CS 251
Intermediate Programming
Methods and More

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Methods

• An operation that can be performed on an object

• Has return type and parameters
  • Method with no return type (void) is often called procedure in other languages.
  • Method that has a return type, may be called function in other languages.
  • In Java - They are all called methods

• Can be overloaded. What does that mean?

• Many already available methods... (See JDK API)
What is Overloading?

- A method is identified by its name, and the types of its arguments. You can declare several methods with the same name if the argument types differ.
- Argument order is important!
- It is not possible to declare two methods that only differ in the return type. (Why?)
- Can not declare one method `circleArea` with the radius as argument, and one `circleArea` with the circumference, unless radius and circumference have different types.
public class OverloadExample {

    public static void writeType(int x) {
        System.out.println("int");
    }

    public static void writeType(char c) {
        System.out.println("char");
    }

    public static void writeType(String s, float f) {
        System.out.println("String + float");
    }

    public static void main(String[] args) {
        writeType(1);
        writeType(’a’);
        writeType("Hello", 3.1415);
    }
}
The static keyword

- Static methods and Static variables
- Mixing static and non static
- Programming style - use a small main
  - Only contain method calls
Nonstatic from static

- Problems with calling non-static methods from a static method. Why?
- Solution 1: Instantiate an object and invoke method with it.
- Solution 2: Add a parameter to take object of object type and use it. (Won’t work for main)
Put a main in any class!

- May be something new.
- Very useful for testing
- No need to compile “whole” program, just class
- Remember previous slide. Instantiate object to test it.
- Other reasons for multiple main methods?
Static variables

- **Constants** - `public final static`
- **Variables** - `public static`
- **When do we use them? Why?**
- **Static vars in other classes. How to use them?**
Static methods

- What is a static method?
- When do we want to use them?
- `main` is always static
- Example: `Math` class
Wrapper classes

• Integer, Character, & Double
• Has many useful static methods.
• Initialization and casting between primitive
• Autoboxing and unboxing
What is an object?

Each object has certain data and behavior

- An example: *student*
  - Data: age, endurance, intelligence, . . .
  - Behavior: code, drink, workout, sleep, . . .

- Another example: *car*
  - Data: power, top-speed, shape, color, etc. . .
  - Behavior: start, accelerate, break, turn
What is a class?

- A class is a blueprint from which objects are created.
- An object created from a class is an *instance* of that class.
Example class

class Student {
    private int age, endurance, intelligence;

    public Student ( int age, int endurance, int intelligence ) {
        this.age = age;
        this.endurance = endurance;
        this.intelligence = intelligence;
    }

    public void drink ( String what ) {
        if ( what == "milk" ) {
            endurance ++;
        } else if ( what == "alcohol" ) {
            if ( age >= 21 ) {
                intelligence = intelligence - 5;
            } else {
                System.out.println("You are too young to drink!");
            }
        } else {
            System.out.println("Don’t drink " + what + "!");
        }
    }
}
Find mistakes!

- What’s wrong with the program on previous page?
The String trap

• Why shouldn’t you compare two strings with the `==` operator?

• Reference types!
  • A reference to a place in memory - a comparison with the `==` operator compares addresses of memory.
  • Are the two references both referring to the same object?

• When comparing two objects, usually want to use `equals` method.
public class Student {
    private int age, endurance, intelligence;

    public Student ( int age, int endurance, int intelligence ) {
        this.age = age;
        this.endurance = endurance;
        this.intelligence = intelligence;
    }

    public void drink ( String what ) {
        if ( what.equals("milk") ) {
            endurance ++;
        } else if ( what.equals("alcohol") ) {
            if (age >= 21) {
                intelligence = intelligence - 5;
            } else {
                System.out.println("You are too young to drink!");
            }
        } else {
            System.out.println("Don’t drink " + what + "!");
        }
    }  
}
Class vs Instance variables

Instance variables
- Non-static fields
- Every object has its own
- Need instance to use

Class Variables
- Static fields
- Associated with class, not a particular object
- Can be manipulated without an instance
public class Student {
    // These are instance variables
    private String name;
    private int id;

    // This is a class variable
    private static int numberOfStudents = 0;

    public Student ( String name ) {
        this.name = name;
        // Give each student a unique ID
        this.id = ++numberOfStudents;
    }

    // More methods here...
}
Access Modifiers

public Accessible to all
private Only this class
protected Only this class and its subclasses
package-private No modifier. This class and others in same package.
Access Modifier Tips

• Don’t expose your guts!
• Use private unless you have a good reason not to.
• Avoid public fields except for constants. (Use getter/setter)
Encapsulation - Creating an API

- API = Application Programming Interface
- Define a set of rules for an object (i.e., what public methods should be available)
- A well defined API will help in large projects
- Will reduce time for redesign and integration
- Is what we will strive to achieve
- Will require a certain design component in later programming projects
How to think object orientation

- Look at problem description – Identify the following:
  - Verbs (possible methods)
  - Nouns (possible objects - or instance variables)
- Think early on how these objects will interact - Diagrams!
- What information (possibly objects) will need to be passed between them
- Then what? Put the design to test - have someone else critique it.
- Revise your design - Start Implementation
Creating the API

• First part of implementation is to realize the API
  • Create all classes, with method stubs only
  • Write an initial documentation for each object and method - This way you clearly know what each method is supposed to do, and might find flaws in the design when you think about it more.
  • Use Javadoc for your comments – Creates nice webpages for the API automatically.
Encapsulation Guidelines

1. Place comment in front of class to define how to think about the class.
2. All instance variables should be declared private.
3. Provide mutator and accessor methods for state change.
4. Use comment before each method, describing its use.
5. Make all helper methods private.
6. Use /* */ comments for API comments and // for implementation details.
public class JavadocDemo {

 private String name; // Name of the object
 private int desc; // Description of object

 /** The constant number of the democonstant. */
 public static final int DEMOCONSTANT = 5;

 /**
  * The default constructor. Defines the empty JavadocDemo class with default values set. Typically implicitly called by subclasses.
  */
 public JavadocDemo () {
 }
/**
 * Preferred constructor.
 * @param desc Describes the entity in the object.
 * @param name Names the entity in the object.
 */

public JavadocDemo (int desc, String name) {
    this.name = name;
    this.desc = desc;
}

/**
 * Changes the name of the object and makes sure name is valid.
 * @param name Proposed new name for object
 * @return True if name accepted, false if not.
 */

public boolean changeName (String name) {
    if (name.equals(this.name)) {
        return false;
    }
    this.name = name;
    return true;
}