

Sarun

How to create code snippets in Xcode

12 Mar 2020 · Xcode Development Workflow

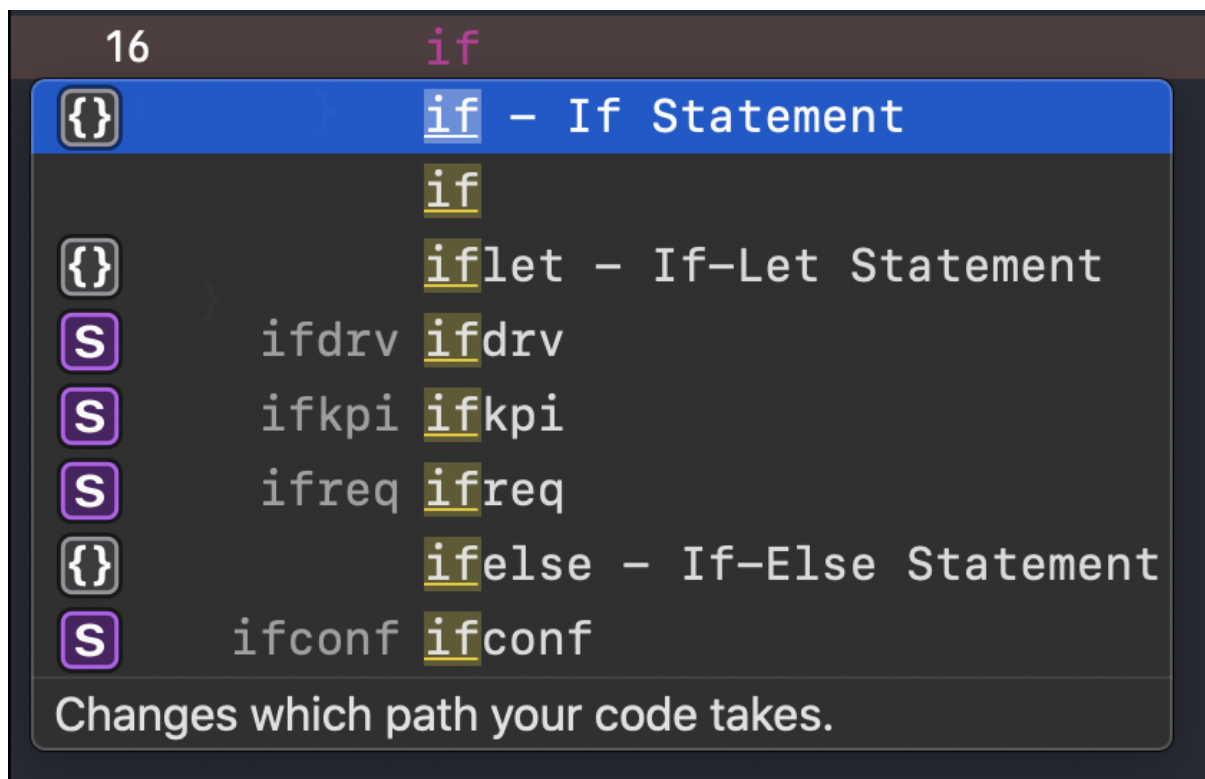
#What is code snippet?

You might never hear it, but believe it or not, you use this feature since the dawn of your iOS development. Try typing `if` in the Xcode and you will see autocomplete box popping up.



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Autocomplete for if

An item with curly braces (`{ }`) is a code snippet. Choosing one of them will produce a boilerplate code like this.

```
if let constant name = optional {  
    statements  
}
```

iflet code snippet

Autocomplete is not the only way to use code snippets. The other way is to use it from **Code Snippets Library**. Let's see where this library is located.

#Code Snippets Library

You can access all the snippets available in two ways.

#From Show Library menu

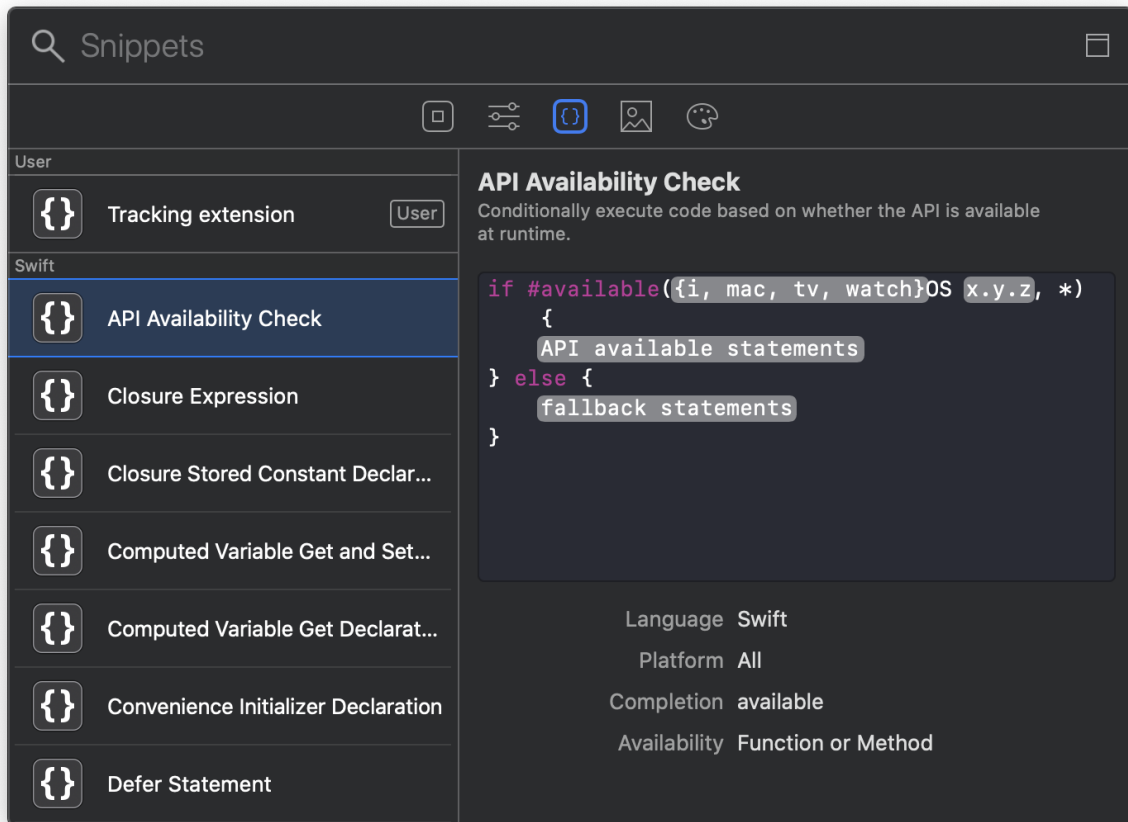
Click on the menu **View menu > Show Library** (`⌘ - command` + `⇧ - SHIFT` + `L`)

#Toolbar icon

You can open **Library** from plus icon (`+`) on the upper right of the Workspace Toolbar.



Both methods will bring you this **Code Snippets Library**.



Code snippets Library

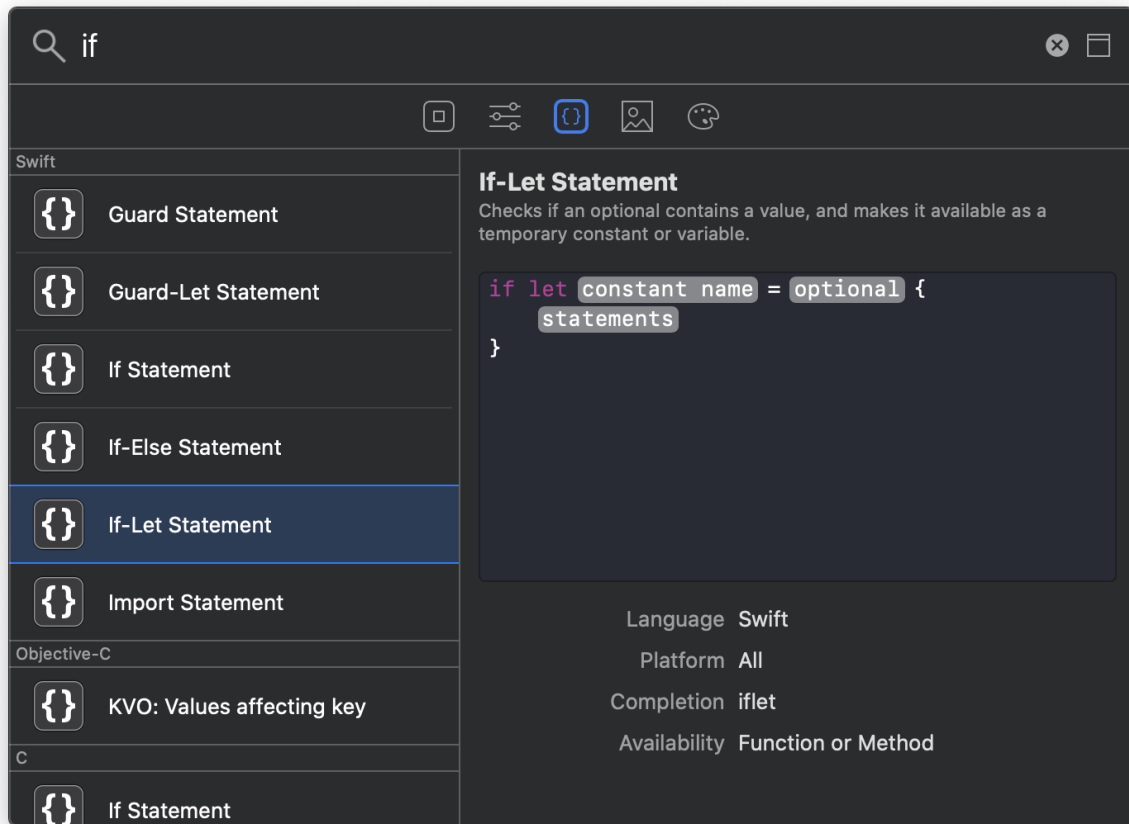
#Using Xcode snippets

As you can see, there are a lot of predefined snippets in the library prepared for us. There are two ways to use them.

#Autocomplete

The first method is the one you already know, using it via autocomplete. Most snippets will have a shortcut starting with the starting letter of that snippets, so you don't have to remember this. Just type the code like you normally do, and if there is a snippet for that, it will show up.

The most common ones you already use are `if` , `iflet` , and `ifelse` . If you are curious about what else the Xcode provided, you can browse through the library, click on any snippet, and see **Completion** field. That is what you need to type to trigger that snippet.



Shortcut for if-let statement is iflet

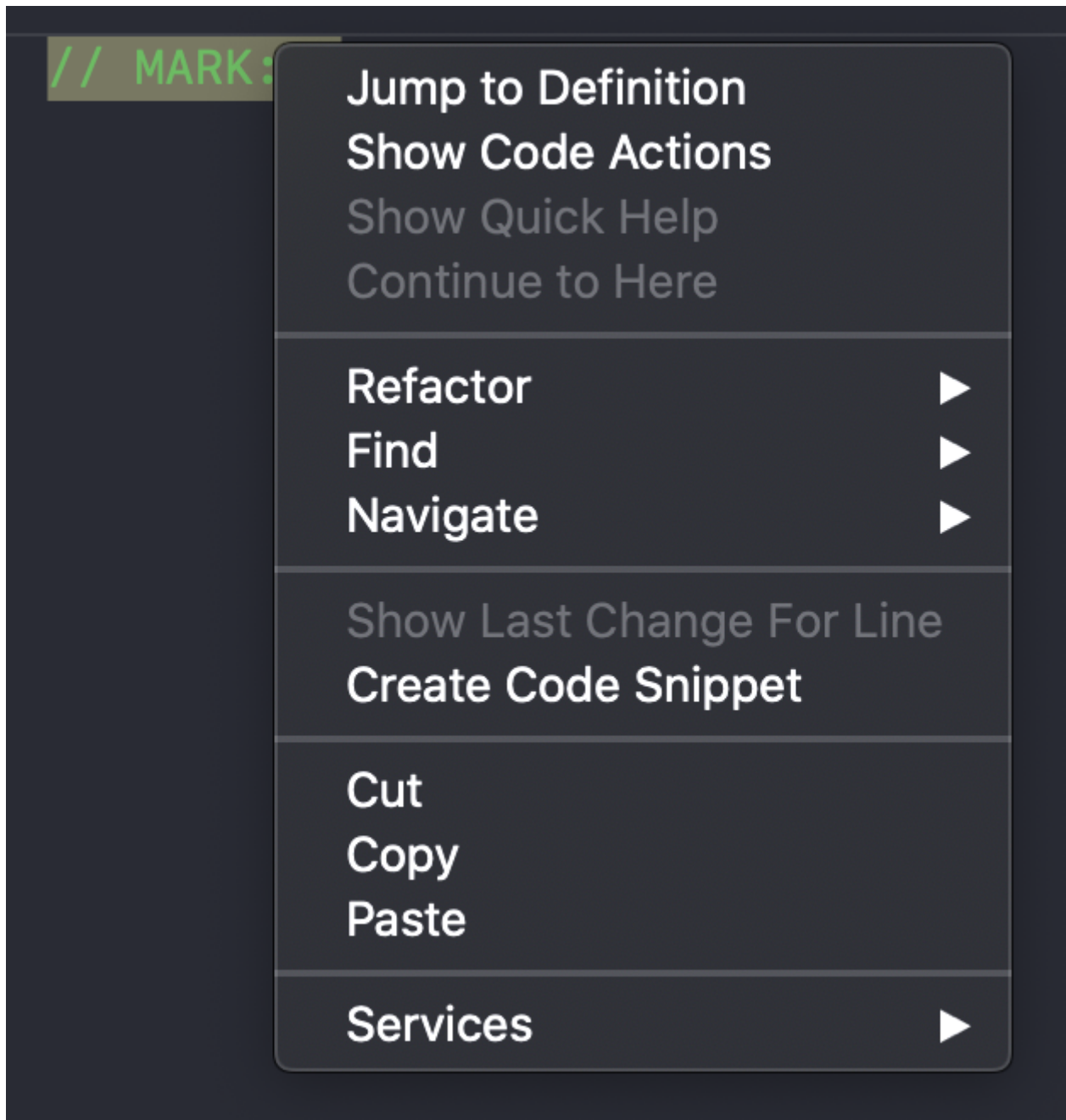
#Drag and Drop

The second way to use snippets is simply drag and drop a snippet from the code snippets library into your editor. This is not quite convenient as it is sound, and I rarely use it.

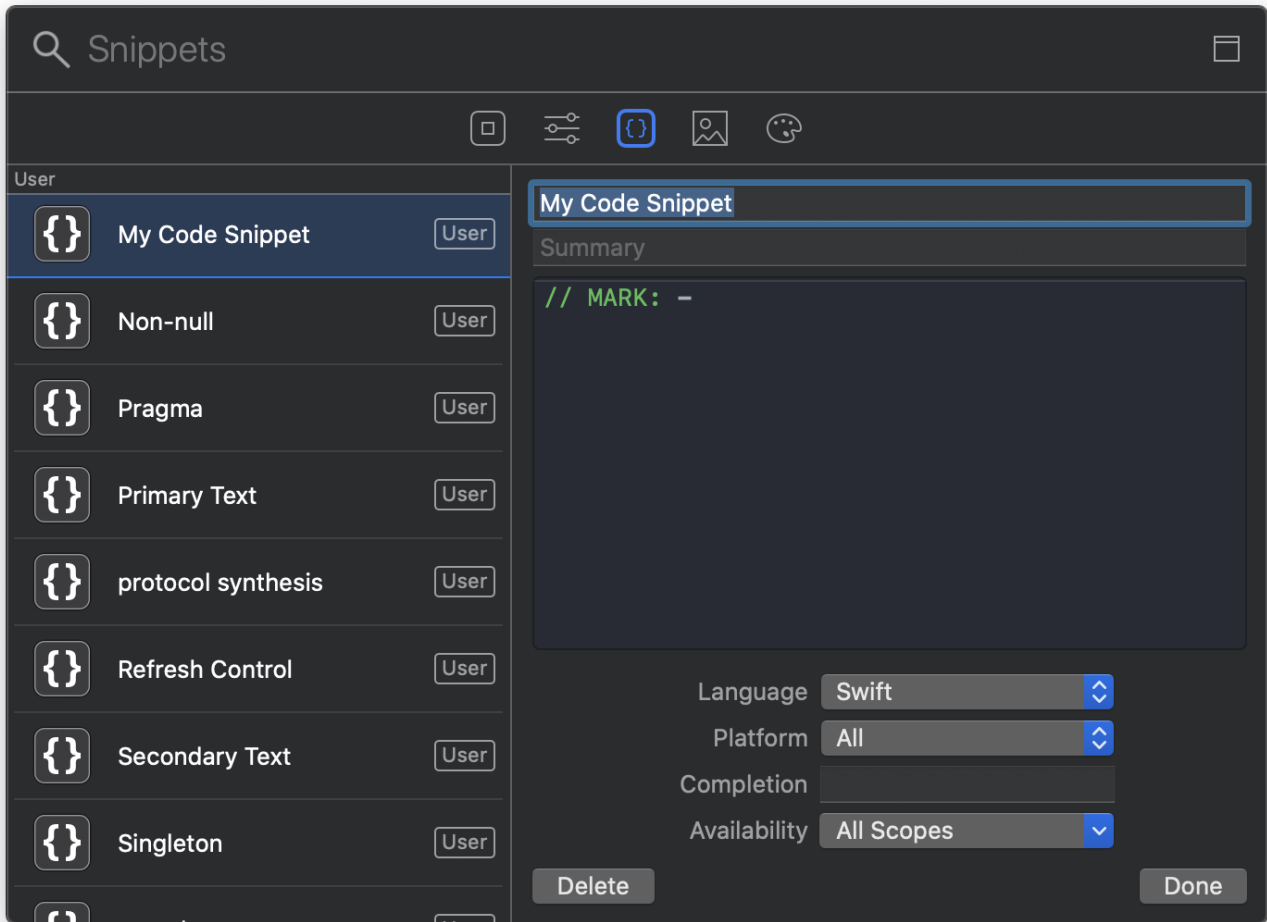
#How to create a snippet

The only way to create a snippet in the current version of Xcode (11.3) is:

1. Highlight the code you want to make a snippet
2. Right-click, then select **Create Code Snippet** or select **Editor Menu > Create Code Snippet**



After that, you will prompt with this window.



Each snippet has the following fields:

- **Title** - The name of the snippet (appears in text completion and in snippet library listing)
- **Summary** - A brief description of what it does (appear at the bottom of text completion and in snippet library listing)
- **Platform** - Platform in which this snippet will be triggered.
 - **iOS**
 - **macOS**
 - **tvOS**
 - **watchOS**
 - **All**
- **Language** - Language in which this snippet will be triggered, e.g., Swift, Objective-C
- **Completion** - The text completion shortcut. This is what use to trigger autocompletion.
- **Availability** - Limits the snippet visibility for text completion to the specified scopes. This field will vary based on your selected **Language** . For

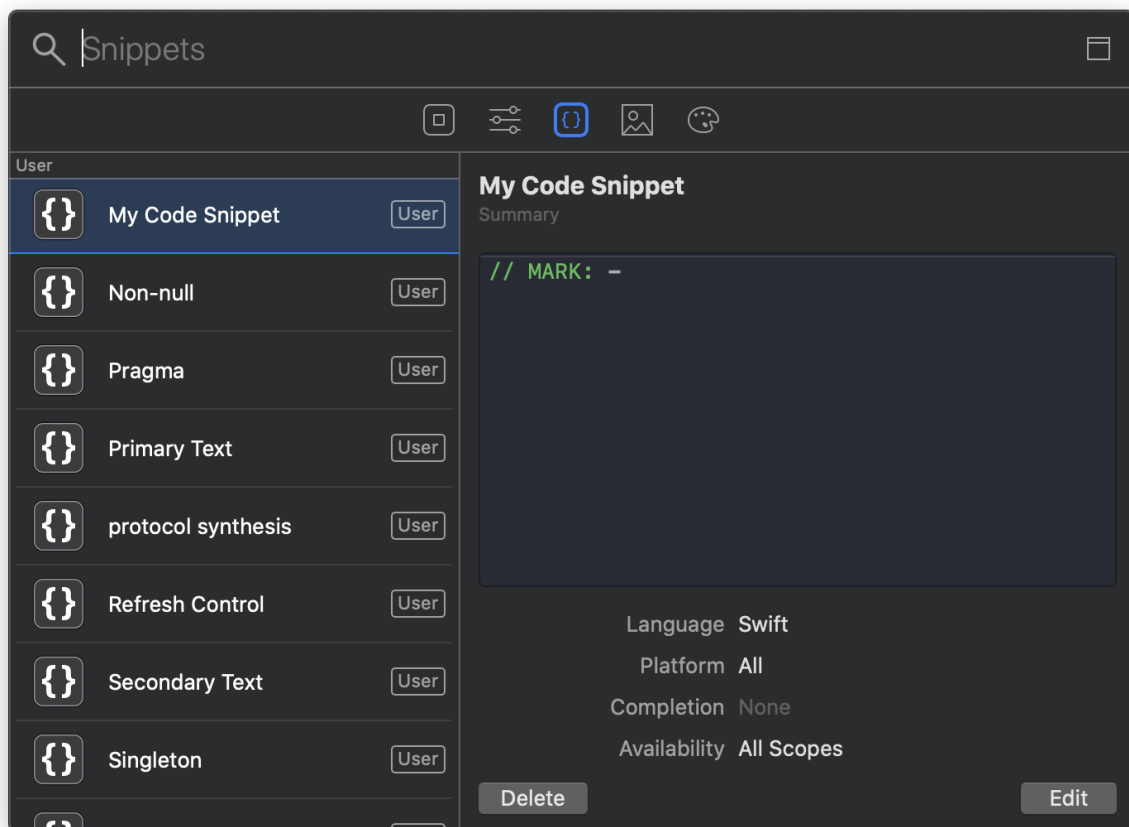
example, singleton should only be generated for Class Implementation, not in a method or function.

#Edit a snippet

To edit a snippet, open **Code Snippets Library** and select a snippet that you want to edit and click **Edit** button.

#Delete a snippet

To delete a snippet, open **Code Snippets Library** and select a snippet that you want to delete and click **Delete** button or `⌘ - Backspace`.



Edit / Delete a snippet by clicking the buttons

#Placeholder Tokens

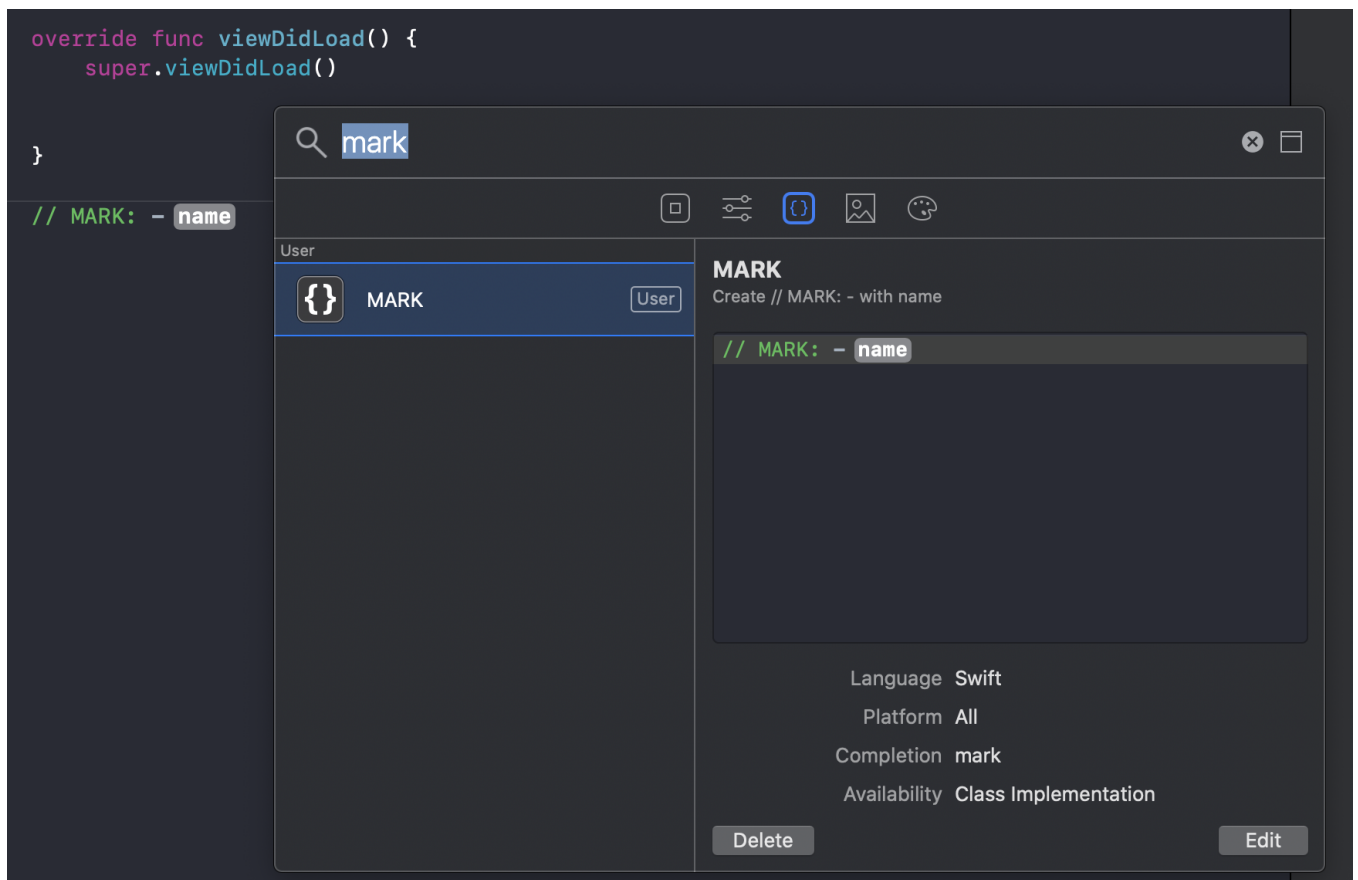
You might notice some of the system snippets have a placeholder token where you can navigate and input a missing token. For example, if let snippet:

```
if let constant name = optional {  
    statements  
}
```

if-let code snippet

You can also have this in your custom snippet by typing `<#` and `#>` with the placeholder name in the middle. You can try this in a code editor or Code Snippets Library.

Here is my code snippet to create `//MARK: - .`



#Related Resources

"// MARK: - What is it?" If this is just a comment for you, this article might benefit you.

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