
Android Boot Camp for Developers Using Java, 3E

Chapter 3: Engage! Android User Input, Variables, and Operations

Android Boot Camp for Developers Using Java, 3rd Ed.

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Objectives

In this chapter, you learn to:

- Use an Android theme
- Add a theme to the Android Manifest file
- Add text to the String table
- Develop a user interface using Text Fields
- Describe the role of different Text Fields
- Display a hint using the Hint property
- Develop the user interface using a Spinner control
- Add a prompt to a Spinner control

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Objectives

- Declare variables to hold data
- Code the GetText() method
- Understand arithmetic operations
- Convert numeric data
- Format numeric data
- Code the SetText() method
- Run the completed app in an emulator

Android Themes

- Engaging the user by requesting input customizes the user experience each time the application is executed
- A **theme** is a style applied to an Activity or an entire application
 - Themes are Android's mechanism for applying a consistent style to an app or Activity
- The default for Nexus 5 shows the title bar displaying the app name with a white background when running the app

Previewing a Theme

- Check the activity_main.xml file in the emulator to see what your screen looks like



Figure 3-3 Holographic theme



Figure 3-4 Material theme with no action bar



Figure 3-5 Black theme

Previewing a Theme (continued)

A new application named *Concert Tickets* is configured to be saved on the *D:\Workspace USB* drive (Figure 3-6).

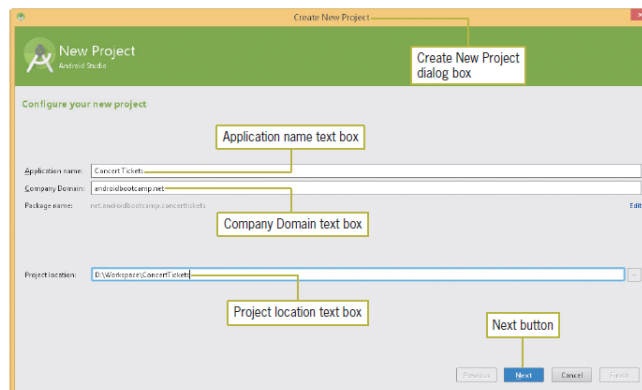


Figure 3-6 Configuring the Concert Tickets project

Previewing a Theme (continued)

The `activity_main.xml` file is displayed on the Design tab and the Hello world `TextView` widget is deleted (Figure 3-7). The emulator displays the default `AppTheme`.

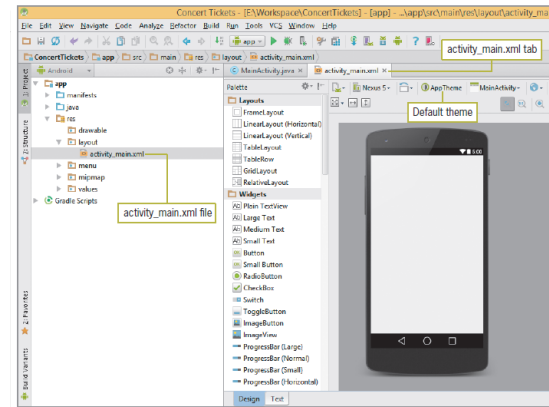


Figure 3-7 activity_main.xml for the Concert Tickets project

Previewing a Theme (continued)

A list of themes with the text "black" in the name is displayed in the Select Theme dialog box (Figure 3-8).

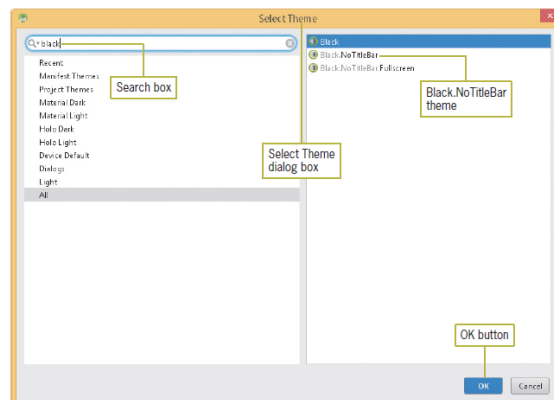


Figure 3-8 Select Theme dialog box

Previewing a Theme (continued)

The theme changes to Black.NoTitleBar. Android Studio removes the title bar in the emulator and displays the background as black (Figure 3-9).

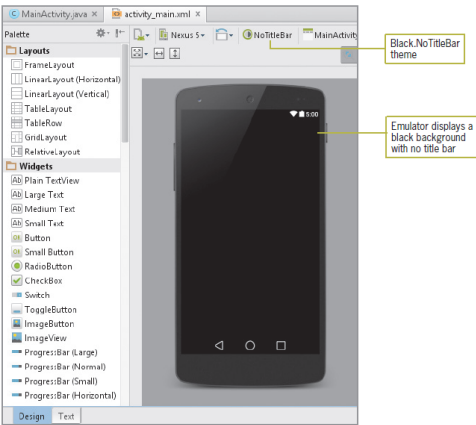


Figure 3-9 New theme applied

Updating the Theme in the styles.xml File

The Android theme is updated within the Activity in the styles.xml file (Figure 3-10).

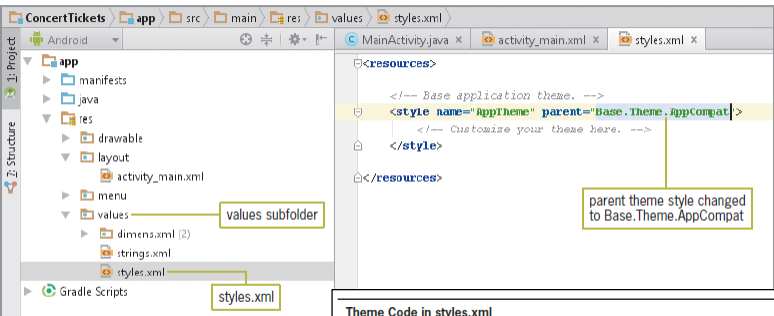


Figure 3-10 Updated theme coded in the styles.xml file

Theme Code in styles.xml	Description
<style name="AppTheme" parent="Base.Theme.AppCompat">	Black background, grey title bar
<style name="AppTheme" parent="Base.Theme.AppCompat.Light">	White background, grey title bar
<style name="AppTheme" parent="Theme.AppCompat.Light.NoActionBar">	White background, no title bar

Table 3-1 XML code for common themes

Simplifying User Input

- The onscreen keyboard is called a **soft keyboard**
 - Input can be in the form of tapping or gestures (using two fingers to pan, rotate, or zoom)
 - Primary design challenge is to simplify user experiences
 - Use legible fonts, simplify input, and optimize each device's capabilities to maximize user experience

Simplifying User Input

Using Android Text Fields

- Text Fields are the most common type of mobile input
 - Can be free-form plain text
 - Numbers
 - A person's name, password, email, phone number
 - A date
 - Multiline text

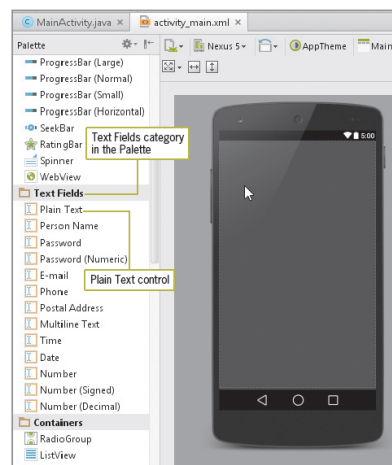


Figure 3-11 Text Fields category

Simplifying User Input

Adding a Text Field

- Use the Id property in the Properties pane to enter a name that begins with the prefix txt
- Use descriptive names like txtTickets instead of txtText1

Using the String Table

- Uses the file strings.xml
- A **string** is a series of alphanumeric characters that can include spaces
- **Localization** is the use of the String table to change text based on the user's preferred language

Simplifying User Input

The Key and Default Value of the TextView control are entered into the strings.xml Translations Editor within a dialog box (Figure 3-12).

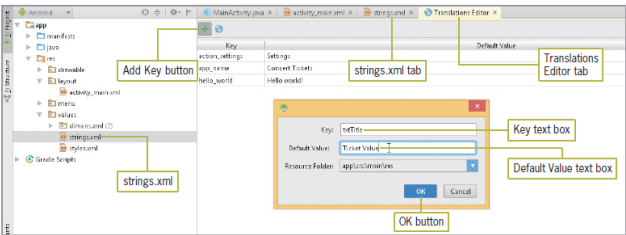


Figure 3-12 Adding strings

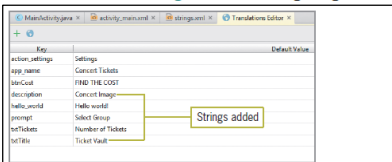


Figure 3-13 Multiple strings added to the Translations Editor

Key	Default Value
txtTickets	Number of Tickets
prompt	Select Group
description	Concert Image
btnCost	FIND THE COST

Table 3-2 String table text

Simplifying User Input

Adding a String Array

- A **string array** defines a string resource of related items in a central location within strings.xml
- An **item** defines an individual entry within a string array
 - As you type the String array XML code, the Android Studio editor offers suggestions in a panel that can complete the statement

Simplifying User Input (continued)

Auto-completion suggestions are displayed in the strings.xml code window (Figure 3-14).

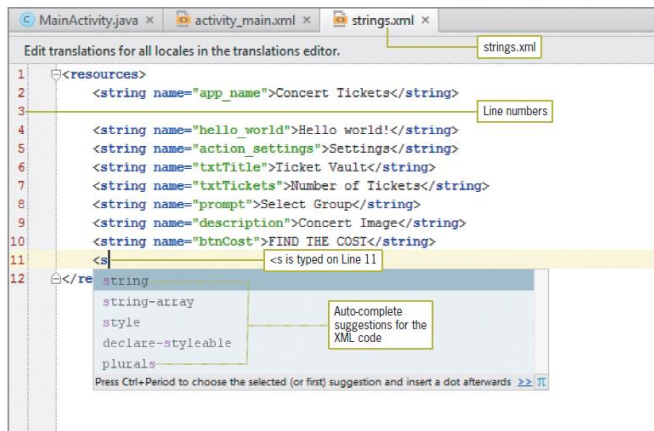


Figure 3-14 XML code auto-completion suggestions

Simplifying User Input (continued)

The string-array XML code named `txtGroup` is added. The closing statement `</string-array>` is added automatically by the editor in Android Studio (Figure 3-15).

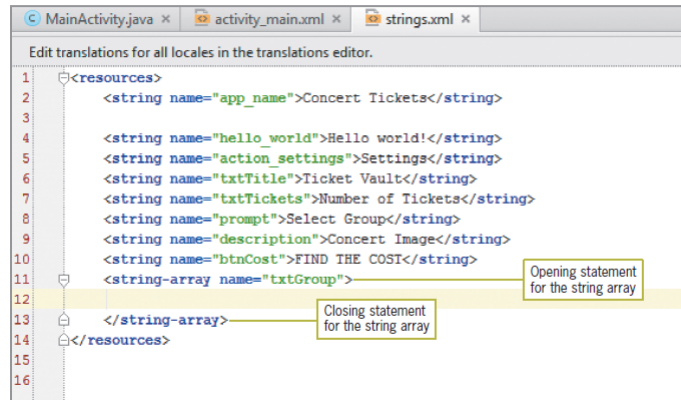


Figure 3-15 Opening and closing XML statements of the string array

Simplifying User Input (continued)

Three items are added to the `txtGroup` String array (Figure 3-16).



Figure 3-16 string-array with three items added

Simplifying User Input (continued)

The text resource `txtTitle` from the `strings.xml` file is selected and the text `Ticket Vault` is displayed in the size of 48 scalable pixels (Figure 3-17).

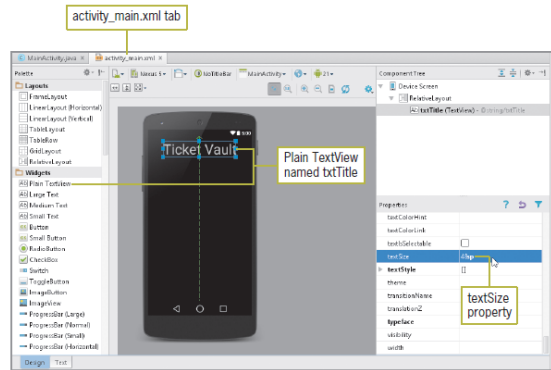


Figure 3-17 Title added to emulator

Simplifying User Input (continued)

A Number Text Field control named `txtTickets` with the size of 36sp is added to the emulator to allow the user to enter the number of tickets (Figure 3-18).

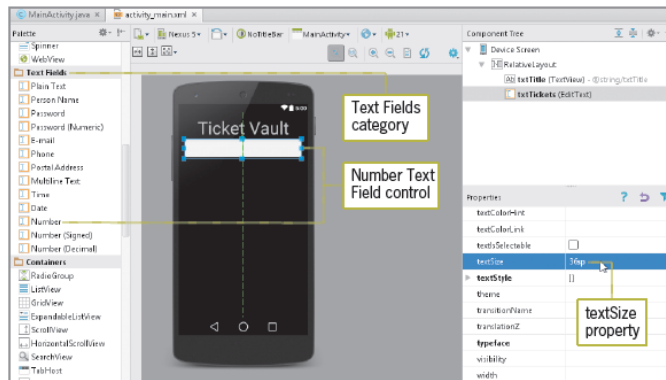


Figure 3-18 String Array

Simplifying User Input (continued)

Setting the Hint Property for the Text Field

- A **hint** is a short description of a field visible as light-colored text (called a watermark)

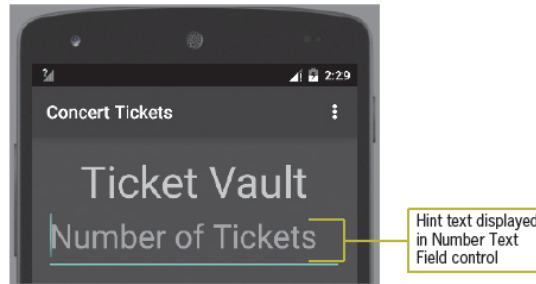


Figure 3-19 Hint in Text Field control

Simplifying User Input (continued)

The hint text `txtTickets` is selected in the Resources dialog box (Figure 3-20).

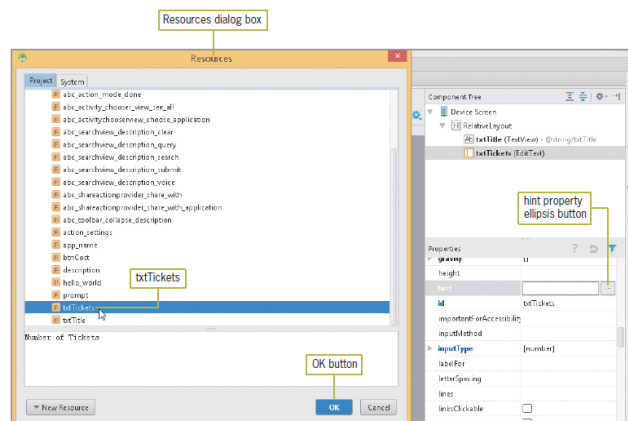


Figure 3-20 Resources dialog box for hint property of the Text Field control

Simplifying User Input (continued)

A watermark hint requests the number of tickets as input in the Text Field control (Figure 3-21).

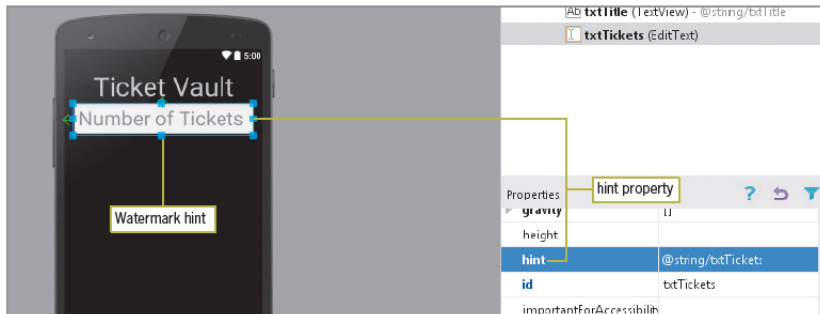


Figure 3-21 Hint added to Text Field control

Simplifying User Input (continued)

Using the Android Spinner Control

- A **Spinner control** is similar to a drop-down list for selecting a single item from a fixed list
- The spinner control displays a list of strings called **items** in a pop-up window
- A **prompt**, which can be used to display instructions at the top of the Spinner control, also is stored in strings.xml and is named prompt
- The Spinner property called **Entries** connects the String Array to the Spinner control for display in the application

Simplifying User Input (continued)

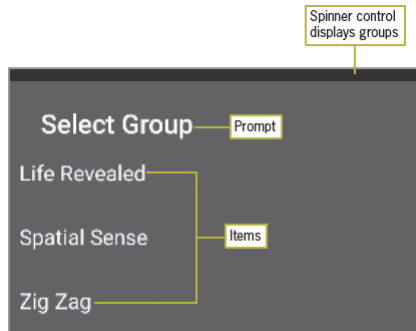


Figure 3-22 Spinner control

The `spinnerMode` property displays the options for the Spinner control named `txtGroup` (Figure 3-23).

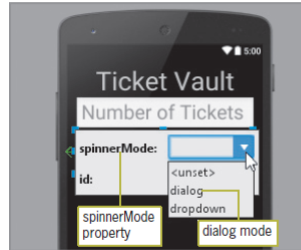


Figure 3-23 spinnerMode property options

Simplifying User Input (continued)

The `prompt` property connects to the resource named `@string/prompt`. The `entries` property connects to the resources of the String Array `@array/txtGroup`. The actual groups are displayed in the Spinner when the app is executed in the emulator (Figure 3-24).

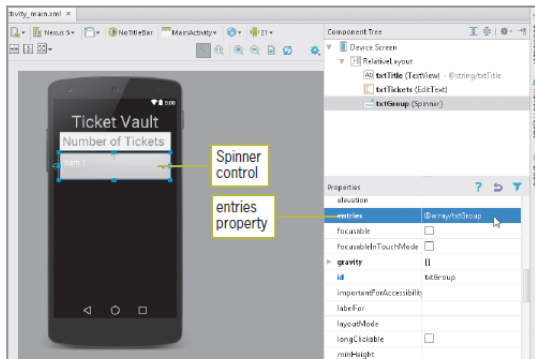


Figure 3-24 Spinner control prompt and entries properties

Simplifying User Input (continued)

Adding the Button, TextView, and ImageView Controls

The Button control named `btnCost` displays the text `FIND THE COST` from the `btnCost` String and the size is changed to 34sp (Figure 3-25).

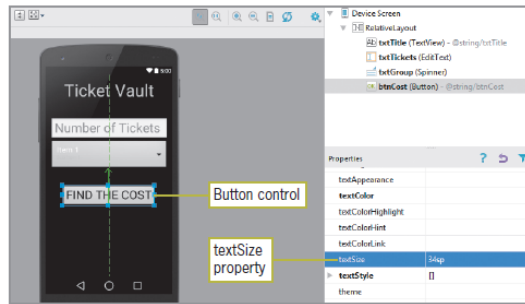


Figure 3-25 Adding a Button control

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Simplifying User Input (continued)

The `txtResult` TextView control is added to the emulator with the Text property blank (Figure 3-26).

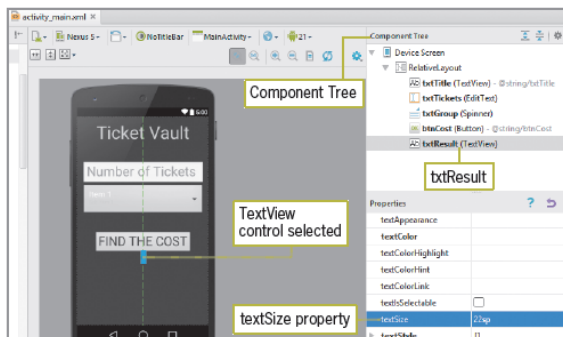


Figure 3-26 Adding a TextView control to display results

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Simplifying User Input (continued)

The concert image is displayed at the bottom of the emulator with a content description for accessibility purposes (Figure 3-27).

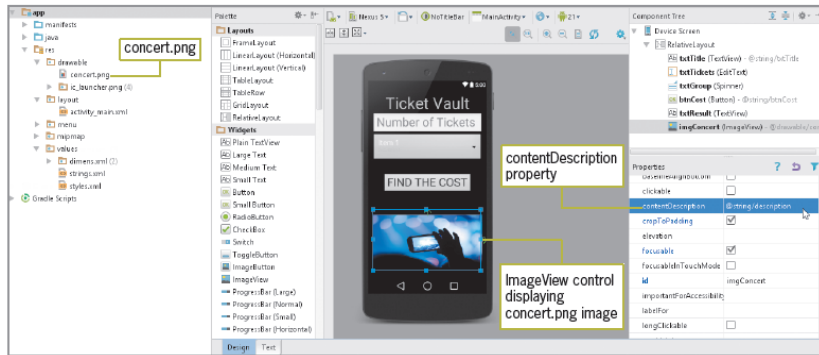


Figure 3-27 Adding an ImageView control

Simplifying User Input (continued)

- **Coding the EditText Class for the Text Field**
 - A **variable** is used in programming to contain data that changes during the execution of a program
 - **Final** variables can be initialized but cannot be changed
 - Insert this code to create a variable:

Code Syntax

```
final EditText tickets = (EditText)findViewById(R.id.txtTickets);
```

Simplifying User Input (continued)

The `EditText` class extracts the value from the user's input for the number of tickets and assigns the value to the variable named `tickets`. Variables that the program has not used appear in gray text. This color is removed when a value is assigned later in the program (Figure 3-28).



Figure 3-28 Coding the `EditText` class for the Text Field

Simplifying User Input (continued)

Coding the Spinner Control

Code Syntax

```
final Spinner group = (Spinner) findViewById(R.id.txtGroup);
```

The `Spinner` control assigns the value from the user's input to the variable named `group` (Figure 3-29).

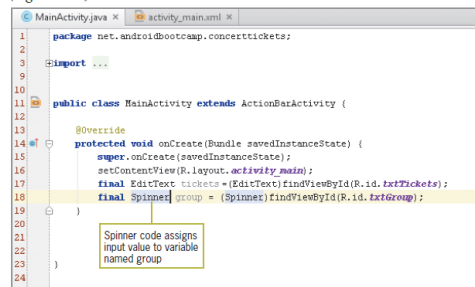


Figure 3-29 Coding the `Spinner` control

Simplifying User Input (continued)

Instantiating the Button Control

Code Syntax

```
final TextView result = ((TextView)findViewById(R.id.txtResult));
```

The Button control is initialized and the Button type is imported (Figure 3-30).

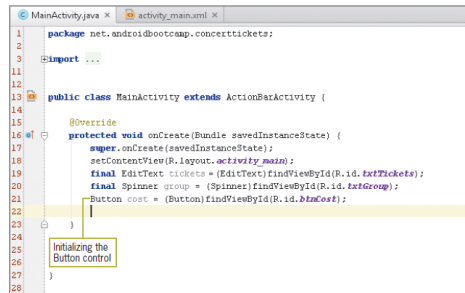


Figure 3-30 Instantiated Button class

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Simplifying User Input (continued)

The Button control is initialized and an OnClickListener auto-generated stub appears in the code window (Figure 3-31).

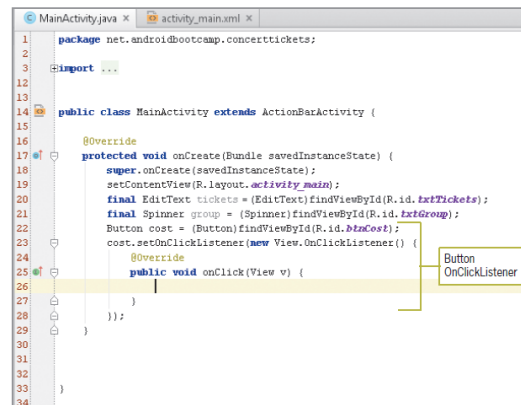


Figure 3-31 Initializing the OnClickListener

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Simplifying User Input (continued)

The TextView control txtResult is assigned to the variable named result (Figure 3-32).

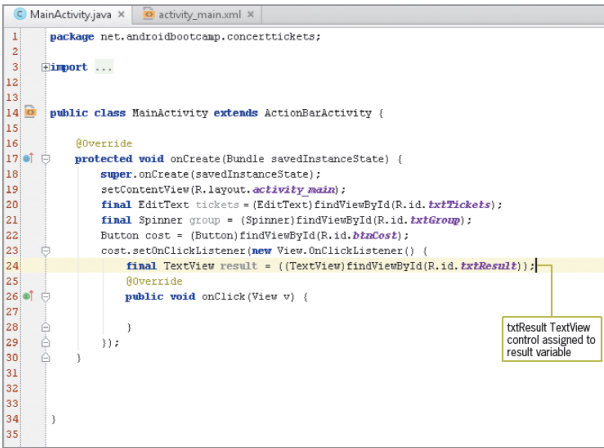


Figure 3-32 TextView control code

Declaring Variables

- Declare the variable
- Assign a value to the variable

Code Syntax

```
double costPerTicket = 79.99;
int numberOfTickets;
double totalCost;
```

Primitive Data Types

Type	Meaning	Range	Default Value
byte	Often used with arrays	-128 to 127	0
short	Often used with arrays	-32,768 to 32,767	0
int	Most commonly used number value	-2,147,483,648 to 2,147,483,647	0
long	Used for numbers that exceed int	-9,223,372,036,854,775,808 to 9,223,372,036,854,775,807	0
float	A single precision 32-bit floating-point number	+/-3.40282347 ^38	0
double	Most common for decimal values	+/-1.79769313486231570 ^308	0
char	Single character	Characters	0
boolean	Used for conditional statement	True or false	False

Table 3-3 Primitive data types in Java

Declaring Variables (continued)

- **String Data Type**

- The String type is a class and not a primitive data type
- A string can be a character, word, or phrase

Code Syntax

```
String groupChoice;
```

- **Declaring the Variables**

- Typically declared at the beginning of an Activity
- Variables must be declared before you can use them

Declaring Variables (continued)

The variables are declared at the beginning of the activity (Figure 3-33).

```
1 package net.androidbootcamp.concerttickets;
2
3 import ...
4
5
6
7
8
9
10 public class MainActivity extends ActionBarActivity {
11     double costPerTicket=79.99;
12     int numberOfTickets;
13     double totalCost;
14     String groupChoice;
15     @Override
16     protected void onCreate(Bundle savedInstanceState) {
17         super.onCreate(savedInstanceState);
18         setContentView(R.layout.activity_main);
19         final EditText tickets = (EditText)findViewById(R.id.txtTickets);
20         final Spinner group = (Spinner)findViewById(R.id.txtGroup);
21         Button cost = (Button)findViewById(R.id.btnCost);
22         cost.setOnClickListener(new View.OnClickListener() {
23             final TextView result = (TextView)findViewById(R.id.txtResult);
24             @Override
25             public void onClick(View v) {
26
27             }
28         });
29     }
30 }
```

Figure 3-33 Declaring variables for the activity

Declaring Variables (continued)

Code Syntax

```
numberOfTickets = Integer.parseInt(tickets.getText( ).toString( ));
```

- **GetText() Method**
 - Read data stored in the EditText control with the **GetText()** method
 - Data is read in as a string, by default
 - A **Parse** class is used to convert strings into numbers

Numerical Data Type	Parse Types
Integer	Integer.parseInt()
Float	Float.parseFloat()
Double	Double.parseDouble()
Long	Long.parseLong()

Table 3-4 Parse type conversions

Declaring Variables (continued)

The `GetText()` method extracts the text from tickets, converts the string to an integer, and assigns the value to `numberOfTickets` (Figure 3-34).

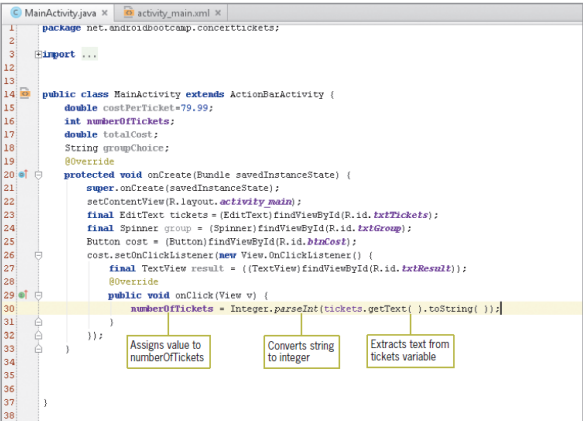


Figure 3-34 Converting a string to an integer

Working with Mathematical Operations

Arithmetic Operators

Arithmetic Operator	Use	Assignment Statement
+	Addition	value = itemPrice + itemTax;
-	Subtraction	score = previousScore - 2;
*	Multiplication	totalCost = costPerTicket * numberOfTickets;
/	Division	average = totalGrade / 5.0;
%	Remainder	leftover = widgetAmount % 3; If widgetAmount = 11 the remainder = 2
++	Increment (adds 1)	golfScore ++
--	Decrement (subtracts 1)	points --

Table 3-5 Java arithmetic operators

Highest to Lowest Precedence	Description
()	Parentheses
++ --	Left to right
* / %	Left to right
+ -	Left to right

Table 3-6 Order of operations

Working with Mathematical Operations

(continued)

- **Formatting Numbers**
 - Currency format requires a dollar sign, a comma (if needed), a decimal point, and two decimal places
 - Java has a class called **DecimalFormat** that provides patterns, such as `$###,###.##` for displaying on the Android screen

Working with Mathematical Operations

(continued)

Code Syntax

```
DecimalFormat currency = new DecimalFormat("$###,###.##");
```

The equation computes the total cost of the tickets and *DecimalFormat* creates a currency format to use when the total cost is displayed (Figure 3-35).

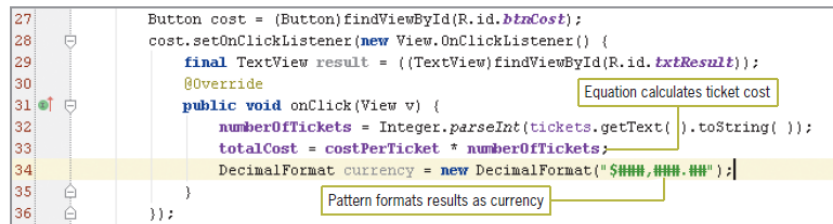


Figure 3-35 Calculating and formatting the ticket cost

Displaying Android Output

GetSelectedItem() Method

- The **GetSelectedItem()** method returns the text label of the currently selected Spinner item

Code Syntax

```
groupChoice = group.getSelectedItem().toString();
```

SetText () Method

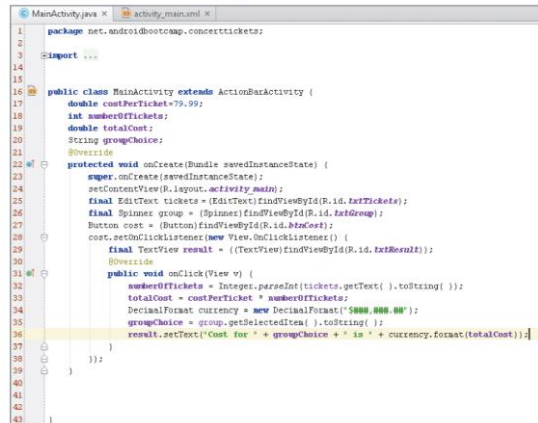
- The **SetText()** method displays text in a TextView control

Code Syntax

```
result.setText("Cost for " + groupChoice + " is " +
currency.format(totalCost));
```

Displaying Android Output

The `getSelectedItem()` method identifies the selected group and `setText()` displays the selected group with the total cost of the tickets (Figure 3-36).



```
1 package net.androidbootcamp.concerttickets;
2
3 import ...
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16 public class MainActivity extends ActionBarActivity {
17     double costPerTicket=79.99;
18     int numberOfTickets;
19     double totalCost;
20     String groupChoice;
21
22     @Override
23     protected void onCreate(Bundle savedInstanceState) {
24         super.onCreate(savedInstanceState);
25         setContentView(R.layout.activity_main);
26         final EditText tickets = (EditText)findViewById(R.id.txtTickets);
27         final Spinner group = (Spinner)findViewById(R.id.txtGroup);
28         Button cost = (Button)findViewById(R.id.btnCost);
29         cost.setOnClickListener(new View.OnClickListener() {
30             final TextView result = ((TextView)findViewById(R.id.txtResult));
31             @Override
32             public void onClick(View v) {
33                 numberOfTickets = Integer.parseInt(tickets.getText().toString());
34                 totalCost = costPerTicket * numberOfTickets;
35                 DecimalFormat currency = new DecimalFormat("$###,###.##");
36                 groupChoice = group.getSelectedItem().toString();
37                 result.setText("Cost for " + groupChoice + " is " + currency.format(totalCost));
38             }
39         });
40     }
41
42 }
43 }
```

Figure 3-36 Completed code

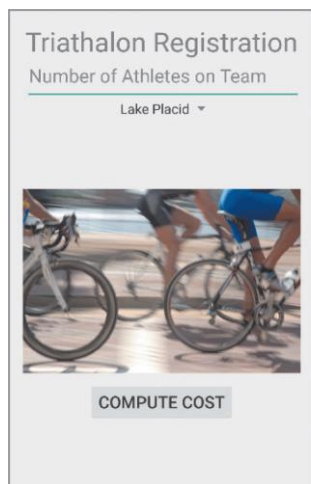
Summary

- Assign a theme to an Activity or an entire application to prevent apps from looking too similar
- Preview a theme by tapping or clicking the AppTheme button in the emulator, and then selecting a theme
- Use Text Fields to request input from users
- The strings.xml file is part of every Android application by default and contains strings used in the application, such as text displayed in a TextView, Spinner, or Button control
- To provide guidelines so users enter the correct data in a Text Field control, use the control's hint property to display light-colored text, also called a watermark, describing what to enter

Summary

- To handle the input that users enter into a Text Field control, you use the EditText class, which extracts the text and converts it for use in the Java code
- To use a variable, you must first declare the variable and then assign a value to it
- After assigning variables to hold the values entered in controls, you often need to convert the values in the assigned variables to the correct data type so the values can be used in calculations

Practice 2



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- Prompt: Select a location
 - Lake Placid
 - Big Island Hawaii
 - Miami
- Compute cost
 - \$72/athlete