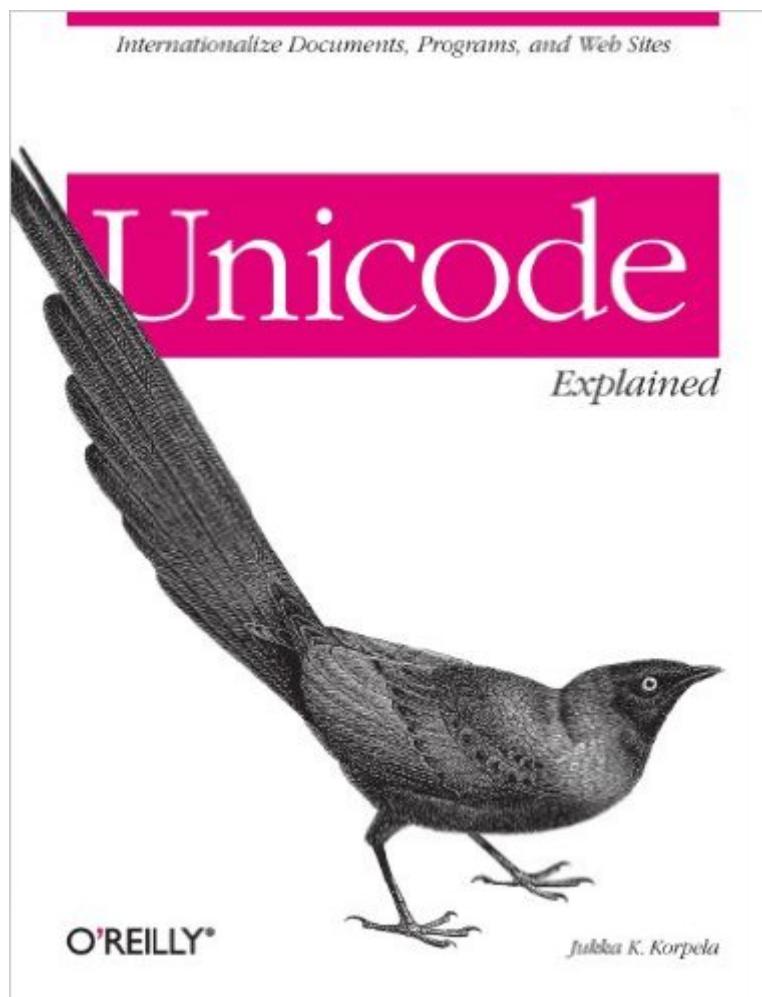


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# Unicode Explained



## Synopsis

Fundamentally, computers just deal with numbers. They store letters and other characters by assigning a number for each one. There are hundreds of different encoding systems for mapping characters to numbers, but Unicode promises a single mapping. Unicode enables a single software product or website to be targeted across multiple platforms, languages and countries without re-engineering. It's no wonder that industry giants like Apple, Hewlett-Packard, IBM and Microsoft have all adopted Unicode. Containing everything you need to understand Unicode, this comprehensive reference from O'Reilly takes you on a detailed guide through the complex character world. For starters, it explains how to identify and classify characters - whether they're common, uncommon, or exotic. It then shows you how to type them, utilize their properties, and process character data in a robust manner. The book is broken up into three distinct parts. The first few chapters provide you with a tutorial presentation of Unicode and character data. It gives you a firm grasp of the terminology you need to reference various components, including character sets, fonts and encodings, glyphs and character repertoires. The middle section offers more detailed information about using Unicode and other character codes. It explains the principles and methods of defining character codes, describes some of the widely used codes, and presents code conversion techniques. It also discusses properties of characters, collation and sorting, line breaking rules and Unicode encodings. The final four chapters cover more advanced material, such as programming to support Unicode. You simply can't afford to be without the nuggets of valuable information detailed in *Unicode Explained*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

.....Ã¶ I had another Unicode book on my desk for a long time. Hardbound, thick, impressive. Never found a way to derive useful information from it however. This book is different.Ã¶ I had high expectations for this book because the author, Jukka Korpela, is one of those erudite and patient people who work hard to raise the signal to noise ratio in Internet newsgroups and other forums. I certainly have quite a few posts from "Yucca" in my working archive of Web tips.Ã¶ Working with Web pages and applications, one can run into practical problems with text display. For Americans especially, often using default software configurations, some of the problems of displaying content in other languages can seem intractable. They are not of course -- but a bit of help from workers in the rest of the world can be a real lift. After all, they deal with these issues in a practical way more often.Ã¶ I had a nasty run-in (also known as "learning experience") with browser display issues when my "CSS Cheatsheet" rose in popularity in Google and other search engines. I decided to create a page quoting comments from linking sites in their native languages. Everything was fine until I got to Russian. I felt as if I were up against a conspiracy of browsers, tools, operating systems and even particular custom configurations!Ã¶ If you are like me and your focus is practical, I recommend: The first two chapters in Part 1: Characters as Data; Writing Characters All the advanced topics in Part 3: these 5 chapters covered character issues involved with programming and developing in the Internet environment.

If you're like me, you probably think of Unicode as "expanded ASCII" and that's about it. But there is infinitely more to the subject than I thought, and *Unicode Explained* by Jukka K. Korpela is an exhaustive reference to all that is Unicode. And in this increasingly global computing environment, you will need to know this information...Contents:Part 1 - Working with Characters: Characters as Data; Writing Characters; Character Sets and EncodingPart 2 - A Systematic Look at Unicode: The Structure of Unicode; Properties of Characters; Unicode EncodingsPart 3 - Advanced Unicode Topics: Characters and Languages; Character Usage; The Character Level and Above; Characters in Internet Protocols; Characters in ProgrammingAppendix - Tables for Writing Characters; IndexIn concept, Unicode is real simple. An expanded character set using 16 bit encoding, and you can accommodate far more languages and symbols than straight ASCII. But the implementation is far more complex than that. Korpela starts with the basics of characters... what they are, what they mean, and the nuances involved. From there, you learn about how applications have to interpret the

different encoding standards and handle things like case, sort orders, line breaks, etc. When I saw the size of the book (600+ pages), I wondered if the material was just a lot of reference tables that could be found online. Gladly, it's not... This is an exploration of everything that is Unicode, and you'd have to wade through a lot of web pages to even begin to glean the level and value of information that you'll find here. If you have anything to do with programming or designing global software, this book purchase is a no-brainer.

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