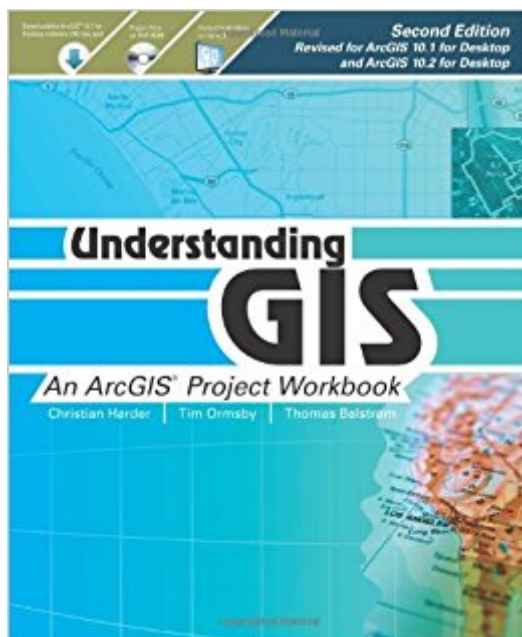


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# Understanding GIS: An ArcGIS Project Workbook



## Synopsis

Understanding GIS: An ArcGIS Project Workbook explains the methods and tools needed to apply GIS analysis to a spatial problem by finding the best location for a new park along the Los Angeles River in Southern California. Through this process, readers develop critical-thinking and

problem-solving skills and learn to use ArcGIS 10.1 for Desktop software from Esri. Understanding GIS: An ArcGIS Project Workbook includes valuable learning materials:

- Self-paced tutorials. The project is carried out progressively in nine lessons comprising more than thirty exercises. Each exercise has step-by-step instructions, graphics to confirm your results, and explanations of key concepts.
- ArcGIS 10.1 for Desktop software. The book includes access to ArcGIS 10.1 for Desktop software (180-day use) to perform the analysis. The book's DVD includes project data.
- An online Understanding GIS Resource Center includes the book's final lesson in PDF format, "GIS TV" videos that walk you through the exercises in real time, exercise results for each lesson, and more.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Christian Harder is a writer at Esri and author of a number of case study books on GIS. Tim Ormsby is a technical writer at Esri and has created and contributed to ArcGIS training courses for both the classroom and online learning. Ormsby coauthored Esri Press's best-selling workbook Getting to Know ArcGIS Desktop (Esri Press 2010). Thomas Balstrøm is the coauthor of the

Danish-language Book of GIS and Geodata. He worked for two decades as an associate professor in GIS and physical geography at University of Copenhagen, Denmark, and is now a freelance GIS consultant.

This workbook is a very user-friendly written book for those interested to begin using ArcGIS Desktop. I am 3/4 of the book through and I am impressed for the care and will to have readers learn ArcGIS and GIS for true. This said, don't expect to become an expert at the end because this is simply a good introduction to ArcGIS. And more precisely, the book is written from the point of view of a GIS analyst (you learn in the beginning of the book that there are 5 categories of ArcGIS users: editors, cartographers, analysts, programmers, managers). The book guides the reader step by step through a project which aims at finding a suitable land parcel(s) for a new park area in Los Angeles. You use real data which comes in the companion DVD. When you reach the final stage in chapter 6 and follow all the careful steps to manually select the best areas and you learned why you do so, you discover in the following chapter (chapter 7) that you can do the same in a much quicker way by using a visual graphing tool, a marvel in my opinion of ArcGIS Desktop. The reader doesn't need to buy ArcGIS desktop since a two months demo can be used as well. Alternatively, a user can apply for a "home user" account and pay just a fraction of the full price (conditions apply). All in all, the workbook is excellent. The general impression is to seat in a jumbo-jet cockpit and start understanding the instructions...only to forget them and be remembered again and again through the superb user-friendliness of the text and the many graphically clear and precise pictures (plus you see often a line saying "don't remember how to?...then read here or skip it if you know" ). The book comes also with videos hosted in the esri website but I must say I'd rather prefer the text that I can read and skim through away from a computer for further "digestion". The whole project can be done in a week but most probably it is better in my opinion to allow yourself 2-3 weeks or so and go back and forth the many different crucial point again and again (e.g. changing and selecting coordinates, geo referencing, editing, etc...). I found that the present version, 10.1, of ArcGIS does not change significantly from the earlier version used for the book. Only in one or two examples I found the pictures slightly different from version 10.1 and only in one case I found myself stuck with instructions (in chapter 6) whereby I don't know if this is because I did something wrong (most probably) or if the text of the book was wrong/outdated. I recommend this book, in the end it's much cheaper than paying for an instructor-led seminar. It will be a good reference book, too.

I was once in a Master's program in landscape architecture at a very good university. I was

unhappy--well, partly because I just could not draw! But, I also felt the program was ignoring computers and all the many factors that go into making something important for the social fabric--such as making public parks. I dropped out, got into CAD, ended up teaching that, later found GIS and got my Master's in GIS/Geography at another fine university. A long trip, but definitely worth it. I mention all this because this book represents exactly what I was looking for! I have now been in GIS for several years in various research positions. Still, this book does a great job of providing the foundation for well-intentioned enterprises. My inner landscape designer wants a defensible foundation for any good municipal design. I give the book four stars instead of five only because it does not show how to transform that ModelBuilder model into some working Python code. Yeah, I know that's a lot to ask for. But, in a realistic project, the model would probably be turned into Python and refined at the script level. My Intro to GIS professor was one of the finest in the USA. For the lab portion of his course, he led us through a semester long project very similar in its flowchart to the one in this book. Nothing can take the place of a fine series of lectures on the concepts and evolving science of GIS. But this book will give you real hands-on experience.

It isn't that I didn't like this book, but I had a lot of issues in my class by purchasing this on rather than the college bookstore. The code they sent me was for the older version which was not Windows 10 compatible. It worked mostly, but there were tasks required in the text that would crash the program I was using. The ONLY reason I was able to complete the course was because Earsi was offering a free 6 week trial of their latest software online. The text book was great, but if you get the code for the older software beware.

The only ArcGIS book and software worth investing in. The Tutorials 1-2 are junk. They didn't even test their books. This book has been tested and will let you know if GIS is something for you or not. You will not learn the background theory but given a good mind the lessons will be quite rewarding.

This book is very well written, and the Lessons build very intelligently upon one another, with real world scenarios. I had to offload the 4gb installation file because the software needed an additional 2gb, but the installation of the 90-day trial software was no problem otherwise. My only disappointment is that Lesson 9 is not included in the printed textbook. You have to view all 55 pages of Lesson 9 as a PDF file. Kudos to the authors, as this tutorial is very professionally written, with helpful explanations and graphic displays throughout the book.

Very helpful when it comes to the specifics of Esri Arc GIS 10. There was trouble getting the program installed. Their customer service was available, but I did have to dig for awhile as to what the problem was and was a bit on my own. Something about needing a service pack. Currently midway through and it is jam-packed with info. Great step-by-step instructions, rarely feel lost in it. Very happy with my experience so far.

An excellent book for beginners because it covers most necessary techniques for a novice; however, I have a few problems when practicing the exercise<sup>3</sup> of changing coordinate system and editing features (Exercise 5) using ArcGIS 10.2 (The book for ArcGIS 10.0). Later on I figured out how to solve them.

The book walks through a sample project to explain some basic editing, data collection, and analyst tools. While it isn't a great book to return to for reference I did learn some good skills from working through the exercise that I rely on frequently.

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