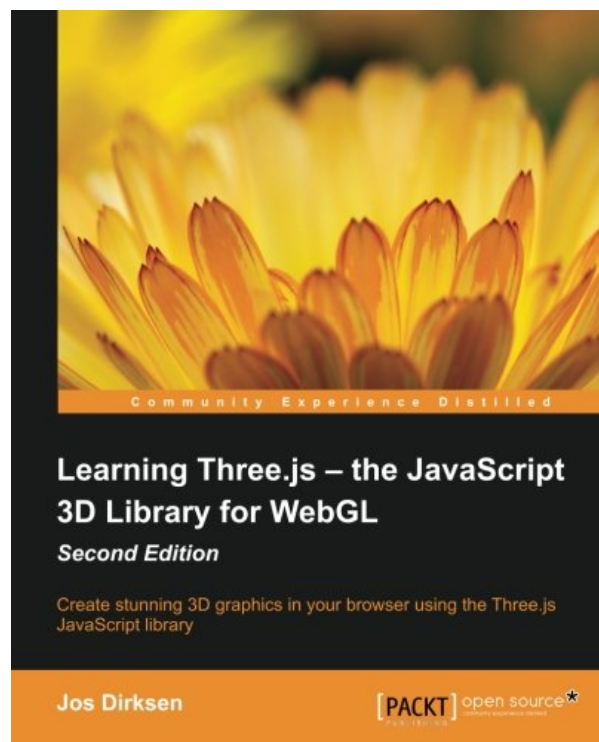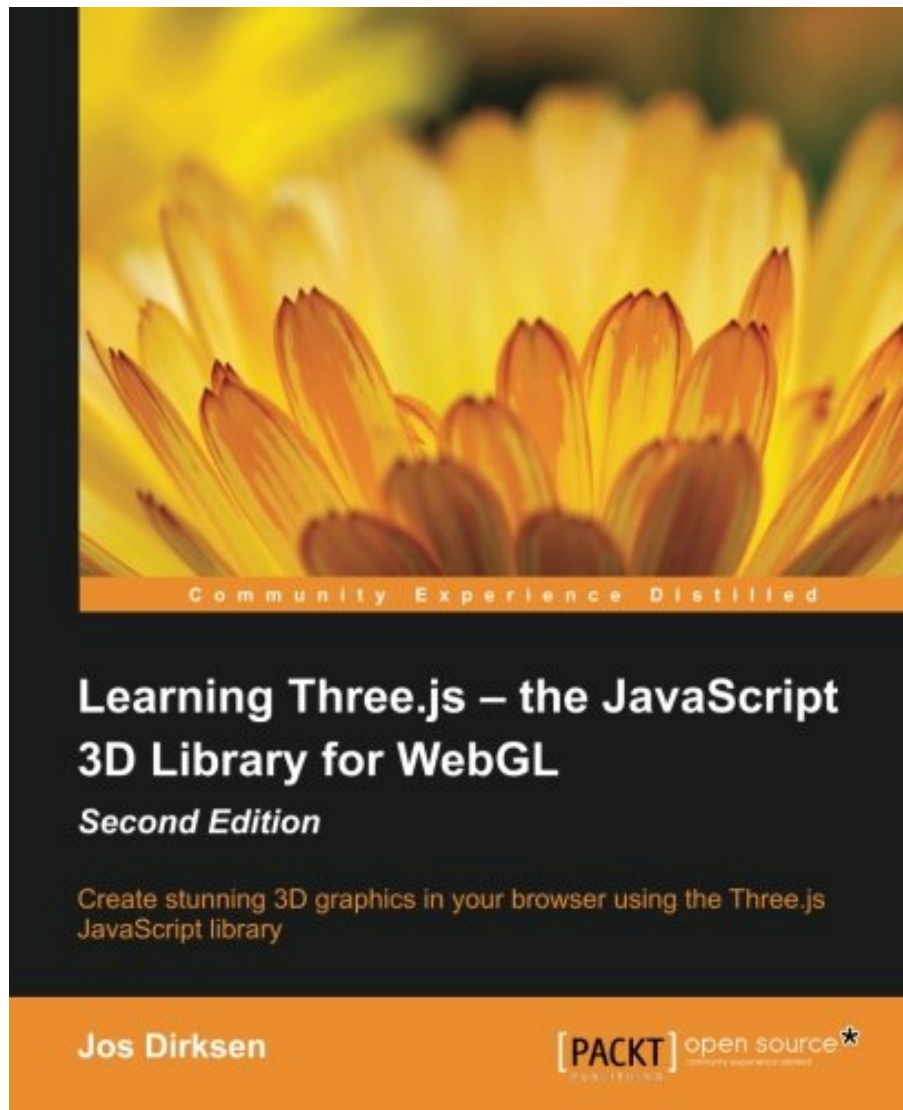# LEARNING THREE.JS: THE JAVASCRIPT 3D LIBRARY FOR WEBGL - SECOND EDITION BY JOS DIRKSEN

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Learning Three.js – the JavaScript 3D Library for WebGL

Second Edition

Create stunning 3D graphics in your browser using the Three.js JavaScript library

Jos Dirksen

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About the Author

Jos Dirksen

Jos Dirksen has worked as a software developer and architect for more than a decade. He has a lot of experience in a wide range of technologies, ranging from backend technologies, such as Java and Scala, to frontend development using HTML5, CSS, and JavaScript. Besides working with these technologies, Jos also regularly speaks at conferences and likes to write about new and interesting technologies on his blog. He also likes to experiment with new technologies and see how they can be best used to create beautiful data visualizations, the results of which you can see on his blog at http://www.smartjava.org/. Jos is currently working as a consultant for a large Dutch financial institution and has just finished a function as an enterprise architect for Malmberg, a large Dutch publisher of educational material. There, he helped to create a new digital platform for the creation and publishing of educational content for primary, secondary, and vocational education. Previously, Jos worked in many different roles in the private and public sectors, ranging from private companies, such as Philips and ASML, to organizations in the public sector, such as the Department of Defense. Jos has also written two other books on Three.js?Three.js Essentials, which uses an example-based approach to explore the most important feature of Three.js, and Three.js Cookbook, which provides a recipe-based approach to cover important use cases of Three.js. Besides his interest in frontend JavaScript and HTML5 technologies, he is also interested in backend service development using REST and traditional web services.

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Create stunning 3D graphics in your browser using the Three.js JavaScript library

About This Book

- Enhance your 3D graphics with light sources, shadows, advanced materials, and textures
- Load models from external sources, and visualize and animate them directly from JavaScript
- Each subject is explained using extensive examples that you can use directly and adapt for your own purposes

Who This Book Is For

If you know JavaScript and want to start creating 3D graphics that run in any browser, this book is a great choice for you. You don't need to know anything about math or WebGL; all that you need is general knowledge of JavaScript and HTML.

What You Will Learn

- Use the different geometries that are provided by Three.js
- Apply realistic lighting and shadows to the 3D objects you have created
- Use the different camera controls provided by Three.js to effortlessly navigate around your 3D scene
- Make use of advanced textures on materials to create realistic-looking 3D objects by using bump maps, normal maps, specular maps, and light maps
- Import and animate models from external formats, such as OBJ, STL, Collada, and many more
- Create and run animations using morph targets and bone animations
- Explore the Physijs JavaScript library to apply physics to your 3D objects
- Interact directly with WebGL by creating custom vertex and fragment shaders

In Detail

Modern browsers support WebGL, which makes it possible to create 3D graphics in a browser without having to use plugins such as Flash and Java. Programming WebGL, however, is difficult, complex, and very difficult to debug. With Three.js, it is possible to create stunning 3D graphics in an intuitive manner using JavaScript, without the need to know the details of WebGL.

Learning Three.js – the JavaScript 3D Library for WebGL, Second Edition, is a practical, example-rich book that will help you learn about all the features of Three.js. This book will show you how to create or load models from externally created models and realistic-looking 3D objects using materials and textures. You'll also learn how to use the HTML5 video and canvas elements as a material for your 3D objects, different ways of animating your models, skeleton-based animation, and how to add physics such as gravity and collision detection to your scene. By the end of the book, you'll know everything that is required to create 3D animated graphics that run in any browser using Three.js.

- Sales Rank: #430107 in Books
- Published on: 2015-03-31
- Released on: 2015-03-31
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.25" h x .96" w x 7.50" l, 1.59 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 423 pages

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2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.
A nice introduction to the three.js library.
By Giuseppe Rodriguez
Learning Three.js is by far one of the most advanced and up to date books you can find out there that explains step by step the uses of the three.js library. Whether you're a front end developer working on designing a better experience for your clients through animations, or a data scientist looking to show graphs that highlight your findings in a more professional and creative way, you can be sure this is the book for you. The book at first seems very fast paced and hand on, however the author goes more in depth in the upcoming chapters and wraps up with an actual real life project. If you want to try out three.js and want to know what all the fuss is about, I highly recommend this book.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.
Not a reference manual, but rather a well-narrated tour guide to accelerate learning and understanding of WebGL and Three.js.
By Tom Warfel
Learning Three.js - the JavaScript 3D Library for WebGL, second edition is a good introduction to creating web-based 3D applications using the three.js library. The book assumes basic programming knowledge and

some experience with using other CAD or 3D scene composition software, but nothing conceptually complex. While it is possible to just "jump in" sans book using the example code at threejs.org, the author takes the reader through the details needed to get started from ground zero. Rather than just assume everyone uses Chrome on a desktop, the author first shows how to do the basic but vital task of enabling WebGL on some of the older (but not uncommon) browsers. This seemingly trivial task had eluded me the better part of an afternoon with an older version of Firefox and of Safari; his instructions made the task as easy as it should have been.

The examples (with downloadable source code) presented in chapters 1-3 follow a logical progression, starting with wireframe rendering of a sphere and cube, then gradually adding more effects and capabilities. This logical evolution (with working example code) made it much easier for me to pick up the basics of three.js application design than just studying the (albeit wonderful) examples at threejs.org. (Although once I had a better handle on how to use three.js, I found studying the threejs.org examples extremely helpful too.)

Chapter 4 introduces custom materials with different surface characteristics, and Chapter 5 gives examples of predefined geometries (obviating the need for creating large detailed triangle mesh models if a pre-defined geometry can suffice). Chapter 6 extends the CAD model further with 2D extrusions and 3D text. Later chapters touch on more complicated topics, including creating custom textures and shaders, smooth camera motion, adding physical constraints, and importing models created in other 3D systems.

This is not a reference manual as much as a well-narrated tour guide to accelerate learning and understanding of WebGL in the context of three.js. I purchased the eBook as much for the working demo code and examples as I did for the expository prose, and feel it was good value for the money.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.
Very useful and practical guide
By Tina Z
Love this book! It is very easy to follow and the examples can be applied directly which allowed me to create stunning 3D graphics using JavaScript in an effortless way. And it also shows cool things like how to use the HTML5 video and canvas elements as a material for 3D objects and how to add physics such as gravity and collision detection to the scene etc. Highly recommend it!

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About the Author

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