Flex in a Week, Flex 4
Video 1.13: Adding scrollbars

In this video, you will learn about viewports and how they relate to the implementation of the Spark Scroller component to add scrollbars to your application.

You can think of a viewport as a window through which you can view content that is otherwise concealed.

Any class that implements the IViewport interface can act as a viewport.

The Group container, and its subclasses VGroup and HGroup, can function as viewports.

The left side of this schematic illustrates some employee content and a possible viewport, in blue, for that content.

The left side of this schematic shows the implemented viewport, with a vertical scrollbar.

You may have noticed that the Spark containers are not automatically scrollable.

You must use the Spark Scroller component to display horizontal and/or vertical scrollbars.

The component will determine which scrollbars are necessary based on the size of the viewport and the content being viewed.

You add the Scroller component to your containers by wrapping them in the tag.

Be careful that you put the size constraints on the Scroller itself, not the viewport container.

It will work, if you put the constraints on the viewport container, but its is recommended best practice to leave them on the Scroller.

If you are working with skinnable containers, you must define their scrollbars in their skins.

You will learn how to do that in Day 5.

Here is the application that I showed you in the last video.

I have some header text and then a number of employees listed in a tile layout.

I want make the list display smaller and add a scrollbar so, back in the code, I am adding a Scroller tag block around my Group container.

Note that I am placing it directly outside my Group container, inside the BorderContainer instance.

This series follows a coding methodology that involves indenting nested tag blocks so I am highlighting the entire Group container and pressing the Tab key on my keyboard to indent it.

When I save the file and run the application, you can see that the display looks exactly the same.

The Scroller component is not constrained in any way, so it automatically expands to the width of the viewport, which is the Group container that ha all the employees.

I am returning to the code and adding a height property set to 300 pixels and a width property set to 300 pixels.

When I save the file and run the application again, you can see the smaller viewport area with the appropriate vertical scrollbar.

For your next step, work through the exercise titled “Experimenting with container layouts”.