

Biomedical Wearable Technologies for Healthcare and Wellbeing

Navigation

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Outline

- **Asynchrony**
- Navigator
- Navigate to a new screen and back
- Named routes
- Passing argument to a route
- Returning an argument from a route

- Exercise
- Homework
- Resources

New concept: asynchrony

- Let's learn something (I believe) new.
- Dart (and Flutter) is full of asynchronous functions: they return after doing **something** possibly time consuming without waiting for that **something** to complete
- Common asynchronous operations:
 - Fetching data over the net
 - Writing/Reading data from a database
 - Load and show an image stored within the phone
- This is a problem because this
 - ```
fetchDataFromFacebook(); // <-- asynchronous stuff
print('Done');
```
  - Can possibly print 'Done' before actually finishing fetching data!
- We need to learn how to manage asynchronous code in a synchronized fashion!

# Key terms

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- **synchronous operation:** A synchronous operation blocks other operations from executing until it completes.
- **synchronous function:** A synchronous function only performs synchronous operations.
- **asynchronous operation:** Once initiated, an asynchronous operation allows other operations to execute before it completes.
- **asynchronous function:** An asynchronous function performs at least one asynchronous operation and can also perform synchronous operations.

# Future

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- Dart manages asynchrony using the **Future** class
- A future (lower case “f”) is an instance of the `Future` class. A future represents the result of an asynchronous operation, and can have two states: uncompleted or completed.
  - **Uncompleted:** When you call an asynchronous function, it returns an uncompleted future. That future is waiting for the function’s asynchronous operation to finish or to throw an error.
  - **Completed:**
    - **With a value:** A future of type `Future<T>` completes with a value of type `T`. For example, a future with type `Future<String>` produces a string value. If a future doesn’t produce a usable value, then the future’s type is `Future<void>`.
    - **With an error:** If the asynchronous operation performed by the function fails for any reason, the future completes with an error.

# Future (wrong example)

---

```
void fetchUserOrder() {
```

```
 Future.delayed(const Duration(seconds: 2),
 () => print('Large Latte'));
```

```
} //fetchUserOrder
```

The function is doing some asynchronous stuff.

```
void main() {
```

```
 print('Fetching user order...');
```

```
 fetchUserOrder();
```

```
 print('Done');
```

```
} //main
```

**Note:** main is an asynchronous function now

**Note:** 'Done' will be print before 'Large latte'. How to fix this?

# Async and Await

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- The **async** and **await** keywords provide a declarative way to define asynchronous functions and use their results. Remember these two basic guidelines when using `async` and `await`:
  1. To define an asynchronous function, add **async** before the function body and wrap its return type in a `Future`.
  2. The **await** keyword is used to wait for the result of an asynchronous function before going on and works only inside asynchronous functions.

# Fixing the main function

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➤ Let's then fix the main function:

- First, add the `async` keyword before the function body

```
void main() async {}
```

- Wrap the return type in a `Future`:

```
Future<void> main() async {}
```

➤ Now that you have a correctly defined `async` function, you can use the `await` keyword to wait for a future to complete:

```
await fetchUserOrder();
```



# Fixing the fetchUserOrder function

---

➤ To fix the `fetchUserOrder` function we can proceed in a similar way

- First, add the `async` keyword before the function body

```
void fetchUserOrder() async {}
```

- Wrap the return type in a `Future`:

```
Future<void> fetchUserOrder() async {}
```

- Then, `await` the end of the asynchronous operation:

```
await Future.delayed...
```

# Future (correct example)

---

```
Future<void> fetchUserOrder() async {
 await Future.delayed(const
 Duration(seconds: 2), () =>
 print('Large Latte'));
} // fetchUserOrder
```

```
Future<void> main() async{

 print('Fetching user order...');
 await fetchUserOrder();
 print('Done');

} // main
```

**Note:** Now 'Done' will be  
print AFTER 'Large latte'.

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# Navigator

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- In general, apps are made of multiple screens (called **routes**)
- How to navigate through routes?
- How to pass things to routes and get values back from them?
- `Navigator` is a special class that allows to manage all of this

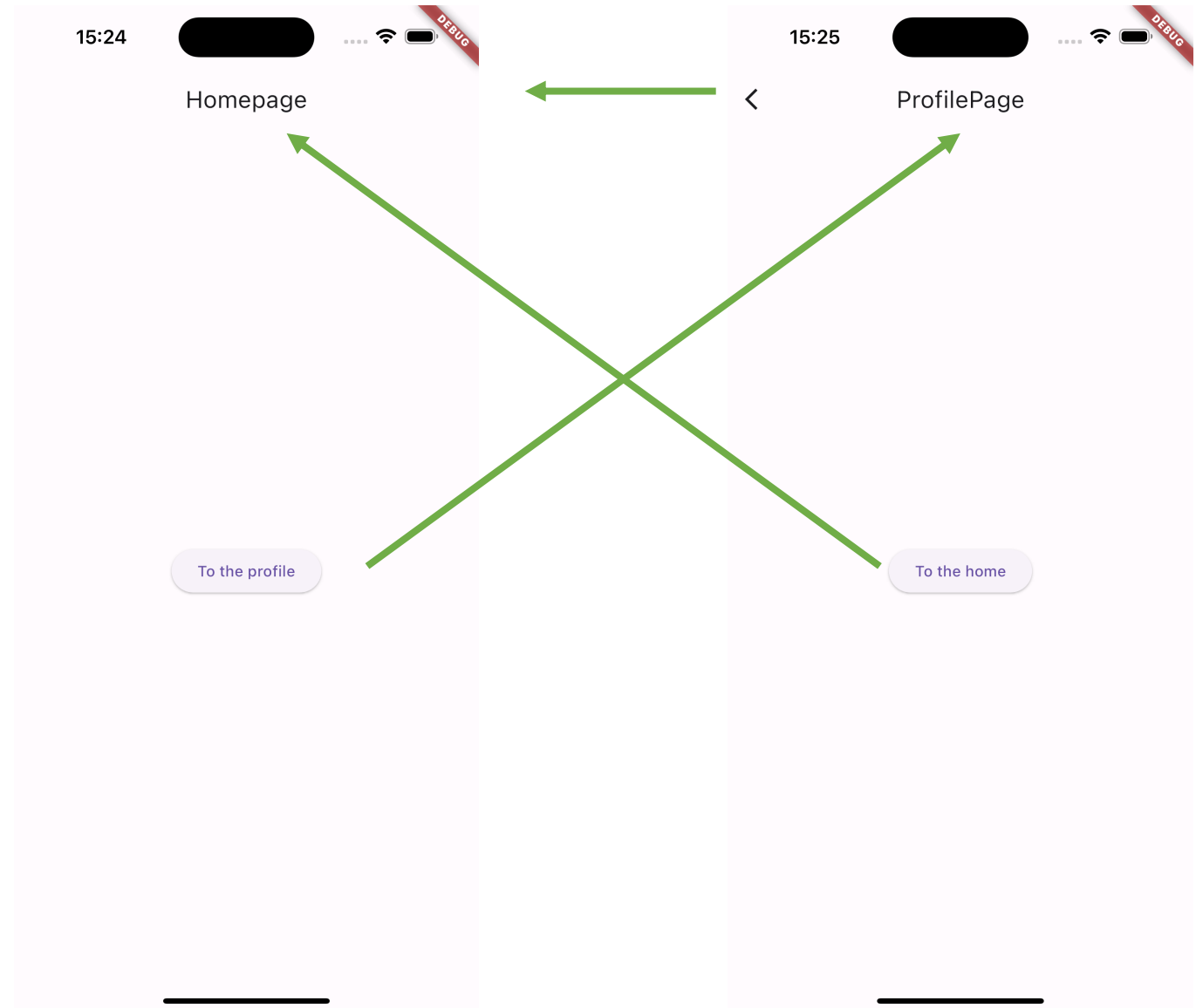
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# Navigator basics

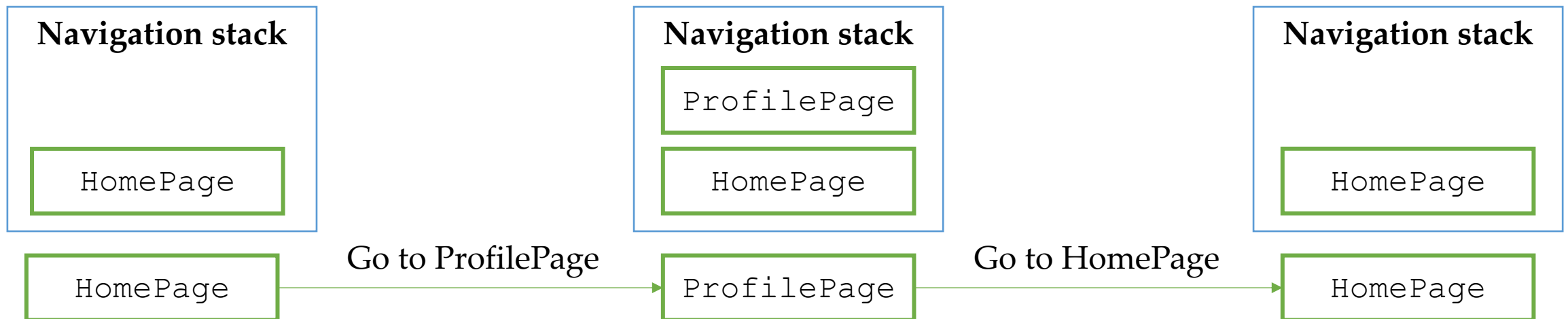
- First let's see how to move between two routes
- We will start from creating a simple two-routes app where the first route will act as homepage and the second will represent the route that will ideally contain the info on the user profile.
- When the user taps the button on the homepage it will be directed to the profile page and viceversa



# Navigator rationale

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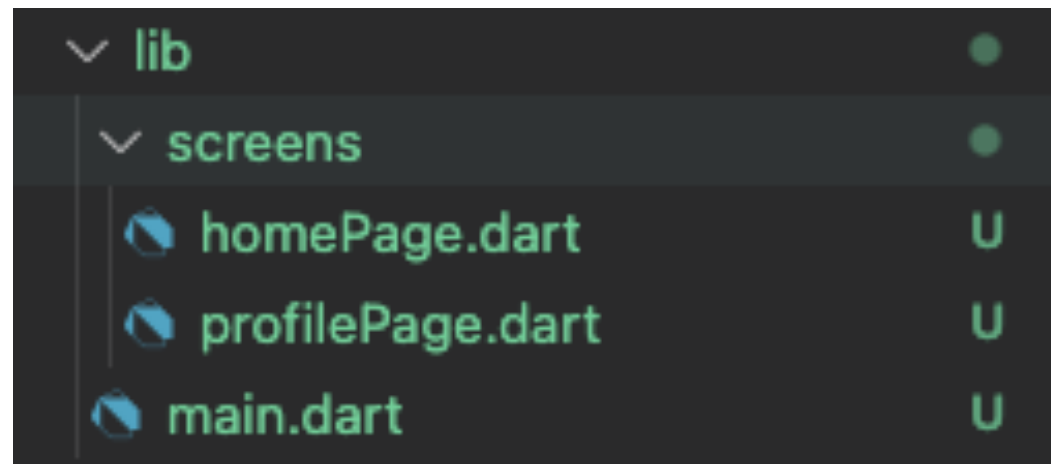
- Navigator is in charge of managing the navigation through the app
- To do so, Navigator uses a **stack-like structure**. The user sees the “top” of the stack
- When you go to a new route, you are “pushing” it into the stack
- When you go back, you are “popping” the route out of the Navigator



# Navigator basics - Preparation

---

- Create a new project called 'there\_and\_back\_again'
- Create the `lib/screens/` folder
- Create two files in the `lib/screens/` folder just created and rename them as 'homePage.dart' and 'profilePage.dart'
- The project `lib` folder should look like this:





# Navigator basics – homePage.dart boilerplate

---

```
import 'package:flutter/material.dart';

class HomePage extends StatelessWidget {
 const HomePage({Key? key}) :
 super(key: key);

 static const routename = 'Homepage';

 @override
 Widget build(BuildContext context) {
 return Scaffold(
 appBar: AppBar(
 title: Text(HomePage.routename),
),
 ...

 ...
 body: Center(
 child: ElevatedButton(
 child: Text('To the profile'),
 onPressed: () {
 //TODO: implement the
 navigation
 },
),
),
);
 } //build
} //HomePage
```

# Navigator basics – profilePage.dart boilerplate

---

```
import 'package:flutter/material.dart';

class ProfilePage extends StatelessWidget {
 const ProfilePage({Key? key}) :
 super(key: key);

 static const routename = 'ProfilePage';

 @override
 Widget build(BuildContext context) {
 return Scaffold(
 appBar: AppBar(
 title: Text(HomePage.routename),
),
 ...
 ...
 body: Center(
 child: ElevatedButton(
 child: Text('To the home'),
 onPressed: () {
 //TODO: implement the
 navigation
 },
),
),
);
 } //build
} //ProfilePage
```

# Navigator basics – main.dart boilerplate

---

```
import 'package:flutter/material.dart';
import
'package:there_and_back_again/screens/homepage.dart';

void main() {
 runApp(const MyApp());
} //main

class MyApp extends StatelessWidget {
 const MyApp({Key? key}) : super(key: key);
 @override
 Widget build(BuildContext context) {
 return MaterialApp(
 home: HomePage(),
);
 } //build
} //MyApp
```

# Navigator basics – push and pop

- To go to the ProfilePage route, simply invoke `Navigator.push()`:

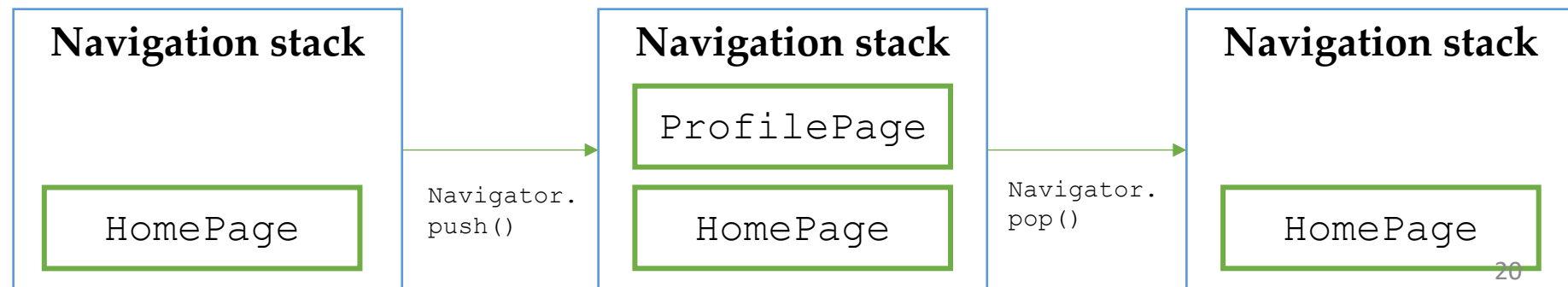
```
...
onPressed: () {
 Navigator.push(context, MaterialPageRoute(builder: (context) => ProfilePage()));
},
...
```

Current BuildContext

The new MaterialPageRoute to be pushed into the stack

- To pop the ProfilePage route, simply invoke `Navigator.pop()`:

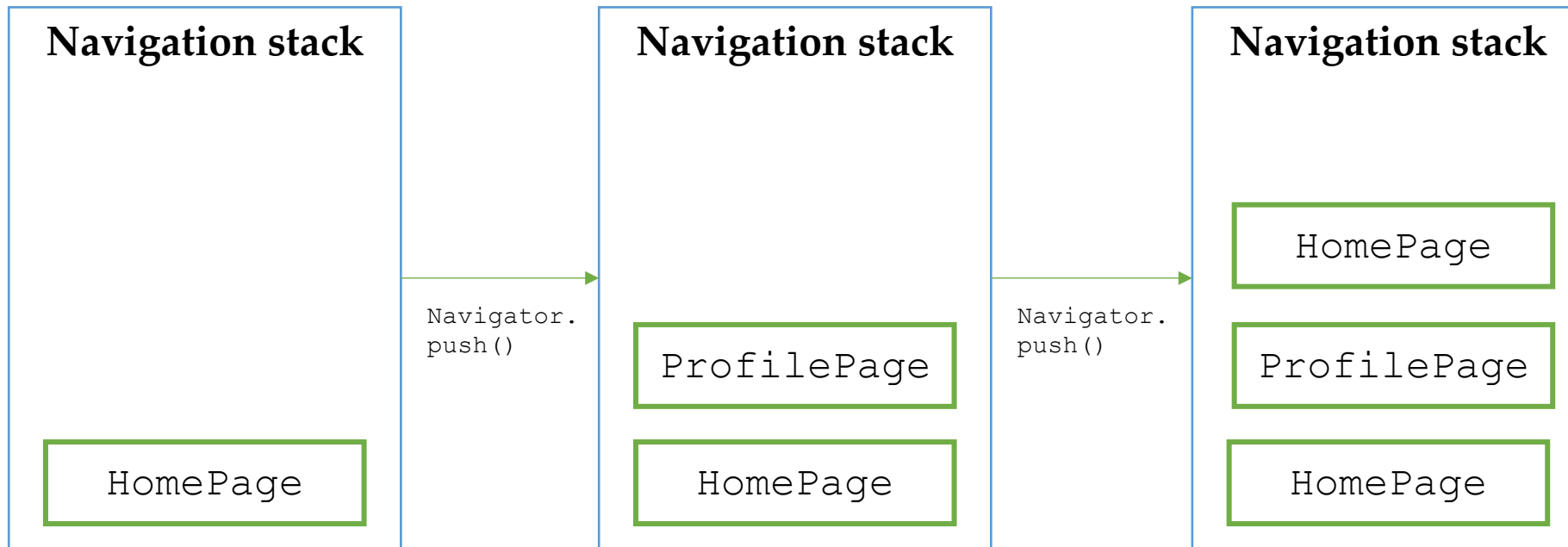
```
...
onPressed: () {
 Navigator.pop();
},
...
```



# Navigator basics – push and pop

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- Note that you could have used `Navigator.push()` to go back to the `HomePage` but this would have been result:



- Very messy situation. The stack will grow indefinitely

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# Another approach: Named routes

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BONUS

- An alternative approach to `Navigator.push()` is `Navigator.pushNamed()`
- This solution consists of **associating names to each route** and use the names for navigation
- Let's see how to convert the previous example using this approach

# Named navigation – Preparation

BONUS

- If you want to implement this approach, you need to specify, from the beginning, the name of each route.
- This is done via the `initialRoute` and `routes` named parameters of `MaterialApp`:

```
MaterialApp(
 initialRoute: '/',
 routes: {
 '/' : (context) => HomePage(),
 '/profile/': (context) => ProfilePage(),
 },
);
```

This specifies the app entry point

This maps names to the corresponding routes within the app



# Named navigation – pushNamed

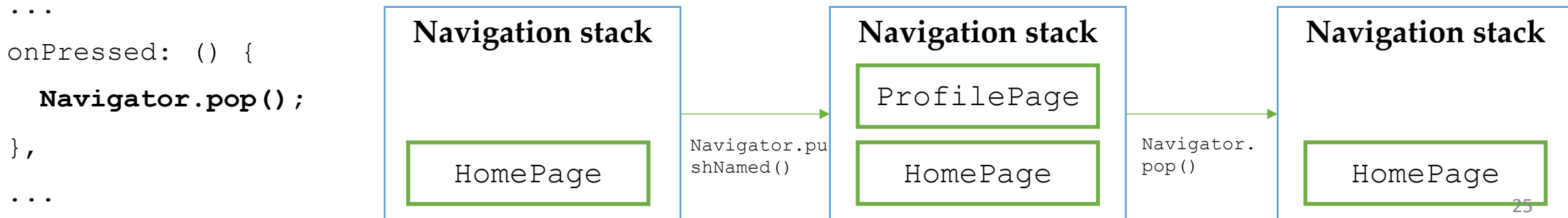
BONUS

- To go to the ProfilePage route, now you can invoke `Navigator.pushNamed()`:

```
...
onPressed: () {
 Navigator.pushNamed(context, '/profile/');
},
...
```

Current BuildContext      The name of the route to be pushed into the stack

- To pop the ProfilePage route, you can still use `Navigator.pop()`:



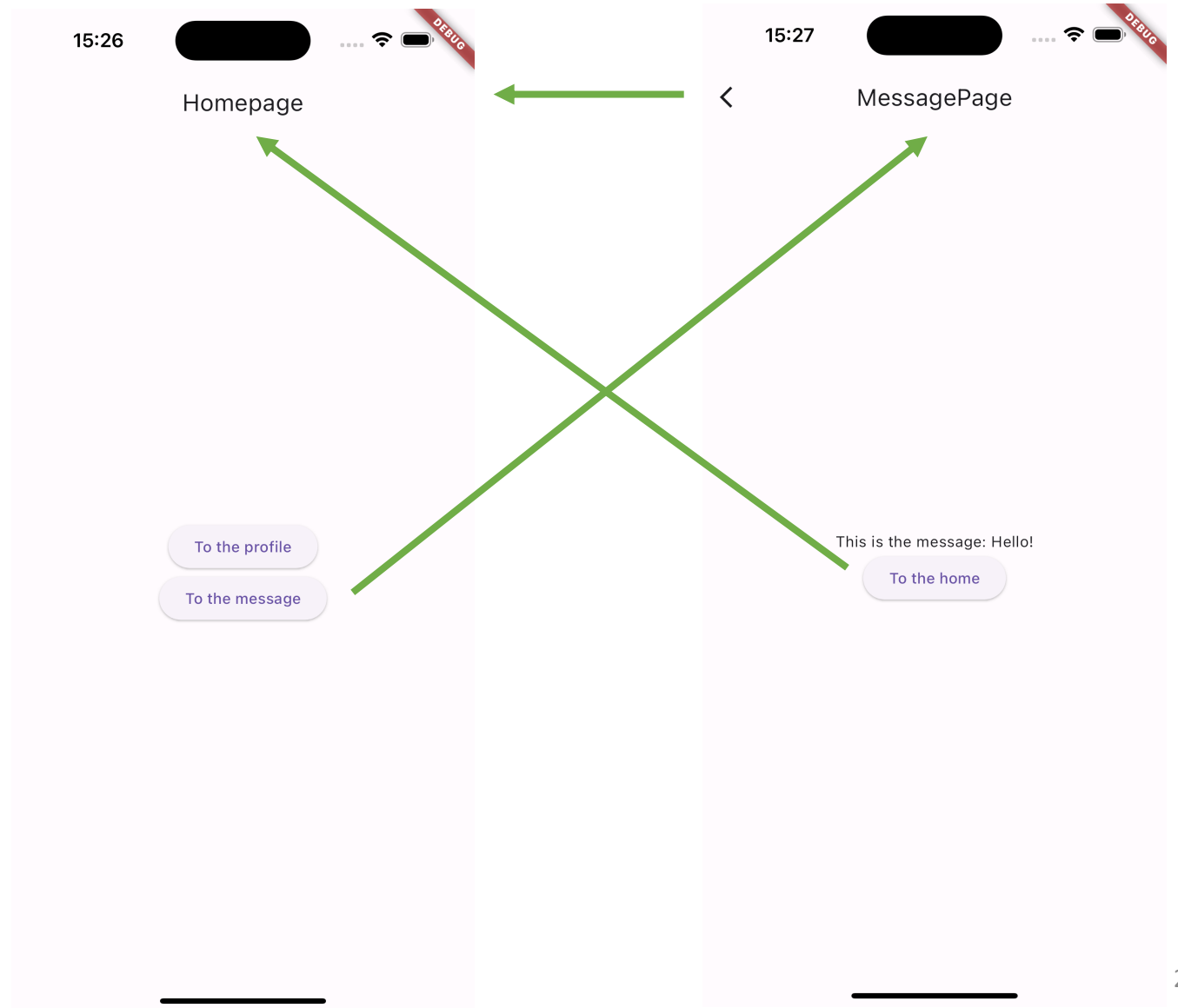
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# Navigator – Passing an argument

- It is (of course) possible to pass arguments to the new route that can be used for several purposes.
- To demonstrate how, let's expand the app with another route `MessagePage` that will get an argument from the `HomePage` and will show it in the center of the screen.



# Passing arguments – messagePage.dart boilerplate

---

```
import 'package:flutter/material.dart';

class MessagePage extends StatelessWidget {
 MessagePage({Key? key}) : super(key:
key);

 static const routename = 'MessagePage';

 @override
 Widget build(BuildContext context) {
 //TODO: get the message from HomePage

 return Scaffold(
 appBar: AppBar(
 title: Text(MessagePage.routename),
),
 ...
);
 }
}
```

```
...
body: Center(
 child: Column(
 mainAxisAlignment:
MainAxisAlignment.center,
 children: [
 Text(''), //TODO: put the message
inside the Text here
 ElevatedButton(
 child: Text('To the home'),
 onPressed: () {
 Navigator.pop(context);
 },
),
],
),
);

} //build
} // MessagePage
```

# Passing arguments

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- To pass an argument to the `MessagePage` route, now you can invoke `Navigator.pushNamed()` as:

```
...
onPressed: () {
 Navigator.push(context, MaterialPageRoute(builder: (context) => MessagePage(message:
'Hello!',)));
},
...
```

- Note: to make this work we need to modify the constructor of `MessagePage`:

```
...
MessagePage({Key? key, required this.message}) : super(key: key);
final String message;
```

- Then, we can finally show the message:

```
...
Text('This is the message: $message'),
...
```

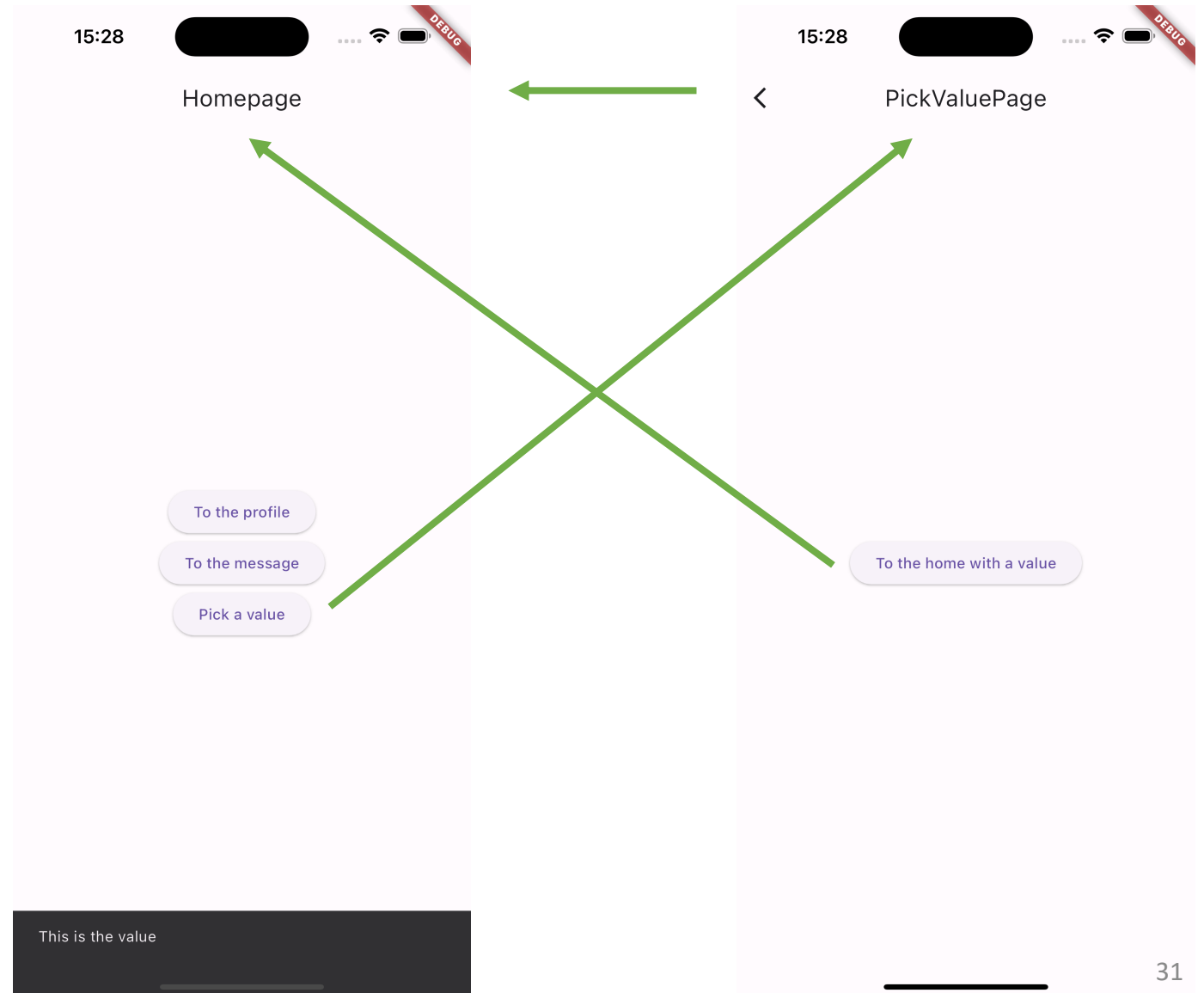
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# Navigator – Returning data

- It is (of course) also possible to return data from a route.
- To demonstrate how, let's expand the app with another route `PickValuePage` that will provide a value to the `HomePage` which will be in charge of showing it via a `ScaffoldMessenger`.



# Returning data – pickValuePage.dart boilerplate

---

```
import 'package:flutter/material.dart';

class PickValuePage extends StatelessWidget {
 PickValuePage({Key? key}) : super(key:
key);

 static const routename = 'PickValuePage';

 @override
 Widget build(BuildContext context) {
 return Scaffold(
 appBar: AppBar(
 title: Text(PickValuePage.routename),
),
 ...
 ...
 body: Center(
 child: ElevatedButton(
 child: Text('To the home'),
 onPressed: () {
 //TODO: implement the
 navigation + return the data
 },
),
),
);
 } //build
} //PickValuePage
```



# Returning arguments

---

- To return an argument to the `HomePage` route, you can invoke `Navigator.pop()` as:

```
...
onPressed: () {
 Navigator.pop(context, 'This is the value');
},
...
```



The value that will return to the `HomePage` once `PickValuePage` is popped out from the stack

- Note that you can return **ANYTHING**, not just a `String`.

# Returning arguments

---

- To get the result, the HomePage must be patient and *await* for it::

Await means async stuff. The onPressed function become asynchronous as well so...

```
...
onPressed: () async {
 final result = await Navigator.push(context, MaterialPageRoute(builder: (context) =>
 PickValuePage()));
 ScaffoldMessenger.of(context)
 ..removeCurrentSnackBar()
 ..showSnackBar(SnackBar(content: Text('$result')));
},
...
```

➤ There are other approaches:

- You can push “replacements”: `Navigator.pushReplacement()` / `Navigator.pushReplacementNamed()`
- There is a new Navigator: Navigator 2.0 -> <https://blog.codemagic.io/flutter-navigator2/>
- ...

➤ The usual rationale: they all have their pros and cons. Choose the approach you prefer!

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# Exercises

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## ➤ Exercise 06.01

- Write an asynchronous function `fetchUserRole()` that after 3 seconds returns the String 'admin'. Then, use that function in the main function to print the provided and properly produce the following output:

```
Fetching user role...
The user is an admin.
```

## ➤ Exercise 06.02

- Use the `fetchUserRole()` function developed in 06.01 to create a new function `isAdminUser()` that checks if the string provided by `fetchUserRole()` is 'admin' and returns the respective boolean. Use the new function in the main to produce the following output:

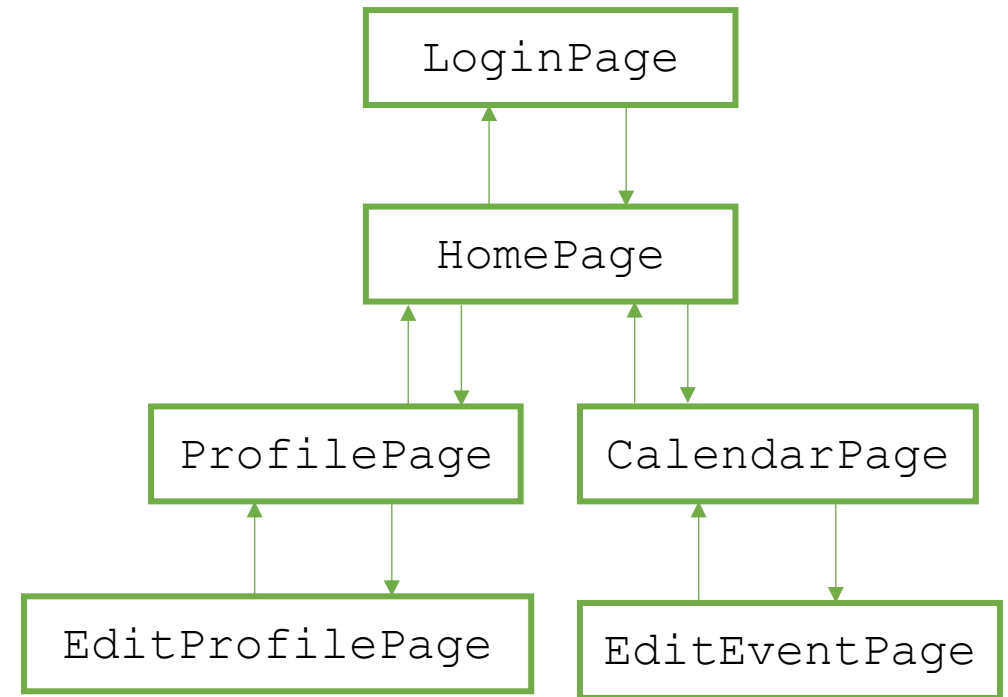
```
Checking if user is an admin...
Ok, access granted! (if the user is an admin)
Access denied! (if the user is not an admin)
```

# Exercise

---

## ➤ Exercise 06.03 (easy)

- Create a new project 'reproduce\_structure'
- Reproduce the app navigation structure on the right.

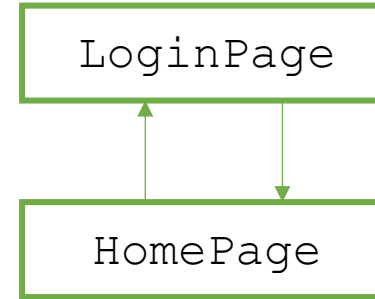


# Exercise

## ➤ Exercise 06.04 (medium)

- Create a new project 'login\_flow'
- Reproduce the app navigation structure on the right.
- The login page consists of a form with two textboxes (one for the username and the other for the password) and a button.
- When the user types "bug@expert.com" in the username textbox and "5TrNgP5Wd" in the password textbox, and taps the button, the user is redirected to the Homepage. If the credentials are wrong, a ScaffoldMessenger is showed for 2 seconds saying "Wrong credentials".

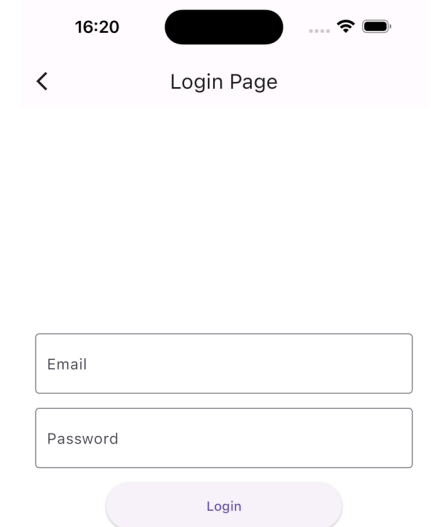
- **Hint #1:** you need to instantiate a TextEditingController as state variable
- **Hint #2:** you need to use a TextField in you UI
- **Hint #3:** then, you can access to the text value using



```
TextEditingController
passwordController =
TextEditingController();
```

```
TextField(
 obscureText: true,
 controller: passwordController,
 decoration: InputDecoration(
 border: OutlineInputBorder(),
 labelText: 'Password',
 hintText: 'Enter password'
),
)
```

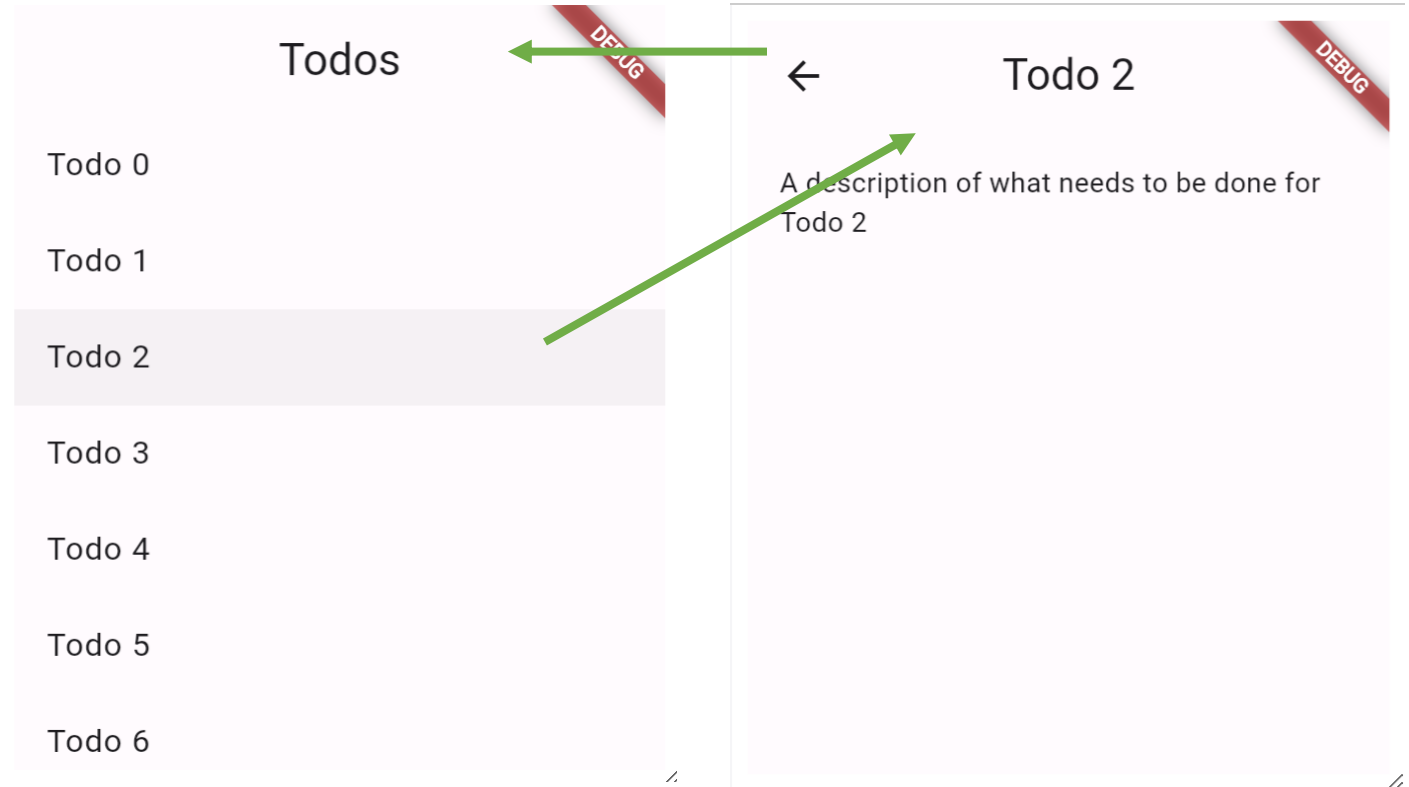
passwordController.text



# Exercise

## ➤ Exercise 06.05 (medium)

- Follow the cookbook <https://docs.flutter.dev/cookbook/navigation/passing-data> by the Flutter team to learn how to pass data to a route directly to its constructor.
- (solution available from the Flutter team in the cookbook)





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# Homework

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- Get familiar with Asynchrony and Navigator

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# Resources

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- Code repository of today's lesson and exercises solution
  - [https://github.com/gcappon/bwthw/tree/master/lab\\_06-navigation](https://github.com/gcappon/bwthw/tree/master/lab_06-navigation)
- Async and await codelabs
  - <https://dart.dev/codelabs/async-await>
- Navigation Recipes
  - <https://docs.flutter.dev/cookbook/navigation>