# Exercises: Asynchronous Programming

Problems for exercises and homework for the "Web Dev Basics" course from the official "Applied Programmer" curriculum. In these exercises we will create a very **simple HTTP Server**. We will extend it every time and design it to mimic Microsoft’s IIS.

## Chronometer

The Chronometer is one of the easiest examples of an **asynchronous processes**. Let’s implement a simple Chronometer.

Create an **interface** IChronometer like this:

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Shape, rectangle

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Implement a program which provides a **Chronometer functionality**, that responds to several commands from the user input:

* start – starts counting time in milliseconds, seconds and minutes
* stop – stops the process of counting time, but the counted time remains
* lap – creates a lap at the current time
* laps – returns all of the currently recorded laps
* time – returns the currently recorded time
* reset – stops the Chronometer, resets the currently recorded time and deletes all of the currently recoded laps
* exit – stops and exits the program

Here is an example screenshot of the functionality:

The time is outputted in the following format: "{minutes}:{seconds}:{milliseconds}", each of them should be **padded** with **zeros**.

Upon **making** a **lap** you should print the **time** at which it was made.

Requesting **all laps** should print them in the following format:

Laps:  
0. {lap1}  
1. {lap2}  
...

In case there are no laps, you should print "Laps: no laps".

### Hints

Let's start implementing our **asynchronous chronometer**. First, we need to create the Chronometer **class**, which implements the IChronometer **interface**:



Use the Stopwatch **C#** **class**, which provides a **set of methods and properties** that you can use to accurately measure elapsed **time**. Create a **field** for the stopwatch. Also, create a **collection for the laps**. Initialize the **fields** in the **constructor** like this:

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We have the GetTime **property**, which should return the **currently recorded time** since the start of the chronometer counter. Use the Elapsed **property** of the Stopwatch **class** to **get the total elapsed time**. This property returns the time as a TimeSpan, so you should convert it to string in the **correct format**. Do it like this:



The other property we have is the Laps **property**. It should just **return the current laps collection**:



Next, we should **implement** the Start() and Stop() **methods** of the Chronometer **class**. The Stopwatch **class** has its own **methods for starting and stopping** – use them as shown below:

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The Lap() **method** returns the **current elapsed time** as a string and **adds it to a collection of laps**. It uses the GetTime **property**:

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Finally, we have the Reset() **method**, which should **invoke the** Reset() **method** of the Stopwatch **class** and **clear the laps collection**. Do it like this:

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As we already have the Chronometer **class** let's use it and invoke its methods depending on **commands** from the console. **Instantiate the chronometer** in the Main() **method** of a **class** called Startup:

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Then, we will **read a command** from the console, until the "exit" **command**.

Logo

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In the while **loop**, work with the chronometer depending on the **read command**. Don't forget that the Start() **command** of the Chronometer **class** should be **run as a task to be asynchronous**. After the while **loop** you should **stop the chronometer**. Complete the Startup **class** like this:

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## Make the Web Server Run Asynchronously

Now we go back to our **server** in the "BasicWebServer" **project** to **make it run asynchronously**, as this improves overall application **performance** and **responsiveness**. To do this, we should **replace the synchronous methods with** **asynchronous**, where possible, and **await** them.

### Step 1: Modify the HttpServer Class

Go to the HttpServer **class** and **make it run concurrently**. Start with the ReadRequest() **method**. In it, we read bytes from the network stream, which should be made **asynchronously** so that bigger requests **don't freeze the program**. Use the ReadAsync(byte[] buffer, int offset, int count) **method** and the await **keyword**:

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When we add the keyword await to await the task, we also need to make the method async and **make it return a** Task. Change the ReadRequest(NetworkStream networkStream):

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Then, do the same with the WriteResponse(NetworkStream networkStream, Response response) method, which should use an **asynchronous method** for writing to the network stream. Change the method like this:

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Description automatically generatedGraphical user interface, text, application

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Next, go to the Start() **method** of the HttpServer **class**. Here, our aim is to **accept and process multiple requests** from the browser in **parallel**, otherwise each request should wait for the others to be completed. To do this, use the AcceptTcpClientAsync() **method** of the TcpListener **class** to **connect to the network**:

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Then, we need to **await the methods**, which we made **asynchronous** earlier:

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Finally, make the whole Start() **method** **asynchronous** like this:

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In addition, we can separate the **network connection** initialization and using in the Startup() method to a separate **task** to **run asynchronously**. In order not to **await the task**, assign it a **variable** like this:

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### Step 2: Modify the Startup Class

Now let's modify the Main() **method** of the Startup **class** in the "BasicWebServer.Demo" **project** to work **asynchronously** with the **HTTP server**. Do it as shown below:

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## Download Web Content as a File

Our task now is to **asynchronously get a part of the HTML content** from **given** **sites** and **add it to a** .txt **file**. In our "BasicWebServer.Demo" **app** we will **click on a button** and **download** **the created file**. The workflow will be as shown below:

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### Step 1: Create File Response

To start with, we will need to **create an HTTP response**, which **returns a file**, and the **file is downloaded**. To do this, we will need to **add the** "Content-Disposition" **header** to the **response headers**, which indicates whether the browser should display or download a given file.

Let's first add a **constant** to the Header **class** for this **header's name**:

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Now we should **create a class for the file response**. The TextFileResponse will return **file content as a plain text** and will **inherit** the Response **class:**



First, we should also have a **property** for the **file name**, which should be accepted through the **constructor**. The constructor should also **initialize** the FileName **property** and **add** the "Content-Type" **header**. Do it like this:

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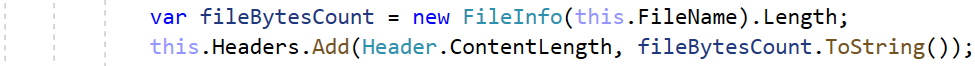
Then, the ToString() method of the class should **set the correct headers** and the **body**,if a **file with the given** **name** exists. Check this, using the File **class** and **set the file content as a response body** asynchronously:

Text

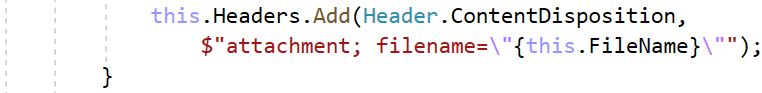
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We will need to add the "Content-Length" and "Content-Disposition" **headers** to the **response**.

Then, use the FileInfo **class** to **get the length** of the **file** with a given name in **bytes** and **add it as a content length header value**:



Add the last **header** for the **content disposition**, as well. It should be of type "attachment" and **contain the file name**:



At the end, return the **base** ToString() **method**:

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### Step 2: Modify the Startup Class

As we have created the TextFileResponse **class** let's use it. First, go to the Startup **class** of the "BasicWebServer.Demo" **project** and **create a simple form**, which should only have a [Download] **button** to **trigger the action on** **the** "/Content" **page** with **method** "POST":

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You can **copy the form field** from here:

|  |
| --- |
| private const string DownloadForm = @"<form action='/Content' method='POST'>  <input type='submit' value ='Download Sites Content' />  </form>"; |

This **form should be displayed** on the "/Content" **page** through a "GET" **request**. Then, when the **button is clicked** it should **send a** "POST" **request** to "/Content" and a TextFileResponse should be returned (and the file should be **downloaded**). Modify the Main() **method** as shown below to **create the needed mappings**:

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As you can see, we **set the file name** from a **class constant**. It is the following:

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As we have created the "POST" request mapping to return a TextFileResponse with a **file name**, we should **fill in the** **file with data** before the **response is returned**. To do this, we will create the DownloadSitesAsTextFile(…) method in the Startup **class** and **invoke it** before the **mappings** are created. With this method, we will **get the** **HTML content** of **several sites** and **write it to a text file** with a given name.

Before we write the above method, let's write another one – the DownloadWebSiteContent(string url) **method**, which should get the **first 2000 symbols** of the **HTML content** of a **site** on a **given URL**.

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To **get the content**, we should **send a** "GET" **request** to the site and **read its content**. For this reason, we will use the HttpClient **class**, which sends **HTTP requests** and receives **HTTP responses** from a resource, identified by a **URL**. The class provides us with the GetAsync(string requestUri) and the ReadAsStringAsync() **methods**.

Use the HttpClient **class** with its **methods** as shown below. At the end, **return only part of the HTML content**, so that the result **file is not too big**:

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Note that **all** async **methods should be awaited** and that's why the DownloadWebSiteContent(string url) should return Task<string>.

The next method we will write is the DownloadSitesAsTextFile() **method**, which **downloads the content** of given sites **asynchronously**. Then, the whole **HTML content will be joined** and **written** to a single **file**.

First, the method should **accept a file name** and a **string array with URLs** of sites to be downloaded:

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Then, create a **collection of type** Task<string>, which holds the **tasks** for getting the **HTML content** from the sites, and **fill in the collection**:

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**Wait** for all tasks to be **executed together** (in parallel) and **get the result** like this:



Now **join all the content** from the responses in a way you want and **get the result**. You can do it as shown below:

Text

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Finally, use the File **class** to **write the HTML content** of the sites to a **file** with a given name **asynchronously**:



We already have the methods for **downloading** and **saving the HTML content** of **sites** to a **file**. Use them in the Main() method **before the mappings** like this:

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As you can see, we have changed the method **structure** a little bit, so that we can **invoke the method** we want. Also, we have **added** the <https://judge.softuni.org/> and <https://softuni.org/> **sites** as **URLs** and their **HTML** **content** will be added to the "content.txt" **file**.

### Step 3: Try File Downloading

**Run** the application. Note that the Main() **method** of the Startup **class is the first executed method of a program**, so the **file** is created **before the server starts**. To look at it, open File Explorer 🡪 "BasicWebServer.Demo" 🡪 "bin" 🡪 "Debug" 🡪 "net5.0" and you should **see the HTML content file**:

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Graphical user interface, text, application

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Then, **open the browser** and go to "/Content". When you **click** on the [Download] **button**, the same **file** should be **automatically downloaded**:

Graphical user interface, application

Description automatically generated