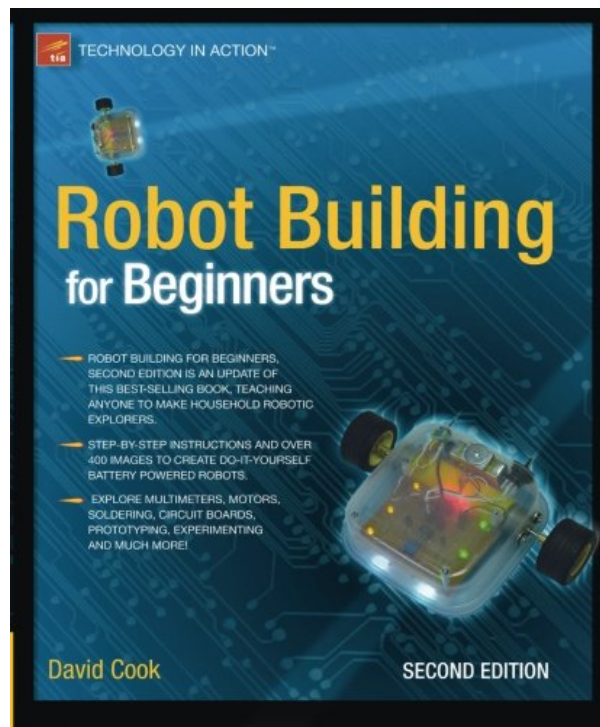
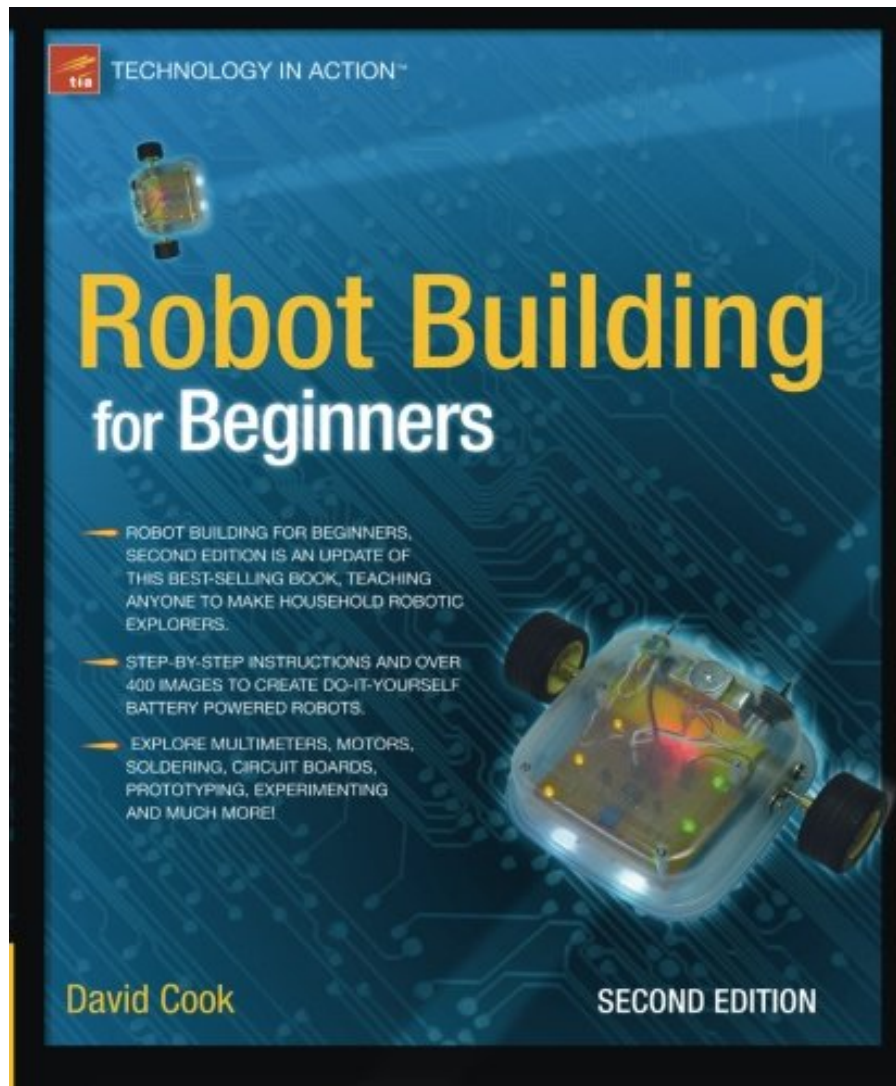


ROBOT BUILDING FOR BEGINNERS, 2ND EDITION (TECHNOLOGY IN ACTION) BY DAVID COOK



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About the Author

David Cook is an engineering manager at Motorola. He has 20 years of experience as a software developer, creating everything from award-winning computer games to mobile background-check applications for police. Self-taught in electronics and basic mechanics, David explains his years of robot experiences to the average backyard scientist in a comfortable and helpful manner, without scholarly intimidation. David hosts the popular robot site RobotRoom.com.

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“I wrote this book because I love building robots. I want you to love building robots, too. It took me a while to learn about many of the tools and parts in amateur robotics. Perhaps by writing about my experiences, I can give you a head start.” ?David Cook

Robot Building for Beginners, Second Edition is an update of David Cook’s best-selling Robot Building for Beginners. This book continues its aim at teenagers and adults who have an avid interest in science and dream of building household explorers. No formal engineering education is assumed.

The robot described and built in this book is battery powered and about the size of a lunchbox. It is autonomous. That is, it isn’t remote controlled.

You’ll begin with some tools of the trade, and then work your way through prototyping, robot bodybuilding, and eventually soldering your own circuit boards. By the book’s end, you will have a solid amateur base of understanding so that you can begin creating your own robots to vacuum your house or maybe even rule the world!

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Features

- Robot Building for Beginners

About the Author

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Most helpful customer reviews

111 of 113 people found the following review helpful.
Just what I've been looking for!

By J. Thurmond

I looked around quite a bit trying to find a robot building book that would take my 14 yr old through the process in a way he could understand. David Cook delivered perfectly. Every other book I looked at seemed either too childish, or alternately, assumed a solid background in electronics. Robot Building for Beginners, like Baby Bear's porridge, is just right!

I studied philosophy in college, so can offer my son no help in building robots. I've seen this book described as a swimming pool that's 5'x5' but 25' deep. That's pretty apt. I like the extensive chapter on components - what they are, how they work - neither my son nor I knew a resistor from a diode before. Also an entire chapter on safety was great from the concerned parent perspective.

The book is long, but covers a lot of ground with very little fluff. In 10 days my son had read up to the chapter where you start building your robot - he had absorbed a ton of information, built a few basic circuits and tested/troubleshoot them with a multimeter. Now he's just waiting impatiently for me to set him up with the necessary components to start building (actually he's started scavenging components from dead/unused electronics he comes across; and I'm starting to fear for my DVD player).

I don't think you'll find a better starting point for a novice.

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Excellent job

By John Ford MD

First of all a disclaimer: Although I've read this book from cover to cover, I haven't yet put its contents to practice. I haven't yet actually built the robot described in it. I therefore can't definitively state that I'll be able to do so and that it will work. Clearly however, others have been successful and I fully expect that (barring an inability to obtain the parts) there's no reason I won't be as well.

As for the text, I found it to be incredibly clear and easy to follow. I was looking for a book that would show a complete beginner how to build a simple robot from scratch. Books I'd previously looked at were either too advanced or were so vague that they only described principles but neglected to provide enough detail to actually make one. This book is very specific and provides the perfect (to me) balance between discussing the concepts in a very easy to understand manner with actually describing the details necessary to implement them. I feel quite confident in being able to design a simple robot (or modify his existing design) to do so.

His teaching is clear and his passion for getting others involved in this hobby is undeniable. What I like most is that he seems to have anticipated the problems people will have with the actual build or with understanding the principles in advance and that he has spent considerable energy resolving them even before they actually come up. This is real teaching and I greatly appreciated it.

I like how much thought he put into the layout of the book and how he takes you step by step through the entire process. He assumes almost nothing about the reader's prior experience, knowledge, or abilities. For some readers, the material will be too basic but for almost no one will it be too advanced. I've noticed that many reviewers criticize books because they weren't written at the level they were hoping for and I think this is wrong. If a book's description doesn't accurately describe the intended audience than these might be valid criticisms. In this case though, I'd have to say the book was exactly what I was hoping for.

I have very little to complain about other than that in some instances the electronics explanations were a little difficult to understand (the chapter on transistors comes to mind) but these problems are actually quite minor. I also agree with some of the other reviewers that the photographs didn't reproduce well.

I was quite pleased with this book all things considered and that without any other sources, I believe I'll be able to help my 11-year-old daughter build the "sandwich" robot and I think we'll both fully understand what we're doing. I definitely recommend Robot Building for Beginners!

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Great beginner book.

By PKen

This book was a good intro into robot building with appropriately detailed descriptions about the different electronic components, where to buy parts and some very good troubleshooting tips.

As good as the book was please note that the Solarbotics sandwich robot is a little different from the one described in the book. The Solarbotics robot includes a printed circuit board with all connections prewired and prelabeled. The soldering is tricky for beginners and the troubleshooting of the components once on the board can be significantly more difficult than a breadboard prototype. There are also no instructions for the Solarbotics board which uses different motors and requires some additional trial and error mounting everything in the sandwich container. The picture on the bag of parts shows a professionally mounted design with no instructions for reproducing this - don't expect perfection on your first attempt. That's part of the fun though isn't it?

I'm hooked and will definitely be ordering the followup book in this series.

PK

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