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Lecture topics

- Intro to DEV4
- Design patterns introduction
- The visitor design pattern
- Course agenda
- Conclusions



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What you have done so far

- Encapsulation, polymorphism, subtyping, generics, etc.;
- Ways to express interactions among entities.



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What is coupling?

- Interactions between entities affect maintainability;
- The more the interactions, the higher the likelihood of having bugs;
- This phenomenon is known as coupling.



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What is coupling?

• If changing something in a program requires changing something else, then we have coupling.



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Sort of coupling

- High, which is undesirable;
- Low, which is our target.



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High-coupling

- As the number of interaction between two classes A and B increases, the coupling between them increases as well;
- This translates into: whenever A changes, the likelihood to erroneously change B is "high";
- Threfore, likely more bugs.



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High-coupling

- The class Driver contains a field of type Car
- The class Driver has visibility of all Car public methods and fields, such as the cilinders status;
- Move is really the only relevant bit here

```
class Driver {
  private Car car;
  void Drive() {
    public this.car.Move();
  }
}
class Car {
  public CilindersStatus cilinders;
  public void Move() {
    ...
  }
  ...
}
```



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Low-coupling

- The number of interaction between two classes **A** and **B** is limited to a series of methods provided by an interface;
- This translates into: whenever A changes, the likelihood to erroneously change B is "low", since A knows little about B.



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Low-coupling

- The class Driver contains a polymorphic type Vehicle
- The interaction between Driver and Car is restricted to the interface method Move;
- No cilinders;
- Also electric cars (no cilinders in electric cars).

```
class Driver {
  private Vehicle vehicle;
  void Drive() {
    public this.vehicle.Move();
  }
}
interface Vehicle {
  void Move();
}
class Car : Vehicle {
  public void Move() {
    ...
  }
}
```



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Low vs High coupling

- As the number of entities increases, the number of interactions increases;
- More precisely, given N classes, it is:

$$I \simeq \left(\sum_{i=2}^{N} \frac{N!}{2(N-i)!}\right)$$

It is a very big number!



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Low vs High coupling

- Consider a very simple program with only 4 classes
- This number is given by

$$I \simeq \frac{4!}{2(4-2)!} + \frac{4!}{2(4-3)!} + \frac{4!}{2(4-4)!} = 30$$



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Achieving low-coupling

- Maintaining code is hard and expensive
- Low coupling results in easily maintainable code
- What seems desirable when dealing with software development is to keep coupling between entities as low as possible



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Maintainability in code

- Is an important aspect in development;
- It affects costs of fixing bugs and changing functionalities.



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Polymorphism for reducing coupling in programs

- We can control interactions by means of an interface that hides the specifics of some classes
- Every entity interacts with another only through small "windows" (defined as interfaces), each exposing a specific and controlled behavior.



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A general view of low-coupling

- Given two classes A and B;
- A interacts with an I_B interface, whenever A needs to interact with an instance of type B;
- B interacts with an I_A interface, whenever B needs to interact with an instance of type A.



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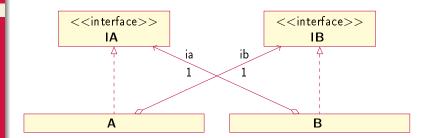
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```

```
class Driver {
 private Vehicle vehicle;
 void Drive() {
    public this.vehicle.Move():
interface Vehicle {
 void Move():
class Car : Vehicle {
 private Engine engine;
 public void Move() {
```

- The driver (class B) can interact with a vehicle (interface IA);
- The engine, which should not be accessible outside the car, is not mentioned in the interface, so the driver cannot interact with it.



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Recurrent patterns in objects interactions

- Disciplined interactions such as the one above tend to exhibit some recurring high level structures;
- Such structures are known under the umbrella term of design patterns.



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Design Patterns

- Design patterns in short are: ways to capture recurring patterns for expressing controlled interactions between entities;
- We will now see a specific example of such a pattern.



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Choosing in the presence of polymorphism

- As you already know polymorphism is a powerful mechanism that allows decomposition and code reuse;
- Sometimes though, we need to go "back" from general instances to concrete ones^a.

^aCat is Animal. Cat is specific. Animal is general.



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Why is choosing concrete types so problematic?

 Mainly because a general type has no information about what classes are implementing it.

```
interface Vehicle {
  void Move();
}
class Car : Vehicle {
    ...
}
class Bike : Vehicle {
    ...
}
```

- Given an instance v of type Vehicle, what can we say about the concrete type of v?
- Is it a Car or a Bike?
- What if we want to turn on the airco of v if it is a Car?



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Safe choice in the presence of polymorphism

- We need a mechanism that allows us to manipulate polymorphic instances as if they were concrete;
- Concrete instances are the only ones who know their identity, so we allow them to choose from a series of given "options".



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The Option<T> data structure

- Is used when an actual value of type T might or might not be variable;
- It is also called "reified null" or "null object".



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Examples of usage

- The following code illustrates the use of the option type;
- In this case we are capturing the number 5 within a Some<int> object;

```
Option<int> a_number = new Some<int>(5);
```

Examples of usage

 In this case we capture the "nothing" common to all values of type int within a None<int> object;

```
Option<int> another_number = new None<int>();
```



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Some<T> and None<T>

Both types implement the Option<T> data structure;

```
class Some<T> : Option<T> {
  public T value;
  public Some(T value) {
    this value = value;
  }
  ...
}
```

```
class None<T> : Option<T> {
  public None() {
  }
  ...
}
```



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Option < T >

- Is an interface that represents both absence and presence of data of type T;
- We cannot give direct access to the T value here as None could not implement it!

```
interface Option<T> {
    ...
}
```



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Visiting an Option<T>

- We add a method Visit to the interface that accepts as input a "Visitor" (an OptionVisitor<T, U>) and returns a generic result;
- The visitor object will able to identify the concrete type of the option (Some or None) and manipulate it accordingly^a.

^aNote, in many literature this Visit method is generally called Accept

```
interface Option<T> {
   U Visit<U>(OptionVisitor<T, U> visitor);
}
```



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What is an OptionVisitor<T, U>?

- An interface that provides a series of methods, one for each concrete class;
- In our case we have two signatures one for visiting a concrete Some instance and one for the None.

```
interface OptionVisitor<T, U> {
  U OnSome<U>(T value);
  U OnNone<U>();
}
```



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A concrete visitor - PrettyPrinterOptionVisitor<int, string>

Provides a pretty printer for options containing integers.

```
class PrettyPrinterOptionVisitor : OptionVisitor <int , string > {
   public string OnSome < string > (int value) {
     return value . ToString () ;
   }
   public string OnNone < string > () {
     return "I'munone . . " ;
   }
}
```



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Visiting a None<T>

• When visited, None informs its visitor of its identity by calling on onNone.

```
class None<T> : Option<T> {
  public U Visit<U>(OptionVisitor<T, U> visitor) {
    return visitor.onNone();
  }
}
```



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Visiting a Some<T>

 When visited, Some informs its visitor of its identity by calling on onSome.

```
class Some<T> : Option<T> {
   public T value;
   public Some(T value) {
     this.value = value;
   }
   public U Visit<U>(OptionVisitor<T, U> visitor) {
      return visitor.onSome(this.value);
   }
}
```



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Testing out our Option<T>

- The next line shows how to use our option to capture numbers and define operations over it;
- More precisely we instantiate a PrettyPrinterOptionVisitor, which is then used to visit a Some containing the number 5.



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Visiting an Option<T>

- Visiting also can be simplified;
- We give directly the methods to choose from;
- One less interface and trivial classes.

```
interface Option<T> {
   U Visit<U>(Func<U> onNone,Func<T, U> onSome);
}
```



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Visiting a None<T>

• None simply selects on None.

```
class None<T> : Option<T> {
  public U Visit<U>(Func<U> onNone,Func<T, U> onSome) {
    return onNone();
  }
}
```



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Visiting a Some<T>

Some simply selects on Some.

```
class Some<T> : Option<T> {
  private T value;
  public Some(T value) {
    this.value = value;
  }
  public U Visit<U>(Func<U> onNone,Func<T, U> onSome) {
    return onSome(value);
  }
}
```



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Testing out our Option<T>

• String conversion is now very streamlined.

```
Option<int> number = new Some<int>(5);
int inc_number = number.Visit(() => "IuamuNone...",x => x.toString());
```



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A concrete visitor - LambdaOptionVisitor<T, U>

 We can adapt the "non-lambda" visitor that we say earlier so that it accepts lambda's as well.

```
class LambdaOptionVisitor<T, U> : Option<T> {
  private Func<T, U> oneSome;
  private Func<U> onNone;
  public LambdaOptionVisitor(Func<T, U> onSome,Func<U> onNone) {
    this.onNone = onNone;
    this.onSome = onSome;
  }
  public U onSome<U>(T value) {
    return onSome(value);
  }
  public U onNone<U>() {
    return onNone();
  }
}
```



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More sample

 Can be found on GIT under the folder: Design Patterns Samples CSharp and also Java.



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The general idea

- What we have seen so far is an example implementing the visitor design pattern;
- It allows the recovery of "lost-type" information from a general instance back to specifics;
- The recovery is based on the actually activation of one of the multiple concrete options available.



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How do we define it $(lambda \ version)$? (Step 1)

- Given: $C_1, ..., C_n$ classes implementing a common interface I;
- ullet Every class C_i has fields $f_1^i,..,f_{m_i}^i$



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How do we define it (lambda version)? (Step 2)

- We now add to I a method Visit that returns a result of type U;
- Visit, which is the common to all classes implementing I, picks the right option based on its concrete shape;
- Since we do not know what the visit will result in, then we return a result of a generic type U



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How do we define it (lambda version)? (Step 2)

- The Visit method accepts as input one function per concrete implementation;
- Each such function depends on the fields of the concrete instance and produces a result of type U.

```
interface I

Interface I

U Visit < U > (Func < Fields C1, U > on C1,

Func < Fields CN, U > on CN);

Interface I

In
```



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How do we implement it (lambda version)? (Step 3)

 Every class implementing the interface I has the task now to implement the Visit method, by selecting and calling the appropriate argument.

```
class C1
 4
             F 1 f1:
             F_m fm;
             U Visit \langle U \rangle (Func \langle FieldsC_1, U \rangle on C_1.
                                Func \langle FieldsC_N, U \rangle \ onC_N \rangle {
10
                onC_1 (f1,..,fm);
11
12
```



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Course structure 51/58 How do we use it (lambda version)? (Step 4)

• Every time we want to consume an instance of type M we have to Visit it.

- Every argument of the visit becomes a function that is triggered depending on the concrete type of i;
- i_i are the fields of the concrete instance C_i ;
- b_i is the block of code to run when a visit on an instance of a concrete type C_i is needed.



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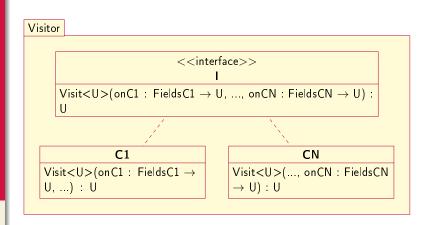
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Final considerations

- The visitor patterns provides us with a mechanism to safely manipulate polymorphic instances;
- This mechanism is transparent and safe, as there always will be an appropriate function to call;
- The instance itself is able to select the proper implementation among the input arguments of the visitor method without any complexity or risks.



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Lectures

Intro to design patterns - Visiting polymorphic instances (1 lecture) TODAY

Iterating collections - Iterator (1 lecture)

• Entities construction and event management - Factory + Observer (1 lecture)

• Building state machines - Strategy (1 lecture)

• Extending behaviors - Decorator over Strategy (1 lecture)

• Composing behaviours - Adapter over Strategy and input (1 lecture)

• Live coding class (1 optional lecture)

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Conclusions

- Coupling in code is dangerous;
- Unmanaged interactions might introduce bugs;
- Interfaces are powerful means to control interactions.



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Conclusions

- Software engineering techniques (called design patterns)
 have been developed to achieve low-coupling by effectively
 using interfaces;
- This is going to be the topic of this course;
- We will study a series of basic design patterns, used in many applications.



This is it!

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Course structure The best of luck, and thanks for the attention!