (default)



1

2

Next

205

votes



I've been moving from C# in my professional career to looking at Ruby and RoR in my personal life, and I've found linux to be slightly more appealing personally for development. Particularly now that I've started using git, the implementation is cleaner on linux.

Currently I'm dual booting and getting closer to running Ubuntu full time. I'm using gedit with various plugins for the development environment. And as of late 2010, I'm making the push to use Vim for development, even over Textmate on OS X.

A large amount of the Rails developers are using (gasp) Macs, which has actually got me thinking in that direction.

Although I haven't tried it, [Ruby in Steel](#) gives you a Ruby IDE inside the Visual Studio world, and [IronRuby](#) is the .NET flavor of Ruby, if you're interested.

As far as books are concerned, the [Programming Ruby](#) (also known as the Pickaxe) book from the Pragmatic Programmers is the de-facto for learning Ruby. I bit the bullet and purchased that book and [Agile Web Development with Rails](#); both books have been excellent.

[Peepcode](#) screencasts and PDF books have also been great for getting started; at \$9 per screencast it's hard to go wrong. I actually bought a 5-pack.

Also check out the following:

- [Official Rails Guides](#)

- [Railscasts](#)
- [railsapi.com](#) or [Ruby on Rails - APIdock](#)
- [The Ruby Show](#)
- [Rails for Zombies](#)
- [Softies on Rails](#) - Ruby on Rails for .NET Developers
- [Rails Podcast](#)
- [Rails Best Practices](#)

I've burned through the backlog of Rails and Rails Envy podcasts in the past month and they have provided wonderful insight into lots of topics, even regarding software development in general.

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edited Sep 24, 2011 at 17:42

community wiki

10 revs, 7 users 81%

Jason Navarrete


45 I used to save all my high end hardware for Windows and run Ubuntu Linux on my lower spec hardware. After a while I stopped wasting good hardware on Windows. – [Rimian](#) Jul 8, 2010 at 11:24

4 I've used PCs, various flavors of Unix and Macs for my Ruby development, and went with Mac for my personal machine. I love Ubuntu, and consider it a great OS and development platform but there's a tiny bit more icing on the Mac's cake that my music and photography take advantage of. So, either

Ubuntu, Ubuntu Mint or Mac OS get my recommendation.

– [the Tin Man](#) Nov 27, 2010 at 3:18

I added Rails Guides at the top because that's the best place to get started and guaranteed to stay up to date. I moved softies and Rails podcast to the bottom because they are broken or not active. – [gtd](#) May 30, 2011 at 18:48

+1 for the shout toward Linux, even if you run it in a VM. Ubuntu is pretty poor for Rails from my experience, unless you are comfortable compiling Ruby from source. Vim is awesome. Textmate on Mac was nice, but once you go Vim you won't go back. – [Adam Hawes](#) Aug 25, 2011 at 0:09 

125

votes



Beware, the rails world is a massively frustrating mess of outdated and inconsistent documentation and examples. It is maybe one of the fastest moving and most faddish development communities there is. By the time you learn something it will already have changed. Even the books are not consistent in which version of rails they are talking about. Documentation by blogging! enough said.

I currently do RoR on windows. My advice is to avoid windows if you can. Lots of things don't work and the rails community really really doesn't care about you. The move to Git has really messed me up since it doesn't work very well on windows. A lot of gems will fail because of this (Heroku looks like a cool tool - too bad for me it can't handle window's Git setup). Capistrano is out. It goes on and annoyingly on.

Plus, in the back of your mind, you always wonder when something doesn't work "Is it a rails/windows problem?" I

am not sure this is solved by using linux because linux brings its own hassles like constantly having to upgrade all those different dependencies, etc...If that's the kind of thing you enjoy it might be an okay choice for you. Those days of enjoying system fiddling are behind me and I just want to get on with doing my work. I am planning on installing ubuntu on a home machine just so i can get familiar with things like capistrano so maybe my opinion will change.

I'd highly suggest if you are going to do rails dev for any amount of time you seriously consider getting a Mac. If you value your time and sanity it will pay for itself almost instantly. Depending on how you value your time 10 hours of debugging windows/linux setup problems and you have spend as much as a Mac costs anyway.

Rails is a joy compared to what it replaces but it is a bit of a pain in that its proponents skip right past a lot of the boring but important stuff like documentation, compatibility issues and community building. It is way more powerful than other frameworks like Django but I sometimes look over at the Django documentation and community and sigh like a guy with a wild sexy girlfriend looking at his friend's plain but sane and stable wife. But then rails adds a feature and I go "Ohhh shiny!"

IMO the Rails Screencasts are better than the Peepcode screencasts. RubyPlus also has screencasts, mind you, they are bit rough around the edges. BuildingWebApps

has a free online course that starts doing screencasts halfway through.

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answered [Sep 15, 2008 at 13:26](#)

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[srboisvert](#)

-
- 29 It's been pretty smooth for me on Ubuntu/Linux. Dependencies auto install (gems and through apt-get.) – [Zach](#) Sep 21, 2008 at 0:54
-
- 4 The book agile developmment with rails really does keep pace with RoR, IMHO – [Tilendor](#) Oct 1, 2008 at 17:43
-
- 3 I'm currently learning rails and the first step I took was setting up a Linux VM to use as my dev/test server so that I didn't have to mess with the Vista host OS I am running. If you are interested in setting up a Linux dev VM for rails feel free to follow my guide: sharingatwork.com/2009/10/... – [Daniel J. Pritchett](#) Oct 27, 2009 at 16:59
-
- 1 March 10 now and developing on Windows is ok for me. – [irl_irl](#) Mar 15, 2010 at 8:27
-
- 4 @srboisvert, "Those days of enjoying system fiddling are behind me and I just want to get on with doing my work." Oh so true brother! Amen! – [the Tin Man](#) Nov 27, 2010 at 3:24
-

96 Path of least resistance:

votes



- Have a simple web project in mind.



- Go to **rubyonrails.org** and look at their "Blog in 15 minutes" screencast to get excited.
- Get a copy of O'Reilly Media's **Learning Ruby**
- Get a Mac or Linux box.
(Fewer early Rails frustrations due to the fact that Rails is generally developed on these.)
- Get a copy of **Agile Web Development with Rails**.
- Get the version of Ruby and Rails described in that book.
- Run through that book's first section to get a feel for what it's like.
- Go to **railscasts.com** and view at the earliest videos for a closer look.
- Buy **The Rails Way** by Obie Fernandez to get a deeper understanding of Rails and what it's doing.
- Then upgrade to the newest production version of Rails, and view the latest railscasts.com videos.

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edited May 18, 2009 at 17:16

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2 revs

Adrian Dunston

And add using RVM to help reduce the friction. – [the Tin Man](#)
Nov 27, 2010 at 3:27

24

votes



I wrote a post called ["Getting Started With Rails -- What I wish I knew"](#) that many people found helpful.

The basics:

- Agile development with Rails (book)
- InstantRails for quick ruby/rails environment on Windows
- Aptana as the IDE
- Subversion for version control

The online tutorials are decent but scattered. Invest \$30 in a book for a more comprehensive understanding.

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answered [Sep 20, 2008 at 23:40](#)

community wiki
[Kalid](#)

It looks like the last InstantRails update was on 2007-12-28.
rubyforge.org/projects/instantrails – [sdfx](#) Feb 5, 2009 at 21:36

do not use windows Just put ubuntu as a dual boot. It will take less than an hour. For Aptana - I went from that 2 netbeans 2 rubyMine. Save yourself the time. Subversion??? no, use git. at very least git-svn if your ork uses svn right now.
– [Michael Durrant](#) Aug 17, 2011 at 9:44

20
votes

I've found <http://railstutorial.org/book> to be a great resource for learning Rails



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answered Jul 30, 2010 at 3:52



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[SiliconChaos](#)

14
votes

I really enjoy RubyMine from JetBrains. It seems like a very full featured IDE something I miss from many of the other alternatives out there. Also for a simple env I enjoy e the text editor. Plain and simple.



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edited Aug 19, 2011 at 16:28



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2 revs, 2 users 67%
[Søren Spelling Lund](#)

2 RubyMine 3 is absolutely great, especially if you're coming from C#. RubyMine is made by the same company that built ReSharper. – [tee](#) May 27, 2011 at 16:11

13
votes

IDE: NetBeans
Book: [Agile Web Development With Rails](#)
Installation: [Instant Rails](#)





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edited Aug 27, 2011 at 2:43

community wiki
2 revs, 2 users 89%
Binil Thomas

NetBeans is a great all-rounder IDE, but it is slow and crash a lot on my Mac. I would rather recommend TextMate (not free, though) – [khairul](#) Dec 16, 2009 at 3:45

- 5 I would not go with an IDE when using rails - use VIM, Textmate, or Emacs – [Scott Schulthess](#) Jun 19, 2010 at 17:07
-

No IDE? Says who? I've used various IDEs, and most of them bring very helpful features to the table. All these guys trying to say you should go hard-core with some plain old editor need to be a little less opinionated about it. – [MattSlay](#) Nov 13, 2010 at 13:18

- 2 NetBeans no longer supports ruby:
netbeans.org/community/news/show/1507.html – [tee](#) May 27, 2011 at 16:10
-

12

votes



+50



1. [Data Structures and Algorithms with Object-Oriented Design Patterns in Ruby](#) Bruno R. Preiss | Published in 2004
2. [Learn to Program](#) Chris Pine | Pragmatic Bookshelf
Published in 2006, 176 pages
3. [Mr. Neighborly's Humble Little Ruby Book](#) Jeremy McAnally | Published in 2006, 147 pages

4. [Programming Ruby: A Pragmatic Programmer's Guide](#) David Thomas, Andrew Hunt | Addison-Wesley
Published in 2000, 608 pages
5. [Rails in a Nutshell](#) C. Fauser, J. MacAulay, E. Ocampo-Gooding, J. Guenin | O'Reilly Media
Published in 2009, 352 pages
6. [Ruby Best Practices](#) Gregory T. Brown | O'Reilly Media
Published in 2009, 328 pages
7. [Ruby Essentials](#) | Techotopia
Published in 2007
8. [Ruby on Rails Security](#) Heiko Webers | OWASP
Published in 2009, 48 pages
9. [Ruby User's Guide](#) Mark Slagell | Published in 2005
10. [The Book Of Ruby](#) Huw Collingbourne | Published in 2009, 425 pages
11. [The Little Book of Ruby](#) Huw Collingbourne | Dark Neon Ltd. Published in 2008, 87 pages
12. [why's \(poignant\) guide to Ruby](#) why the lucky stiff | Published in 2008

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answered [Mar 16, 2011 at 7:02](#)

community wiki
[Soner Gönül](#)

Great list! This post talks about a few other good rails books like The Rails 3 Way, Crafting Rails Applications, etc:

9

votes

There's a very solid [ongoing series on NETTUTS](#) right now that you may be interested in.



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edited Feb 11, 2010 at 22:52



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[2 revs](#)

[Kevin Pang](#)

9

votes

<http://railsforzombies.org/> is a nice one. Introducing an all new way to learn Ruby on Rails in the browser with no additional configuration needed.



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answered [Nov 27, 2010 at 3:12](#)



community wiki

[wizztjh](#)

7

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As you, I'm a java/C# developer trying to learn more Ruby On Rails.



I'm taking the free online course [Ruby on Rails](#)



[Programming with Passion](#), is a good introductory course, check it out.

We are using [NetBeans](#) as IDE (win/mac/linux/solaris), if you are used to Eclipse or Visual Studio, there is a good chance you will like it.

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answered [Sep 15, 2008 at 15:48](#)

community wiki

[José Carlos Gil](#)

7

votes



Fantastic decision! It is extremely useful to get a grounding in Ruby before going to Rails so here is my take on the best path to Rails:

- [Learn to Program by Chris Pine](#) - You can read this in an afternoon to get a feel for the Ruby language.
- [The Well Grounded Rubyist by David Black](#) - Like the title says it will give you an excellent grounding in the language.
- [Eloquent Ruby by Russ Olsen](#) - This book is sublime, it reads like a novel.
- [Ruby Best Practices by Gregory Brown](#) - By this point you should be ready for the advanced level of this book.
- [Rails for Zombies](#) - Fun tutorial you can complete in an afternoon.
- [Rails Tutorial by Michael Hartl](#) - Fantastic (and free) tutorial and I have heard his accompanying

screencasts are amazing.

- [Agile Web Development with Rails by Sam Ruby](#) - By the time you are finished this you are now a completely capable Rails person!

Aside from books the most important thing is to get feedback on what you are doing. To do this I recommend spending time in `irc.freenode.net` `#ruby` and `#rubyonrails`. It is also extremely helpful to post things you are working on or having trouble with here on stackoverflow as the comments, explanations and different way of thinking about things that people provide are invaluable.

You should also definitely check out the [Ruby Rogues podcast](#), they provide invaluable information and the commentators are all extremely respected people in the Ruby community. And for your viewing and reading pleasure (in that order,) head over to Ryan Bates's [Railscasts](#) and then Eifion Bedford's [Asciicasts](#).

Finally, I recommend looking into different gems on github, reading the code and then contributing to them. You don't have to get overly ambitious and do massive recodes, especially at first. Just start with small things like editing and making the README files a little easier to read.

I don't use an IDE but at Railsconf I saw a demo of [Rubymine](#) from JetBrains and it seemed pretty amazing.

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edited Aug 15, 2011 at 8:38

6

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0) LEARN RUBY FIRST. This is very important. One huge advantage of Rails is Ruby: a great language that is very powerful but also marvelously easy to misunderstand. Run through a few Ruby tutorials online. When coding challenges come up on Daily WTF, write them in Ruby. You'll pick it up fast.

1) Go buy the book "Ruby for Rails"

2) Check out a Rails tutorial and subscribe to the [Riding Rails](#) blog.

3) Standup an app locally. Don't use scaffolding.

4) When you install plugins into your app, go look at the code in that plugin (in your vendor directory) and learn it. It is one of the best ways to learn Ruby and Rails internals. When you don't understand how something works, post it here and 1,000 people will help you.

As for your other questions:

Yes, you will need a Linux environment to develop in. You *can* develop Rails on Windows, but that doesn't mean it should be done. Lots of gems aren't up to speed on Windows.

NetBeans works well as an IDE. If you're on a Mac, you'll get street cred for using Textmate.

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edited Nov 5, 2009 at 16:01

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[2 revs](#)

[gmoore](#)

this does NOT work for everyone. Please remember 1 hat doesn't fit all. Learning ruby first is a fine idea but there's a reason the ruby language didn't go anywhere until rails come along. Many developers want to use something with end results on the web right away and that's reasonable today. A lot of ruby will not mean anything at all to people. You can literally fall asleep after a few pages. But with a practice web app to 'try' things on, things will start to make sense - as there is context.

– [Michael Durrant](#) Aug 17, 2011 at 9:49

5

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Find a nearby Ruby users group and start attending that. I've found that is a great way to meet a lot of people who are passionate about development and willing to teach.

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answered [Jul 12, 2010 at 4:25](#)

community wiki

[Matthew J Morrison](#)

5

votes



I'm surprised there has been so little mention of Why's (Poignant) Guide to Ruby. Why may not be around anymore but the guide is easy to find on the net ([Google points here first](#)) it's a very easy read and provided my introduction to Ruby.

After the guide, I'd recommend either one of the books the others have suggested, or following the series of screencasts at [Learning Rails](#) which is how I picked up enough Ruby on Rails to be dangerous. Once you've completed the Learning Rails series. what you want to do with Rails will start to diverge from the general tutorials and that's where [Railscasts](#) becomes a wonderful tool. There's not much can be done with Rails that Railscasts hasn't touched on at some point.

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edited Jul 12, 2010 at 15:40

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[2 revs](#)

[nuclearsandwich](#)

While that's very true, I found it hard to understand what was going on in Rails without knowing more about Ruby syntax. I've made some changes to the my answer to better reflect the process. – [nuclearsandwich](#) Jul 12, 2010 at 15:34

4

My first suggestion would be to learn a little about [symbols](#) first. Rails isn't the smallest framework ever, and while

votes



there's definitely lots to learn, most of it will start to make sense if you have at least a little bit of understanding what makes it different ("special") from other languages. As pointed out, there's no exact analog in any of the major languages, but they're heavily used by Rails, in order to make things read straightforwardly and perform well, which is the reason I brought it up. My very first exposure to Rails was also my first time looking at Ruby (well before 2.0), and the first thing that caught my eye was the goofy `:things` they were passing around, and I asked, "WTF is *that*?"

Also, check out [RubyQuiz](#), and read other peoples' answers on that site.

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answered [Jul 12, 2010 at 4:34](#)

community wiki
[Marc Bollinger](#)

3

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I came from a Java background to Ruby to. I found this tutorial helpful <http://www.ruby-lang.org/en/documentation/ruby-from-other-languages/to-ruby-from-java/>. When it comes to learning rails I cannot say how much I use script\console. It allows you to play with the code and learn how to do things that you are not sure about.

The only book I ever bought was Agile Web Development with Rails, Third Edition

<http://www.pragprog.com/titles/rails3/agile-web-development-with-rails-third-edition>. It was quite useful and provided a good overview of the Rails framework. In addition to that I regular watch Railscasts(<http://railscasts.com>), which is a great screen casting blog that covers all kinds of Rails topics.


I personally prefer using Linux (because git works better). But, I have also used windows and besides git I do not think the OS choice will impact your programming.

I use netbeans for my IDE and occasionally vim (with the rails plugin). I like netbeans but, I find that it can still be a little flaky when it comes to the Rails support (not all the features work all the time).

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answered [Sep 11, 2008 at 2:03](#)

community wiki
[Josh Moore](#)

The fourth edition of agile web development is now out here:
pragprog.com/book/rails4/agile-web-development-with-rails.
– [Sean](#) Aug 27, 2011 at 2:04 

3 votes This looks like a great resource for people like me who are coming from PHP to RoR



<http://railsforphp.com/> There's also a book [Rails for PHP Developers](#)



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answered Sep 12, 2008 at 19:54

community wiki
[Robert Swisher](#)

3

I used to do Java and C# on Windoze.

votes



I'd second these sources:



IDE: Try Apatana RadRails 3 Sneak Peek:

<http://www.radrails.org/3>. Its the closest thing you'll get to Visual Studio. I play with it here and there but still love the lightness of Textmate.

OS: Mac OS gets the most if not all love from Ruby community. Anything else is treated like a bastard child.

Books:

- The Pragmatic Programmers' Guide (the pickaxe book)
- Agile Web Development with Rails

Screencasts:

- Peepcode (pay) is a nice way to pick up concepts quickly
- [Railscasts \(free\)](#) is a good weekly way to pick up new gems and concepts incrementally

- [Railscasts \(pro\)](#) is also a good way to pick up concepts for a pretty low price.

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edited Jan 19, 2012 at 16:20

community wiki
2 revs, 2 users 90%
Steve McKinney

2

votes



The ubber source for anything Rails is <http://www.rubyonrails.org/> if they don't have it on the site you probably don't need it.

A quick cookbook is Ruby on Rails: Up and Running you can get it from O'Reilly or search Google for a on-line version. They walk you though the conventions of Rails and use Instant Rails which is ok.

A better Rails book "Agile Web Development with Rails"
This is the soups to nuts of Rails. It walks you though downloading and setting up Rails, Gems, everything.

If you want are a Java 'guy' and want a transition book O'Reilly has "Rails for Java Developers"
http://oreilly.com/catalog/9780977616695/?CMP=AFC-ak_book&ATT=Rails+for+Java+Developers

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answered Sep 11, 2008 at 1:22

2 Another IDE you could try is [Aptana](#).

votes



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answered [Sep 15, 2008 at 13:47](#)



community wiki
[Andrei Savu](#)

2 Oh I almost forgot. Here are a few more Ruby screencast resources:

votes



[SD Ruby](#) - they have a bunch of videos online - I found their Rest talks SD9 and SD10 to be among the best of the intros. Other rest talks assume you know everything. These ones are very introductory and to the point.

[Obie Fernandez](#) on InfoQ - Restful Rails. I've also read his Rails Way book and found it informative but really long winded and meandering and the quality is a bit inconsistent. I learned a lot from this book but felt it was a bit punishing to have to read through the repetition and irrelevant stuff to get to the good bits.

Netbeans is a nice hand holding IDE that can teach you a lot of language tricks if you have the patience to wait for its tooltips (it is a painfully slow IDE even on a really fast machine) and you can use the IDE to graphically browse

through the available generators and stuff like that. Get the latest builds and you even have Rspec test running built in.

[Bort](#) is a prebuilt base app with a lot of the standard plugins already plugged in. If you download it and play with it and figure out how it is setup you are about halfway to creating your own full featured apps.

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answered [Sep 15, 2008 at 14:35](#)

community wiki
[srboisvert](#)

2

votes



I bought the book "Simply Rails 2" by Patrick Lenz. This book is a great introduction to Ruby and Ruby on Rails.

As for my ruby installation and db, I used Cygwin.

It comes with PostgreSQL, ruby and svn.

I like PostgreSQL because I come from an Oracle background so it feels more comfortable than MySQL.

The other utility I found really useful was pgAdmin for accessing the PostgreSQL databases.

The first thing I needed to do was to get gems installed. I got the gems tar file from rubyforge
wget

"<http://rubyforge.org/frs/download.php/60718/rubygems-1.3.5.tgz>"

Once I had gems setup, I installed

rails

ruby-postgres

postgres

rack

I also needed an issue tracking system so I installed redmine.

wget

["http://rubyforge.org/frs/download.php/60718/rubygems-1.3.5.tgz"](http://rubyforge.org/frs/download.php/60718/rubygems-1.3.5.tgz)

I found that using a UNIX-like environment (Cygwin) was preferable in my case because many of the tutorials were tailored for OS X or Linux.

The text editor I use is Textpad. I'm looking for an alternative. I think that vim with the rails plugin might work nicely.

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answered [Mar 2, 2010 at 0:30](#)

community wiki
[user78706](#)

2

votes



I come from a non-programming background. I have learned PHP on my own and recently joined a firm that specializes in Ruby on Rails. They have a comprehensive Rails training program, which is flexible enough to



accommodate whatever changes we want to implement. Though I am not a rails pro, I would like to share my experience with rails. I hope that it helps.

Here is the path I am following [combined with tools I am using]

- Start with a simple ruby guide. It will help a lot, since entire rails framework revolves around classes and objects.
- Environment and OS are not important. Though I am working on a Mac, I frequently work on Linux and Windows, and I do not face any problems.
- Start with a good book which explains using a demo app. [I am using Agile Web Development with Rails - By The Pragmatic Bookshelf]. There are many other good books as well.
- Once you are done with the application, you will have a good idea of the framework.
 - Try to understand the SQL queries generated by Active Record module.
 - Go through the Rails Guides. You will find the framework a lot easier.
- Keep practicing.

Few imp points

- It takes years to learn a language completely. So be patient and do not stop learning.

- Go through rails api as when required. [While developing your first app]
- Google the things which you do not understand. People have written great articles on almost all topics.
- Use Stackoverflow :-) [Only when you are not able to find the solution on your own.]
- Load railscasts on your phone or video player. Watch 'em while travelling or in your free time. They are of few minutes each. You will learn a great deal of things and also learn the best way of doing things.

Tools

- Shell [in Mac and Ubuntu]
- Editor [Textmate in Mac, Gedit in Ubuntu and Notepad++ in Windows]
- Firefox with Firebug installed for testing.

Finally I have one thing to say "Keep trying". All the best.

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answered [May 19, 2010 at 17:24](#)

community wiki
[Jagira](#)

2

votes

The fastest way to learn anything, Ruby on Rails included, is **pair programming**.



Find someone who knows Rails, pick an example app, sit down, and work through fixing bugs, adding features.



The knowledge sharing is unbelievable.

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answered [Aug 15, 2011 at 17:53](#)

community wiki
[Scott Schulthess](#)

2

votes



My suggestion is just to start - pick a small project that you would generally use to learn an MVC-style language (i.e. something with a database, maybe some basic workflow), and then as you need to learn a concept, use one (or both!) of

[Agile Web Development with Rails](#) or The Rails Way

to learn about how it works, and then try it.

The problems with Agile Web Development are that it's outdated, and that the scenario runs on too long for you really to want to build it once; The Rails Way can be hard to follow as it bounces from reference to learning, but when it's good, it's better than Agile Web Development.

But overall they're both good books, and they're both good for learning, but neither of them provide an "education" path that you'll want to follow. So I read a few chapters of the former (enough to get the basic concepts and learn how to

bootstrap the first app - there are some online articles that help with this as well) and then just got started, and then every few days I read about something new or I use the books to understand something.

One more thing: both books are much more Rails books than they are Ruby books, and if you're going to write clean code, it's worth spending a day learning Ruby syntax as early as possible. Why's Guide to Ruby is a good one, there are others as well.

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edited Sep 24, 2011 at 17:43

community wiki
2 revs, 2 users 86%
scottru

1
vote



I think the screencasts and short books from [Peepcode](#) are really good. They have screencasts to get you started and have some as you get more advanced.

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answered Sep 11, 2008 at 15:09

community wiki
[Rob Bazinet](#)



There is a site called [Softies on Rails](#) that is written by a couple of ex-.NET developers that may be of some use. They have a book called [Rails for .NET Developers](#) coming out in the next few months...

I started out on a Windows box using the [RadRails](#) plugin for Eclipse and the [RubyWeaver](#) extension for Dreamweaver (back during the 1.x days of Rails). Since then I have moved to a Mac running TextMate and haven't thought of going back.

As for books, I started with The Ruby Way and Agile Web Development with Rails. It definately helps to build a background in Ruby as you start to make your way into Rails development.

Definately watch the Railscast series by Ryan Bates.

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I have found "The Rails Way" by Obie Fernandez excellent and often found myself referring to it when Agile Web Development with Rails didn't seem to go far enough. Obie Fernandez has a decent [blog](#) too.

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Wait a couple of months for [Learning Rails by Simon St. Laurent, Edd Dumbill](#) to come out in November. That series of books is stupendous, and this book will cover the latest version of Rails.

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