

Hibernate Tip: Order the elements of a relationship

Question:

How can I order the elements of an annotated relationship without writing my own query?

Solution:

JPA supports the *@OrderBy* annotation which you can add to a relationship attribute as you can see in the following code snippet.

```
@ManyToMany
@JoinTable(name="BookAuthor",
    joinColumns={ @JoinColumn(name="bookId",
        referencedColumnName="id")},
    inverseJoinColumns={ @JoinColumn(name="authorId",
        referencedColumnName="id")})
@OrderBy(value = "lastName ASC")
private Set<Author> authors = new HashSet<Author>();
```

In this example, I want to order the Authors who have written a specific book by their last name.

You can do this by adding the *@OrderBy* annotation to the relationship and specifying the *ORDER BY* statement in its value attribute. In this case, I define an ascending order for the *lastName* attribute of the *Author* entity.

If you want to order by multiple attributes, you can provide them as a comma-separated list as you know it from SQL or JPQL queries.

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Hibernate uses the value of the annotation to create an *ORDER BY* statement when it fetches the related entities from the database.

```
05:22:13,930 DEBUG [org.hibernate.SQL] –
select authors0_.bookId as bookId1_2_0_,
       authors0_.authorId as authorId2_2_0_,
       author1_.id as id1_0_1_,
       author1_.firstName as firstNam2_0_1_,
       author1_.lastName as lastName3_0_1_,
       author1_.version as version4_0_1_
from BookAuthor authors0_ inner join Author author1_
       on authors0_.authorId=author1_.id
where authors0_.bookId=?
order by author1_.lastName asc
```