

Android

IN ACTION

THIRD EDITION

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 MANNING

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preface

The idea of writing a book about Android development can be somewhat futile at times, considering the pace at which Android continues to expand, morph, and change. What started out as a book project a few years ago has now become a series of updates to the original work with the page count nearly double the original project—and that after making hard decisions about what to leave out of the book to make sure it gets published.

This update to *Android in Action* represents our latest effort to provide coverage on important Android development topics, namely the expansion into the tablet space with Android 3.x as well as advances in mobile graphics and media such as RenderScript.

Although there have been many off-brand and name-brand tablet offerings popping up over time, the Android development team has taken the step of adding tablet-specific capabilities to the SDK under the banner of 3.0. True to form, 3.0 was quickly updated, so we generally refer to the tablet-specific features as 3.x; and before long I am sure Android 4.x will be out with a super-set of features.

Like many things in life, the only constant is change, but by now we're somewhat accustomed to the rapid-fire environment of Android development. To that end, we have ensured that all of the applications in the book work with Android 3.x. The newest chapters covering tablet-specific content (20–22) require the 3.x SDK, whereas the remaining chapters are compatible with the 2.x SDK versions. If you plan to write application software for Android, you simply need to steel yourself for navigating the multiple version game. It is at once a strength and a challenge of the Android ecosystem.