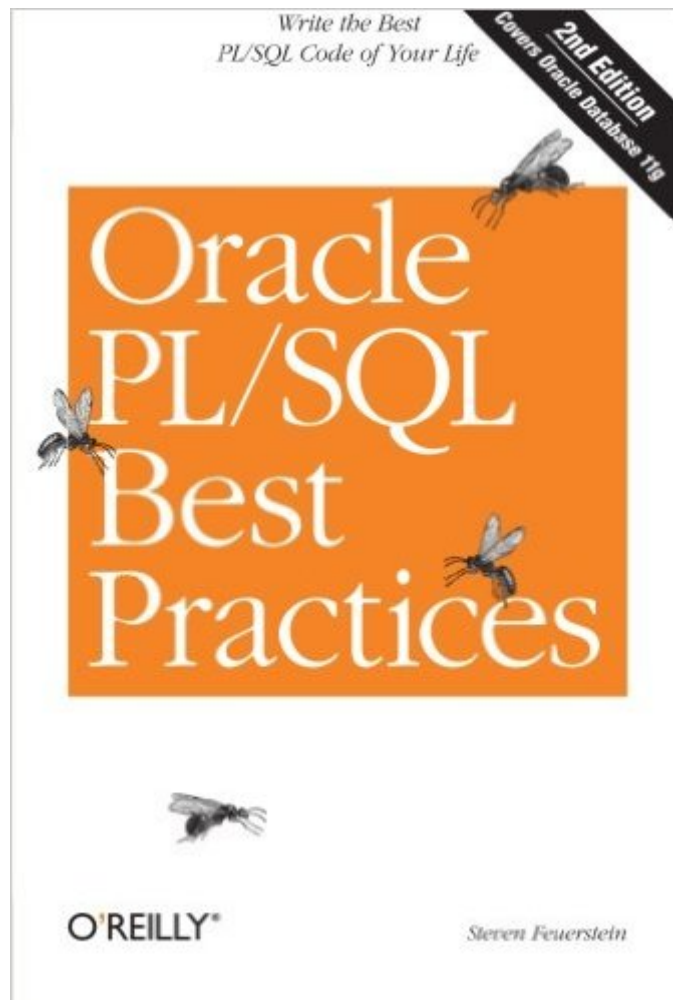


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# Oracle PL/SQL Best Practices



## Synopsis

In this compact book, Steven Feuerstein, widely recognized as one of the world's leading experts on the Oracle PL/SQL language, distills his many years of programming, teaching, and writing about PL/SQL into a set of best practices-recommendations for developing successful applications. Covering the latest Oracle release, Oracle Database 11gR2, Feuerstein has rewritten this new edition in the style of his bestselling Oracle PL/SQL Programming. The text is organized in a problem/solution format, and chronicles the programming exploits of developers at a mythical company called My Flimsy Excuse, Inc., as they write code, make mistakes, and learn from those mistakes-and each other. This book offers practical answers to some of the hardest questions faced by PL/SQL developers, including: What is the best way to write the SQL logic in my application code? How should I write my packages so they can be leveraged by my entire team of developers? How can I make sure that all my team's programs handle and record errors consistently? Oracle PL/SQL Best Practices summarizes PL/SQL best practices in nine major categories: overall PL/SQL application development; programming standards; program testing, tracing, and debugging; variables and data structures; control logic; error handling; the use of SQL in PL/SQL; building procedures, functions, packages, and triggers; and overall program performance. This book is a concise and entertaining guide that PL/SQL developers will turn to again and again as they seek out ways to write higher quality code and more successful applications. "This book presents ideas that make the difference between a successful project and one that never gets off the ground. It goes beyond just listing a set of rules, and provides realistic scenarios that help the reader understand where the rules come from. This book should be required reading for any team of Oracle database professionals."--Dwayne King, President, KRIDAN Consulting

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## Customer Reviews

You can glean some of Steven Feuerstein's insights on PL/SQL development from his other books on PL/SQL. In fact, his books were how I learned the subject and the basis for the PL/SQL guidelines that I have used within various companies for years. Here for the first time, however, Steven focuses completely on the practices that a PL/SQL developers needs to know to develop real world PL/SQL apps that are well-written and easy-to-maintain. In the book, Steven covers the various topics that a developer needs to know. Starting from a high level view of the development process and coding styles/conventions, he drills down to the detailed technical issues of creating variables and data structures, control structures and exception handling. There is an excellent section on coding SQL statements in PL/SQL, which is one of the main reasons for writing PL/SQL to begin with. The book closes with an examination of functions, procedures and packages including several of Oracle's key built-in packages. The best practices themselves are well-organized, concise and illustrated with specific examples. Steven provides his own insights for each best practice. As with all his books, this one is well thought out and worth twice the price!

This is not a text for learning PL/SQL programming. Feuerstein's PL/SQL Programming text is much more suited for that. What you have in this book is information that the author has distilled from his other works. In a way it could be considered a summary as the title might suggest. This book is a must have for the leader of an organization that is beginning to use PL/SQL. You will find what you need for your programming standards here. In addition to good standards suggestions, the author also gives a lot of resources that are available to PL/SQL developers. One of the prime examples is utPLSQL, a unit testing tool for stored procedures and functions. The author gives numerous other web sites and tool suggestions throughout the book. Anyone looking to increase their PL/SQL productivity should pick up this book.

I found this book to be an excellent (re-)introduction to good programming practices in PL/SQL. After reading the first few pages a little defensively ("I don't make those sorts of mistakes do I?") I soon realised that there was much to learn in this book as well as much that I had forgotten. This book has lead to an instant improvement in the quality of my PL/SQL code. I particularly like the

Quick Reference card in the back of the book.

A few years ago I bought the first edition of this book. It had a meaningful classification of the suggested best practices and each of them was presented in a consistent way e.g. Title, Example, Benefits, and Challenges. As the technology evolved (and the links mentioned were not there anymore), I bought this second edition expecting an update in the available tools to support the best practices and probably one or two chapters related to the new Oracle PL/SQL features. Those things were definitely there but I was surprised to find a totally rewritten book. Steven Feuerstein opted for a story-telling style instead of the formal approach followed in the first edition. By describing a project inside an imaginary company with its imaginary employees (each of them with a different character and a different way of working), it is definitely easier (and funnier) to read. Good programming practices are common to all languages so I didn't expect any big surprises (naming conventions, layout, keeping procedures short, avoid repeating code, etc). What I found extremely valuable was the chapter about exception handling, the advice about how to implement a test-driven approach for the PL/SQL code, the reference to software tools (free and commercial) that can be used in the development process, and the online resources (PL/SQL code, articles). My only criticism would be the Quick Reference provided in the book. After having read the book, it was not so easy for me to find again a particular section or example. I had to re-read a few pages in order to find what I was looking for (contrary to the first edition where this was very easy done). I would recommend this book to any beginner or intermediate PL/SQL developer, although I am sure that even experienced ones will learn valuable things.

I have been an avid reader of Steven's books ever since I started learning PL/SQL as part of my career in Oracle. Without a doubt he is an authority on this proprietary language from Oracle and has a vast repository of code that he can proudly claim his own. This book is ideal for those who have experience working with applications built on Oracle. You may have encountered situations in which you probably chose an approach to solve a problem or get something done in a hurry without thinking through the implications on performance or taking recourse to some useful features in PL/SQL. These practices classified by topic will not only explain the wisdom but also illustrate how to use it. Make sure you keep it handy and follow these guidelines religiously in your application code. Hats off to Steven and O'Reilly for another useful title !

I got this book when I started using Oracle. I ended up having to write sample code and set

standards for other folks who were also new to Oracle and PL/SQL, and this book allowed me to gain some wisdom quickly and point the rest in the right direction. I also had another Oracle reference book, but for schooling an Oracle novice on best practices, this was great. I ended up implementing a common exception handling package that was inspired by what I read in this book, and it turned out to be greatly needed. I wish it had been a bit more detailed in places, and if it were up to twice as long that would probably have made it better. The ability to look things up in an index was also strangely limited. The book isn't perfect, but it was money very well spent.

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