

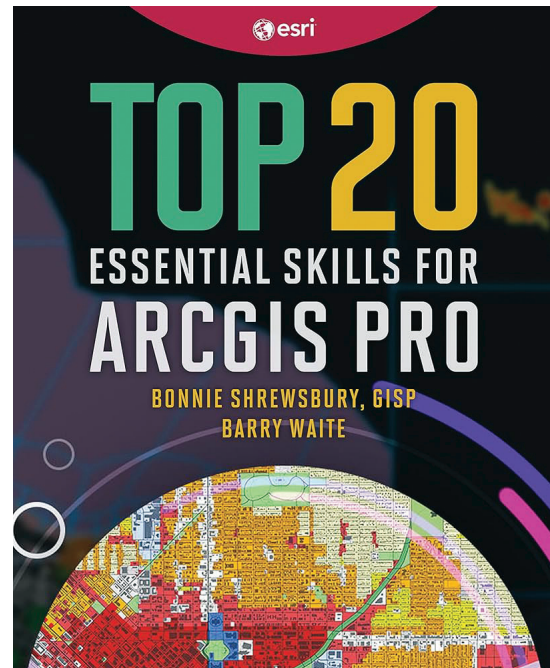
This book is another in the successful series of “*Top 20 ArcGIS Skills*” books published by Esri Press. The authors, Shrewsbury and Waite are well-qualified to write such a book that has a focus on novices or beginners learning ArcGIS Pro skills. For those not familiar with ArcGIS Pro, it is Esri’s most recent, full-featured desktop GIS software. It was introduced in 2015 as a fully 64-bit application with integrated 2D and 3D functionality. The product suite is available in three levels of licensing: Basic (formerly called ArcView), Standard (formerly called ArcEditor) and Advanced. Esri has positioned the ArcGIS Pro (current version 3.2) as a successor to older desktop GIS software (ArcMap in particular).

I am a GIS consultant with familiarity with ArcGIS Pro and other Esri software platforms but I’ve been a “casual user” of ArcGIS Pro but definitely not a hands-on expert with the software. I believe this put me in an appropriate position to review the book from a standpoint of a beginner with the software. I followed directions to download the software and proceeded with the step-by-step exercises.

The book begins with a description of software requirements and instructions for getting authorization and completing installation of a 180-day trial version of ArcGIS Pro software. One critique is that these instructions are not detailed enough and completing the software installation may take a little time, and, like my experience, may require a call to Esri Technical Support (which went smoothly).

The book provides a very short “what is GIS” intro and summary of the book content and organization. The introductory information should include a statement about the intended audience and expected skill level of users of the book. The “meat” of the book consists of 21 Chapters each of which covers one of the 20 ArcGIS Pro skills (actually 21 with a bonus skill added). Chapters include:

- Chapter 1 — Exploring ArcGIS interface
- Chapter 2 — Creating reference maps and layouts
- Chapter 3 — Preparing your data
- Chapter 4 — Joining tables to GIS data
- Chapter 5 — Creating thematic maps
- Chapter 6 — Geocoding
- Chapter 7 — Creating categorical maps
- Chapter 8 — Working with data tables
- Chapter 9 — Enriching your data
- Chapter 10 — Mapping x,y data
- Chapter 11 — Editing feature data
- Chapter 12 — Performing data queries
- Chapter 13 — Performing location queries
- Chapter 14 — Using geoprocessing tools



Top 20 Essential Skills for ArcGIS Pro

Bonnie Shrewsbury GISP and Barry Waite

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- Chapter 15 — Creating geodatabases
- Chapter 16 — Joining features
- Chapter 17 — Working with imagery
- Chapter 18 — Using 3D data
- Chapter 19 — Adding a table and chart to a layout
- Chapter 20 — Sharing your work
- “Bonus” Chapter 21 — Publishing your work

Given that ArcGIS Pro is extremely feature-rich, I believe this set of skills are well-chosen for ArcGIS Pro beginners.

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Anyone familiar with ArcGIS Pro could probably come up with several other important skills. For instance, there was no information about accessing and editing metadata. Also, an exercise using ArcGIS Pro network tracing tools would be useful. Currently, there are many organizations that are in the process of migrating ArcMap users to ArcGIS Pro so some mention of this and Esri resources to enable this migration would have been useful. Use of ArcGIS Pro is built around the construct of a “Project”. The book should briefly explain what an ArcGIS Pro Project is. The sample data sets (mainly Shape Files) were appropriate but, since many ArcGIS Pro users are in local government and utility organizations, it would have been valuable to include some exercises using parcel, zoning, and water/wastewater utility data.

Speaking of data, I found the book’s discussion and exercises on geodatabases somewhat lacking. Many ArcGIS Pro users will be part of an organization with an enterprise GIS program—with a network accessible geodatabase often managed in an ArcGIS Enterprise software environment. A brief explanation of this common user setting could have been included.

In my review, I used the hardcopy version of the book (not the eBook). While the step by step exercises were complete

and clear in almost all cases, the continual movement of my eyes from the book up to the screen resulted in occasionally missing steps and the need to back-up to complete the exercises. Maybe the eBook version would have been a better option to keep all instructions and software in a “heads-up” mode. I found it useful that the book has screenshots showing the menu selections associated with an exercise step. These screenshots are small snippets and hard to read if you’re a little farsighted and sometimes hard to orient to the full screen layout. Also, it would be helpful to have some sort of highlighting or box outline to the menu selection that corresponds to that step. The book includes excellent “user stories” at the end of each chapter which give a “real-life” vignette of the application of ArcGIS Pro functionality taught in that chapter.

To conclude, this book is a useful and clear guide to ArcGIS Pro. The exercises are realistic and practical. Completion of all the exercises, which does not take an inordinate amount of time, will position a novice or beginner to start using the software in a professional position. And there is value even for a GIS professional who may not be a regular ArcGIS Pro user but needs to understand more about the software capabilities.



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