

CONTENTS IN DETAIL

INTRODUCTION 1

Who Should Read This Book	2
What You Will Learn	2
Code Samples	3
Complaints, Adulation, and Everything in Between	3
Chapter Overview	4
What Comes Next?	5

1 THE .NET REVOLUTION 7

A Brief History of Visual Basic	7
Enter .NET	8
The Limitations of "Classic" Visual Basic	8
Visual Basic's Quirky Mix	8
Isolated Languages	9
Enterprise Development Headaches	9
DLL Hell	9
Incomplete Support for Object-Oriented Programming	10
The .NET Vision	10
The Ingredients of .NET	10
The Common Language Runtime (CLR)	11
The .NET Classes	11
Speaking the Same Language	12
Deep Language Integration	13
Prebuilt Infrastructure	13
Web Services and the Next-Generation Internet	14
Open Standards: XML, SOAP, WSDL, and Other Letters from the Alphabet	14
Metadata: The End of DLL Hell?	15
Is VB 2005 Still VB?	15
Ten Enhancements You Can't Live Without	16
Ten Changes That May Frustrate You	16
The Dark Side of .NET	17
What About COM?	17
What Comes Next?	18

2 THE DESIGN ENVIRONMENT 19

New in .NET	20
Starting Out in the IDE	21
The Start Page	22
Changing the Startup Behavior	23

Creating a Project	24
Tabbed Documents	25
Docked and Grouped Windows	26
Touring Visual Studio	27
The Solution Explorer	27
The Toolbox	28
The Properties Window	30
The Code Display	31
Splitting Windows	32
The Task List	34
Code Snippets	35
Inserting a Snippet	35
Managing Snippets	36
Macros	37
The Macro IDE	38
The Temporary Macro	39
Macros with Intelligence	39
Macros and Events	40
The Simplest Possible .NET Program	41
MyFirstConsoleApplication Files	43
MyFirstConsoleApplication Directories	43
Project Properties	44
What Comes Next?	46

3

VB 2005 BASICS

47

New in .NET	48
Introducing the Class Library	49
Namespaces	49
Assemblies	51
Types	52
Using the Class Library	53
Adding a Reference to an Assembly	53
Importing a Namespace	55
Exploring the Class Library Namespaces	57
The My Object	60
Code Files	62
Class and Module Blocks	63
Namespace Blocks	64
Adding Code Files	64
Data Types	65
The System Types	65
Multiple Variable Declaration	66
Initializers	66
Data Types as Objects	67
Strings	67
More Efficient Strings	70
Dates and Times	71
Arrays	71
Arrays and IEnumerable	72

Built-in Array Features	72
Arrays as Reference Types	74
Changes to Operations	75
Assignment Shorthand	75
Converting Variables	75
Math	76
Random Numbers	76
Some New Rules for Scope	76
Short-Circuit Logic	77
Quickly Skipping Through a Loop	78
Enhanced Procedures	79
Calling a Method	79
ByVal and ByRef	80
The Return Keyword	81
Optional Parameters	81
Default Values	82
Method Overloading	82
Delegates	84
What Comes Next?	86

4

WINDOWS FORMS

87

New in .NET	88
Getting Started	89
The Component Tray	89
Custom Designers	90
Locking Your Controls	91
Control Layout	92
Anchoring	92
Docking	94
Maximum and Minimum Window Sizes	96
Automatic Scrolling	96
Split Windows	97
Container Controls	99
Controls and Events	100
Handling More Than One Event	102
Accept and Cancel Buttons	103
Exploring .NET Forms	104
Two Ways to Show a Form	104
Forms and the My Object	106
Modal Forms	107
The Startup Form and Shutdown Mode	108
Application Events	108
Form Oddities	110
The Inner Workings of Forms	111
Visual Basic 6 Forms "Under the Hood"	112
Visual Basic 2005 Forms "Under the Hood"	113
Stepping Through the "Muck and Goo"	115
What About Binary Information?	116

Adding Controls Dynamically	117
Dynamic Event Hookup	118
Interaction Between Forms	120
A Sample Form Interaction Problem	120
Dialog Windows	121
Owned Forms	123
MDI Interfaces	123
More .NET Controls	126
Strips and Menus	126
System Tray Icons	129
Providers	132
What Comes Next?	133

5 **OBJECT-ORIENTED PROGRAMMING** **135**

New in .NET	136
Introducing OOP	137
What Is Object-Oriented Programming?	137
The Problems with Traditional Structured Programming	137
First There Were Structures	138
A Very Simple Person Structure	139
Making a Structure That Has Brains	140
Instantiating an Object	141
Objects Behind the Scenes	142
Classes in Pieces	144
Enhancing a Class with Properties	145
Enhancing a Class with a Constructor	148
Constructors That Accept Parameters	149
Multiple Constructors	150
The Default Constructor	152
Destructors	152
Garbage Collection	152
Enhancing a Class with Events	155
An Event in Action	155
Events with Different Signatures	157
Enumerations	159
Creating an Enumeration	160
Enumerations "Under the Hood"	162
Using Enumerations with an Event	163
Shared Members	165
Shared Methods	165
Shared Properties	167
Modules "Under the Hood"	168
Assessing Classes	169
Types: The Big Picture	169
Surveying the Objects in Your Application	170
What Comes Next?	171

6 MASTERING OBJECTS 173

New in .NET	174
The Philosophy of OOP	174
The “Black Box” Idea	175
Loose Coupling	175
Cohesion	176
What Do Classes Represent?	177
Inheritance	177
Inheritance Basics	178
Constructors in Inherited Classes	180
Protected Members	182
Overriding Methods	183
Casting	185
MustInherit (Abstract Classes)	186
MustOverride	187
Multiple-Level Inheritance	188
Is Inheritance a Good Idea?	189
Using Inheritance to Extend .NET Classes	189
Interfaces	194
Using Interfaces	196
Interfaces and Backward Compatibility	197
Using Common .NET Interfaces	198
Collection Classes	203
A Basic Collection	204
A NuclearFamily Class	204
Specialized Collections	207
Generic Collections	207
What Comes Next?	209

7 ASSEMBLIES AND COMPONENTS 211

New in .NET	212
Introducing Assemblies	212
Assemblies Versus Components That Use COM	213
Why Haven’t We Seen These Features Before?	215
Looking at Your Program as an Assembly	215
Setting Assembly Information	218
Retrieving Assembly Information	221
Creating a .NET Component	223
Creating a Class Library Project	223
Creating a Client	224
The Global Assembly Cache	226
The GAC “Under the Hood”	227
Creating a Shared Assembly	228
Policy Files	230
Creating a Version Policy	231

Resources	233
Adding a Resource	233
Using a Resource	235
What Comes Next?	237

8 BUG PROOFING 239

New in .NET	240
Understanding Errors	241
The Principles of Bug Proofing	242
Errors at Compile Time	242
Option Explicit and Option Strict	244
Line Numbers	246
Visual Studio's Debugging Tools	247
Watching Your Program in Action	247
Commands Available in Break Mode	249
The Breakpoints Window	250
Hit Count	251
The Autos, Locals, and Watch Windows	252
The Immediate Window	253
Errors at Runtime	254
Structured Exception Handling	255
Understanding the Error Call Stack	256
The Evolution from On Error Goto	257
The Exception Object	257
Filtering by Exception	260
Exception Types	261
Filtering by Conditions	261
Throwing Your Own Exceptions	262
Perfecting a Custom Exception Class	264
The UnhandledException Event: The Line of Last Defense	264
Defensive Coding	265
The Principles of Defensive Coding	266
Testing Assumptions with Assertions	266
Debug.WriteLine()	268
Using Logging and Traces	268
What Comes Next?	270

9 DEALING WITH DATA: FILES, PRINTING, AND XML 271

New in .NET	272
Interacting with Files	273
Reading and Writing Files	273
Creating a File with the My Object	274
Creating a File with the FileStream Class	275
The StreamWriter and StreamReader Classes	275
The BinaryWriter and BinaryReader Classes	276
Visual Basic-Style File Access	279

A Little More About Streams	280
Compressing Files	281
Managing Files and Folders	283
The FileInfo Class	283
A Simple Directory Browser	287
“Watching” the File System	288
Object Serialization	290
Storing and Retrieving a Serializable Object	291
Fine-Tuned Serialization	292
Cloning Objects with Serialization	292
Printing and Previewing Data	293
Printing Data from an Array	294
Printing Wrapped Text	296
Printing Pictures	298
Print Settings	298
Print Preview	299
Working with the Registry	301
XML Files	303
What Is XML, Anyway?	304
Writing a Simple XML Document	306
Reading XML	307
Advanced XML	309
What Comes Next?	310

10

DATABASES AND ADO.NET

311

New in .NET	312
Introducing ADO.NET	313
Using Relational Data	313
The Northwind Database	314
SQL Server 2005 Express Edition	314
The Provider Model	315
The Basic ADO.NET Objects	316
Fast-Forward Read-Only Access	317
Connection Objects	318
Command Objects	321
DataReader Objects	322
Updating Data with a Command Object	325
Why Use a Command Object?	326
A Data Update Example	326
Calling a Stored Procedure	328
Using a Parameterized Command	330
A Transaction Example	331
Using DataSet Objects	333
When to Use a DataSet Object	333
Filling a DataSet with a DataAdapter	334
Accessing the Information in a DataSet	334
Deleting Records	336
Adding Information to a DataSet	336
Working with Multiple Tables	338

DataTable Relations	338
Using a DataSet Object to Update Data	341
Updating the Data Source	343
Creating a DataSet Object by Hand	347
Data Binding	350
What Comes Next?	352

11

THREADING

355

New in .NET	356
An Introduction to Threading	356
Threads “Under the Hood”	357
Comparing Single Threading and Multithreading	357
Scalability and Simplicity	359
Timers Versus Threads	359
Basic Threading with the BackgroundWorker	360
Transferring Data to and from the BackgroundWorker	363
Tracking Progress	366
Supporting a Cancel Feature	368
Advanced Threading with the Thread Class	369
A Simple Multithreaded Application	369
Sending Data to a Thread	371
Threading and the User Interface	373
Basic Thread Management	375
Thread Methods	375
Thread Priorities	377
When Is Too Much Not Enough?	377
Thread Priority Example	378
Thread Debugging	380
Thread Synchronization	381
Potential Thread Problems	381
Basic Synchronization	381
A Sample Synchronization Problem	382
Using SyncLock to Fix the Problem	384
What Comes Next?	385

12

WEB FORMS AND ASP.NET

387

New in .NET	388
A Web Development Outline	388
What Was Wrong with Classic ASP?	389
Web Application Basics	390
Creating a Web Application	390
Ingredients of an ASP.NET Project	392
Designing Web Forms	394
The Basic Controls	394
Adding Controls to a Web Form	395
Running a Web Page	397

Adding an Event Handler	398
How Does It Work?	399
The AutoPostBack Property	400
Web Control Events	400
A Web Form "Under the Hood"	400
View State	403
The Page Processing Cycle	403
Other Controls	404
Thinking About State	404
Anatomy of a Web Request	406
Witnessing the Problem	406
Storing Extra Information in View State	407
Transferring Information	408
Passing Information in the Query String	409
Using Session State	411
Using Application State	413
A Summary of Different Types of State Management	414
Displaying Data with Data Binding	415
Basic ASP.NET Data Binding	415
The Data Source Controls	417
Deploying Your Website	418
IIS Setup	419
Virtual Directories	420
What Comes Next?	423

13

WEB SERVICES

425

New in .NET	426
The Vision of the Interactive Web	426
Web Services: COM for the Internet?	426
Web Services Today	427
Are Web Services Objects?	428
Creating Your First Web Service	428
Setting Up a Web Service	428
The Web Service Project	430
The Web Service Class	431
Touching Up Your Web Service	432
Testing Your Web Service	434
Your Web Service in Action	434
The Open Standards Plumbing	436
XML and WSDL	436
SOAP	438
Consuming a Web Service	439
The Proxy Class	439
Creating a Client Application	439
Adding a Web Reference	440
Inspecting the Proxy Class	442
Using the Proxy Class	443
Debugging a Web Service Project	444

Asynchronous Web Service Calls	446
Asynchronous Support in the Proxy Class	446
An Asynchronous Client Example	447
Canceling an Asynchronous Request	448
What Comes Next?	449

14

SETUP AND DEPLOYMENT

451

New in .NET	452
Setup Programs	452
Requirements for .NET Applications	453
ClickOnce	454
Publishing to the Web or a Network	454
Installing a ClickOnce Application	458
Updating a ClickOnce Application	459
Publishing to a CD	461
Creating a Visual Studio Setup Project	461
Basic Setup Project Options	463
File System	464
Registry	466
File Types	467
User Interface	469
Custom Actions	472
Launch Conditions	473
What Comes Next?	474

INDEX

475