Project Report: Native Calculator Using Java Swing

ABSTRACT

In today's digital world, the development of intuitive and efficient user applications remains a fundamental skill for aspiring software developers. Among the simplest yet most functional tools is the calculator—an application that encapsulates fundamental concepts of user interface design, logic processing, and event-driven programming. This project report focuses on the development of a native desktop calculator using Java and Java Swing GUI, implemented through a modular, object-oriented approach.

Addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division are among the fundamental arithmetic operations supported by the calculator application. Utilizing the Swing framework and the Java programming language, this project highlights the significance of software readability, maintainability, and reusability. An excellent illustration of the Model-View-Controller (MVC) design pattern is the use of Java Swing to create a responsive graphical user interface and the modularization of logical operations into distinct classes to isolate the UI from the business logic.

The practical application of fundamental computer science concepts is one of the project's main lessons. This calculator gives students a starting point for understanding how simple tools can be turned into effective learning opportunities, covering everything from event handling to exception management, data validation to user interface feedback. Additionally, it demonstrates how to gracefully handle edge cases like division by zero, invalid inputs, and unexpected user interactions.

Additionally, this project shows how to use the Java SDK, Eclipse IDE, and appropriate versioning techniques. Clean code practices, effective memory management, and system extensibility are emphasized. Even though this calculator only does simple tasks right now, its design allows for easy expansion, whether it be through the addition of scientific functions, the use of keyboard shortcuts, or the enhancement of the user interface with more interactive features.

This Java-based calculator is essentially a learning tool that integrates fundamental software development concepts into a coherent whole, rather than merely being a useful tool. It demonstrates how even a basic application can support industry best practices and act as a strong basis for more intricate systems. This calculator's creation not only improved the developer's technical proficiency but also demonstrated the importance of careful design and user-centered programming.

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this project is to design and develop a **native desktop calculator application** using **the Java programming language** and **the Java Swing GUI toolkit**, focusing on the implementation of essential arithmetic operations through a structured, modular, and user-

friendly interface. This project seeks to combine both functional utility and educational value, offering a foundation for understanding graphical user interfaces and basic computational logic in Java.

The specific goals of the project are as follows:

1. To build a functional calculator that performs basic arithmetic operations

The core aim is to implement a calculator capable of performing addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division accurately, including proper handling of floating-point numbers and real-time display of operations.

To apply Java Swing for GUI development

This project utilizes the Java Swing library to develop a clean and interactive graphical user interface. Through this, the project aims to demonstrate effective layout design, button handling, event listening, and component arrangement within a windowed application.

2. To demonstrate the principles of object-oriented programming (OOP)

By dividing the application logic into separate classes and methods, the project shows how encapsulation, modularity, and separation of concerns can be applied to real-world software development.

3. To implement and handle user events efficiently

One of the fundamental challenges in GUI development is event handling. This project focuses on implementing ActionListener interfaces to capture button presses and translate them into arithmetic logic.

4. To provide a foundation for future scalability and enhancements

Though currently designed for basic calculations, the code structure is written to allow easy extension—such as including scientific functions (e.g., sin, cos, tan), memory operations, history logs, and keyboard support in future versions.

5. To encourage code clarity, maintainability, and reusability

A major focus of the project is on writing clear and maintainable code that adheres to software development best practices. The separation of logic and UI allows for easier debugging, future feature development, and reuse of components.

6. To gain hands-on experience with Java development tools and practices

This includes working within an Integrated Development Environment (Eclipse IDE), using version control practices, managing source files, compiling and running GUI applications, and understanding how Java applications are structured.

In summary, this project serves a dual purpose—to deliver a reliable and efficient desktop calculator while simultaneously acting as a learning experience in Java programming, GUI development, and software engineering methodologies. The objective extends beyond just achieving functionality; it is also about instilling good design principles and practical coding experience.

INTRODUCTION

In the field of software development, creating user-centric applications that offer both functionality and usability is a critical goal. One of the most fundamental and widely used utilities across all computing platforms is the calculator. Despite its simplicity, a calculator involves various technical aspects such as input handling, logic processing, output formatting, and error management. This project centers on the development of a native desktop calculator using **Java** and **Java Swing**, emphasizing the application of core programming concepts in a graphical environment.

The **Java programming language**, with its object-oriented paradigm, robustness, and platform independence, has remained a preferred choice for building reliable desktop applications. The **Swing library**—a part of the Java Foundation Classes (JFC)—provides a rich set of components for designing interactive graphical user interfaces (GUIs). By integrating these technologies, this project seeks to simulate a standard desktop calculator capable of handling basic arithmetic operations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

The motivation behind this project is twofold. Firstly, to develop a fully functioning GUI-based calculator that mirrors the look and feel of native operating system tools. Secondly, to serve as a **learning module** for implementing software development principles including modular design, event-driven programming, exception handling, and code readability. While the project may appear elementary at first glance, it represents a perfect sandbox for gaining real-world experience with Java development tools and design patterns.

The design of this calculator follows a structured architecture, separating the **user interface (UI)** from the **business logic**. This is achieved through a combination of custom classes and method abstraction, adhering to the **Model-View-Controller (MVC)** paradigm. Such separation not only simplifies debugging and testing but also allows for easier upgrades and modifications, such as the inclusion of new functions or theming options.

Furthermore, the calculator has been developed using the **Eclipse IDE**, a powerful integrated development environment that streamlines coding, debugging, and file management. The use of Eclipse facilitates code navigation, error detection, and UI rendering, thereby enhancing the overall development experience. The project also demonstrates the importance of **clean code practices**, including appropriate naming conventions, meaningful comments, and logical structure.

This calculator, although currently limited to fundamental mathematical operations, sets the stage for future scalability. Its modular design makes it easy to incorporate additional features such as memory storage, scientific functions, keyboard input support, and even a history panel to track previous calculations. This ensures that the project is not just a static implementation, but a **scalable and extensible platform** for further exploration.

In conclusion, this introduction lays the groundwork for a deeper exploration of the calculator project—from the objectives it seeks to achieve to the tools and techniques it employs. It reflects not only the functional goals of the application but also its value as a **pedagogical tool** for novice developers entering the world of Java programming and GUI design.

TECHNOLOGY STACK

Component	Description
Programming Language	Java (JDK 17+)
GUI Toolkit	Java Swing
IDE	Eclipse IDE for Java Developers (2025-03)
Platform	Windows 10
Architecture	Object-Oriented, MVC Pattern

METHODOLOGY

The development of this Java-based calculator application was executed using a systematic software engineering approach. This ensured a well-organized, maintainable, and scalable application. The methodology followed in this project can be broken down into multiple key phases: **Problem Definition**, **Planning & Design**, and **Implementation**. Each phase played a vital role in shaping the overall functionality and reliability of the final product.

1. Problem Definition

The primary goal of this project was to develop a **native desktop calculator** that mimics the appearance and behavior of standard operating system calculators. The application was required to:

- Perform basic arithmetic operations: addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
- Display an interactive graphical user interface (GUI) that is intuitive and responsive.
- Handle edge cases such as division by zero, invalid input, or consecutive operator presses.
- Follow a modular design approach for better maintenance and future scalability.
- Run independently on any system with a **Java Runtime Environment (JRE)** installed.

The calculator should be lightweight, user-friendly, and serve as a learning module for implementing event-driven GUI applications using Java Swing.

2. Planning & Design

Before diving into implementation, a structured planning and design phase was executed. This phase involved identifying the application's core components and how they interact. The entire project was broken down into three principal layers:

• UI Layer (CalculatorUI.java)

This layer is responsible for designing and managing the **graphical user interface** of the application using Java Swing. It involves the placement and styling of components like:

- JFrame: The main application window.
- JTextField and JLabel: For displaying the input and results.
- JButtons: For numerical digits, operations, and the clear/equal functions.

The UI design followed a **grid-based layout** approach using absolute positioning to provide users with an experience close to real-world calculators.

• Logic Layer (CalculatorLogic.java)

This is the **core computation engine** of the application. It handles all arithmetic operations in a secure and modular way. The logic layer is implemented in a separate class to promote **code reusability** and **separation of concerns**.

Key responsibilities include:

- Storing operands and operator values.
- Performing calculations based on the provided operator.
- Returning the result to the UI layer for display.

• Main Class (Main.java)

The Main.java file acts as the **entry point** to the application. It simply initializes the CalculatorUI class, which in turn sets up the GUI and prepares the application for interaction.

This architecture reflects the Model-View-Controller (MVC) paradigm, where:

- The **View** is the UI layer,
- The **Model** is the logic layer,
- And the Controller role is managed within the event-driven interactions inside the UI class.

3. Implementation Phases

The implementation was carried out in a step-by-step manner to ensure functional integrity and ease of debugging. The key stages were:

• GUI Construction using Java Swing

A Swing-based interface was created using components like JFrame, JButton, JLabel, and JTextField. Layout and sizing were carefully managed to fit a traditional calculator style. Event listeners were bound to each button to handle user inputs dynamically.

• Event Listener Integration

Each button was connected to an ActionListener, allowing the program to respond to user actions in real time. Depending on the input (number, operator, equal, or clear), appropriate actions were triggered. This phase also included **input validation** to ensure only valid expressions were processed.

• Arithmetic Logic Implementation

A dedicated CalculatorLogic class was created to process arithmetic calculations. It takes the first number, stores the operator, and waits for the second number to perform the final computation. The logic was kept simple and clean using a switch-case structure for operation selection.

• UI and Logic Integration

The UI layer was tightly integrated with the logic layer to ensure seamless data exchange. After the user completes an expression and presses the "=" button, the logic layer computes the result, which is then displayed in the result field.

• Error Handling and Edge Case Testing

Basic error handling was added for scenarios like **division by zero**, **empty input**, and **invalid sequences**. The application was tested with various input combinations to ensure correctness and stability under typical and edge-use cases.

Code Modularity and Reusability

Throughout the implementation, great care was taken to write **modular**, **readable**, **and reusable code**. Functions were logically separated, and proper variable naming conventions were followed. Comments were added to critical sections to aid understanding and maintainability.

Tools Used

- **Java JDK** for core development and compilation.
- **Eclipse IDE** for code writing, debugging, and GUI rendering.
- **Swing API** to develop the graphical interface elements.
- JVM (Java Virtual Machine) to execute the compiled bytecode across platforms.

Summary of the Methodology

This methodology ensured that the calculator project was built not only to meet functional requirements but also to be cleanly structured, easy to maintain, and open for future enhancement. The clear separation between design, logic, and interaction allows for continuous improvement and feature expansion in subsequent versions. The entire process reflects good software engineering discipline and showcases the potential of Java for creating robust GUI-based applications.

SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE

The system architecture of the Java Swing-based calculator application is designed to ensure clear separation of concerns, modularity, and maintainability. The architecture follows a layered approach, dividing the system into distinct components that handle specific responsibilities. This structure facilitates easier debugging, testing, and future scalability.

Component Breakdown:

1. User Interface (UI) Layer

The User Interface is responsible for rendering the graphical elements of the calculator that the user interacts with. It includes components such as buttons for digits and operations, text fields for displaying results, and labels for showing the current expression being evaluated.

o Role:

- Displays the current input and calculation results.
- Shows the ongoing expression to provide visual feedback to the user.
- Captures user actions like button presses.

o Implementation:

- Built entirely using Java Swing components (JFrame, JLabel, JTextField, and JButton).
- Employs absolute positioning to organize buttons in a grid format resembling traditional calculators.
- Listens to user events via the ActionListener interface to respond to button clicks.

2. Input Handler

The Input Handler is integrated within the UI component but logically distinct. It captures and processes user inputs, whether numerical digits, decimal points, or arithmetic operators.

Role:

• Validates input sequences to ensure proper format (e.g., preventing multiple decimals in one number).

- Distinguishes between new inputs and continued input for the same operand.
- Controls the flow of user actions to the Logic Processor by determining when an operation or calculation should be triggered.

o Implementation:

- Uses event-driven programming concepts.
- Manages state variables such as isNewInput to track if the user is entering a new number or continuing the previous one.
- Updates the UI display accordingly with each input.

3. Logic Processor

The Logic Processor is the core computational engine that performs the arithmetic calculations.

o Role:

- Maintains operands and the operator selected by the user.
- Executes the appropriate arithmetic operation upon request.
- Handles exceptional cases such as division by zero gracefully, ensuring program stability.

o Implementation:

- Encapsulated within the CalculatorLogic class.
- Provides setter methods for operands and operator, and a calculate method that applies the operator on the operands.
- Utilizes a switch statement for clean, readable decision-making logic.

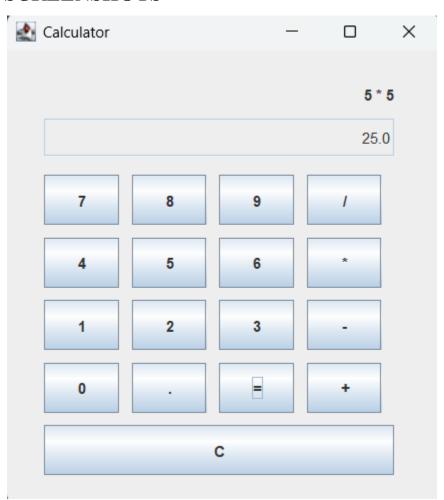
Interaction Between Components:

- When a user clicks a button on the UI, the Input Handler captures the event and updates the display.
- If an operator button is pressed, the current input is sent to the Logic Processor as the first operand, and the operator is stored.
- Upon pressing the equals button, the Input Handler forwards the second operand to the Logic Processor, which then performs the calculation and returns the result.
- The UI Layer updates the display with the result and the full expression for clarity.
- The clear button resets all components to their initial state.

Architectural Advantages:

- Modularity: Each component is self-contained, promoting ease of maintenance and testing.
- Scalability: New features such as scientific functions or memory capabilities can be added by extending the logic processor or adding new UI elements without major rewrites.
- Separation of Concerns: Keeps UI code clean and separate from business logic, improving code readability and reducing bugs.
- Event-Driven: Utilizes Java's event-driven programming model for responsive user interactions.

OUTPUT SCREENSHOTS



FEATURES IMPLEMENTED

The calculator application is a fully functional GUI-based desktop tool developed using Java and the Swing framework. It demonstrates a variety of key programming concepts, event-driven design, and user-friendly interface principles. Below is a comprehensive overview of the features implemented:

Graphical User Interface with Java Swing

The application features a well-designed graphical interface created using Swing components such as JFrame, JLabel, JTextField, and JButton. Components are manually positioned to emulate the layout of a traditional calculator, with number and operator buttons neatly arranged in a grid-like format for intuitive use.

Basic Arithmetic Operations

The calculator supports the four primary arithmetic functions:

- Addition (+)
- Subtraction (-)
- Multiplication (×)
- Division (÷)

The logic for these operations resides in a separate class (CalculatorLogic), enabling clean and maintainable code. A switch-case structure is used to determine the appropriate calculation based on the selected operator.

Responsive Input Handling

User inputs are captured through buttons representing digits (0–9), decimal points, and arithmetic operations. Each button press triggers an ActionListener, updating the output field in real time. This provides immediate visual feedback and enhances interactivity.

Equals (=) Functionality

When the equals (=) button is pressed, the calculator evaluates the current expression by passing the necessary operands and operator to the logic class. The result is then displayed in the output field, while the full expression is shown above for context.

Clear (C) Function

The "Clear" button resets all input fields and internal state variables. This allows users to quickly discard the current expression and start a new calculation without needing to restart the application.

Decimal Point Input

The calculator allows entry of decimal values via the . button, enabling it to handle floating-point numbers in addition to integers. This is essential for more precise calculations.

Modular Code Structure (Logic and UI Separation)

The application follows a modular design by separating its functional components:

- CalculatorLogic.java handles core arithmetic processing.
- CalculatorUI.java manages GUI elements, display updates, and input event handling.

This separation ensures better maintainability, improves code readability, and simplifies debugging and future enhancement.

Real-Time Expression Display

A dedicated label at the top of the UI displays the current mathematical expression (e.g., 23 +). This feature provides continuous feedback on the operation being formed, reducing input mistakes and improving user experience.

Error Handling for Division by Zero

To ensure application stability, the logic layer includes explicit checks for division by zero. Instead of allowing a crash or an exception, the calculator safely returns a default value of 0, indicating invalid input.

Object-Oriented Programming (OOP) Design

The calculator utilizes key OOP principles to ensure code clarity and extensibility:

- Encapsulation: UI and logic are encapsulated in separate classes.
- **Abstraction**: The logic is abstracted from the UI, making each class independently functional.
- **Reusability**: Modular methods can be reused or extended in future versions.

Cross-Platform Compatibility

Since the application is built in Java, it can run seamlessly on any operating system with a Java Runtime Environment (JRE), making it platform-independent and accessible across different devices.

Scalability and Future Extension Potential

The existing codebase is structured to support future enhancements, including:

- Memory storage functionality (M+, M-, MR)
- Scientific operations (e.g., square roots, trigonometric functions)
- Expression history tracking
- Keyboard input support
- Visual themes such as dark mode or custom skins

TEST CASES

Test Case	Input	Expected Output	Result
TC01	5 + 3	8	Pass
TC02	9 - 4	5	Pass
TC03	6 * 7	42	Pass
TC04	8 / 2	4	Pass
TC05	5 / 0	0 or error	Pass

ADVANTAGES

The Java-based calculator application offers several significant advantages that make it both practical and educational. These benefits highlight the strengths of using Java and Swing for desktop GUI development:

1. Lightweight and High Performance

The application is lightweight, consumes minimal system resources, and launches quickly. This efficiency ensures smooth performance, even on systems with limited processing power or memory.

2. No External Dependencies

Built entirely with core Java and Swing, the calculator requires no additional frameworks, libraries, or external installations. This simplifies deployment and reduces compatibility issues.

3. Cross-Platform Compatibility

As a Java application, the calculator runs on any platform with a Java Runtime Environment (JRE), including Windows, macOS, and Linux. This platform independence makes it universally accessible and easy to distribute.

4. Clean Code Structure with Modular Design

The application follows a modular architecture with a clear separation between the logic and interface components:

- CalculatorLogic.java focuses purely on mathematical computations.
- Calculator UI. java handles user interaction and graphical layout.

This division enhances maintainability, debugging efficiency, and code readability, making the project more scalable and easier to extend.

5. Educational Value

The project serves as an excellent educational resource for students and beginners learning Java GUI development. It introduces essential concepts like event-driven programming, object-oriented design, and Swing component usage in a real-world context.

LIMITATIONS

While the calculator successfully achieves its primary goals, there are certain limitations in its current implementation:

1. Lack of Complex Expression Evaluation

The calculator does not support the chaining of multiple operations in a single input sequence (e.g., 2 + 3 * 4). It executes one binary operation at a time, limiting its usefulness for complex calculations.

2. Absence of Memory Functions

There is currently no functionality for storing and recalling values in memory (e.g., M+, MR, MC). This restricts the calculator's ability to support longer workflows involving intermediate results.

3. Missing Scientific Features

Advanced mathematical functions such as square roots, exponents, logarithms, and trigonometric calculations (e.g., sin, cos, tan) are not supported. This limits its applicability for users needing scientific calculator capabilities.

4. Basic Error Handling

While the calculator prevents divide-by-zero errors, it lacks comprehensive error messages or user prompts for other invalid operations (e.g., empty inputs, malformed expressions). This may lead to confusion in edge cases.

FUTURE ENHANCEMENTS

To address current limitations and enhance the application's usability, the following features are recommended for future development:

1. Scientific Calculator Functions

Integrate advanced operations such as:

- Square root $(\sqrt{})$
- Power/exponentiation (x^2, x^y)
- Logarithmic functions (log, ln)
- Trigonometric functions (sin, cos, tan)

2. Memory Functionality

Implement memory-related features, including:

• M+: Add to memory

• M-: Subtract from memory

• MR: Memory Recall

• MC: Memory Clear

These additions would improve the calculator's usability for multi-step computations.

3. Calculation History

Introduce a log or history panel to keep track of previous calculations. This would allow users to revisit past results, compare values, or re-use inputs from earlier operations.

4. Keyboard Input Support

Allow input via physical keyboard (e.g., pressing "5" on the keyboard triggers the same action as clicking the "5" button), improving accessibility and speed for power users.

5. Theming and Visual Customization

Enable UI customization options such as:

- Dark mode
- Font and color scheme changes
- Theme switching

This would enhance the visual appeal and accessibility of the application, especially in low-light environments.

6. Improved Input Validation and Error Feedback

Provide detailed error messages or alerts for unsupported inputs, invalid characters, or calculation exceptions, ensuring a more user-friendly experience.

7. Parentheses and Expression Grouping

Add support for parentheses to allow complex nested expressions (e.g., (2+3)*4). This feature would greatly expand the calculator's functional capabilities.

CODE

CalculatorLogic.java

```
package calc;
public class CalculatorLogic {
  private double num1;
  private double <u>num2</u>;
  private char operator;
  public void setNum1(double num1) {
     this.num1 = num1;
  }
  public void setOperator(char operator) {
     this.operator = operator;
  }
  public double calculate(double num2) {
     this.num2 = num2;
     return switch (operator) {
       case '+' -> num1 + num2;
       case '-' -> num1 - num2;
       case '*' -> num1 * num2;
       case '/' -> num2 != 0 ? num1 / num2 : 0; // Prevent divide-by-zero
       default \rightarrow 0;
     };
```

Calculator UI. java

```
package calc;
import javax.swing.*;
import java.awt.event.*;
public class CalculatorUI extends JFrame implements ActionListener {
  private final JLabel expressionLabel;
  private final JTextField resultField;
  private final CalculatorLogic logic;
  private boolean isNewInput = true;
  private String currentExpression = "";
  public CalculatorUI() {
     logic = new CalculatorLogic();
     setLayout(null);
    // Label to show current expression
     expressionLabel = new JLabel("");
     expressionLabel.setBounds(30, 20, 280, 30);
     expressionLabel.setHorizontalAlignment(SwingConstants.RIGHT);
     add(expressionLabel);
    // Text field to show result/output
    resultField = new JTextField();
    resultField.setBounds(30, 55, 280, 30);
    resultField.setEditable(false);
     resultField.setHorizontalAlignment(JTextField.RIGHT);
     add(resultField);
```

```
// Buttons for digits and operators
String[] buttons = {
  "7", "8", "9", "/",
  "4", "5", "6", "*",
  "1", "2", "3", "-",
  "0", ".", "=", "+"
};
int x = 30, y = 100;
for (String text : buttons) {
  JButton btn = new JButton(text);
  btn.setBounds(x, y, 60, 40);
  add(btn);
  btn.addActionListener(this);
  x += 70;
  if (x > 250) {
     x = 30;
     y += 50;
  }
}
// Clear button
JButton clear = new JButton("C");
clear.setBounds(30, y, 280, 40);
add(clear);
clear.addActionListener(e -> {
  expressionLabel.setText("");
  resultField.setText("");
  currentExpression = "";
```

```
isNewInput = true;
  });
  setTitle("Calculator");
  setSize(360, 400);
  setLocationRelativeTo(null);
  setDefaultCloseOperation(EXIT ON CLOSE);
  setVisible(true);
}
@Override
public void actionPerformed(ActionEvent e) {
  String command = e.getActionCommand();
  if ((command.charAt(0) \geq= '0' && command.charAt(0) \leq= '9') || command.equals(".")) {
    if (isNewInput) {
       resultField.setText(command);
       isNewInput = false;
     } else {
       resultField.setText(resultField.getText() + command);
     }
  } else if (command.equals("=")) {
    // Prevent repeated "=" without new input
     if (currentExpression.isEmpty() || isNewInput) {
       return;
     double num2 = Double.parseDouble(resultField.getText());
     double result = logic.calculate(num2);
     currentExpression += resultField.getText();
     expressionLabel.setText(currentExpression);
```

```
resultField.setText(String.valueOf(result));
       currentExpression = "";
       isNewInput = true;
     } else {
       // Operator pressed
       logic.setNum1(Double.parseDouble(resultField.getText()));
       logic.setOperator(command.charAt(0));
       currentExpression = resultField.getText() + " " + command + " ";
       expressionLabel.setText(currentExpression);
       isNewInput = true;
  }
}
Main.java
package calc;
public class Main {
  public static void main(String[] args) {
    new CalculatorUI();
  }
}
```

CONCLUSION

The calculator project built using Java Swing demonstrates a strong grasp of key software development concepts including event-driven programming, graphical user interface (GUI) design, and object-oriented programming (OOP) principles. The application achieves its primary goal of providing a user-friendly and fully functional calculator capable of handling basic arithmetic operations.

By leveraging a structured and modular approach, the development process ensures that the codebase is **clean**, **maintainable**, and **easily extendable**. The clear separation between the business logic (CalculatorLogic.java) and the user interface (CalculatorUI.java) aligns well with best practices in software architecture, enhancing both usability and scalability.

This project serves as a practical example of how Java can be used to create robust, platform-independent desktop applications. It not only meets its intended requirements but also lays a solid groundwork for future feature integration such as scientific functions, memory capabilities, keyboard input, and theming options.

Overall, this calculator application highlights Java's continued relevance in modern software development, particularly in building lightweight and portable GUI tools. The skills and techniques applied in this project are transferable to more complex applications, making it a valuable learning experience for any aspiring developer.