

Contents

About the Author	v
Acknowledgments	xxv
Introduction	1
Who This Book Is For	1
How This Book Is Structured	2
What You Need to Use This Book	4
Conventions	5
Source Code	5
Errata	5
p2p.wrox.com	6
Chapter 1: Writing Your First AppleScript Program	7
Starting with Script Editor	7
<i>Try It Out: Typing Your First Program</i>	8
Compiling and Running Your Program	9
<i>Try It Out: Running Your First Program</i>	9
<i>Try It Out: Saving Your First Program</i>	11
Extending Your First Program	12
Reporting Errors in Your Programs	12
<i>Try It Out: Adding a Description to Your Program</i>	14
An AppleScript Command to Display a Dialog	15
Understanding the Buttons Parameter in the display dialog Command	17
<i>Try It Out: Using the display dialog's Buttons Parameter</i>	17
Changing the Labels on a Button	19
<i>Try It Out: Setting the Default Button in a Dialog</i>	19
Adding an Icon to Your Dialog Box	20
<i>Try It Out: Adding a Note Icon to Your Dialog</i>	21
Multiple AppleScript Commands	21
<i>Try It Out: Add a "Beep"</i>	21
Adding Comments to Your Programs	22
Summary	23
Exercises	24

Chapter 2: Variables, Classes, and Expressions	25
Working with Variables	25
Variable Names and the set Command	25
Accessing the Value of a Variable and the get Command	27
<i>Try It Out: Working with Variables</i>	27
<i>Try It Out: More on Working with Variables</i>	27
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Case in Variable Names</i>	29
Writing Special Variable Names	32
The Special result Variable	33
More on Commands and Statements	34
Commands	34
Statements	34
The log Command and the Event Log	35
<i>Try It Out: Using the Event Log</i>	34
<i>Try It Out: Using the Event Log History</i>	36
Basic Data Type Classes	38
The string Class	38
The Integer Class	39
Small and Double Integer Classes	39
The real Class	39
The Boolean Class	40
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Boolean Values</i>	41
The class Command	42
<i>Try It Out: Using the Class Command</i>	42
Basic Data Type Conversions	43
Coercing a Data Type Using the as Operator	44
<i>Try It Out: Basic Data Type Conversions with the as Operator</i>	44
Arithmetic Operators and Expressions	49
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Arithmetic Operations</i>	49
The Date Class	53
<i>Try It Out: Understanding the Date Format</i>	54
Getting Date Properties	54
<i>Try It Out: Getting the Properties of a Date</i>	54
Setting Date Properties	56
<i>Try It Out: Setting Date Properties</i>	57
Performing Arithmetic with Dates	60
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Arithmetic with Dates</i>	60
Classes of Weights and Measures	62
<i>Try It Out: Using Weights and Measures</i>	63
Summary	66
Exercises	67

Chapter 3: Making Decisions	69
The if Statement	69
A Single Line Form of the if Statement	70
AppleScript's Relational Operators	71
<i>Try It Out: Testing the Various Relational Operators</i>	<i>72</i>
Numeric Tests	73
String Tests	74
Date Tests	76
Getting Data from the User	77
<i>Try It Out: Taking the Absolute Value of a Number</i>	<i>79</i>
The if-else Statement	80
Nested if Statements	82
The if-else if Statement	83
<i>Try It Out: Displaying a Message Based on the Day of the Week</i>	<i>84</i>
Compound Relational Tests	86
<i>Try It Out: Testing Whether a Year Is a Leap Year</i>	<i>88</i>
Creating Your First Application	89
<i>Try It Out: Speaking a Salutation</i>	<i>90</i>
<i>Try It Out: Displaying a Startup Screen</i>	<i>92</i>
<i>Try It Out: Have Some Fun: Get Your Salutation at Log In</i>	<i>93</i>
Catching Errors with the try Statement	94
<i>Try It Out: Introducing the try Statement</i>	<i>94</i>
<i>Try It Out: Error Handling with the try Statement</i>	<i>96</i>
<i>Try It Out: More on the try Statement</i>	<i>96</i>
Summary	98
Exercises	98
Chapter 4: Program Looping	101
The repeat...times Statement	101
<i>Try It Out: Log a Message Five Times</i>	<i>101</i>
The repeat with Statement	102
<i>Try It Out: Counting from 1 to 10</i>	<i>102</i>
Writing a Loop with an Increment	104
<i>Try It Out: Counting Down from 10</i>	<i>105</i>
<i>Try It Out: A Program to Sum the Integers from 1 to n</i>	<i>106</i>
Your First Look at a Dictionary	108
<i>Try It Out: Looking Up a Command in a Dictionary</i>	<i>109</i>
The repeat while Statement	111
<i>Try It Out: Counting from 1 to 10</i>	<i>111</i>

Contents

Using Flags	113
Another Look at the Triangular Number Program	113
<i>Try It Out: Getting Another Chance</i>	113
A Final Look at the Triangular Number Program	115
<i>Try It Out: Limiting the Number of Attempts</i>	115
A Quick Look at the Concatenation Operator	117
The repeat until statement	118
<i>Try It Out: A Simple Guessing Game</i>	119
The repeat with Statement for Lists	122
<i>Try It Out: Sequencing through the Elements in a List</i>	122
Setting Up an Infinite Loop with repeat	123
Summary	123
Exercises	124
Chapter 5: Working with Strings	125
<hr/>	
Strings, Text, and Unicode Text	125
The Null String	126
Review of Concatenation	126
Getting the Size of a String	127
Using Special String Characters	128
Special Properties Used Outside Strings	128
Escape Characters Used inside Strings	128
More on Unicode Text	129
The considering and ignoring Statements	130
Combining Attributes	132
<i>Try It Out: Using considering and ignoring Statements</i>	133
Words, Characters, and Paragraphs	135
Working with Elements	136
<i>Try It Out: Working with Character Elements</i>	138
<i>Try It Out: Working with Word Elements</i>	140
<i>Try It Out: Picking a Random Element</i>	143
Understanding Text Item Delimiters	143
<i>Try It Out: Working with text item delimiters</i>	144
Locating Strings inside Strings	145
<i>Try It Out: Using Containment Operators and the offset Command</i>	146
Specifying a Range to Get a Substring	149
More on the Count Command	149
<i>Try It Out: Count the Number of Words in Some Text</i>	150
Using length instead of count	150
<i>Try It Out: Enumerating the Words in a String</i>	151
A Quick Note on References	152

Enhancing the Alarm Clock Program	153
<i>Try It Out: Enhancing the Alarm Clock Program</i>	154
Summary	158
Exercises	158
Chapter 6: Working with Lists and Records	161
<hr/>	
Working with Lists	161
Empty Lists	163
Counting the Number of Items in a List	163
Accessing the Items in a List	164
<i>Try It Out: Working with List Items</i>	165
<i>Try It Out: Sequencing through the Items in a List</i>	168
<i>Try It Out: A Program to Display Populations of U.S. Cities</i>	169
<i>Try It Out: A Modified Version of the Population Program</i>	172
The choose from list Command	174
<i>Try It Out: Looking Up the choose from list Command in the Dictionary</i>	174
<i>Try It Out: Using the choose from list Command</i>	175
Accessing Items by Class	178
Enumerating Lists: A Quick Review	180
The rest and reverse Properties	180
<i>Try It Out: Exercising List Properties</i>	180
Modifying Lists	181
<i>Try It Out: Modifying List Items</i>	183
<i>Try It Out: Deleting and Inserting items in a List</i>	186
Using Containment Operators with Lists	192
Multiple Assignments with Lists	193
List Coercions	194
A Quick Note about Efficiency and Large Lists	195
Working with Records	196
Defining a Record	196
The result Record from the display dialog Command	198
Working with Lists of Records	198
<i>Try It Out: A Version of the Population Program Using Records</i>	200
Modifying Records	203
Retrieving Multiple Properties	205
Using the Containment Operators with Records	206
Summary	207
Exercises	207

Chapter 7: Working with Files	211
Path Names: Traditional Mac and POSIX-style	211
Full Path Names	212
Relative Path Names	212
File Name Extensions	213
What's in a Name?	214
The file Class	214
File Name Aliases	214
Reading and Writing Files	215
<i>Try It Out: Creating a File in AppleScript</i>	216
The open for access Command	219
Writing Data with the write Command	220
Closing a File with the close Command	221
Getting Information about a File or Folder Using the info for Command	221
Reading Data with the read Command	222
<i>Try It Out: Reading Data from a File</i>	222
<i>Try It Out: Using Various read Command Parameters</i>	225
More on Using the write Command	228
<i>Try It Out: Writing and Reading a List of Records</i>	229
Truncating a File Using the set eof Command	231
Getting the Size of a File Using the get eof Command	231
Appending Data to the End of a File	231
Enumerating Disks and Folders	231
<i>Try It Out: Using the list folder Command</i>	232
<i>Try It Out: Using the choose file Command</i>	235
Using the choose file Command to Pick a File	235
Using the choose folder Command to Pick a Folder	237
Using the choose file name Command to Pick a File Name	238
<i>Try It Out: Generating a List of Files for Backup</i>	238
Summary	241
Exercises	241
Chapter 8: Handlers	243
Writing a Handler	243
<i>Try It Out: Writing Your First Handler</i>	243
Passing Parameters to Handlers	245
<i>Try It Out: Passing Parameters to Handlers</i>	245
Returning Handler Results	247
<i>Try It Out: Returning Values from Handlers</i>	247

Argument Types	249
Local Variables	250
<i>Try It Out: Local Variables</i>	250
Call by Value	252
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Call by Value</i>	252
Recursive Handlers	257
<i>Try It Out: Recursive Factorial Handler</i>	257
<i>Try It Out: A Recursive List Sort Handler</i>	259
Local/Global Variables and Variable Scope	262
<i>Try It Out: Local versus Global Variables</i>	263
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Variable Scope: Protecting a Global Variable</i>	265
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Variable Scope: Local and Global Variables with the Same Name (Part 1)</i>	265
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Variable Scope: Local and Global Variables with the Same Name (Part 2)</i>	266
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Variable Scope: Accessing a Global Variable Declared Outside a Handler</i>	267
<i>Try It Out: Writing General Purpose Handlers</i>	268
Saving and Loading Handlers	269
<i>Try It Out: Saving and Loading the List Handlers</i>	269
The Apostrophe-s notation	272
Labeled Parameters	272
<i>Try It Out: Writing a Handler with Labeled Parameters–Form 1</i>	273
Identifying Parameters with Prepositions	274
<i>Try It Out: Writing a Handler with Labeled Parameters–Form 2</i>	275
Combining Labeled Parameter Formats	275
Specifying a Direct Parameter	276
Using with and without for Boolean Parameters	277
Specifying Patterns for Parameters	278
Summary	280
Exercises	281
Chapter 9: Error Handling	283
<hr/>	
Beeps and Dialogs	283
The try...on error Statement	284
More on the on error Clause	285
<i>Try It Out: Experimenting with Errors</i>	286
<i>Try It Out: Identifying Errors by Number</i>	287
Catching a Specific Error by Number	289
More on Error Numbers and Error-Handling Strategy	290

Contents

The error Command	292
<i>Try It Out: Catching Errors in Your Handlers</i>	293
<i>Try It Out: Error-Proofing Your Code</i>	296
Summary	298
Exercises	299
Chapter 10: Working with Applications	301
Talking to Other Applications: The tell Statement	301
<i>Try It Out: Using the tell Statement</i>	302
<i>Try It Out: References to Objects and More on the tell Statement</i>	304
<i>Try It Out: Sliding Windows</i>	306
<i>Try It Out: Stacking Windows</i>	307
The One-Liner tell Statement	309
More on Targets	309
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Targets–Part 1</i>	309
<i>Try It Out: Understanding Targets–Part 2</i>	310
Using my, me, and its inside tell Blocks	311
<i>Try It Out: Calling Handlers from within tell Blocks</i>	312
<i>Try It Out: Accessing Properties or Variables from within tell Blocks–Part 1</i>	313
<i>Try It Out: Accessing Properties or Variables–Part 2</i>	314
Tell Me Some More	315
More on Working with the Finder	317
Looking at the Finder’s Dictionary in Greater Detail	317
<i>Try It Out: Examining the Finder’s Dictionary</i>	317
The Finder’s Classes	321
Containers	322
<i>Try It Out: Learning about Containers–Part 1</i>	322
<i>Try It Out: Learning about Containers–Part 2</i>	322
<i>Try It Out: Learning about Containers–Part 3</i>	323
<i>Try It Out: Learning about Containers–Part 4</i>	323
<i>Try It Out: Learning about Containers–Part 5</i>	324
Common File Operations	324
Common Folder Operations	325
<i>Try It Out: Getting a List of Containers</i>	328
<i>Try It Out: A List of Containers as Aliases</i>	328
<i>Try It Out: Adding a Prefix to Each File in a Folder</i>	329
More on Understanding Finder File References	331
<i>Try It Out: Understanding File References</i>	331
<i>Try It Out: Using Finder Filer References outside a tell Block</i>	332
Beware of the repeat-with Statement!	333
AppleScript versus the Finder’s File Class	334

Filters	336
<i>Try It Out: Using a Filter</i>	336
More on Working with Applications	338
<i>Try It Out: Generating a List of Backup Files</i>	338
Ignoring Application Responses	342
Application Timeouts	343
Applets and Droplets	343
Stay Open Applications	344
The run Handler	344
The quit Handler	344
The reopen Handler	344
The idle Handler	345
<i>Try It Out: Simple Applet Handlers</i>	345
Droplets	347
<i>Try It Out: Creating a Droplet</i>	347
Summary	351
Exercises	352
<hr/> Chapter 11: Scripting iLife Applications	<hr/> 355
Scripting iTunes	356
<i>Try It Out: Examining the iTunes Dictionary</i>	356
Working with Tracks and Playlists	359
An iTunes Player Applet	363
<i>Try It Out: An iTunes Song Player</i>	363
Scripting iPhoto	366
<i>Try It Out: Examining iPhoto's Dictionary</i>	367
<i>Try It Out: Making an Album from a Folder of Images</i>	368
Scripting iDVD	372
<i>Try It Out: Examining iDVD's Dictionary</i>	372
<i>Try It Out: Making a DVD Slide Show from a Folder of Images</i>	375
Summary	382
Exercises	382
<hr/> Chapter 12: Script Objects	<hr/> 385
Defining a Script Object	385
<i>Try It Out: Defining a Script Object</i>	385
Script Properties	386
<i>Try It Out: Working with Script Properties</i>	387
Initializing Script Properties	387
<i>Try It Out: Initializing Script Properties</i>	388

Contents

Copying Script Objects	389
<i>Try It Out: Copying Script Objects</i>	389
Your Program Is a Script Object	390
<i>Try It Out: Defining Properties at the Top Level</i>	390
<i>Try It Out: Properties in Applications</i>	391
<i>Try It Out: Recording Values in Applications</i>	392
Scope of Properties	393
<i>Try It Out: Scope of Script Properties</i>	393
pi Is a Property	394
Script Objects Containing Handlers	394
<i>Try It Out: Defining Handlers inside Scripts</i>	395
The Run Handler	396
Handlers Containing Script Objects	397
<i>Try It Out: Defining Script Objects inside Handlers</i>	397
Storing, Loading, and Running Scripts from Files	399
<i>Try It Out: Illustrating the store script and run script Commands</i>	399
<i>Try It Out: Running and Loading a Script</i>	400
Script Objects and Object-Oriented Programming	401
<i>Try It Out: Returning a Script Object from a Handler</i>	402
<i>Try It Out: More on Returning Script Objects</i>	403
<i>Try It Out: Defining a Rectangle Object</i>	405
Polymorphism	407
<i>Try It Out: Polymorphism in AppleScript</i>	407
Inheritance	409
<i>Try It Out: Illustrating Inheritance</i>	410
<i>Try It Out: Defining a Square Using Inheritance</i>	412
Using its in Inherited Handlers	413
<i>Try It Out: Using my in Handlers</i>	413
The continue Command	414
<i>Try It Out: Calling a Parent's Handler Using the continue Command</i>	414
Summary	415
Exercises	416
Chapter 13: Loose Ends	419
Command Handlers	419
<i>Try It Out: Writing a Command Handler</i>	420
Using terms from	420
Using the clipboard	421
The Script Menu	423
Folder Actions	424
<i>Try It Out: Working with Folder Actions</i>	425

Open Scripting Architecture	427
Scripting Additions	429
AppleEvents	429
<i>Try It Out: AppleEvents in the Event Log History</i>	429
Recording Scripts	430
<i>Try It Out: Recording Actions in the Finder</i>	430
GUI Scripting	432
<i>Try It Out: Introduction to GUI Scripting</i>	432
Before and After	434
Creating a Reference to an Object	434
Web Services: XML-RPC and SOAP	435
<i>Try It Out: Using SOAP Services</i>	437
Running Scripts from Terminal	438
The do shell script Command	439
The with transaction Statement	441
Delayed Evaluation with the run script Command	441
Scheduling Scripts to Run with the cron	442
<i>Try It Out: Chime the Hour!</i>	442
Summary	445
Exercises	446
<hr/> Chapter 14: Introducing AppleScript Studio	<hr/> 449
Installing AppleScript Studio	449
Developing a Simple Application	450
<i>Try It Out: Working with AppleScript Studio</i>	451
An iTunes Remote	469
Summary	470
Exercises	471
<hr/> Appendix A: Exercise Answers	<hr/> 473
<hr/> Appendix B: Language Reference	<hr/> 525
Operators	525
English Equivalents of Relational Operators	526
Containment Operators	527
Built-in Classes	528
Classes of Weights and Measures	530
Lists	530
List Class Properties	530
Element Specifiers	531

Contents

Records	531
Record Class Properties	531
Strings	532
String Class Properties	532
Predefined String Properties	532
Escape Characters	532
String Elements	533
Dates	533
Date Class Properties	533
Predefined Properties for Working with Dates	534
Compound Statements	534
considering	534
if	535
ignoring	536
repeat	536
tell	537
try	537
using terms from	537
with timeout	537
with transaction	538
Commands	538
activate	539
adding folder items to*	539
ASCII character*	540
ASCII number*	540
choose application*	540
choose color*	540
choose file*	540
choose file name*	541
choose folder*	541
choose from list*	541
choose URL*	541
clipboard info*	541
close access*	542
closing folder window for*	542
continue	542
copy	542
count	542
current date*	543
delay*	543
display dialog*	543

do shell script*	543
error	544
exit repeat	545
get	545
get eof*	545
get volume settings*	545
handle CGI request*	545
info for*	546
launch	546
list disks*	546
list folder*	546
load script *	546
log	547
mount volume*	547
moving folder window for*	547
offset*	547
open for access*	547
open location*	548
opening folder*	548
path to*	548
random number*	548
read*	549
removing folder items from*	549
return	549
round*	550
run script*	550
say*	550
scripting components*	550
set	551
set eof*	551
set the clipboard to*	551
set volume*	551
start log	551
stop log	552
store script*	552
summarize*	552
system attribute*	552
the clipboard*	552
time to GMT*	553
write*	553

Contents

Appendix C: Resources	555
Errata, etc.	555
AppleScript Books	555
Websites	556
Mailing Lists and Newsgroups	556
Development Tools	557
AppleScript Studio	557
Script Editor	558
Smile	558
Script Debugger 3.0	558
Index	559