
MAHARISHI UNIVERSITY of MANAGEMENT
Engaging the Managing Intelligence of Nature
Computer Science Department
CS390 Foundamental Programming Practices (FPP)
Professor Paul Corazza

Lecture 7:
Building GUIs in Java with Swing

Wholeness of the Lesson

Swing is a windowing toolkit that allows developers to create GUIs that are rich in content and functionality. The ultimate provider of tools for the creation of beautiful and functional content is pure intelligence itself; all creativity arises from this field's self-interacting dynamics.

Introduction to Swing

- ***Java Swing*** is a part of Java Foundation Classes (JFC) that is used to create window-based applications. It is built on the top of AWT (Abstract Windowing Toolkit) API and entirely written in java.

- ***Sun's AWT.*** The original version of Java (jdk1.0) came with a primitive windowing toolkit (the AWT) for making simple GUIs. GUI components were built by using the native GUI toolkit of the target platform (Windows, MacIntosh, Solaris, etc). It is platform dependent.

- Unlike AWT, Java Swing provides platform-independent and lightweight components.

- ***AWT Still Used.*** Swing components still make use of aspects of the AWT – Swing is built "on top of" the old AWT. In particular, handling of events relies on the old event-handling model.

- ***JavaFX.*** In 2014, Oracle declared that Swing libraries would be developed no further, and that the windowing toolkit of choice had become JavaFX. JavaFX has more modern-looking components and has a more flexible API.

- ***Return of Swing.*** In 2018, Oracle announced that, starting with JDK 11, JavaFX will no longer be bundled with the JDK, but will be available through a separate download. The JDK 8 version of JavaFX will continue to be supported through the "open source" project through 2022. On the other hand, Oracle has announced that it will resume support of Swing (along with AWT) in JDK 8 and 11 and for the foreseeable future.

Outline of Topics

- **Swing Components and Containers**
- Laying Out Components with Layout Managers
- Handling Events
- Additional Technique: Displaying Pop-up Windows
- A sample UI: UserIO.java
- Working with Lists in a UI

The Main Idea in Swing

- *Components and containers.* Swing provides components (like text boxes, buttons, checkboxes) and containers (frames, windows, panels) in which such components can be placed.

- *Containers placed in other containers.* In Swing, a container is also considered to be another kind of component, so containers can be placed in other containers.

- *LayoutManagers for containers.* Every container supports the use of a layout strategy. To achieve the visual objectives in building Swing screens requires skillful use of layouts on multiple containers.

- *Listeners = Event Handlers.* A Swing GUI becomes responsive to user actions (like button presses, item selections, etc.) by means of an event handling model. In this model, there are "listeners" for user actions (like button presses and mouse clicks). When a relevant user action occurs, the listener is informed and the code that you have written to handle the event will then be executed.

JFrames

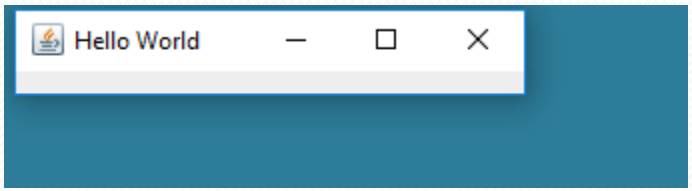
- The top-level container class in Swing is `JFrame`. ("Top-level" means "not contained in any other containers.") JFrame is equipped with a title bar whose value can be modified. [See package `lesson7` for all the code shown in these slides.]

```
class MyFrame0 extends JFrame {
    MyFrame0() {
        setTitle("Hello World");
}
```

To see the result so far, create an instance of `MyFrame` and call the `setVisible` method on it.

```
public static void main(String[] args) {
    EventQueue.invokeLater(new Runnable()
    {
        public void run() {
            MyFrame0 mf = new MyFrame0();
            mf.setVisible(true);
        }
    });
}
```

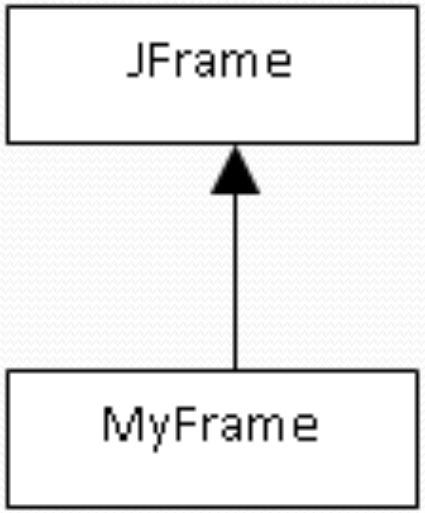
The JFrame that is created is placed by default in the upper left corner of the screen, squeezed into the smallest possible area



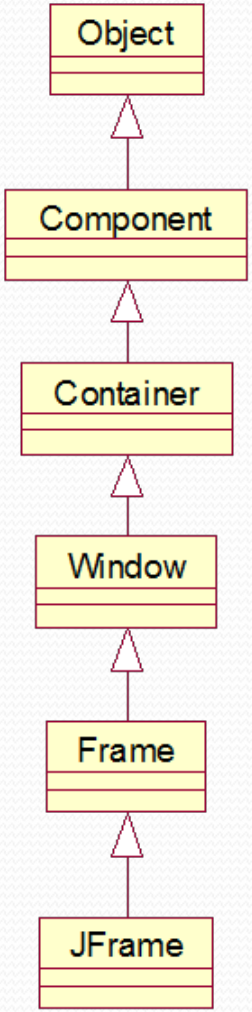
NOTE: Because of the non-threadsafe nature of Swing components, all component-building (to be safe) must be done through the EventQueue, so we have to create our JFrame and make it visible with this mysterious code, which places our GUI-building thread in Swing's event queue, where it will be executed in the proper order. (If you don't do this, GUI may become unresponsive.)

User-Defined UI a Subclass of JFrame

The code makes it clear that, when you design a Swing application, you start by creating a *subclass* of Jframe. The class diagram in UML is the following:



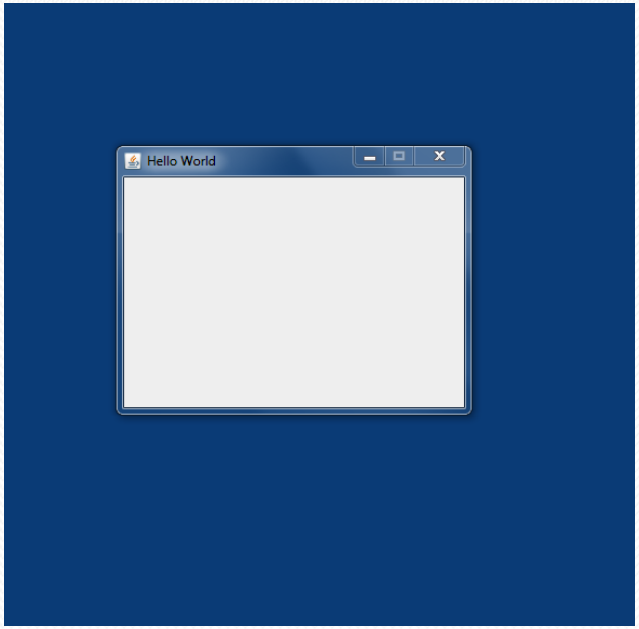
Inheritance Hierarchy for JFrame



- In the Example, next step is to adjust size and position.

```
public class MyFrame extends JFrame {
    public MyFrame()
       setDefaultCloseOperation(JFrame.EXIT_ON_CLOSE
     );
       setTitle("Hello World");
       setSize(320,240);
          setResizable(false);
       // Make your screen center
       setLocationRelativeTo(null);
  }
}

//To start the UI, use the same main method
as given in //previous slide
```



Jframe is now centered in the desktop window and has the specified width and height

Tips:

- *Use* `pack()` *instead of hard-coding size*: Will make the window just large enough to fit in all the components (note: since we have no components yet in this example, `pack()` is not a good choice here)
- Call `pack()` after all components have been added to the container.
- Centering of window should be done *after* size has been set or `pack()` has been called

Outline of Topics

- Swing Components and Containers
- **Laying Out Components with Layout Managers**
- Handling Events
- Additional Technique: Displaying Pop-up Windows
- A sample UI: UserIO.java
- Working with Lists in a UI

Adding Components

- Organize components into containers (called “panels”) and assemble panels into the main frame.
- Design Tip: Create a “top-level” panel that will contain all the other panels that you define.
- You can add components to your main panel; they will be arranged according to a default layout (called `FlowLayout for JPanel`). (Note: The default layout for the content pane of a `JFrame` is `BorderLayout`.)

```
//make the text field and label instance variables in MyFrame
JTextField text;
JLabel label;
public MyFrame(){
    //put initializations like setSize, setTitle, centerFrame here
    initializeWindow();

    JPanel mainPanel = new JPanel();
    text = new JTextField(10);
    label = new JLabel("My Text");
    JButton button = new JButton("My Button");
    mainPanel.add(text);
    mainPanel.add(label);
    mainPanel.add(button);

    getContentPane().add(mainPanel);
}
```

Main Point

Swing classes are of two kinds: *components* and *containers*. A screen is created by creating components (like buttons, textfields, labels) and arranging them in one or more containers. Components and containers are analgous to the *manifest* and *unmanifest* fields of life; manifest existence, in the form of individual expressions, lives and moves within the unbounded container of pure existence.

Layout Managers: FlowLayout and BorderLayout

A Layout Manager is a Java class that decides how components will be arranged in a container and to what extent the *preferred size* of these components will be honored.

- The preferred size of a component, is, roughly, the minimum size it can have and still be visually meaningful (for example, a button's preferred size is "just big enough" for you to see the button's label)
- The general rule is that the components in a container will be given their preferred size unless the policy of the container's layout manager conflicts with this

FlowLayout Policy

- All components are given their preferred size
- When components are added to the container, they are added from left to right in horizontal rows; when a row is filled up, components are placed in a new line below the first
- The default distance between successive components (both horizontally and vertically) is 5 pixels – this quantity can be modified using `setHgap`, `setVgap`.
- The entire cluster of components in a row can be justified left, justified right, or centered using these arguments, respectively, in the `FlowLayout` constructor: `FlowLayout.LEFT, FlowLayout.RIGHT,FlowLayout.CENTER`

  Example:

```
myPanel.setLayout(new FlowLayout(FlowLayout.LEFT));
```

BorderLayout Policy

- When components are added, they are placed in one of 5 regions in the container, specified by

  ```
  BorderLayout.NORTH, BorderLayout.SOUTH,
  BorderLayout.EAST, BorderLayout.WEST,
  BorderLayout.CENTER
  ```

  If no region is specified, `CENTER` is the default. It is not necessary to populate every region with a component.

- The preferred *height* of components placed North or South is honored, but the *width* of such components is made to be as wide as the container itself.

- The preferred *width* of components placed East or West is honored. The *height* of such a component is forced to extend to the top and bottom of the container *unless* a component occupies North or South position. If North is occupied, then the height of West (and East) extends up to the North component. If South is occupied, the height of West (and East) extends down to the South component.
- A component that occupies the Center position is stretched to fill out the region up to the components in the other positions.
- The gaps between these regions is, as with `FlowLayout`, 5 pixels both vertically and horizontally.

Main Point

Components are arranged in a container through the use of *layout managers* that organize components in different ways. FlowLayout preserves the size of components and lays components out horizontally, from left to right. BorderLayout lays out components in five positions – north, south, east, west and center; to preserve the size of components, BorderLayout is used in conjunction with FlowLayout. Likewise, all of manifest life is conducted by a vast network of natural laws.

Outline of Topics

- Swing Components and Containers
- Laying Out Components with Layout Managers
- **Handling Events**
- Additional Technique: Displaying Pop-up Windows
- A sample UI: UserIO.java
- Working with Lists in a UI

Handling Events

To get a response from a button click, we associate a "listener" to the button; the listener will be informed (by way of an `ActionEvent`) whenever the button is clicked at runtime.

ButtonListener Code

```
//define the listener class
public class MyButtonListener implements ActionListener {
   //the text field we are listening to
   private JTextField text;
   public MyButtonListener(JTextField text) {
      this.text = text;
   }
   public void actionPerformed(ActionEvent evt){
      String textVal = text.getText();
      final String prompt = "Type a string";
      final String youWrote = "You wrote: ";
      if(textVal.equals("") ||
            textVal.equals(prompt) ||
            textVal.startsWith(youWrote)){

         text.setText(prompt);
      }
      else {

         text.setText(youWrote+"\""+textVal+"\".");
      }
   }
}
```

Attaching the ButtonListener

```
//Inside MyFrame, register your new
//listener class when the button is defined
button = new JButton("My Button");

//because our text field is stored as an instance variable
//we can pass it in to the listener like this:
button.addActionListener(new MyButtonListener(text));
```

Event-Handling Sequence

1. A listener object is an instance of a class that implements a *listener interface* – typical example: `ActionListener` – used for the most common GUI components in Java. (*Interfaces* were discussed in Lesson 4.)

   Here is `ActionListener` from the source code for the Java libraries:

```
public interface ActionListener {
      public void actionPerformed(ActionEvent e);
}
```

2. An event source is an object that can register listener objects and send them event objects – examples: buttons, menu items, checkboxes, combo boxes

3. The event source sends out event objects to all registered listeners when that event occurs – for instance, when a button is clicked, all listeners for this button receive an `ActionEvent` instance

4. Listener objects may use the information in the event object received to determine their reaction to the event

Running the Code

When the user clicks the button….

User types “Hello”

User clicks My Button

User clicks My Button a second time

Listeners As Inner Classes

- The class `MyButtonListener` is closely associated with `MyFrame` – it relies on the text field of `MyFrame` and has behavior that is customized to the requirements of this particular application.
- It is therefore natural to think of `MyButtonListener` as an inner class in `MyFrame`.
- If we make `MyButtonListener` an inner class of `MyFrame`, then there is no longer a need to pass a text field into the listener class since it will automatically have access to it.
- Note that `ActionListener` is a functional interface, with unique method actionPerformed. This means that `MyButtonListener` can be replaced by a lambda expression. See `lesson7.MyFrame5`.

Implementing Listener As an Inner Class

```
public class MyFrame extends JFrame {
    private JTextField text;
    private JLabel label;
    private JButton button;
    public MyFrame() {
          // . . .
    }
    private void defineMiddlePanel(){
          middlePanel=new JPanel();
          // . . .
          button = new JButton("My Button");
          button.addActionListener(new
                                   MyButtonListener());
          // . . .
    }
```

```
// . . .
//now defined as an inner class
class MyButtonListener implements ActionListener {
    public void actionPerformed(ActionEvent evt){
        //automatic access to MyFrame's instance variables
        String textVal = text.getText();
        final String prompt = "Type a string";
        final String youWrote = "You wrote: ";
        if(textVal.equals("") ||
              textVal.equals(prompt) ||
              textVal.startsWith(youWrote)){

            text.setText(prompt);
        }
        else if(textVal.equalsIgnoreCase("error")){
            showMessage("An error has occurred!");
            text.setText(prompt);
        }
        else {

text.setText(youWrote+"\""+textVal+"\".");
        }
    }
}
```

Main Point

A GUI becomes responsive to user interaction (for example, button clicks and mouse clicks) through Swing's event-handling model in which event sources are associated with listener classes, whose actionPerformed method is called (and is passed an event object) whenever a relevant action occurs. To make use of this event-handling model, the developer defines a listener class, implements actionPerformed, and, when defining an event source (like a button), registers the listener class with this event source component. The "observer" pattern that is used in Swing mirrors the fact that in creation, the influence of every action is felt everywhere; existence is a field of infinite correlation; every behavior is "listented to" throughout creation.

Outline of Topics

- Swing Components and Containers
- Laying Out Components with Layout Managers
- Handling Events
- **Additional Technique: Displaying Pop-up Windows**
- A sample UI: UserIO.java
- Working with Lists in a UI

Displaying Pop-up Messages

The Swing class `JOptionPane` makes it easy to pop up a standard dialog box that prompts users for a value or informs them of something (such as error messages). See the Java API docs for all the different options in using this class. We focus on one common usage here:

Example: In our example, we will add one more piece of functionality. When the user types in the word "error" in the text box, the GUI will respond by displaying a popup with an error message:

After the user presses MyButton, we see

When the user clicks OK, we see that the "Type a string" prompt appears.

To achieve this behavior, we modify the listener code to check for the input “error” like this:

```
class MyButtonListener implements ActionListener {
    public void actionPerformed(ActionEvent evt){
            String textVal = text.getText();
            final String prompt = "Type a string";
            final String youWrote = "You wrote: ";
            if(textVal.equals("") ||
                        textVal.equals(prompt) ||
                        textVal.startsWith(youWrote)){

                text.setText(prompt);
            }
            else if(textVal.equalsIgnoreCase("error")){
                showMessage("An error has occurred!");
                text.setText(prompt);
            }
            else {

                text.setText(youWrote+"\""+textVal+"\".");
            }
    }
}
```

- The work of displaying the message is encapsulated in the `showMessage()` method:

```
private void showMessage(String message){
    JOptionPane.showMessageDialog(this,
                message,
                "Error",
                JOptionPane.ERROR_MESSAGE);
}
```

IntelliJ IDE –Swing UI Designer

- Refer the Lesson7-JavaSwingGUI IntelliJ Step by Step.pdf from LectureSlides.
- This file explain the step by step implementation for the Login Validation.
- You can do the homework by using Swing UI Designer Drag and Drop.

Outline of Topics

- Swing Components and Containers
- Laying Out Components with Layout Managers
- Handling Events
- Additional Technique: Displaying Pop-up Windows
- A sample UI: UserIO.java
- **Working with Lists in a UI**

Working with JLists in Swing

- A more sophisticated component in Swing is a JList, which displays selectable lists.

- JLists are normally embedded in a JScrollPane to support changes in the size of the list.

```
mainScroll = new JScrollPane(mainList);
```

- It is possible to load data for a JList directly, but the best practice is to load it using a *data model*.

```
JList<String> list = new JList<String>(listModel);
```

A data model keeps data separate from its presentation – this supports the MVC design pattern, which allows presentation and data to change independently. For example, you can present the same data in multiple ways.

See the package `lesson7.jlist`

Summary

Development in Swing requires knowledge of three areas:

1. ***Containers and Components***. The elements that a user makes use of to interact with a UI – like buttons, textfields, etc – are *components,* which are arranged in Swing *containers.*

2. ***Layout Managers***. Design of a UI first requires the developer to visualize, and sketch out, the desired appearance of windows. This design is translated into Swing components and containers by skillful use of LayoutManagers, which provide rules that determine dimensions and positions of components on the window

3. ***Event-Handling.*** The functionality of a UI – by which a user can initiate an action to obtain a response – is achieved in Swing with *listeners.* Typically on a UI, *ActionListeners,* which are implemented with event-handling code, are attached to components. The event-handling mechanism of Java translates user actions into events that causes the ActionListener code to execute.

Connecting the Parts of Knowledge With the Wholeness of Knowledge

The self-referral dynamics
arising from the reflexive association of container classes

1. In Swing, components are placed and arranged in container classes for attractive display.
2. In Swing, containers are also considered to be components; this makes it possible to place and arrange container classes inside other container classes. These self-referral dynamics support a much broader range of possibilities in the design of GUIs.

---

3. **Transcendental Consciousness:** TC is the self-referral field of all possibilities.
4. **Wholeness moving within itself**: In Unity Consciousness, all activity is appreciated as the self-referral dynamics of one's own Self.