

Encapsulation (an object oriented principle):

- Says that instance variables should be declared as **private** to protect them (encapsulate them) from clients.
- **public** methods should be written to give clients access to the instance data.
- The public methods form the interface for the class.
(This is the way that clients interface with objects of this class).

Accessor methods give clients *read-only* access to an object.

Mutator methods give clients *read/write* access to an object.