Why should the first letter of a Java class be upper-cased? [closed]

Asked 12 years, 4 months ago Modified 2 years, 10 months ago Viewed 16k times



28





As it currently stands, this question is not a good fit for our Q&A format. We expect answers to be supported by facts, references, or expertise, but this question will likely solicit debate, arguments, polling, or extended discussion. If you feel that this question can be improved and possibly reopened, visit the help center for guidance.

Closed 12 years ago.

Why should the first letter of a Java class be uppercased? Is it not possible to run a program containing lower-cased class names? If it is possible, what's the difference?

java naming-conventions uppercase lowercase

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edited Aug 14, 2012 at 7:02

Sai Ye Yan Naing Aye
6,740 • 12 • 48 • 65

asked Aug 14, 2012 at 6:45



62 Because it says so in the common writing rules. It's the same thing with natural languages, like English. yOU CaN bREak thE RuLeS, tHE mEsSaGe gETS tHrouGH anYwaY, bUt iT lOOk vErY sillY. – some Aug 14, 2012 at 7:14

10 Answers

Sorted by:

Highest score (default)





114

It's a coding convention, adopted by most Java programs. It makes reading code easier as you become use to a given standard.



No, you don't have to follow it, but you won't make any friends by not doing so ;)





Why / how was this convention established in the first place?



The convention was established by Sun/The creators of the Java language.

It was likely establish to improve the promotion of the language across a wide and diverse audience, to lower the entry level requirements for new developers (much easier to learn if you don't need to keep switching between other people's "ideas" of what good code looks like) and generally to try and keep the code clean within the community.

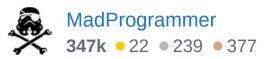
You could ask "why do companies have style guidelines for coders?" and the reasons would, generally, be the same

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edited Feb 15, 2022 at 6:22

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answered Aug 14, 2012 at 6:46



Why / how was this convention established in the first place?

- Michael Sep 30, 2015 at 0:36
- @Michael The convention was established by the Sun/The creators of the Java language. It was likely establish to improve the promotion of the language across a wide and diverse audience, to lower the entry level requirements for new developers (much easier to learn if you don't need to keep switching between other people's "ideas" of what good code looks like) and generally to try and keep the code clean within the community. But that's just my take on it. You could task "why do companies have style guidelines for coders?" and the reasons would, generally, be the same
 - MadProgrammer Sep 30, 2015 at 0:45



Using *naming conventions* makes it easier to **quickly** understand code when you read it.

22

Here are two simple lines of code:



foo = FooFactory.getFooInstance();

M

1

If we know the author follows naming conventions, we quickly know several things:

- 1. foo is an instance of some class
- 2. FooFactory is a class
- 3. *getFooInstance()* is a **static** method of the class *FooFactory*
- 4. doSomethingFoosDo() is an instance method of foo

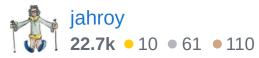
Otherwise we waste time wondering things like "is FooFactory an object or a class?"

Without naming conventions, you'd actually have to search through the source code to answer such questions.

This seems overly uptight at first, but it makes an **ENORMOUS** difference as you begin to write more complex software and work with others.

You'll find that naming conventions even make *your own* code more readable.

answered Aug 14, 2012 at 6:52



I'm not against naming conventions and I do try to follow them wherever reasonable, but good IDEs have made some of them less significant. Quite like the syntax highlighting above that makes it clear which foo is an object and which is a class. – Alexandre G Jan 29, 2015 at 3:02

Ok... Maybe IDE's have made them "less significant" when you're using an IDE. Not sure that's any kind of reason not to follow naming conventions. I'd argue you should strive to make your code readible for people using text editors and online repositories as well people reading code on their local machine with IDEs. – jahroy Apr 12, 2015 at 6:50

@Alexandre G - Interestingly enough, if I edit my answer to make FooFactory start with a lowercase letter, the syntax highlighting no longer identifies *fooFactory* as a class.

- jahroy Apr 26, 2017 at 3:55



Why should the first letter of a Java class be upper-cased?

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There are <u>Code Conventions for the Java Programming</u> <u>Language</u> and it says:



This Code Conventions for the Java
Programming Language document contains **the**

1

standard conventions that we at Sun follow and recommend that others follow. It covers filenames, file organization, indentation, comments, declarations, statements, white space, naming conventions, programming practices and includes a code example.

- 80% of the lifetime cost of a piece of software goes to maintenance.
- Hardly any software is maintained for its whole life by the original
- Code conventions improve the readability of the software, allowing engineers to understand new code more quickly and thoroughly.

It states <u>Naming Conventions</u>, which says on class names:

Class names should be nouns, in mixed case with the first letter of each internal word capitalized. Try to keep your class names simple and descriptive. Use whole words-avoid acronyms and abbreviations (unless the abbreviation is much more widely used than the long form, such as URL or HTML).

i.e. class Raster; class ImageSprite;

Is it not possible to run a program containing lower-cased class names? If it is possible, what's the difference?

It is possible, appropriate and there is no difference for compiler.

It is disrespectful for code and other programmers.

It is uncomfortable for you not to follow Java coding conventions.

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answered Aug 14, 2012 at 6:55



d1e

6,432 • 2 • 29 • 41



16

Why should the first letter of a Java class be upper-cased?



It is a convention that is universally observed by experienced Java programmers.



Is it not possible to run a program containing lower-cased class names?

Yes it is possible. It is also possible to go to work in the same set of clothes for a month. But you won't make any friends by doing either.

The difference is that your code is much less readable to other people if you ignore the conventions. Now, if you are writing code that will only ever be read by you, then code style is purely your problem. However, in the real world, most of us regularly have to read code written by other people. And if your code is painful to read because you've chosen to ignore the conventions, don't expect people to praise you for it.

Frankly, it is *anti-social* to write unreadable code in a context where there is a reasonable expectation that other people will need to read it.

I should add that it is not *just* anti-social. It turns out that you can burn *yourself* by ignoring the conventions. The style conventions are designed to work in conjunction with Java's identifier disambiguation rules; see <u>JLS 6.5</u>. If you ignore the style rules, you are liable to find that an ambiguous identifier (e.g. one that could be either a class name or a variable name) gets disambiguated in an unexpected way. The net result will be unexpected compilation errors that are (typically) hard to understand.

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Java naming convention for class

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Classes: Names should be in CamelCase.



Try to use nouns because a class is normally representing something in the real world:



class Customer class Account

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edited Aug 14, 2012 at 7:04

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answered Aug 14, 2012 at 6:55



Mohammod Hossain **4,114** • 2 • 27 • 37



It is the <u>java naming convention</u>

7

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edited Aug 14, 2012 at 12:05





()

answered Aug 14, 2012 at 6:46



Jigar Joshi

241k • 42 • 408 • 446



just naming convention.recommended to follow.



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answered Aug 14, 2012 at 6:47



oyss

692 • 1 • 8 • 20







5



Those are not rules, but conventions. You are free to use whatever you want, the way you want, but by following the convention you are sure that other developers will quickly understand your code, as it's clear what's a class, what's a property, what's a method, and so on.





Class names should be nouns, in mixed case with the first letter of each internal word capitalized. Try to keep your class names simple and descriptive. Use whole words-avoid acronyms and abbreviations (unless the abbreviation is much more widely used than the long form, such as URL or HTML).

http://www.oracle.com/technetwork/java/javase/document ation/codeconventions-135099.html#367

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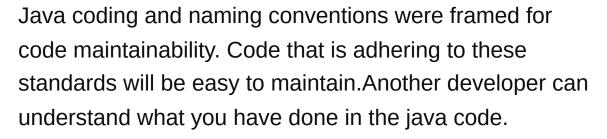
answered Aug 14, 2012 at 6:52



jpkroehling 14k • 1 • 39 • 39



4





Extract from the internet:



43

"Different Java programmers can have different styles and approaches to the way they program. By using standard Java naming conventions they make their code easier to read for themselves and for other programmers. Readability of Java code is important because it means less time is spent trying to figure out what the code does, leaving more time to fix or modify it."

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answered Aug 14, 2012 at 11:49





Yes It is possible to use lower-cased class names in Java. But you should obey naming convention of Java that is recommended in Java Community.



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edited Oct 21, 2014 at 6:19





answered Aug 14, 2012 at 7:01

