Coding Conventions

Selectron

# Rationale

Code is how you tell people what you want the computer to do.

That is a paraphrase of something I read recently, and I think that approaching programming with that in mind will result in more understandable code that has fewer bugs and is easier to maintain. These are largely based on Douglas Crockford’s To quote Crockford from his [Code Conventions for the JavaScript Programming Language](http://javascript.crockford.com/code.html):

“Neatness counts.”

# General

## Indentation:

* 4 spaces
  + Consistency across GUIs and RTF fields (Tab Return has never been standardized)
  + Immediately evident without being too wasteful
  + File size impact is immaterial due to minification/packing

## Line Length & Format:

* 80 Characters or less
  + Standard terminal line length
  + Avoid GUI line wrap visual inconsistency
* Break immediately following operator
  + Ideally a comma
  + Helps avoid copy/paste errors

## Comments

* Be generous
  + …but meaningful
  + May seem obvious at the time, confusing later
  + Can be deleted later easier than being added
  + Do not repeat back to me what the code just said in different fucking words! (The E.B. Farnum effect)
    - Crockford’s example:

i = 0; // Set i to zero.

* Keep current with code changes
* Block comments:
  + Formal documentation
  + Commenting out
* Line comments:
  + Primary comment form

## Whitespace

* Put a blank line above each line comment
  + Much better readability
* Use blank lines to separate logically related sections of code
* Directly from Crockford:
  + A keyword followed by ( (left parenthesis) should be separated by a space.

while (true) {

* + A blank space should not be used between a function value and its ( (left parenthesis).
    - This helps to distinguish between keywords and function invocations.
  + All binary operators except . (period) and ( (left parenthesis) and [ (left bracket) should be separated from their operands by a space.
  + No space should separate a unary operator and its operand except when the operator is a word such as typeof.
  + Each ; (semicolon) in the control part of a for statement should be followed with a space.
  + Whitespace should follow every , (comma).