The JFreeChart Class Library

Version 0.9.15

Installation Guide

Written by David Gilbert

November 28, 2003

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Chapter 1

Introduction

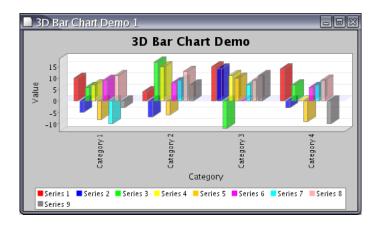
1.1 What is JFreeChart?

1.1.1 Overview

JFreeChart is a free Java chart library that can be used in applications, applets, servlets and JSP. It is distributed with complete source code, subject to the terms of the GNU Lesser General Public Licence (see Appendix A for details).

1.1.2 Features

JFreeChart can generate pie charts, bar charts (horizontal and vertical, regular and stacked, optional 3D-effect), line charts, scatter plots, time series charts (including moving averages, high-low-open-close charts and candlestick plots), Gantt charts, meter charts (dial, compass and thermometer), symbol charts, wind plots, combination charts and more.



Additional features include:

- data is accessible from any implementation of the defined interfaces;
- export to PNG and JPEG;
- export to any format with a Graphics2D implementation including:
 - PDF via iText (http://www.lowagie.com/iText/);
 - SVG via Batik (http://xml.apache.org/batik/);
- tool tips;
- interactive zooming;
- chart mouse events;
- annotations;
- HTML image map generation;
- works in applications, servlets, JSP (thanks to the Cewolf project¹) and applets;
- distributed with complete source code subject to the terms of the GNU Lesser General Public License (LGPL);
- commercial support available.²

JFreeChart is written entirely in Java, and should run on any implementation of the Java 2 platform (JDK 1.2.2 or later).

1.1.3 Home Page

The JFreeChart home page can be found at:

```
http://www.jfree.org/jfreechart/index.html
```

Here you will find all the latest information about JFreeChart, including sample charts, download links, Javadocs, a discussion forum and more.

1.2 This Document

1.2.1 Versions

Two versions of this document are available:

• a free version, the "JFreeChart Installation Guide", is available from the JFreeChart home page, and contains chapters up to and including the instructions for installing JFreeChart (plus a chapter describing the commercial support that is available for JFreeChart).

¹See http://cewolf.sourceforge.net for details.

²See http://www.object-refinery.com/jfreechart/support.html for details.

a premium version, the "JFreeChart Developer Guide", is available only
to those that have purchased commercial support, and includes additional
tutorial chapters and reference documentation for the JFreeChart classes.

1.2.2 Disclaimer

Please note that I have put in considerable effort to ensure that the information in this document is up-to-date and accurate, but I cannot guarantee that it does not contain errors. You must use this document at your own risk or not use it at all.

1.3 Acknowledgements

JFreeChart contains code and ideas from many people. At the risk of missing someone out, I would like to thank the following people for contributing to the project:

Richard Atkinson, David Berry, Anthony Boulestreau, Jeremy Bowman, Nicolas Brodu, David Browning, Søren Caspersen, Chuanhao Chiu, Pascal Collet, Martin Cordova, Paolo Cova, Michael Duffy, Jonathan Gabbai, Serge V. Grachov, Hans-Jurgen Greiner, Joao Guilherme Del Valle, Aiman Han, Jon Iles, Wolfgang Irler, Xun Kang, Bill Kelemen, Norbert Kiesel, Gideon Krause, Arnaud Lelievre, David Li, Tin Luu, Craig MacFarlane, Achilleus Mantzios, Thomas Meier, Jim Moore, Jonathan Nash, Barak Naveh, David M. O'Donnell, Krzysztof Paz, Tomer Peretz, Andrzej Porebski, Viktor Rajewski, Eduardo Ramalho, Michael Rauch, Cameron Riley, Dan Rivett, Thierry Saura, Andreas Schneider, Jean-Luc Schwab, Bryan Scott, Roger Studner, Irv Thomae, Eric Thomas, Rich Unger, Daniel van Enckevort, Laurence Vanhelsuwé, Sylvain Vieujot, Mark Watson, Alex Weber, Matthew Wright, Christian W. Zuckschwerdt, Hari and Sam (oldman).

1.4 Comments and Suggestions

If you have any comments or suggestions regarding this document, please send e-mail to: david.gilbert@object-refinery.com

Chapter 2

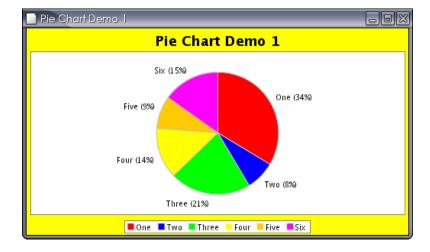
Sample Charts

2.1 Introduction

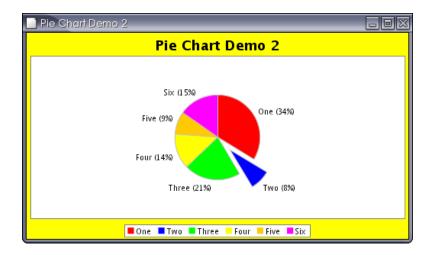
This section shows some sample charts created using JFreeChart. It is intended to give a reasonable overview of the types of charts that JFreeChart can generate. For other examples, please try the demo applications included in the JFreeChart distribution.

2.2 Pie Charts

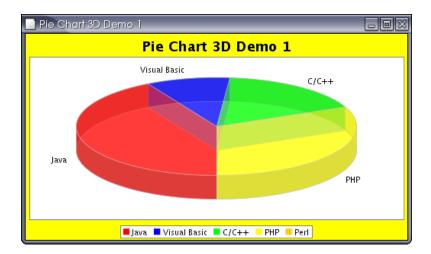
J FreeChart can create $pie\ charts$ using any data that conforms to the <code>PieDataset</code> interface:



Individual pie sections can be "exploded":



You can also display pie charts with a 3D effect:

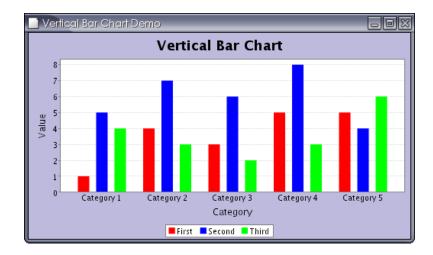


At the current time it is not possible to explode sections of the 3D pie chart.

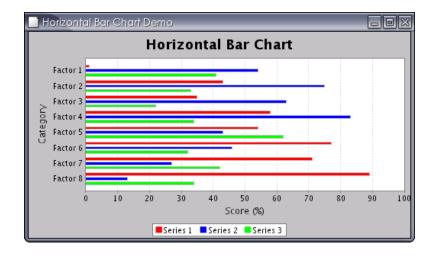
2.3 Bar Charts

A range of bar charts can be created with JFreeChart, using any data that conforms to the CategoryDataset interface.

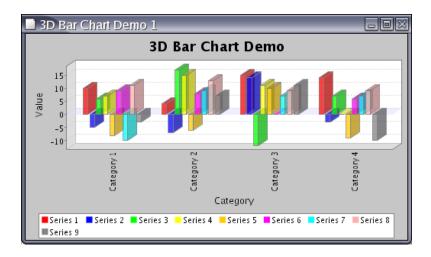
The first example is a vertical bar chart:



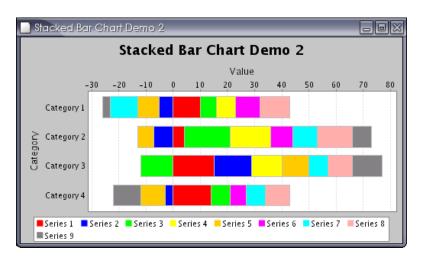
Changing the orientation, but still using a ${\tt CategoryDataset}$, JFreeChart can generate a $horizontal\ bar\ chart$:



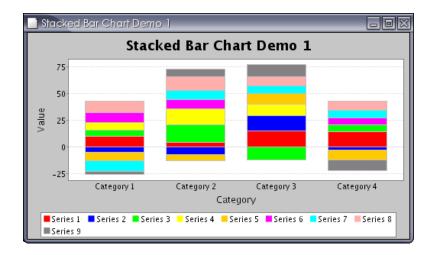
Both the vertical and horizontal bar charts can be displayed with a 3D effect:



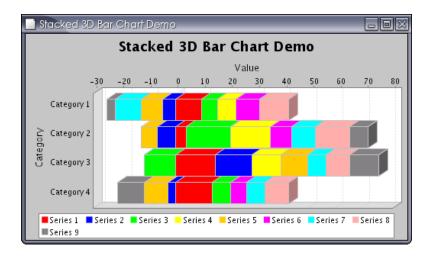
The bars can be stacked in a stacked horizontal bar chart:



...and similarly a stacked vertical bar chart:

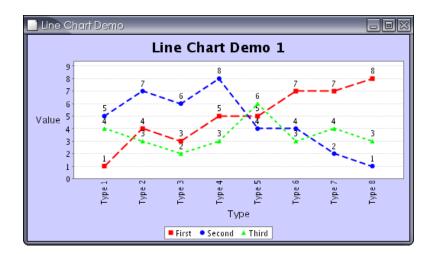


The stacked vertical bar chart can be displayed with a 3D effect:



2.4 Line Chart

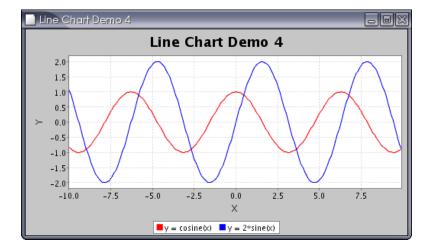
The $line\ chart$ is generated using the same <code>CategoryDataset</code> that is used for the bar charts:



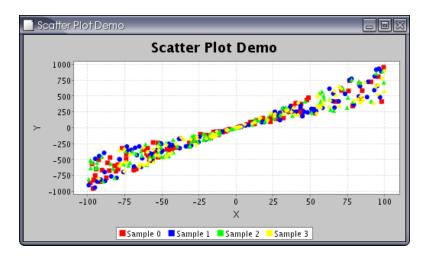
The data is the same, but the *line chart* gives you another presentation option.

2.5 XY Plots

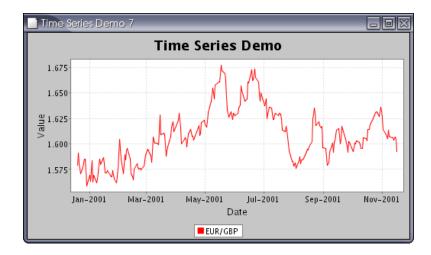
A third type of dataset, the XYDataset, is used to generate further chart types. The standard XY plot has numerical x and y axes. By default, lines are drawn between each data point:



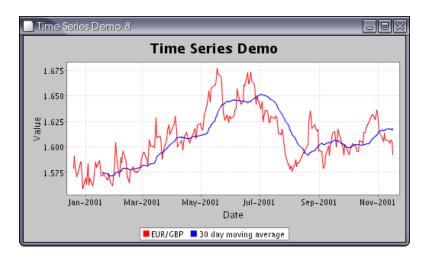
Dots can be drawn at data points, rather than connecting points with lines, for a *scatter plot*:



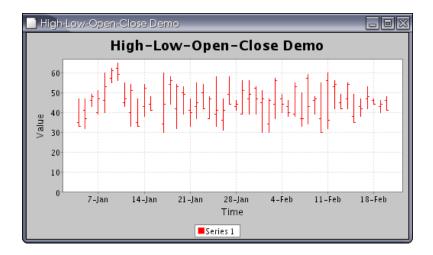
 ${\it JFreeChart \ supports \ } time \ series \ charts:$



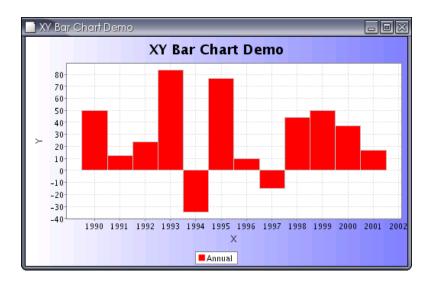
It is straightforward to add a moving average line to a time series chart:



Using a ${\tt HighLowDataset}$ (an extension of ${\tt XYDataset}$) you can display high-low-open-close data:

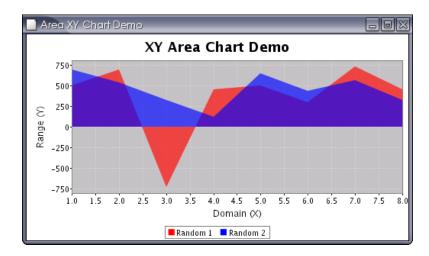


Using an IntervalXYDataset (another extension of XYDataset), JFreeChart can produce bar charts over a numerical domain:



2.6 Area Charts

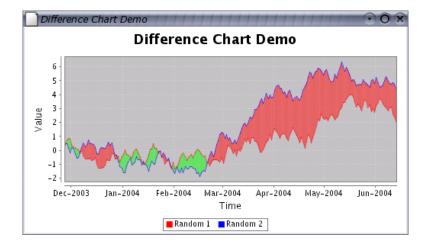
You can generate an $area\ chart$ for data in a Category Dataset or an XYDataset. For example:



JFreeChart also supports the creation of stacked area charts.

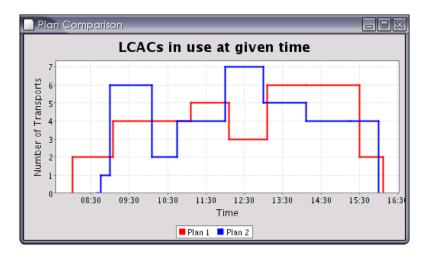
2.7 Difference Chart

A difference chart highlights the difference between two series:



2.8 Step Chart

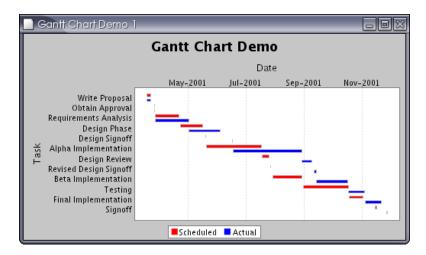
A step chart displays numerical data as a sequence of "steps":



Step charts are generated from data in an XYDataset.

2.9 Gantt Chart

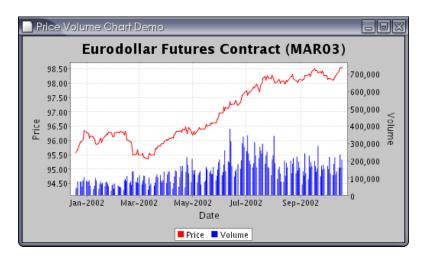
 ${\it Gantt\ charts}$ can be generated using data from an IntervalCategoryDataset:



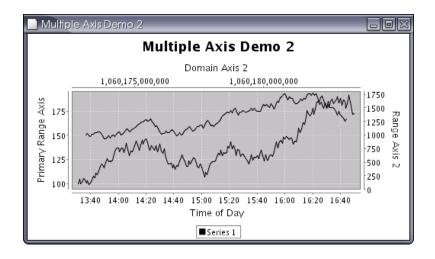
From 0.9.5 onwards, it is possible to display multiple sub-periods within a single task.

2.10 Multiple Axis Charts

You can add multiple domain and range axes to charts:

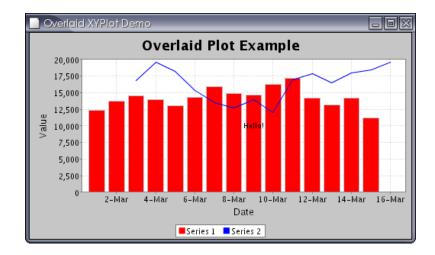


This feature is supported by the CategoryPlot class and the XYPlot class.

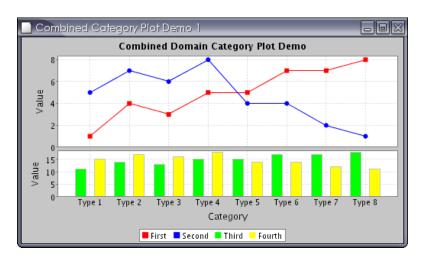


2.11 Combined Charts

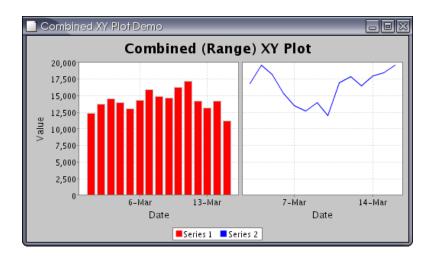
JFreeChart supports combined charts, including overlaid charts:



 $\dots combined\ domain\ charts:$



...and combined range charts:



2.12 Future Development

JFreeChart is *free software*, ¹ so anyone can extend it and add new features to it. Already, more than 50 developers from around the world have contributed code back to the JFreeChart project. It is likely that many more chart types will be developed in the future as developers modify JFreeChart to meet their requirements. Check the JFreeChart home page regularly for announcements and other updates:

http://www.jfree.org/jfreechart/index.html

And if you would like to contribute code to the project, please join in...

 $^{^1\}mathrm{See}\ \mathrm{http://www.fsf.org}$

Chapter 3

Downloading and Installing JFreeChart

3.1 Introduction

This section contains instructions for downloading, unpacking, and (optionally) recompiling JFreeChart. Also included are instructions for running the JFreeChart demonstration application, and generating the Javadoc HTML files from the JFreeChart source code.

3.2 Download

You can download the latest version of JFreeChart from:

http://www.jfree.org/jfreechart/index.html

There are two versions of the JFreeChart download:

File:	Description:	
jfreechart-0.9.15.tar.gz	JFreeChart for Linux/Unix.	
jfreechart-0.9.15.zip	JFreeChart for Windows.	

The two files contain the same source code. The main difference is that all the text files in the zip download have been recoded to have both carriage return and line-feed characters at the end of each line.

JFreeChart uses the JCommon class library (currently version 0.9.0). The JCommon runtime jar file is included in the JFreeChart download, but if you require the source code (recommended) then you should also download JCommon from:

http://www.jfree.org/jcommon/index.html

There is a separate PDF document for JCommon, which includes full instructions for downloading and unpacking the files.

3.3 Unpacking the Files

After downloading JFreeChart, you need to unpack the files. You should move the download file to a convenient directory—when you unpack JFreeChart, a new subdirectory (jfreechart-0.9.15) will be created in the same location as the download file.

3.3.1 Unpacking on Linux/Unix

To extract the files from the download on Linux/Unix, enter the following command:

```
tar xvzf jfreechart-0.9.15.tar.gz
```

This will extract all the source, run-time and documentation files for JFreeChart into a new directory called jfreechart-0.9.15.

3.3.2 Unpacking on Windows

To extract the files from the download on Windows, enter the following command:

```
jar -xvf jfreechart-0.9.15.zip
```

This will extract all the source, run-time and documentation files for JFreeChart into a new directory called jfreechart-0.9.15.

3.3.3 The Files

The top-level directory (jfreechart-0.9.15) contains the files and directories listed in the following table:

File/Directory:	Description:
ant	A directory containing an Ant build.xml script.
checkstyle	A directory containing a Checkstyle property file. This defines the coding conventions used in the JFreeChart source code.
jfreechart-0.9.15.jar	The JFreeChart runtime jar file.
jfreechart-0.9.15-demo.jar	A jar file containing demo applications.
junit	A directory containing JUnit testing code.
lib	A directory containing libraries used by JFreeChart.
licence-LGPL.txt	The GNU LGPL.
README	Important information - read this first!
src	A directory containing the source code for JFreeChart.

You should spend some time familiarising yourself with the files included in the download. In particular, you should always read the README file.

3.4 Running the Demonstration Applications

A range of demonstration applications are included with JFreeChart, to give you some idea of what the class library can do. It is not necessary to recompile the library to run the demonstration applications. All the classes are precompiled in the jar files.

To run the main demo (JFreeChartDemo), type the following command:

```
java -jar jfreechart-0.9.15-demo.jar
```

Alternatively, you can specify the classpath manually:

```
java -classpath lib/jcommon-0.9.0.jar:jfreechart-0.9.15.jar:
jfreechart-0.9.15-demo.jar org.jfree.chart.demo.JFreeChartDemo
```

Windows users should use a semi-colon rather than a colon to separate items on the classpath.

3.5 Compiling the Source

To recompile the JFreeChart classes, you can use the Ant build.xml file included in the distribution. Change to the ant directory and type:

```
ant compile
```

This will recompile all the necessary source files and recreate the JFreeChart run-time jar file.

To run the script requires that you have Ant 1.5.1 (or later) installed on your system, to find out more about Ant visit:

```
http://ant.apache.org/
```

3.6 Generating the Javadoc Documentation

The JFreeChart source code contains extensive Javadoc comments. You can use the <code>javadoc</code> tool to generate HTML documentation files directly from the source code—there is a link to the Javadoc HTML pages on the JFreeChart web page.

To generate the documentation, use the javadoc target in the Ant build.xml script:

```
ant javadoc
```

This will create a javadoc directory containing all the Javadoc HTML files, inside the main jfreechart-0.9.15 directory.

Chapter 4

Commercial Support

4.1 Introduction

Commercial support for JFreeChart is now being offered by Object Refinery Limited—this section provides an overview of the service.

4.2 The Support Package

4.2.1 Overview

Support contracts cover a one year period, and provide access to:

- the JFreeChart Priority Support Forum;
- ullet the JFreeChart Developer Guide;
- extra demos not included in the standard JFreeChart distribution;

This support is provided by Object Refinery Limited, a private company based in the United Kingdom, owned and managed by David Gilbert (the primary author and maintainer of JFreeChart).

4.2.2 The Priority Support Forum

The *Priority Support Forum* is a password protected web-based forum where you can post questions about JFreeChart and have them answered quickly by JFreeChart experts. This forum is monitored from 9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays), United Kingdom local time. It is our aim to respond to all queries within 24 hours of posting—in many cases, responses will be much faster than that.

4.2.3 The Developer Guide

The JFreeChart Developer Guide is a document written by David Gilbert, the primary author and maintainer of JFreeChart. It is designed as an introduction to JFreeChart, with tutorials on the various aspects of using JFreeChart, and also a reference guide. The document is constantly being revised and updated—the current version is around 310 pages long. The document is made available via HTTP download in Acrobat PDF format (generated in A4 and US letter paper sizes).

4.2.4 Extra Demos

Extra demos are available for download with the JFreeChart Developer Guide. These include:

- a servlet demo, with charts embedded in an HTML page;
- several JDBC demos, where charts are generated using data from a relational database;
- demos showing how to capture chart mouse events;

The servlet and JDBC demos are described in the JFreeChart Developer Guide, including all the steps required for configuration.¹

4.3 Need Convincing?

JFreeChart is *free software*—you are free to use it, modify it and even redistribute it² and you are not required to pay any fee. You will, however, incur some "soft dollar" expenses as you and your development team learn how to use JFreeChart effectively. These expenses are difficult to quantify, but can mount quickly.

Our business model is built around the premise that we can dramatically reduce your "soft dollar" expenses by making it easier for you and your developers to learn how to use JFreeChart. Support is not an afterthought for us, as it is for many "traditional" software companies—support is our business.

We are confident that our support package offers excellent value for money. But you can be the judge—if, for any reason, you are not happy with the service we provide, we will refund your money.

4.4 How To Purchase

You can find out more about the JFreeChart support package, including how to purchase, at the following web page:

¹Using Tomcat for the servlet demo and PostgreSQL for the JDBC demos.

²Refer the the GNU LGPL for terms and conditions.

http://www.object-refinery.com/jfreechart/support.html

Thanks for supporting the JFreeChart project.

Appendix A

The GNU Lesser General Public License

A.1 Introduction

JFreeChart is licensed under the terms of the GNU Lesser General Public License (LGPL). The full text of this license is reproduced in this appendix. You should read and understand this license before using JFreeChart in your own projects.

If you are not familiar with the idea of *free software*, you can find out more at the Free Software Foundation's web site:

http://www.fsf.org

Please send e-mail to david.gilbert@object-refinery.com if you have any questions about the licensing of JFreeChart (but please read section A.3 first).

A.2 The License

The following license has been used for the distribution of the JFreeChart class library:

GNU LESSER GENERAL PUBLIC LICENSE

Version 2.1, February 1999

Copyright (C) 1991, 1999 Free Software Foundation, Inc. 59 Temple Place, Suite 330, Boston, MA 02111-1307 USA Everyone is permitted to copy and distribute verbatim copies of this license document, but changing it is not allowed.

[This is the first released version of the Lesser GPL. It also counts as the successor of the GNU Library Public License, version 2, hence the version number 2.1.]

Preamble

The licenses for most software are designed to take away your freedom to share and change it. By contrast, the GNU General Public Licenses are intended to guarantee your freedom to share and change free software—to make sure the software is free for all its users.

This license, the Lesser General Public License, applies to some specially designated software packages—typically libraries—of the Free Software Foundation and other authors who decide to use it. You can use it too, but we suggest you first think carefully about whether this license or the ordinary General Public License is the better strategy to use in any particular case, based on the explanations below.

When we speak of free software, we are referring to freedom of use, not price. Our General Public Licenses are designed to make sure that you have the freedom to distribute copies of free software (and charge for this service if you wish); that you receive source code or can get it if you want it; that you can change the software and use pieces of it in new free programs; and that you are informed that you can do these things.

To protect your rights, we need to make restrictions that forbid distributors to deny you these rights or to ask you to surrender these rights. These restrictions translate to certain responsibilities for you if you distribute copies of the library or if you modify it.

For example, if you distribute copies of the library, whether gratis or for a fee, you must give the recipients all the rights that we gave you. You must make sure that they, too, receive or can get the source code. If you link other code with the library, you must provide complete object files to the recipients, so that they can relink them with the library after making changes to the library and recompiling it. And you must show them these terms so they know their rights.

We protect your rights with a two-step method: (1) we copyright the library, and (2) we offer you this license, which gives you legal permission to copy, distribute and/or modify the library.

To protect each distributor, we want to make it very clear that there is no warranty for the free library. Also, if the library is modified by someone else and passed on, the recipients should know that what they have is not the original version, so that the original author's reputation will not be affected by problems that might be introduced by others.

Finally, software patents pose a constant threat to the existence of any free program. We wish to make sure that a company cannot effectively restrict the users of a free program by obtaining a restrictive license from a patent holder. Therefore, we insist that any patent license obtained for a version of the library must be consistent with the full freedom of use specified in this license.

Most GNU software, including some libraries, is covered by the ordinary GNU General Public License. This license, the GNU Lesser General Public License, applies to certain designated libraries, and is quite different from the ordinary General Public License. We use this license for certain libraries in order to permit linking those libraries into non-free programs.

When a program is linked with a library, whether statically or using a shared library, the combination of the two is legally speaking a combined work, a derivative of the original library. The ordinary General Public License therefore permits such linking only if the entire combination fits its criteria of freedom. The Lesser General Public License permits more lax criteria for linking other code with the library.

We call this license the "Lesser" General Public License because it does Less to protect the user's freedom than the ordinary General Public License. It also provides other free software developers Less of an advantage over competing non-free programs. These disadvantages are the reason we use the ordinary General Public License for many libraries. However, the Lesser license provides advantages in certain special circumstances.

For example, on rare occasions, there may be a special need to encourage the widest possible use of a certain library, so that it becomes a de-facto standard. To achieve this, non-free programs must be allowed to use the library. A more frequent case is that a free library does the same job as widely used non-free libraries. In this case, there is little to gain by limiting the free library to free software only, so we use the Lesser General Public License.

In other cases, permission to use a particular library in non-free programs enables a greater number of people to use a large body of free software. For example, permission to use the GNU C Library in non-free programs enables many more people to use the whole GNU operating

system, as well as its variant, the GNU/Linux operating system.

Although the Lesser General Public License is Less protective of the users' freedom, it does ensure that the user of a program that is linked with the Library has the freedom and the wherewithal to run that program using a modified version of the Library.

The precise terms and conditions for copying, distribution and modification follow. Pay close attention to the difference between a "work based on the library" and a "work that uses the library". The former contains code derived from the library, whereas the latter must be combined with the library in order to run.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR COPYING, DISTRIBUTION AND MODIFICATION

0. This License Agreement applies to any software library or other program which contains a notice placed by the copyright holder or other authorized party saying it may be distributed under the terms of this Lesser General Public License (also called "this License"). Each licensee is addressed as "you".

A "library" means a collection of software functions and/or data prepared so as to be conveniently linked with application programs (which use some of those functions and data) to form executables.

The "Library", below, refers to any such software library or work which has been distributed under these terms. A "work based on the Library" means either the Library or any derivative work under copyright law: that is to say, a work containing the Library or a portion of it, either verbatim or with modifications and/or translated straightforwardly into another language. (Hereinafter, translation is included without limitation in the term "modification".)

"Source code" for a work means the preferred form of the work for making modifications to it. For a library, complete source code means all the source code for all modules it contains, plus any associated interface definition files, plus the scripts used to control compilation and installation of the library.

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(For example, a function in a library to compute square roots has a purpose that is entirely well-defined independent of the application. Therefore, Subsection 2d requires that any application-supplied function or table used by this function must be optional: if the application does not supply it, the square root function must still compute square roots.)

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This option is useful when you wish to copy part of the code of the Library into a program that is not a library.

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However, linking a "work that uses the Library" with the Library creates an executable that is a derivative of the Library (because it contains portions of the Library), rather than a "work that uses the library". The executable is therefore covered by this License. Section 6 states terms for distribution of such executables.

When a "work that uses the Library" uses material from a header file that is part of the Library, the object code for the work may be a derivative work of the Library even though the source code is not. Whether this is true is especially significant if the work can be linked without the Library, or if the work is itself a library. The threshold for this to be true is not precisely defined by law.

If such an object file uses only numerical parameters, data structure layouts and accessors, and small macros and small inline functions (ten lines or less in length), then the use of the object file is unrestricted, regardless of whether it is legally a derivative work. (Executables

containing this object code plus portions of the Library will still fall under Section 6.)

Otherwise, if the work is a derivative of the Library, you may distribute the object code for the work under the terms of Section 6. Any executables containing that work also fall under Section 6, whether or not they are linked directly with the Library itself.

6. As an exception to the Sections above, you may also combine or link a "work that uses the Library" with the Library to produce a work containing portions of the Library, and distribute that work under terms of your choice, provided that the terms permit modification of the work for the customer's own use and reverse engineering for debugging such modifications.

You must give prominent notice with each copy of the work that the Library is used in it and that the Library and its use are covered by this License. You must supply a copy of this License. If the work during execution displays copyright notices, you must include the copyright notice for the Library among them, as well as a reference directing the user to the copy of this License. Also, you must do one of these things:

- * a) Accompany the work with the complete corresponding machine-readable source code for the Library including whatever changes were used in the work (which must be distributed under Sections 1 and 2 above); and, if the work is an executable linked with the Library, with the complete machine-readable "work that uses the Library", as object code and/or source code, so that the user can modify the Library and then relink to produce a modified executable containing the modified Library. (It is understood that the user who changes the contents of definitions files in the Library will not necessarily be able to recompile the application to use the modified definitions.)
- * b) Use a suitable shared library mechanism for linking with the Library. A suitable mechanism is one that (1) uses at run time a copy of the library already present on the user's computer system, rather than copying library functions into the executable, and (2) will operate properly with a modified version of the library, if the user installs one, as long as the modified version is interface-compatible with the version that the work was made with.
- * c) Accompany the work with a written offer, valid for at least three years, to give the same user the materials specified in Subsection 6a, above, for a charge no more than the cost of performing this distribution.
- * d) If distribution of the work is made by offering access to copy from a designated place, offer equivalent access to copy the above specified materials from the same place.
- * e) Verify that the user has already received a copy of these materials or that you have already sent this user a copy.

For an executable, the required form of the "work that uses the Library" must include any data and utility programs needed for reproducing the executable from it. However, as a special exception, the materials to be distributed need not include anything that is normally distributed (in either source or binary form) with the major components (compiler, kernel, and so on) of the operating system on which the executable runs, unless that component itself accompanies the executable.

It may happen that this requirement contradicts the license restrictions of other proprietary libraries that do not normally accompany the operating system. Such a contradiction means you cannot use both them and the Library together in an executable that you distribute.

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<signature of Ty Coon>, 1 April 1990
Ty Coon, President of Vice

That's all there is to it!

A.3 Frequently Asked Questions

A.3.1 Introduction

Some of the most frequently asked questions about JFreeChart concern the license. I've published this FAQ to help developers understand my choice of license for JFreeChart. If anything is unclear, or technically incorrect, please e-mail me (david.gilbert@object-refinery.com) and I will try to improve the text.

A.3.2 Questions and Answers

1. "Can I incorporate JFreeChart into a proprietary (closed-source) application?"

Yes, the GNU Lesser General Public License (LGPL) is specifically designed to allow this.

2. "Do I have to pay a license fee to use JFreeChart?"

No, JFreeChart is free software. You are not required to pay a fee to use JFreeChart. All that we ask is that you comply with the terms of the license, which (for most developers) is not very difficult.

If you want to make a financial contribution to the JFreeChart project, you can buy a support package from Object Refinery Limited. This is appreciated, but not required.

3. "If I use JFreeChart, do I have to release the source code for my application under the terms of the LGPL?"

No, you can choose whatever license you wish for your software. But when you distribute your application, you must include the complete source code for JFreeChart—including any changes you make to it—under the terms of the LGPL. Your users end up with the same rights in relation to JFreeChart as you have been granted under the LGPL.

4. "My users will never look at the source code, and if they did, they wouldn't know what to do with it...why do I have to give it to them?"

The important point is that your users have access to the source code—whether or not they choose to use it is up to them. Bear in mind that non-technical users *can* make use of the source code by hiring someone else to work on it for them.

5. "What are the steps I must follow to release software that incorporates JFreeChart?"

The steps are listed in the license (see section 6 especially). The most important things are:

• include a notice in your software that it uses the JFreeChart class library, and that the library is covered by the LGPL;

- include a copy of the LGPL so your users understand that JFreeChart is distributed WITHOUT WARRANTY, and the rights that they have under the license;
- include the complete source code for the version of the library that you are distributing (or a written offer to supply it on demand);

6. "I want to display the JFreeChart copyright notice, what form should it take?" Try this:

This software incorporates JFreeChart, (C)opyright 2000-2003 by Object Refinery Limited and Contributors.

7. "The LGPL is unnecessarily complicated!"

OK, that's not a question, but the point has been raised by a few developers.

Yes, the LGPL is complicated, but only out of necessity. The complexity is mostly related to the difficulty of defining (in precise legal terms) the relationship between a free software library and a proprietary application that uses the library.

A useful first step towards understanding the LGPL is to read the GNU General Public License (GPL). It is a much simpler license, because it does not allow free software to be combined with non-free (or proprietary) software. The LGPL is a superset of the GPL (you are free to switch from the LGPL to the GPL at any time), but slightly more "relaxed" in that it allows you to combine free and non-free software.

A final note, some of the terminology in the LGPL is easier to understand if you keep in mind that the license was originally developed with statically-linked C programs in mind. Ensuring that it is possible to relink a modified free library with a non-free application, adds significant complexity to the license. For Java libraries, where code is dynamically linked, modifying and rebuilding a free library for use with a non-free application needn't be such a big issue, particularly if the free library resides in its own jar file.

8. "Who developed the license?"

The license was developed by the Free Software Foundation and has been adopted by many thousands of free software projects. You can find out more information at the Free Software Foundation website:

http://www.fsf.org

The Free Software Foundation performs important work, please consider supporting them financially.

9. "Have you considered releasing JFreeChart under a different license, such as an "Apache-style" license?"

Yes, a range of licenses was considered for JFreeChart, but now that the choice has been made there are no plans to change the license in the future.

A publication by Bruce Perens was especially helpful in comparing the available licenses:

http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/opensources/book/perens.html

In the end, the LGPL was chosen because it is the closest fit in terms of my goals for JFreeChart. It is not a perfect license, but there is nothing else that comes close (except the GPL) in terms of protecting the freedom of JFreeChart for everyone to use. Also, the LGPL is very widely used, and many developers are already familiar with its requirements.

Some other open source licenses (for example the Apache Software License) allow open source software to be packaged and redistributed without source code. These licenses offer more convenience to developers (especially in large companies) than the LGPL, but they allow a path from open source software to closed source software, which is not something I want to allow for JFreeChart.