

books

It's easy when you know how: Networking, the Internet, and Quark XPress, step by step

Recently I was confronted for the first time with the task of putting a plug onto a network coax

cable, a tricky task if you don't know how. Not one of some ten expensive US



two others in the same series from UK publisher ComputerStep: *QuarkXpress in Easy Steps* and *Internet UK in Easy Steps*. All are written in English, with UK references where appropriate, which is a welcome

change in a market flooded

with US works. The networking book, for instance, refers you to UK suppliers and its internet stablemate includes a Demon sign-up disk. There is some

overlap between the two, though *Internet UK* concentrates more on what you can do online rather than how to get there.

The Quark volume covers both the Mac and PC versions of the desktop publishing suite. The coverage seems fairly

comprehensive, although I

found no warning in the pagination section about the program's annoying

habit of shuffling pages around without warning if you delete an opening right page, which can be devastating for a novice in a hurry. The

information in all three books is rudimentary but no less than you need to make a good start on the subject. In general, publishers are too aware of the fact that people buy computer how-to books when they really need them, which is why manuals tend to be twice the price of more general reference works.

ComputerStep deserves support for bucking this trend: each of these volumes costs just £8.99 – about the same price as the network plugs I messed up due to a lack of good advice. Note there are about 40 titles in the same series.



PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

NETWORKING IN EASY STEPS

Author Peter Ingram

Publisher Computer Step

ISBN 1-874029-92-X

Price £8.99

networking books I consulted gave any advice on the matter. Days later *Networking in Easy Steps* plonked through the PCW portals with the best part of an entire chapter on the subject, complete with detailed diagrams. Clearly the author, Peter Ingram, had a good sense of priorities.

The title is a little misleading as it only covers networking using the facilities

bundled with Windows 95, together with internet access via modems and ISDN. The book came with

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

INTERNET UK IN EASY STEPS

Author Chris Russell

Publisher Computer Step

ISBN 1-847078-006-1

Price £8.99

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

QUARKXPRESS IN EASY STEPS

Author Robert Shufflebotham

Publisher Computer Step

ISBN 1-874029-99-7

Price £8.99

CLIVE AKASS

Have a nice weekend with HTML

With the explosive growth of the World Wide Web, many books are making an appearance in an effort to explain to beginners how to get started with HTML and web publishing. *Learn HTML In A Weekend* is another in the same vein as the "Dummies guides" that have proven very popular. It is written in a



tutorial style, and offers you the chance to structure your entire weekend around a set of lessons, should you really have nothing better to do with your time. You can of course make the decision to spread these lessons over a more convenient period. The framework and history of the

internet is explained, along with the basis of the World Wide Web and other aspects such as File Transfer Protocol (FTP).

The tutorials begin with basic formatting and move on to incorporate images, lists, links, tables and frames. The commands, or "tags", used to achieve these are explained, with additional information

PCW DETAILS

★★★★★

LEARN HTML IN A WEEKEND

Author Steven E. Callihan

Publisher Prima

ISBN 0-7615-1293-4

Price £23.49

on the extra attributes you can use to further enhance your HTML documents. The differences between web browsers and computing platforms are also mentioned so that you know how to design for as wide an audience as possible. One of the book's shortcomings is that it doesn't acknowledge that most people will start to write web pages using an HTML editor. As such, it doesn't mention how to use popular authoring software such as Microsoft FrontPage or Netscape Gold. Neither does it tell you how to publish your pages once you've written

them, which is likely to leave most people at this level confused and irritated. The book comes with a CD-ROM that has a range of shareware and freeware software for creating web sites. Software packages notably absent from the CD — even in demo format — are popular HTML editors and browsers such as Netscape and Internet Explorer. This book is one of many routes into DIY web publishing and overall is quite extensive, but you would ideally need to combine it with another source of information to gain a basic knowledge.

DAVID CUSHING

Master plan: Microsoft Office

With Microsoft recently announcing that its next version of Office is to be called 2000 (even though it could come out as early as December this year) users have only a limited amount of time to get acquainted with the current incarnation, Office 97, before those Microserfs needlessly obfuscate and complicate it with the new release.

If you are the average home user and have Microsoft Office installed on your computer, the chances are that you probably use Word for typing letters, Excel for the odd graph or table, and you've never even looked at Powerpoint. You may even wonder how Microsoft can get away with charging exorbitant amounts of money for what seems to amount to little more than clever word-processing software. Well, I know I did, even though I knew there was a lot more to it than that. Which was why I was intrigued by the latest release from the Macmillan Master series, a rather smashing range of books that covers a bewildering variety of topics from C++ programming to Shakespeare. The book covers the three Office programs

already mentioned, plus the database program Access included in MS Office Professional 97. The book aims to cater for both beginner and intermediate Office user, with each program getting three or four chapters

to itself, starting with the basics. It was rather disheartening to realise that, even after a few years of using Office, I'd never heard of half the tricks taught in

the chapters dealing with Word.

Mastering Microsoft Office is a lucid read. It's not exactly fun-packed, but its methodical approach pays dividends the next time you sit down to write a letter. It covers Office 97 specifically, and whatever does not apply to its predecessor is explained in the two versions. I still can't figure out how to uninstall the damn office

PCW DETAILS



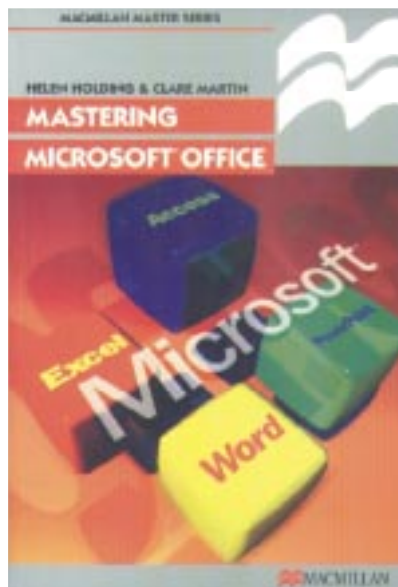
MASTERING MICROSOFT OFFICE

Author Helen Holding & Clare Martin

Publisher Macmillan

ISBN 0-333073059-3

Price £8.99



TOP

10

books

1

MCSE: The Core Exams in a Nutshell

O'Reilly
£14.95

2

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Addison-Wesley
£27.95

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£31.50

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O'Reilly
£14.95

5

Cisco CCIE Exam Guide

McGraw-Hill
£49.99

6

HTML 4 for the World Wide Web Visual Quickstart Guide

Peachpit Press
£14.99

7

Microsoft Windows Architecture Training Kit

Microsoft Press
£93.99

8

The Internet & World Wide Web: The Rough Guide 1998

Rough Guides
£5.00

9

MCSE Exam Cram: NT Server 4

Coriolis
£22.00

10

PalmPilot: The Ultimate Guide

O'Reilly
£21.95

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