10 Best Programming Books You Should Know

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Programming is the art of creating innovative solutions in the form of computer programs for solving problems that vary across a wide spectrum of fields, ranging from classic mathematical puzzles and everyday life issues to weather forecasting and seeking and understanding novel marvels across the cosmos.

Although programming and coding are typically used interchangeably, programming is not just coding. Coding represents that part of programming, which involves writing computer code.

Programming, on the other hand, is a wider process that also involves the approach of coming up with ideas to develop a program as well as the testing of the same and much more. Check out this detailed coding vs. programming (https://hackr.io/blog/coding-vs-programming-difference-you-should-know) comparison.

Best Programming Books

Programming is one of the most sought-after professional fields in the world. It presents candidates with a galore of opportunities to learn and earn. It, however, requires continuous learning and what can be better than books to learn from!

So, here is our pick of 10 best programming books to step-up your game:

1. Clean Code: A Handbook of Agile Software Craftsmanship (https://geni.us/K41gV)
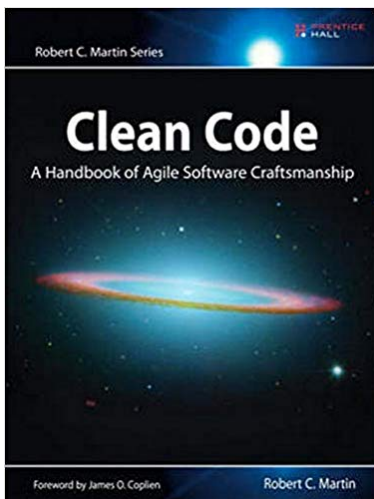
(https://geni.us/K41gV)Author – Robert C. Martin
Latest Edition – First
Publisher – Prentice Hall
Format(s) – Kindle/Paperback

Programming is about polishing the craft with years of trial and error. I wish there was a way to save yourself from all the hard work by learning from the mistakes of other programmers? Fortunately, there is, and it is known to the world as the Clean Code: A Handbook of Agile Software Craftsmanship book from the legendary Uncle Bob.

The clean code offers invaluable insights into code cleaning and software development. It has thorough, step-by-step explanations on cleaning, writing, and refactoring code. The programming book has a galore of practical examples about the how and why of writing clean code.

Post successful completion of the Clean Code book, you will be able to effortlessly implement Agile methodology, one of the leading forms of SDLC (https://hackr.io/blog/sdlc-methodologies), in your software development projects. Also, you will find yourself to be a more resolute, disciplined programmer than before.
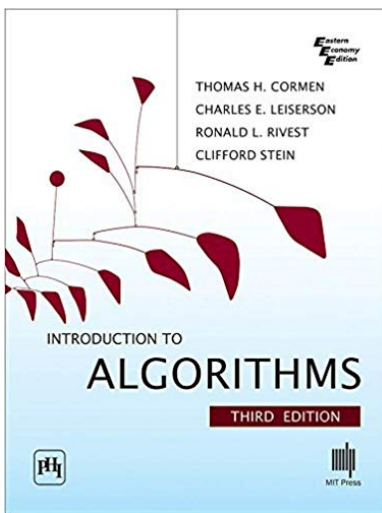
You can signup here (https://geni.us/K41gV).

2. Introduction to Algorithms (https://geni.us/WiC1OQl)

(https://geni.us/WiC1OQl)Author – Thomas H. Cormen, Charles E. Leiserson, Ronald L. Rivest, Clifford Stein
Latest Edition – Third
Publisher – The MIT Press
Format(s) – Hardcover/Paperback

The name of the book is self-explanatory. It is what the title suggests, i.e., Introduction to Algorithms. Also known as CLRS, a reference to the last name of the authors of the book, it goes in-depth into a range of algorithms divided across several self-contained chapters.

All the algorithms discussed in the Introduction to Algorithms book are amply explained. They are presented using pseudocode, readable by programmers of all skill levels, even those who are relatively new to programming.

The third edition of the Introduction to Algorithms book is comprehensively revised and updated. It adds two new chapters:

- Van Emde Boas tree (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Van_Emde_Boas_tree)
- Multithreaded algorithms

Aside from that, the latest edition of the Introduction to Algorithms book also adds an appendix on matrices and considerable addition to the chapter focusing on recurrence (divide-and-conquer), and much more.

You can signup here (https://geni.us/WiC1OQl).

3. Structure and Interpretation of Computer Programs (SICP) (https://geni.us/culW)
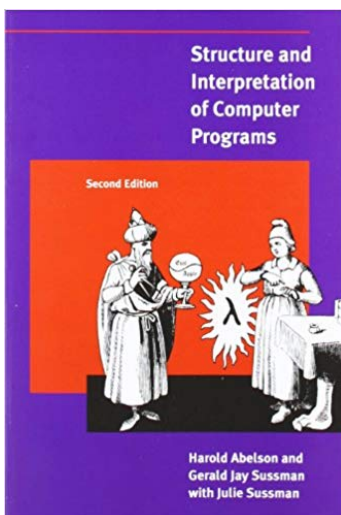
(https://geni.us/culW)Author – Harold Abelson, Gerald Jay Sussman, Julie Sussman
Latest Edition – Second
Publisher – The MIT Press
Format(s) – Hardcover/Paperback

The Structure and Interpretation of Computer Programs, a.k.a. SICP is among the best books to learn the fundamentals of programming (https://hackr.io/tutorials/learn-intro-to-programming). Employed as a foundational course to programming at MIT, SICP is a generic programming book that uses Scheme to illustrate the various programming concepts.

Although SCIP is a must-have book for programmers, going through it will be a far better experience after, thoroughly, learning one or two programming languages. Of course, the book offers a solid programming foundation, and also deals with functional programming.

Completing The Structure and Interpretation of Computer Programs book is an ordeal. The book features a galore of hands-on exercises to help the readers win through it.

You can signup here (https://geni.us/cuIW).

4. The Clean Coder: A Code of Conduct for Professional Programmers (https://geni.us/RzQA)
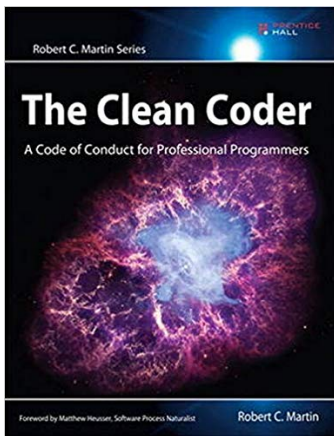
(https://geni.us/RzQA)Author – Robert C. Martin
Latest Edition – First
Publisher – Prentice Hall
Format(s) – Kindle/Paperback

Compiled by the seasoned software engineer and author Robert C. Martin a.k.a. Uncle Bob, The Clean Coder book covers the practices, techniques, and tools of true software craftsmanship. The book not only tells you how to write clean code but also how to build the attitude of a skilled professional programmer.

The Clean Coder is ideal reading for those looking to learn the aspects of being a professional programmer in a hard-yet-efficient way. It is full of practical advice for everything related to programming, from coding and refactoring to testing.
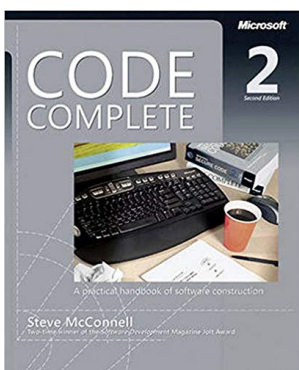
The Clean Coder has helped hundreds of thousands of developers become much more passionate and proficient in their craft. Don't buy it? Start reading the programming book today and know the difference for yourself.

You can signup here (https://geni.us/RzQA).

5. Code Complete: A Practical Handbook of Software Construction (https://geni.us/sORTPLJ)

(https://geni.us/sORTPLJ)Author – Steve McConnell
Latest Edition – Second
Publisher – Microsoft Press
Format(s) – Kindle/Paperback

Want to know how to write robust code irrespective of the architecture of a programming language? Then consider reading the Code Complete: A Practical Handbook of Software Construction. It comprehensively covers all the aspects of the structure of good code.

The Code Complete book is held dearly among the best practical guides on programming. The programming book has no shortage of code examples that thoroughly illustrate the art of and science behind software development.

The tried-and-tested techniques and strategies explained in the book assist programmers and software developers to:

- Benefit from collaborative development
- Develop software with minimum complexity
- Fasten the debugging process
- Maximize creativity
- Reduce errors and issues
- Refactor and evolve code

Irrespective of the readers' level of expertise, the chosen development environment, or project size, the Code Complete book helps in stimulating the programming mind.

You can signup here (https://geni.us/sORTPLJ).

6. Design Patterns: Elements of Reusable Object-Oriented Software (https://geni.us/ce3VZ)

Author – Erich Gamma, Richard Helm, Ralph Johnson, John Vlissides, Grady Booch (Foreword)
Latest Edition – First
Publisher – Addison-Wesley Professional
Format(s) – Hardcover/Kindle/Paperback

Don't you know what software design patterns are? The Design Patterns: Elements of Reusable Object-Oriented Software is one of the authority tomes on the topic. And yes, it is not an easy read.

If you don't have a good grasp over UML, you might find it difficult to ingest some of the information and examples compiled in the programming book. That, however, will not stop you from appreciating the beauty of the narration in the Design Patterns book, which is easy and informative.

The Design Patterns book exhaustively explains 23 software design patterns that help software developers and designers in crafting better, elegant, and flexible software. The book discusses a galore of concise and straightforward solutions to usual software design problems.

Even though you know what software design patterns are, you must add the Design Patterns: Elements of Reusable Object-Oriented Software book to your library to further refine your understanding of the topic and have a quick reference when the need arises.
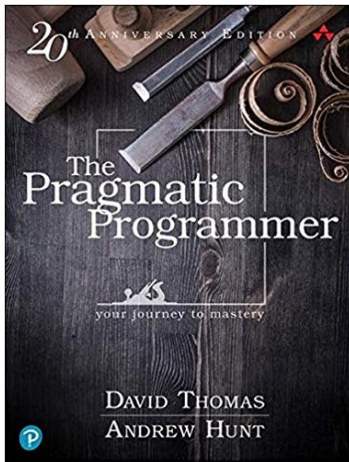
You can signup here (https://geni.us/ce3VZ).

7. The Pragmatic Programmer (https://geni.us/VXk0)

(https://geni.us/VXk0)Author – Andrew Hunt, David Thomas
Latest Edition – Second (20th Anniversary Edition)
Publisher – Addison-Wesley Professional
Format(s) – Audiobook (audible)/Hardcover/Kindle

Since its creation in 1999 by its authors to aid its clientele to develop better software, The Pragmatic Programmer has succeeded in becoming one of the highly-revered programming books. This book is for every coder looking to transcend to be a skilled software developer and a full-fledged programmer.

No matter how many times you read The Pragmatic Programmer, there is something new to learn in every reading. It's the creative use of classic and modern anecdotes, fascinating analogies, and thought-provoking examples that make learning each section both interesting and fun.

The Pragmatic Programmer covers not only a comprehensive range of programming and software development topics but also topics that aren't the norm for programming books, such as career development and personal responsibility while developing software.

You can signup here (https://geni.us/VXk0).

8. Head First Design Patterns: A Brain-Friendly Guide (https://geni.us/9N5e)
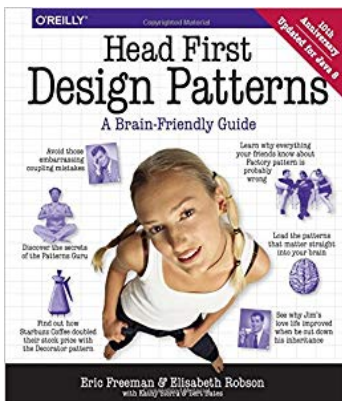
(https://geni.us/9N5e)Author – Eric Freeman, Bert Bates, Kathy Sierra, Elisabeth Robson
Latest Edition – First
Publisher – O'Reilly Media
Format(s) – Kindle/Paperback

The Head First book series is known for its innovative way of breaking down complex topics into simpler, easy-to-understand units. The Head First Design Patterns: A Brain-Friendly Guide is compiled based on this tried-and-tested formula.

There is a galore of illustrative and brain-stimulating examples in the Head First Design Patterns book that will make learning both efficient and fun simultaneously. Unlike other text-heavy programming books, this book features a thought-inducing, visually-rich format.

The Head First Design Patterns book effortlessly explains the several software design patterns employed by proficient software developers and programmers from across the world to build elegant, fully-functional, flexible, and reusable software.

You can signup here (https://geni.us/9N5e).

9. **Refactoring: Improving the Design of Existing Code** (https://geni.us/oEnSe2)
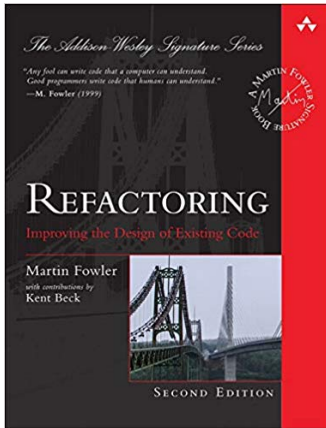
(https://geni.us/oEnSe2)Author – Martin Fowler

Latest Edition – Second

Publisher – Addison-Wesley Professional

Format(s) – Hardcover/Kindle

Refactoring is a vital programming concept for understanding the underlying aspects of writing clean, robust code. Martin Fowler's Refactoring: Improving the Design of Existing Codebook covers all major refactorings that any skilled programmer must know about.

Learning the best approaches to refactor code base allows a programmer to improve the code maintenance throughout its time, or save it from rotting, at the very least. The latest edition of refactoring features JS code examples and examples demonstrating refactoring without classes.

What is refactoring? Why refactor code? How to recognize code requiring refactoring? All these and several other important questions related to code refactoring are thoroughly explained in the Refactoring: Improving the Design of Existing Codebook.

By the successful completion of Fowler's Refactoring book, the reader will be able to:

- Build comprehensive tests for refactorings
- Explore the refactorings
- Identify tradeoffs and issues while refactoring
- Swiftly apply the refactoring to a program for making it easier to understand and modify

You can signup here (https://geni.us/oEnSe2).

10. **The Art of Computer Programming, Volumes 1-4** (https://geni.us/rs4qst)
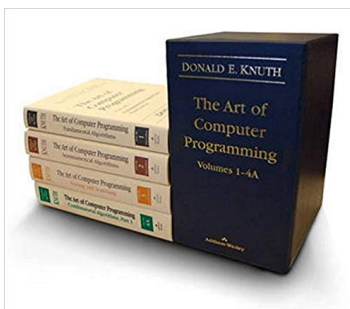
(https://geni.us/rs4qst)Author – Donald E. Knuth

Latest Edition – First

Publisher – Addison-Wesley Professional

Format(s) – Hardcover

Unlike other entries on the list of the ten best programming books, The Art of Computer Programming is not just a book; instead, it is a series of 4 books, namely:

- Volume 1: Fundamental Algorithms
- Volume 2: Seminumerical Algorithms
- Volume 3: Sorting and Searching
- Volume 4A: Combinatorial Algorithms

Although primarily written as a reference, The Art of Computer Programming has gained a cult following of resolute programmers who are always ready to push their limits. The programming book series dives deeper into the realm of computer science algorithms and is not an easy read. Bill Gates reviewed this

book series by stating:

"If you think you're an excellent programmer... read [Knuth's] Art of Computer Programming... You should send me a résumé if you can read the whole thing."

Donald E. Knuth, the author of The Art of Computer Programming series, is the recipient of the ACM A.M. Turing Award 1974, referred to as the Nobel Prize of Computing. A caution before beginning with the programming book series; Heavy mathematics up ahead!

You can signup here (https://geni.us/rs4qst).

Summary

With that, we've completed our take on the list of 10 best programming books. Although books are one of the best ways to learn to program, there are also other means to reinforce learning, such as online tutorials, seminars, web articles, video lessons, and many more.

You should continuously upgrade your skills and be on the lookout for finding and learning new and better ways of doing something that you already do as a programmer/software developer. Only those who keep getting upgraded over time will stay relevant in the modern landscape where change is surprisingly fast and difficult to pin down. All the best!

Are you preparing for a programming interview? Check out these best programming interview questions (https://hackr.io/blog/programming-interview-questions).

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Akhil Bhadwal

(https://hackr.io/blog/author/akhilbhadwal)

A Computer Science graduate interested in mixing up imagination and knowledge into enticing words. Been in the big bad world of content writing since 2014. In his free time, Akhil likes to play cards, do guitar jam, and write weird fiction. View all posts by the Author (https://hackr.io/blog/author/akhilbhadwal)

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