In the post-genomic era, every biologist is faced with the task of complex data analysis and interpretation. Often a simple yet tailor-made computer algorithm can work wonders and make a complex task easy. As a consequence, more and more biologists have begun to write small programs, using such script-based languages as Perl and Python.

This first introductory book designed to train biology students without previous experience in programming is based on a student course given by the author, and teaches essential skills for life scientists who want -- or need -- to write their own bioinformatics software tools.

By interspersing theory chapters with numerous small and large programming exercises, the author quickly shows readers how to do their own programming, and makes use throughout of anecdotes and real-life examples from the biosciences to optimize the text for biologists.

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