

contents in detail

foreword: why LEGO matters, by Chris Anderson xv

introduction xvii

the NXT STEP blog xvii

who is this book for? xvii

about this book xviii

how to use this book xviii

PART I BEYOND THE BASICS

chapter 1 the LEGO MINDSTORMS NXT system 3

differences between the RIS and the NXT 3

the electronics 4

the building pieces 6

the programming language 6

conclusion 7

chapter 2 the grammar of NXT-G 9

is NXT-G a toy programming language? 9

where's the guidebook? 10

 help is built in 10

 help index 10

the basics: starting out 10

sequence beams 12

branching and sequences 12

blocks and structures 13

 blocks 13

 cloning blocks 13

loop and switch structures 13

 tabbed view 14

keeping things neat 14

 wires 14

 comment tool 15

my blocks save time and simplify your programs 16

going with the flow: data dependency 17

matching wires and plugs 17

 a deeper look at dependency 18

 solutions using variables 19

 using data dependency to your advantage 19

wiring into a wait: my blocks in action 19

 a better way 20

 cautions 20

chapter 3 NXT-G problems and solutions.....	21
the dreaded “mystery” broken wire.....	21
remove bad wires.....	21
running out of memory.....	22
stretching the memory.....	22
mini blocks.....	23
when to use a crowbar in programming.....	24
the crowbar.....	24
a bigger crowbar: the switch.....	24
removing the crowbar.....	24
variables: the scoop on scoping.....	25
local variables.....	25
global variables.....	25
all variables are global.....	25
the problem with global variables.....	25
solving the problem.....	25
the remarkable untouchable variable.....	26
an invitation to continue.....	26
 chapter 4 debugging—when the unexpected occurs.....	 27
care to comment?.....	27
waiting as a debugging tool.....	29
listen as you troubleshoot.....	31
look before you leap.....	32
summary.....	34
 chapter 5 making sense of sensors.....	 35
light sensor.....	35
block types.....	35
sound sensor.....	36
block types.....	36
what the sound sensor is not.....	38
touch sensor.....	38
block types.....	38
ultrasonic sensor.....	39
potential drawbacks.....	39
accessing the ultrasonic sensor.....	40
wait block.....	40
switch conditions.....	40
built-in sensors.....	41
data plug reference chart.....	42
 chapter 6 design.....	 45
taking inventory of available resources.....	45
taking inventory of smart parts.....	45
taking inventory of LEGO building parts.....	48
taking inventory of chassis types.....	49

design concept.....	50
brainstorming robotic tasks	50
design feasibility	50
hardware feasibility check.....	51
software feasibility check.....	51
prototyping and building techniques.....	51
testing and improvements.....	52
maintenance and repairs	52
the design cycle.....	52
worksheets.....	52
smart parts worksheet	53
smart part groups worksheet.....	54
building parts and assemblies worksheet.....	55
chassis types worksheet	56
task worksheet.....	57
chapter 7 bluetooth on the NXT.....	59
problems with the RCX IR connection.....	59
bluetooth as problem solver.....	60
making a connection: wireless introductions.....	60
time for a connection	60
connecting with a mac	61
connecting with a windows PC.....	62
after your device is paired.....	64
breaking the BT barrier: troubleshooting.....	64
networking with your peers: NXT-to-NXT communication.....	65
setting up an inter-NXT connection.....	66
communicating between NXTs	67
BT messaging under program control.....	67
receiving messages.....	67
chapter 8 NXT-to-NXT remote control.....	69
choosing a robot platform.....	69
defining a common language	70
defining a control system.....	70
programming the remote control	70
programming refinements.....	72
mailing out the result.....	73
the receiver.....	75
control issues.....	76
tuning the program.....	77
where do we go from here?	77
giving control back to the robot.....	78
adding brains to the vehicle.....	78
future directions: going beyond the book	79

PART II THE ROBOTS

chapter 9 RaSPy: a rock, scissors, paper-playing robot.....	83
building RaSPy.....	84
programming RaSPy.....	93
chapter 10 beach buggy chair: a ramblin' robot.....	101
building the beach buggy chair.....	102
seat back.....	103
front wheel hub.....	105
front.....	107
robot back.....	108
final assembly (including sensors).....	110
programming the beach buggy chair.....	115
my blocks.....	115
putting the pieces together.....	120
troubleshooting tips.....	121
hints for further exploration.....	121
a final thought.....	121
chapter 11 3D PhotoBot: a 3D photo assistant robot.....	123
the art of three-dimensional photography.....	124
producing three-dimensional images.....	125
viewing your three-dimensional image.....	126
notes on using your 3D PhotoBot.....	126
building the 3D PhotoBot.....	127
subassembly 1.....	127
subassembly 2.....	128
subassembly 3.....	130
main assembly.....	132
programming the 3D PhotoBot.....	140
chapter 12 CraneBot: a grabber robot.....	143
grippers.....	143
the robotic arm.....	144
building CraneBot.....	145
building the gripper.....	145
building the arm.....	151
building the crane body.....	155
programming CraneBot.....	168
part 1.....	169
part 2.....	170
part 3.....	170
part 4.....	170

chapter 13 slot machine: a one-armed robot.....	171
what is a slot machine?.....	172
hardware challenges.....	172
the reels.....	172
the lever.....	172
the slot.....	172
the pay-off mechanism.....	173
the complete robot.....	173
building the slot machine.....	175
finishing up.....	222
adding symbols.....	222
connecting the motors and sensors.....	222
general program flow.....	223
the game controller.....	223
the game's result controller.....	224
programming the slot machine.....	224
the game controller.....	224
the game's result controller.....	229
running the programs.....	231
ideas for enhancing your robot.....	232
chapter 14 BenderBot: an anti-theory music robot.....	233
building BenderBot.....	234
wiring BenderBot.....	244
programming BenderBot.....	244
a program to start you off.....	244
additional programs to explore.....	246
learning more.....	248
chapter 15 ScanBot: an image-scanning robot.....	249
building ScanBot.....	250
NXT module.....	256
light sensor carriage.....	260
final model.....	265
programming ScanBot.....	267
defining the variables.....	267
the my blocks.....	268
increasing the threshold.....	273
displaying the updated threshold.....	274
deciding whether to scan the next row.....	282
using ScanBot.....	289
troubleshooting tips.....	289
above and beyond.....	289
chapter 16 marty: a performance art robot.....	291
design challenges.....	291
holding the pen.....	291
wheels.....	292

building marty	293
left motor subassembly	293
right motor subassembly	295
the two-wheeled chassis.....	298
pen grip	300
left rail	304
right rail.....	305
pen housing.....	307
putting it all together.....	311
programming marty	312
marty's first drawing	312
tweaking the program.....	313
marty's basic my block toolkit.....	313
marty gets into shape	319
mbPolygon.....	319
RandomPolygon	321
mbStar.....	322
RandomStar	323
mbZigzag	323
MegaRandom.....	325
SpiralStraight	327
SpiralCurve.....	328
where to next?	329
troubleshooting.....	329
appendix A differences between sets.....	331
why two?.....	331
what do they cost?	331
advantages of the retail version.....	331
advantages of the education version.....	332
which one?.....	333
appendix B trouble-free CAD installation guide.....	335
why use the CAD programs?.....	335
just how good could this freeware be?.....	335
what's the use?	336
step 1: download and install LDraw.....	336
step 2: download andinstall MLCad.....	336
step 3: download andinstall LdView.....	337
adding parts to the LDraw parts library.....	337
official parts.....	337
unofficial parts.....	337
parts library structure	337
conclusion.....	338
index	339