

Data Structures & Algorithms 1

Topic 3 – Methods and Objects

Java program structure



- Java programs are built up of multiple files called **classes**
- There are advantages in splitting a program into distinct files rather than keeping it in one big chunk
 - The different components can be easily re-used
 - The same piece of code can be re-run as many times as you want without re-typing it
- **Classes** are made up of **variables** and **methods**
 - Variables store information
 - Methods are contained chunks of code which do a specific job and then return a result

A big chunk of code

```
import java.util.Scanner;

public class MyProgram{

    public static void main(String args[]) {

        final double PI = 3.1414;
        Scanner in = new Scanner(System.in);
        System.out.print("Enter radius");
        double radius = in.nextDouble();
        double circumference = radius*2*PI;
        System.out.println("Circumference="+circumference);
        double area = PI*radius*radius;
        System.out.println("Area="+area);
    }
}
```



Problems with the chunk

- The program does what it's supposed to, calculating the circumference and area
- However, the code is not very re-usable as it's hard to separate out the different bits and pieces
- When the programs gets big it becomes more and more important to break into **distinct components**
- A **method** is a piece of code that takes in some values, does a calculation using them and sends back a result



Method structure

- First is the **access modifier**
 - **public** if any program can call the method
 - **private** if the method can only be called from within that file
 - You also need to include the word **static** if the method is included in the same file as your main method
- Second is the **return type**
 - **void** if it returns nothing
 - **int** if it returns an int
 - **String** if it returns a String
- Third is the **name** of the method

Method structure

- The bit in brackets is the **parameter list**
 - This is the list of variables that the method takes in
 - Their types are given as well as the names they will have for the duration of the method
 - Variables can be re-christened with new names when they arrive in a method
 - Parameters are separated by commas
 - If there are no parameters put an empty brackets

```
public void square (int one, int two){...}
private boolean isPrime (int number){...}
public static void printList(){...}
```

Method structure

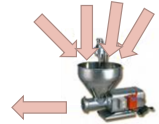
- If your method is supposed to return an answer then a return statement must be included at the end
 - `return answer;`
 - `return 0;`
- The code to be executed by the method is wrapped up in curly brackets `{ }`
- The main method is a special method because it is the method that is always run first by the Java Virtual Machine
 - The main method always takes in an array of Strings as arguments by default
 - `public static void main(String[] args){...}`

Calling a method

- You can call a method as many times as you want, sending in any variable(s) matching its parameters

```
double area1 = getArea(3);
double area2 = getArea(5.6);
double area3 = getArea("hello"); // compile error!
```

- Inputs go in, result comes out



Example with methods

```
public class MyProgram{
    public final double PI = 3.1414;

    public static void main(String args[])
    {
        Scanner in = new Scanner(System.in);
        System.out.print("Enter radius");
        double radius = in.nextDouble();
        double circumference = getCircleCircumference(radius);
        System.out.println("Circumference="+circumference);
        double area = getArea(radius);
        System.out.println("Area="+area);
    }

    public static double getCircleCircumference(int valuein){
        return PI*2*valuein;
    }

    public static double getArea(int valuein){
        return PI*valuein*valuein;
    }
}
```

Advantages

- One method called `getCircleCircumference` takes in a radius and calculates the circumference
- Another method called `getArea` takes in a radius and calculates the area
- We've separated the code into distinct parts, making it easy to identify and re-use individual components
- We can run a method as many times as we want with different numbers



Method features

```
public static double getArea(double valuein){
    return PI*valuein*valuein;
}
```

Annotations:

- It's in the main file so use *static*
- This method returns a *double*
- Method takes in an *double* That *double* will be referred to as 'valuein' for the duration of the method
- It returns the result of this calculation

Variable scope

- A variable defined inside a method will only exist for the duration of that method
- When the method returns a result, the variable will be disposed of by Java's garbage collector
- If you want a variable to be available to all methods you need to define it outside those methods
 - `PI` is declared outside the methods of the class
 - Therefore it is a **class variable** rather than a **method variable**
- The area of the program in which a variable is available is called the **scope** of that variable



Class variable scope

```
public class MyProgram{
    public final double PI = 3.1414;
    public static void main(String args[]){
        Scanner in = new Scanner(System.in);
        System.out.print("Enter radius");
        double radius = in.nextDouble();
        double circumference = getCircumference(radius);

        System.out.println("Circumference="+circumference);
        double area = getArea(radius);
        System.out.println("Area="+area);
    }

    public double getCircumference(double valuein){
        return PI*2*valuein;
    }

    public double getArea(double valuein){
        return PI*valuein*valuein;
    }
}
```

This is the scope of *PI*

Method variable scope

```
public class MyProgram{
    public final double PI = 3.1414;
    public static void main(String args[]){
        Scanner in = new Scanner(System.in);
        System.out.print("Enter radius");
        double radius = in.nextDouble();
        double circumference = getCircumference(radius);
        System.out.println("Circumference="+circumference);
        double area = getArea(radius);
        System.out.println("Area="+area);
    }

    public static double getCircumference(double valuein){
        return PI*2*valuein;
    }

    public static double getArea(double valuein){
        return PI*valuein*valuein;
    }
}
```

This is the scope of *valuein*

Classes and objects



- Say we want to re-use a method like `getArea()` or `getCircumference()` in a new program
- Do we need to copy and paste these methods into our new program? That would be quite a waste of space
- The **object-oriented** approach allows us to use the methods defined in other files (which are called **classes**)
- First we create an instance of that class called an **object**, sending in the values required by the constructor of that class
- Then, we can call methods on that object and the results are returned in the same way as before

Classes

- A **class** is a collection of **variables** and **methods** that operate on those variables

Circle
PI radius
getCircumference() getArea()

Objects

- Creating an object looks like this:


```
Circle myCircle = new Circle(double radius);
```

new is the reserved word for creating objects

This can have any name

This is the value sent into the **constructor** of the Circle class
- The program looks for the file called **Circle.java** and runs the constructor of that class

Objects

- This is how to call a method on an object:

```
double area = myCircle.getArea();
```

Result saved in this variable

The dot is the reserved symbol which is used to run a method on an object

This variable is sent into the method

Full example

```
public class MyProgram{
    public static void main(String args[])
    {
        Scanner in = new Scanner(System.in);
        System.out.print("Enter radius");
        double radius = in.nextDouble();
        Circle myCircle = new Circle(radius);
        double circumference = myCircle.getCircumference();
        System.out.println("Circumference="+circumference);
        double area = myCircle.getArea();
        System.out.println("Area="+area);
    }
}
```

Run constructor
in Circle.java

Run method in Circle.java
and return result

Circle.java

```
public class Circle{
    public final double PI = 3.1414;
    public double radius;
    public Circle(double valuein)
    {
        radius=valuein;
    }
    public double getArea(){
        return PI*radius*radius;
    }
    public double getCircumference(){
        return PI*2*radius;
    }
}
```

constructor
code is run

a variable
stored by
Circle
objects

method
called

answer
returned

Constructor

- When you create a new object from a class, the constructor in that class is automatically run

```
public Circle(double valuein)
{
    radius=valuein;
}
```

This constructor must be sent
an **double** which is referred to
as 'valuein' for the duration of
the constructor

It puts its variable **radius** equal to the
value sent in: this variable is accessible
by all methods in the class

Multiple objects

- You can create as many objects as you want, using different values sent into the constructor
- You can then call methods on particular objects

```
Circle myCircle1 = new Circle(5);
Circle myCircle2 = new Circle(3.6);
Circle myCircle3 = new Circle(2.9);
```

area = 40.7

```
double area = myCircle2.getArea();
```

anotherArea = 26.4

```
double anotherArea = myCircle3.getArea();
```

Advantages of objects

- The program is split into a number of components, each stored in a separate **class** file
- Each class has its own **variables** and **methods**
- You can make as many objects of a class as you want
- You can make an object of a class from any other program, promoting code re-use
- If anyone else writes a program that involves circles, they will be able to use your Circle class so long as they have a copy of **Circle.java**

Advantages of objects

- Related pieces of information can be tied together in a single data structure
 - Student number
 - Student name
 - Date of Birth
- You can write lots of methods that go with your class
- People calling these methods just need to know the input parameters and the return type
- They don't need to know how your methods work
- This is called **encapsulation**



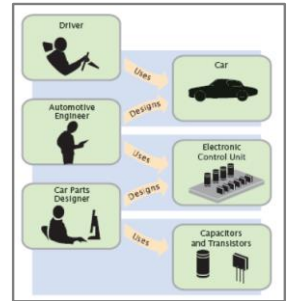
Encapsulation



- Encapsulation hides all the unimportant details
- In **object-oriented programming** objects are like a black box because you don't need to know how they're implemented
 - You know what information to use to construct an object
 - You know what methods you can call on the object
 - You don't need to know anything else
- This makes it easy to use other people's code
- It also makes it easy to recycle individual components of a program

Encapsulation example

- Black box systems in a car:
 - The **driver** doesn't need to know how the car works to use it
 - The **mechanic** doesn't need to know how the electronic components of the car work to put them together
 - The **electronic engineer** doesn't need to know how transistors work to put together an electronic control unit



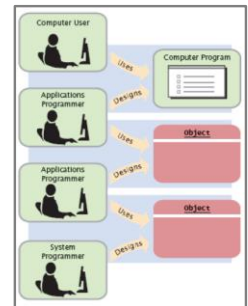
Encapsulation example

- **Encapsulation** leads to efficiency
- The mechanic deals only with car engine components, not with capacitors and transistors
- The driver worries only about interaction with car (e.g. putting petrol in the tank), not about how the engine works
- All they need to know is how to use the system, not how the lower levels actually work



Software encapsulation

- Software engineers adhere to the same principles:
 - The **end user** uses a web application, without needing to know how it works
 - The **programmer** uses an application to help create the web application, without needing to know how it works
 - The **application programmer** uses an operating system to help create applications, without needing to know how it works



Java Application Programming Interface (API)

- The Java API describes all of the methods that go with a class
 - Names of the methods
 - Parameters they take in
 - A brief description of what they do
- The full Java API is available at <http://java.sun.com/j2se/1.4.2/docs/api/>
- This contains a full description of all the classes and methods that you have already been using
 - String, Scanner, Math...

String API

Method Summary	
char	charAt (int index) Returns the character at the specified index.
int	compareTo (Object o) Compares this String to another Object.
int	compareTo (String anotherString) Compares two strings lexicographically.
int	compareToIgnoreCase (String str) Compares two strings lexicographically, ignoring case considerations.
String	concat (String str) Concatenates the specified string to the end of this string.
static String	copyValueOf (char[] data) Returns a String that is equivalent to the specified character array.
static String	copyValueOf (char[] data, int offset, int count) Returns a String that is equivalent to the specified character array.
boolean	endsWith (String suffix) Tests if this string ends with the specified suffix.
boolean	equals (Object anObject) Compares this string to the specified object.

Java features

- A java program will consist of a number of classes each written in a separate file with the **same name** as the class
- Each class will have methods and variables declared in it as well as a **constructor** with the **same name** as the class
- One class will be the one which starts the program - this will have a **main()** method which is run automatically
- Curly brackets are used to separate methods within classes **{ }**



Java features

- Every time you see the word **new** an object of a class is being created
- Every time you see the dot **.** a method in a class is being called on an object of that class

```
Circle myCircle3 = new Circle(2.9);
double anotherArea = myCircle3.getArea();
```

- Naming convention:
 - classes start with an uppercase letter
 - objects start with a lowercase letter



```
Typewriter myTypewriter = new Typewriter( );
```

Java program structure

```
// comments about the class
public class Universe {

}

// comments about the method
```

class header

class body

Comments can be placed almost anywhere

This class is written in a file named: Universe.java

Running a program

- To run a java program you must run the **main()** method
 - It is **public** which means that it can be run from anywhere
 - It is **static** which means you don't need to have created an object to use it
 - It is **void** meaning it doesn't return a result
 - It can take in an array of Strings as an input parameter (**String[] args**)

```
public static void main(String[] args) {
```

Java program structure

```
// comments about the class
public class Universe {

    // comments about the method
    public static void main(String[] args) {

    }

}
```

Anyone can run this method

This method doesn't return anything

Parameters passed to this method, in this case an array of strings

Name of method

This method can be run without creating an object

method body

Java class modifiers

- A class can be:
 - **abstract** is a class with abstract methods which are empty (there is no code associated with the methods) – it cannot be instantiated
 - **final** describes a class that can have no subclasses
 - **public** describes a class that can be instantiated or extended by any other package
 - No modifier, then the class is **friendly** (can be instantiated by classes in the same package only)

Java method modifiers

- A method can be:
 - **public** is a method that can be called by any class anywhere
 - **protected** is a method that can only be called from inside the class or any of its subclasses in the same package
 - **private** is a method that can only be called from inside the class

Static methods

- Ordinary methods are known as **instance methods** because they operate on a particular instance of an object
- To use these methods you need to create an object of the class first and then call the method on that object
- A **static** method can be run on its own without creating an object

```
public static void main(String[] args){
```

Variables

- A **local variable** is created inside a method or loop and cannot be accessed outside that method or loop
- ```
for(int i=0; i<10; i++){
```
- A **parameter variable** is one that arrives into a method
- ```
public Contact(int number, String name){
```
- A **class variable** is a variable in a class for which a single copy is shared by all objects of that class

```
public static final PI = 3.14
```

Variables

- An **instance variable** is one that is defined inside a class
- Every time an object of that class is created, it gets its own unique instance of that variable
- These variables are usually declared as **private** so they can only be manipulated within the class in which they are created

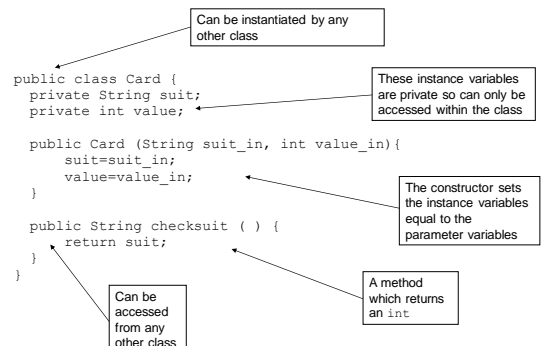
```
public class Card
{
    . . .
    private String suit;
}
```

Instance variables

- A instance variable declaration consists of the following parts:
 - access specifier (private, public)
 - type of variable (int, double, String etc.)
 - name of variable

```
public class Card
{
    . . .
    private String suit;
}
```

Example



Accessing instance variables

- If the instance variables are **private** then this means they cannot be directly accessed from other classes
- In this case, methods need to be provided for manipulating and accessing these variables
- The `checksuit()` method of the `Card` class can access the private instance variable `suit`

```
public String checksuit( ) {  
    return suit;  
}
```

Accessing instance variables

- Other classes cannot access or manipulate these private variables directly

```
public class AnotherClass  
{  
    public static void main(String[] args)  
    {  
        Card myCard = new Card("Spades", 6);  
        . . .  
        myCard.suit = "Hearts"; // ERROR!!!  
    }  
}
```