

HACKING WITH SWIFT



PROJECTS 1-39

Learn to make iOS apps
with real projects

Paul Hudson

Hacking with Swift

Paul Hudson

Contents

Preface	13
About this book	
Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners	18
How to install Xcode and create a playground	
Variables and constants	
Types of Data	
Operators	
String interpolation	
Arrays	
Dictionaries	
Conditional statements	
Loops	
Switch case	
Functions	
Optionals	
Optional chaining	
Enumerations	
Structs	
Classes	
Properties	
Static properties and methods	
Access control	
Polymorphism and typecasting	
Closures	
Protocols	
Extensions	
Protocol extensions	
Wrap up	
Project 1: Storm Viewer	114
Setting up	
Listing images with FileManager	
Designing our interface	
Building a detail screen	
Loading images with UIImage	
Final tweaks: hidesBarsOnTap and large titles	

Wrap up

Project 2: Guess the Flag 160

Setting up

Designing your layout

Making the basic game work: UIButton and CALayer

Guess which flag: random numbers

From outlets to actions: creating an IBAction

Wrap up

Project 3: Social Media 191

About technique projects

UIActivityViewController explained

Wrap up

Project 4: Easy Browser 200

Setting up

Creating a simple browser with WKWebView

Choosing a website: UIAlertController action sheets

Monitoring page loads: UIToolbar and UIProgressView

Refactoring for the win

Wrap up

Project 5: Word Scramble 222

Setting up

Reading from disk: contentsOf

Pick a word, any word: UIAlertController

Prepare for submission: lowercased() and IndexPath

Checking for valid answers

Or else what?

Wrap up

Project 6: Auto Layout 252

Setting up

Advanced Auto Layout

Auto Layout in code: addConstraints with Visual Format Language

Auto Layout metrics and priorities: constraints(withVisualFormat:)

Auto Layout anchors

Wrap up

Project 7: Whitehouse Petitions	271
Setting up	
Creating the basic UI: UITabBarController	
Parsing JSON using the Codable protocol	
Rendering a petition: loadHTMLString	
Finishing touches: didFinishLaunchingWithOptions	
Wrap up	
Project 8: 7 Swifty Words	296
Setting up	
Building a UIKit user interface programmatically	
Loading a level and adding button targets	
It's play time: firstIndex(of:) and joined()	
Property observers: didSet	
Wrap up	
Project 9: Grand Central Dispatch	330
Setting up	
Why is locking the UI bad?	
GCD 101: async()	
Back to the main thread: DispatchQueue.main	
Easy GCD using performSelector(inBackground:)	
Wrap up	
Project 10: Names to Faces	344
Setting up	
Designing UICollectionView cells	
UICollectionView data sources	
Importing photos with UIImagePickerController	
Custom subclasses of NSObject	
Connecting up the people	
Wrap up	
Project 11: Pachinko	367
Setting up	
Falling boxes: SKSpriteNode, UITouch, SKPhysicsBody	
Bouncing balls: circleOfRadius	
Spinning slots: SKAction	
Collision detection: SKPhysicsContactDelegate	
Scores on the board: SKLabelNode	
Special effects: SKEmitterNode	

Wrap up

Project 12: UserDefaults 397

Setting up

Reading and writing basics: UserDefaults

Fixing Project 10: NSCoder

Fixing Project 10: Codable

Wrap up

Project 13: Instafilter 412

Setting up

Designing the interface

Importing a picture

Applying filters: CIContext, CIFilter

Saving to the iOS photo library

Wrap up

Project 14: Whack-a-Penguin 432

Setting up

Getting up and running: SKCropNode

Penguin, show thyself: SKAction moveBy(x:y:duration:)

Whack to win: SKAction sequences

Wrap up

Project 15: Animation 455

Setting up

Preparing for action

Switch, case, animate: animate(withDuration:)

Transform: CGAffineTransform

Wrap up

Project 16: Capital Cities 468

Setting up

Up and running with MapKit

Annotations and accessory views: MKPinAnnotationView

Wrap up

Project 17: Space Race 479

Setting up

Space: the final frontier
Bring on the enemies: Timer, linearDamping, angularDamping
Making contact: didBegin()
Wrap up

Project 18: Debugging 492

Setting up
Basic Swift debugging using print()
Debugging with assert()
Debugging with breakpoints
View debugging
Wrap up

Project 19: JavaScript Injection 503

Setting up
Making a shell app
Adding an extension: NSExtensionItem
What do you want to get?
Establishing communication
Editing multiline text with UITextView
Fixing the keyboard: NotificationCenter
Wrap up

Project 20: Fireworks Night 526

Setting up
Ready... aim... fire: Timer and follow()
Swipe to select
Making things go bang: SKEmitterNode
Wrap up

Project 21: Local Notifications 546

Setting up
Scheduling notifications: UNUserNotificationCenter and UNNotificationRequest
Acting on responses
Wrap up

Project 22: Detect-a-Beacon 560

Setting up
Requesting location: Core Location
Hunting the beacon: CLBeaconRegion

Wrap up

Project 23: Swifty Ninja 575

Setting up

Basics quick start: SKShapeNode

Shaping up for action: CGPath and UIBezierPath

Enemy or bomb: AVAudioPlayer

Follow the sequence

Slice to win

Game over, man: SKTexture

Wrap up

Project 24: Swift Strings 613

Setting up

Strings are not arrays

Working with strings in Swift

Formatting strings with NSAttributedString

Wrap up

Project 25: Selfie Share 626

Setting up

Importing photos again

Going peer to peer: MCSession, MCBrowserViewController

Invitation only: MCPeerID

Wrap up

Project 26: Marble Maze 643

Setting up

Loading a level: categoryBitMask, collisionBitMask, contactTestBitMask

Tilt to move: CMMotionManager

Contacting but not colliding

Wrap up

Project 27: Core Graphics 663

Setting up

Creating the sandbox

Drawing into a Core Graphics context with UIGraphicsImageRenderer

Ellipses and checkerboards

Transforms and lines

Images and text

Wrap up

Project 28: Secret Swift 686

Setting up

Creating a basic text editor

Writing somewhere safe: the iOS keychain

Touch to activate: Touch ID, Face ID and LocalAuthentication

Wrap up

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys 701

Setting up

Building the environment: SKTexture and filling a path

Mixing UIKit and SpriteKit: UISlider and SKView

Unleash the bananas: SpriteKit texture atlases

Destructible terrain: presentScene()

Wrap up

Project 30: Instruments 735

Setting up

What are we working with?

What can Instruments tell us?

Fixing the bugs: slow shadows

Fixing the bugs: wasted allocations

Fixing the bugs: Running out of memory

Wrap up

Project 31: Multibrowser 756

Setting up

UIStackView by example

Adding views to UIStackView with addArrangedSubview()

Removing views from a UIStackView with removeArrangedSubview()

iPad multitasking

Wrap up

Project 32: SwiftSearcher 779

Setting up

Automatically resizing UITableViewCells with Dynamic Type and
NSAttributedString

How to use SFSafariViewController to browse a web page

How to add Core Spotlight to index your app content

Wrap up

Project 33: What's that Whistle? 802

Setting up

Recording from the microphone with AVAudioRecorder

Animating UIStackView subview layout

Writing to iCloud with CloudKit: CKRecord and CKAsset

A hands-on guide to the CloudKit dashboard

Reading from iCloud with CloudKit: CKQueryOperation and NSPredicate

Working with CloudKit records: CKRecord.Reference, fetch(withRecordID:), and save()

Delivering notifications with CloudKit push messages: CKQuerySubscription

Wrap up

Project 34: Four in a Row 872

Setting up

Creating the interface with UIStackView

Preparing for basic play

Adding in players: GKGameModelPlayer

Detecting wins and draws in Four in a Row

How GameplayKit AI works: GKGameModel, GKGameModelPlayer and GKGameModelUpdate

Implementing GKGameModel: gameModelUpdates(for:) and apply()

Creating a GameplayKit AI using GKMInmaxStrategist

Wrap up

Project 35: Random Numbers 915

Setting up

Generating random numbers without GameplayKit

Generating random numbers with GameplayKit: GKRandomSource

Choosing a random number source: GKARC4RandomSource and other GameplayKit options

Shaping GameplayKit random numbers: GKRandomDistribution, GKShuffledDistribution and GKGaussianDistribution

Shuffling an array with GameplayKit: arrayByShufflingObjects(in:)

Wrap up

Project 36: Crashy Plane 933

Setting up

Creating a player: resizeFill vs aspectFill

Sky, background and ground: parallax scrolling with SpriteKit

Creating collisions
Pixel-perfect physics in SpriteKit, plus explosions and more
Background music with SKAudioNode, an intro, plus game over
Optimizing SpriteKit physics
Wrap up

Project 37: Psychic Tester 970

Setting up
Laying out the cards: addChildViewController()
Animating a 3D flip effect using transition(with:)
Adding a CAGradientLayer with IBDesignable and IBInspectable
Creating a particle system using CAEmitterLayer
Wiggling cards and background music with AVAudioPlayer
How to measure touch strength using 3D Touch
Communicating between iOS and watchOS: WCSession
Designing a simple watchOS app to receive data
Wrap up

Project 38: GitHub Commits 1011

Setting up
Designing a Core Data model
Adding Core Data to our project: NSPersistentContainer
Creating an NSManagedObject subclass with Xcode
Loading Core Data objects using NSFetchedRequest and NSSortDescriptor
How to make a Core Data attribute unique using constraints
Examples of using NSPredicate to filter NSFetchedRequest
Adding Core Data entity relationships: lightweight vs heavyweight migration
How to delete a Core Data object
Optimizing Core Data Performance using NSFetchedResultsController
Wrap up

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest 1070

Setting up
Creating our first unit test using XCTest
Loading our data and splitting up words: filter()
Counting unique strings in an array
measure(): How to optimize our slow code and adjust the baseline
Filtering using functions as parameters
Updating the user interface with filtering
User interface testing with XCTest
Wrap up

Preface

About this book

The **Hacking with Swift** tutorial series is designed to make it easy for beginners to get started coding for iPad and iPhone using the Swift programming language.

Hacking with Swift's teaching styling is extremely *hands-on*, which means nearly everything you learn from me will have a direct, practical application to something we're working on. That way, your brain can see exactly why a certain technique is helpful and you can start using it straight away.

This book has been written on the back of my personal motto: "Programming is an art. Don't spend all your time sharpening your pencil when you should be drawing." We'll be doing some "sharpening" but a heck of a lot more "drawing" – if that doesn't suit your way of learning, you should exit now.

The three golden rules

The series is crafted around a few basic tenets, and it's important you understand them before continuing:

1. Follow the series: The tutorials are designed to be used in order, starting at the beginning and working through to the end. The reason for this is that concepts are introduced sequentially on a need-to-know basis – you only learn about something when you really have to in order to make the project work.
2. Don't skip the games and techniques: The tutorials follow a sequence: app, game, technique, app, game, technique, etc. That is, you develop an app, then you develop a game, then we focus on a particular iOS component together to help make your apps better. The apps and games are, of course, standalone projects that you can go on to develop as you wish, whereas the technique tutorials will often be used to improve or prepare you for other projects.
3. Get ready to hack: This is not designed to be the one-stop learning solution for all your Swift needs. It's called "Hacking with Swift" because the goal of each project is to reach the end with as little complication as possible – we're hacking, or playing around, with the

language, not trying to give you a degree in Computer Science.

I can't re-iterate that last point enough. What I have found time and time again is that any tutorial, no matter how carefully written or what audience it's aimed at, will fail to fit the needs of many possible readers.

You'd be surprised by how many people think the path to success is through reading books, attending classes or, well, doing pretty much anything except sitting down in front of a computer and typing. Not me. I believe the best way to learn something is to try to do it yourself and see how it goes.

Sure, going to classes might re-enforce what you've learned, or it might teach you some time-saving techniques, but ultimately I've met too many people with computing degrees who stumble when asked to write simple programs. Don't believe me? Try doing a Google search for "fizz buzz test", and you'll be surprised too.

So, dive in, make things, and please, please, please have fun – because if you're not enjoying yourself, Swift coding probably isn't for you.

To download the files for any Hacking with Swift project, or if you'd like to learn more about the series, visit the series website and see the full range: hackingwithswift.com.

If you spot any errors in this book, either typos or technical mistakes, please do let me know so I can correct them as soon as possible. The best way to get in touch is on Twitter [@twostraws](https://twitter.com/twostraws), but you can also email paul@hackingwithswift.com.

Xcode, Swift and iOS

I'm not going to talk much, because I want to get straight into coding. However, there are some points you do need to know:

- You should install the latest Xcode from the Mac App Store. It's free, and includes everything you need to make iOS apps in the iOS Simulator. Most of the projects in this series will be developed in the simulator, but a couple will require a device because the

Preface

technology isn't available in the simulator – things like the accelerometer, for example. Projects that require a device also require you to have an active iOS developer account with Apple so that you can deploy your project to a device.

- Swift is a relatively new language, and is evolving quickly. Every new release of Xcode seems to change something or other, and often that means code that used to work now no longer does. At the time of writing, Swift is mature enough that the changes are relatively minor, so hopefully you can make them yourself. If not, check to see if there's an update of the project files on hackingwithswift.com.
- These projects are designed to work with iOS 12.0 or later, which is the version that runs on the majority of devices. You can downgrade them to 11.0 with relatively few changes if you desperately want to maximize your reach, but it's really not worth it at this point.

Important note: if any bugs are found in the project files, or if Swift updates come out that force syntax changes, I'm going to be making changes to the projects on the website and updating this book as needed. Please make sure you read the release notes for each project to see what's changed, and **follow me on Twitter @twostraws** if you want to be notified of updates.

I'm also happy to answer questions on Twitter if you encounter problems, so please feel free to get in touch!

Swift, the Swift logo, Xcode, Instruments, Cocoa Touch, Touch ID, AirDrop, iBeacon, iMessage, iPhone, iPad, Safari, App Store, Mac and macOS are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the U.S. and other countries.

Hacking with Swift is copyright Paul Hudson. All rights reserved. No part of this book or corresponding materials (such as text, images, or source code) may be reproduced or distributed by any means without prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Frequent Flyer Club

You can buy Swift tutorials from anywhere, but I'm pleased, proud, and very grateful that you chose mine. I want to say thank you, and the best way I have of doing that is by giving you

bonus content above and beyond what you paid for – you deserve it!

Every book contains a word that unlocks bonus content for Frequent Flyer Club members. The word for this book is **VECTOR**. Enter that word, along with words from any other Hacking with Swift books, here: <https://www.hackingwithswift.com/frequent-flyer>

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my daughter Charlotte, aka "Bonk", who has provided lots of hugs and lots of happiness at every point in its creation.

Introduction

If you want to learn the language all at once before you start making apps, this is for you.

How to install Xcode and create a playground

Xcode is Apple's programming application for developers. It's free from the Mac App Store, and it's required to do development for Apple's platforms. So, your first action is to [click here to install Xcode from the Mac App Store](#) – it's quite a big download, so start downloading it now and carry on reading.

While that's downloading, I can explain a couple of the absolute basics to you:

- **iOS** is the name of the operating system that runs on all iPhones and iPads. It's responsible for all the basic operations of the phone, such as making phone calls, drawing on the screen, and running apps.
- **macOS** is the name for Apple's desktop operating system, which is the technological grandparent of iOS, tvOS, and even watchOS.
- **watchOS** is the name for Apple's tiniest operating system, and is responsible for running native apps and also delivering notifications from the phone.
- **Swift** is Apple's modern programming language that lets you write apps for iOS, macOS, and other platforms. It contains the functionality for building programs, but doesn't handle anything like user interfaces, audio or networking.
- **Swift 1.2** was the first major update to Swift, tweaking various language features and improving others.
- **Swift 2** was the second major update to Swift, introducing checked exceptions, and many other major improvements.
- **Swift 2.2** was a minor update to Swift 2.0, deprecating some syntax ahead of its removal in Swift 3.
- **Swift 3** is the third major update to Swift, and brought a huge number of naming changes to make the language easier and more natural to write.
- **Swift 4** is the fourth major update to Swift, and focused mainly on new features that helped make the language more expressive.
- **UIKit** is Apple's user interface toolkit. It contains things like buttons, text boxes,

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

navigation controls and more, and you drive it using Swift.

- **AppKit** is Apple's user interface toolkit for macOS. Like UIKit it contains things like buttons, text boxes, and more, although focused on macOS rather than iOS.
- **WatchKit** is Apple's user interface toolkit for watchOS. While UIKit and AppKit have much in common, WatchKit is significantly different – and significantly simpler.
- **Cocoa Touch** is the name commonly used for Apple's vast collection of frameworks for iOS. It includes UIKit to do user interfaces, but most people would say it also includes SpriteKit for making 2D games, SceneKit for making 3D games, MapKit for maps, Core Graphics for drawing, Core Animation for animating things, and much more.
- **Cocoa** is the name used for Apple's framework collection on macOS. Strictly speaking it's made up of AppKit for user interface, Foundation for basic functionality, and Core Data for object graphs, but like Cocoa Touch it's often used to mean “all of macOS development.”
- **NeXTSTEP** is an operating system created by a company that Steve Jobs founded called NeXT. It was bought by Apple, at which point Jobs was placed back in control of the company, and put NeXTSTEP technology right into the core of Apple's development platform.
- **iOS Simulator** is a tool that comes with Xcode that looks and works almost exactly like a real iPhone or iPad. It lets you test iOS apps very quickly without having to use a real device.
- **Playgrounds** are miniature Swift testing environments that let you type code and see the results immediately. You don't build real apps with them, but they are great for learning. We'll be using playgrounds in this introduction.
- **Crashes** are when your code goes disastrously wrong and your app cannot recover. If a user is running your app it will just disappear and they'll be back on the home screen. If you're running in Xcode, you'll see a crash report.
- **Taylor Swift** has nothing to do with the Swift programming language. This is a shame, as you might imagine, but I'll try to make up for this shortfall by using her songs in this tutorial. Deal with it.

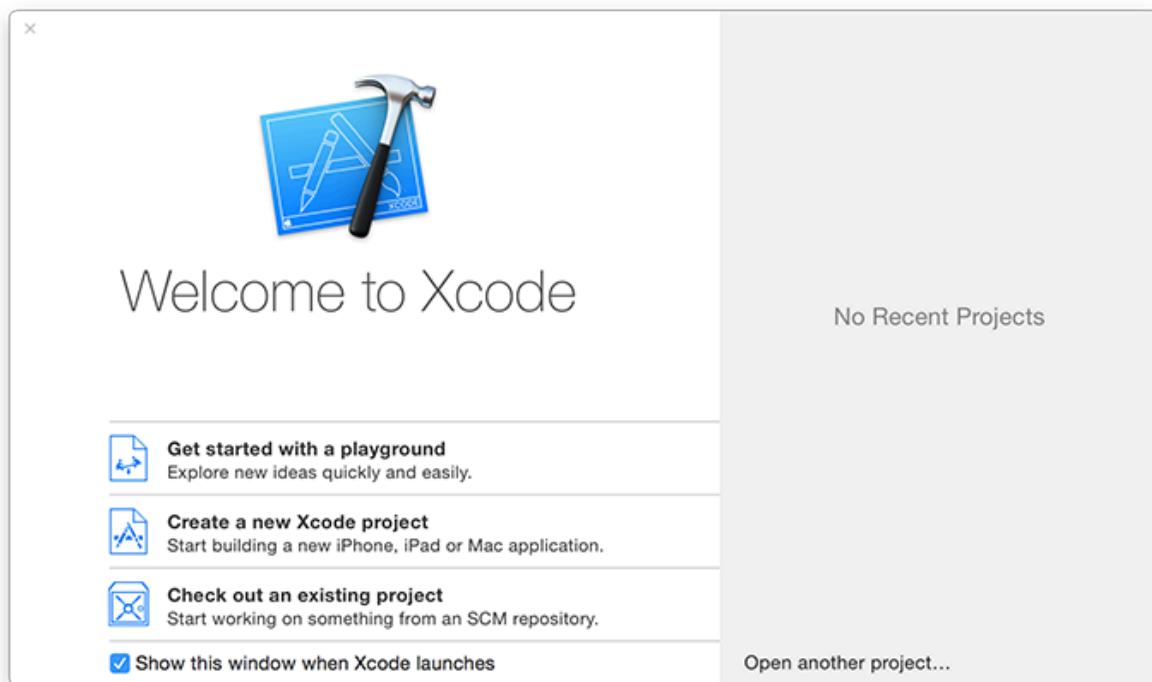
That's it for the basics – if Xcode still hasn't finished downloading then why not watch some Taylor Swift videos while you wait? The examples in this tutorial will certainly make a lot

more sense...

Got Xcode installed? OK! Let's do this...

Introduction to Swift playgrounds

When you launch Xcode, you'll see something like the picture below. Look for the "Get started with a playground" button on the lower left, and click that.



Xcode will ask you whether you want to create a playground for iOS or macOS, but it doesn't matter here – this introduction is almost exclusively about the Swift language, with no user interface components. For the avoidance of problems, leave “iOS” selected for the platform. You’ll see a list of playground templates you can choose from, but we’re going to start small here so please choose Blank.

Finally, Xcode will ask you to name your playground – the default name of "MyPlayground" is fine, so go ahead and click Create.

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

What you'll see is a window split in two. On the left you'll see this:

```
//: Playground - noun: a place where people can play

import UIKit

var str = "Hello, playground"
```

And on the right, once Xcode has built and run the code, you'll see this: "Hello, playground". Note that build and running the code takes 10 seconds or so the first time, but is fast otherwise – Xcode has to launch a mini simulator behind the scenes.

This split is important, because it divides code and results. The code is in the left pane, and you will edit this to do your own Swift work as we go. The results are in the right pane, and it shows you what your Swift code has done. In this case, it's telling us that we successfully set the value "Hello, playground."

You will also notice that the very first line of the playground starts with two slashes, //. When Swift sees two slashes like that, it ignores everything after them on a line. This is commonly used for comments: notes that you write into your code to help you understand what it does later.

As you type, the playground may automatically run your code and show the updated results. For example, if you just write **str** by itself, you'll see "Hello, Playground" twice on the right – once because it's being set, and once because you're printing the value. If it doesn't run your code for you, press the Play button near the bottom of the playground window.

Playgrounds are a great way to try some code and see the results immediately. They are extremely powerful too, as you'll see over the next hour or so. Let's get started writing Swift!

Variables and constants

Every useful program needs to store data at some point, and in Swift there are two ways to do it: variables and constants. A variable is a data store that can have its value changed whenever you want, and a constant is a data store that you set once and can never change. So, variables have values that can vary, and constants have values that are constant – easy, right?

Having both these options might seem pointless, after all you could just create a variable then never change it – why does it need to be made a constant? Well, it turns out that many programmers are – shock! – less than perfect at programming, and we make mistakes.

One of the advantages of separating constants and variables is that Xcode will tell us if we've made a mistake. If we say, "make this date a constant, because I know it will never change" then 10 lines later try to change it, Xcode will refuse to build our app.

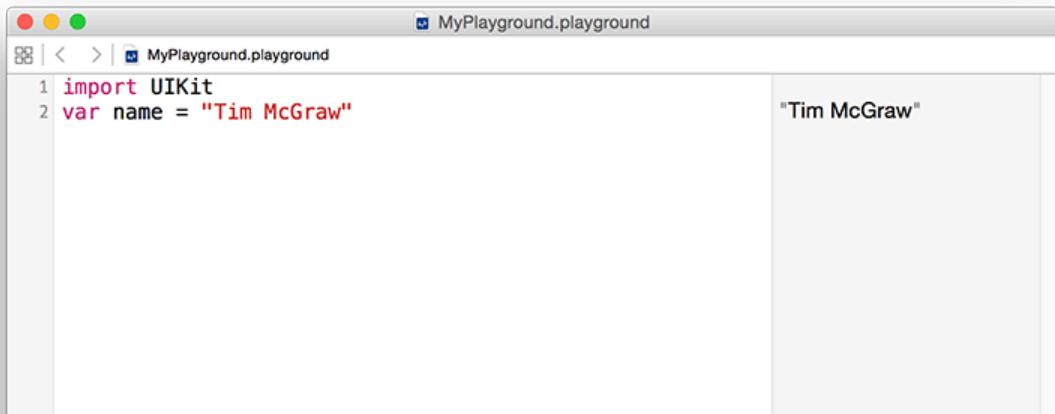
Constants are also important because they let Xcode make decisions about the way it builds your app. If it knows a value will never change, it is able to apply optimizations to make your code run faster.

In Swift, you make a variable using the **var** keyword, like this:

```
var name = "Tim McGraw"
```

Let's put that into a playground so you can start getting feedback. Delete everything in there apart from the **import UIKit** line (that's the bit that pulls in Apple's core iOS framework and it's needed later on), and add that variable. You should see the picture below.

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

A screenshot of an Xcode playground window titled "MyPlayground.playground". The code area contains two lines of Swift code:

```
1 import UIKit
2 var name = "Tim McGraw"
```

The results area to the right shows the output of the second line: "Tim McGraw".

Because this is a variable, you can change it whenever you want, but you shouldn't use the **var** keyword each time – that's only used when you're declaring new variables. Try writing this:

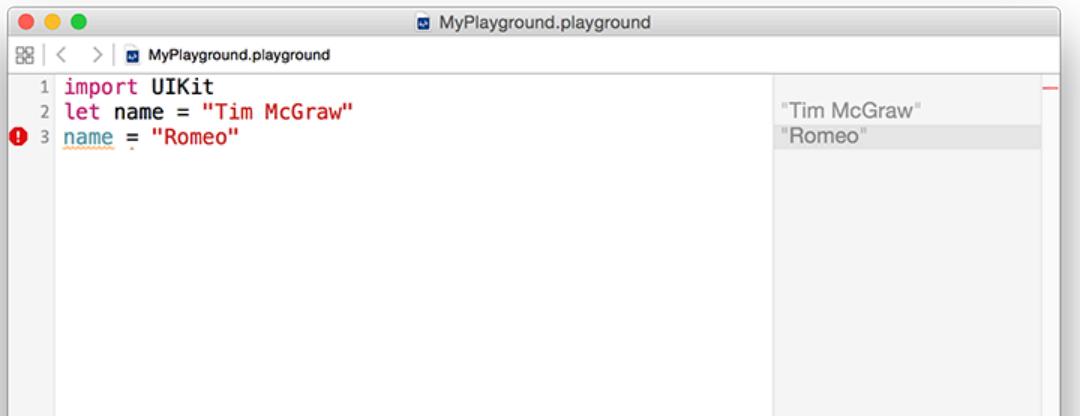
```
var name = "Tim McGraw"
name = "Romeo"
```

So, the first line creates the **name** variable and gives it an initial value, then the second line updates the **name** variable so that its value is now "Romeo". You'll see both values printed in the results area of the playground.

Now, what if we had made that a constant rather than a variable? Well, constants use the **let** keyword rather than **var**, so you can change your first line of code to say **let name** rather than **var name** like this:

```
import UIKit
let name = "Tim McGraw"
name = "Romeo"
```

But now there's a problem: Xcode is showing a red warning symbol next to line three, and it should have drawn a squiggly underline underneath your code. If you click the red warning symbol, Xcode will tell you the problem: "Cannot assign to 'let' value 'name'" – which is Xcode-speak for "you're trying to change a constant and you can't do that."



So, constants are a great way to make a promise to Swift and to yourself that a value won't change, because if you do try to change it Xcode will refuse to run. Swift developers have a strong preference to use constants wherever possible because it makes your code easier to understand. In fact, in the very latest versions of Swift, Xcode will actually tell you if you make something a variable then never change it!

Important note: variable and constant names must be unique in your code. You'll get an error if you try to use the same variable name twice, like this:

```
var name = "Tim McGraw"
var name = "Romeo"
```

If the playground finds an error in your code, it will either flag up a warning in a red box, or will just refuse to run. You'll know if the latter has happened because the text in the results pane has gone gray rather than its usual black.

Types of Data

There are lots of kinds of data, and Swift handles them all individually. You already saw one of the most important types when you assigned some text to a variable, but in Swift this is called a **String** – literally a string of characters.

Strings can be long (e.g. a million letters or more), short (e.g. 10 letters) or even empty (no letters), it doesn't matter: they are all strings in Swift's eyes, and all work the same. Swift knows that **name** should hold a string because you assign a string to it when you create it: "Tim McGraw". If you were to rewrite your code to this it would stop working:

```
var name  
name = "Tim McGraw"
```

This time Xcode will give you an error message that won't make much sense just yet: "Type annotation missing in pattern". What it means is, "I can't figure out what data type **name** is because you aren't giving me enough information."

At this point you have two options: either create your variable and give it an initial value on one line of code, or use what's called a type annotation, which is where you tell Swift what data type the variable will hold later on, even though you aren't giving it a value right now.

You've already seen how the first option looks, so let's look at the second: type annotations. We know that **name** is going to be a string, so we can tell Swift that by writing a colon then **String**, like this:

```
var name: String  
name = "Tim McGraw"
```

Note: some people like to put a space before and after the colon, making **var name : String**, but they are *wrong* and you should try to avoid mentioning their wrongness in polite company.

The lesson here is that Swift always wants to know what type of data every variable or constant will hold. Always. You can't escape it, and that's a good thing because it provides

something called type safety – if you say "this will hold a string" then later try and put a rabbit in there, Swift will refuse.

We can try this out now by introducing another important data type, called **Int**, which is short for "integer." Integers are round numbers like 3, 30, 300, or -16777216. For example:

```
var name: String  
name = "Tim McGraw"  
  
var age: Int  
age = 25
```

That declares one variable to be a string and one to be an integer. Note how both **String** and **Int** have capital letters at the start, whereas **name** and **age** do not – this is the standard coding convention in Swift. A coding convention is something that doesn't matter to Swift (you can write your names how you like!) but does matter to other developers. In this case, data types start with a capital letter, whereas variables and constants do not.

Now that we have variables of two different types, you can see type safety in action. Try writing this:

```
name = 25  
age = "Tim McGraw"
```

In that code, you're trying to put an integer into a string variable, and a string into an integer variable – and, thankfully, Xcode will throw up errors. You might think this is pedantic, but it's actually quite helpful: you make a promise that a variable will hold one particular type of data, and Xcode will enforce that throughout your work.

Before you go on, please delete those two lines of code causing the error, otherwise nothing in your playground will work going forward!

Float and Double

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

Let's look at two more data types, called **Float** and **Double**. This is Swift's way of storing numbers with a fractional component, such as 3.1, 3.141, 3.1415926, and -16777216.5. There are two data types for this because you get to choose how much accuracy you want, but most of the time it doesn't matter so the official Apple recommendation is always to use **Double** because it has the highest accuracy.

Try putting this into your playground:

```
var latitude: Double  
latitude = 36.166667  
  
var longitude: Float  
longitude = -86.783333
```

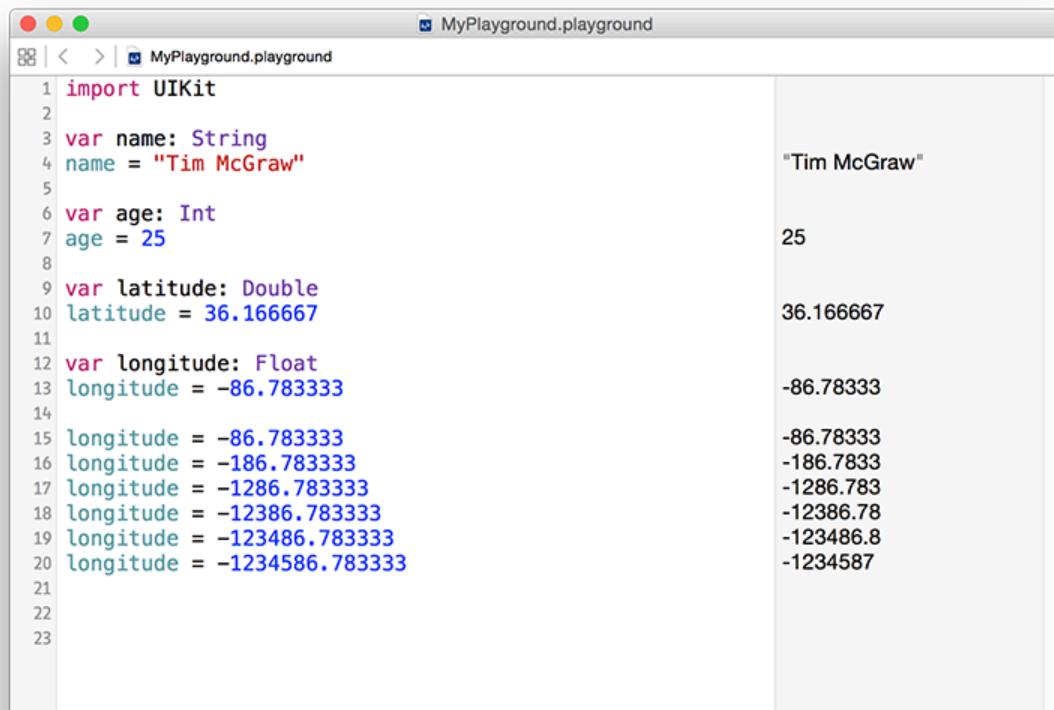
You can see both numbers appear on the right, but look carefully because there's a tiny discrepancy. We said that **longitude** should be equal to -86.78333, but in the results pane you'll see -86.78333 – it's missing one last 3 on the end. Now, you might well say, "what does 0.000003 matter among friends?" but this is ably demonstrating what I was saying about accuracy.

Because these playgrounds update as you type, we can try things out so you can see exactly how **Float** and **Double** differ. Try changing the code to be this:

```
var longitude: Float  
longitude = -86.78333  
longitude = -186.78333  
longitude = -1286.78333  
longitude = -12386.78333  
longitude = -123486.78333  
longitude = -1234586.78333
```

That's adding increasing numbers before the decimal point, while keeping the same amount of numbers after. But if you look in the results pane you'll notice that as you add more numbers

before the point, Swift is removing numbers after. This is because it has limited space in which to store your number, so it's storing the most important part first – being off by 1,000,000 is a big thing, whereas being off by 0.000003 is less so.



The screenshot shows an Xcode playground window titled "MyPlayground.playground". The code in the left pane is:

```

1 import UIKit
2
3 var name: String
4 name = "Tim McGraw"
5
6 var age: Int
7 age = 25
8
9 var latitude: Double
10 latitude = 36.166667
11
12 var longitude: Float
13 longitude = -86.783333
14
15 longitude = -86.783333
16 longitude = -186.783333
17 longitude = -1286.783333
18 longitude = -12386.783333
19 longitude = -123486.783333
20 longitude = -1234586.783333
21
22
23

```

The right pane shows the output of the code. The variables are listed with their values:

Variable	Value
name	"Tim McGraw"
age	25
latitude	36.166667
longitude (Float)	-86.783333
longitude (Double)	-86.783333
longitude (Double)	-186.783333
longitude (Double)	-1286.783333
longitude (Double)	-12386.783333
longitude (Double)	-123486.783333
longitude (Double)	-1234586.783333

Now try changing the **Float** to be a **Double** and you'll see Swift prints the correct number out every time:

```
var longitude: Double
```

This is because, again, **Double** has twice the accuracy of **Float** so it doesn't need to cut your number to fit. Doubles still have limits, though – if you were to try a massive number like 123456789.123456789 you would see it gets cut down to 123456789.1234568.

Boolean

Swift has a built-in data type that can store whether a value is true or false, called a **Bool**, short for Boolean. Booleans don't have space for "maybe" or "perhaps", only absolutes: true or false.

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

For example:

```
var stayOutTooLate: Bool  
stayOutTooLate = true  
  
var nothingInBrain: Bool  
nothingInBrain = true  
  
var missABeat: Bool  
missABeat = false
```

Tip: You'll notice these variables are written in a very particular way: we don't write **MissABeat**, **missabeat**, or other such variations, but instead make the initial letter lowercase then capitalize the first letter of the second and subsequent words. This is called "camel case" because it looks a bit like the humps of a camel, and it's used to make it easier to read words in variable names.

Using type annotations wisely

As you've learned, there are two ways to tell Swift what type of data a variable holds: assign a value when you create the variable, or use a type annotation. If you have a choice, the first is always preferable because it's clearer. For example:

```
var name = "Tim McGraw"
```

...is preferred to:

```
var name: String  
name = "Tim McGraw"
```

This applies to all data types. For example:

```
var age = 25  
var longitude = -86.783333
```

```
var nothingInBrain = true
```

This technique is called *type inference*, because Swift can infer what data type should be used for a variable by looking at the type of data you want to put in there. When it comes to numbers like -86.783333, Swift will always infer a **Double** rather than a **Float**.

For the sake of completeness, I should add that it's possible to specify a data type and provide a value at the same time, like this:

```
var name: String = "Tim McGraw"
```

Operators

Operators are those little symbols you learned in your very first math classes: + to add, - to subtract, * to multiply, / to divide, = to assign value, and so on. They all exist in Swift, along with a few extras.

Let's try a few basics – please type this into your playground:

```
var a = 10  
a = a + 1  
a = a - 1  
a = a * a
```

In the results pane, you'll see 10, 11, 10 and 100 respectively. Now try this:

```
var b = 10  
b += 10  
b -= 10
```

`+=` is an operator that means "add then assign to." In our case it means "take the current value of `b`, add 10 to it, then put the result back into `b`." As you might imagine, `-=` does the same but subtracts rather than adds. So, that code will show 10, 20, 10 in the results pane.

Some of these operators apply to other data types. As you might imagine, you can add two doubles together like this:

```
var a = 1.1  
var b = 2.2  
var c = a + b
```

When it comes to strings, `+` will join them together. For example:

```
var name1 = "Tim McGraw"  
var name2 = "Romeo"
```

```
var both = name1 + " and " + name2
```

That will write "Tim McGraw and Romeo" into the results pane.

One more common operator you'll see is called modulus, and is written using a percent symbol: %. It means "divide the left hand number evenly by the right, and return the remainder." So, **9 % 3** returns 0 because 3 divides evenly into 9, whereas **10 % 3** returns 1, because 10 divides by 3 three times, with remainder 1.

Note: If you bought Hacking with Swift and are using the exclusive guide book accompaniment to the course, you'll find the modulus operator useful later on.

Comparison operators

Swift has a set of operators that perform comparisons on values. For example:

```
var a = 1.1
var b = 2.2
var c = a + b

c > 3
c >= 3
c > 4
c < 4
```

That shows off greater than (>), greater than or equal (>=), and less than (<). In the results window you'll see true, true, false, true – these are Booleans, because the answer to each of these statements can only ever be true or false.

If you want to check for equality, you can't use = because it already has a meaning: it's used to give a variable a value. So, Swift has an alternative in the form of ==, meaning "is equal to." For example:

```
var name = "Tim McGraw"
```

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

```
name == "Tim McGraw"
```

That will show "true" in the results pane. Now, one thing that might catch you out is that in Swift strings are case-sensitive, which means "Tim McGraw", "TIM McGRAW" and "TiM mCgRaW" are all considered different. If you use `==` to compare two strings, you need to make sure they have the same letter case.

There's one more operator I want to introduce you to, and it's called the "not" operator: `!`. Yes, it's just an exclamation mark. This makes your statement mean the opposite of what it did. For example:

```
var stayOutTooLate = true
stayOutTooLate
!stayOutTooLate
```

That will print out true, true, false – with the last value there because it flipped the previous true.

You can also use `!` with `=` to make `!=` or "not equal". For example:

```
var name = "Tim McGraw"
name == "Tim McGraw"
name != "Tim McGraw"
```

String interpolation

This is a fancy name for what is actually a very simple thing: combining variables and constants inside a string.

Clear out all the code you just wrote and leave only this:

```
var name = "Tim McGraw"
```

If we wanted to print out a message to the user that included their name, string interpolation is what makes that easy: you just write a backslash, then an open parenthesis, then your code, then a close parenthesis, like this:

```
var name = "Tim McGraw"  
"Your name is \(name)"
```

The results pane will now show "Your name is Tim McGraw" all as one string, because string interpolation combined the two for us.

Now, we could have written that using the + operator, like this:

```
var name = "Tim McGraw"  
"Your name is " + name
```

...but that's not as efficient, particularly if you're combining multiple variables together. In addition, string interpolation in Swift is smart enough to be able to handle a variety of different data types automatically. For example:

```
var name = "Tim McGraw"  
var age = 25  
var latitude = 36.166667  
  
"Your name is \(name), your age is \(age), and your latitude is  
\(latitude)"
```

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

Doing that using `+` is much more difficult, because Swift doesn't let you add integers and doubles to a string.

At this point your result may no longer fit in the results pane, so either resize your window or hover over the result and click the `+` button that appears to have it shown inline.

One of the powerful features of string interpolation is that everything between `\(` and `)` can actually be a full Swift expression. For example, you can do mathematics in there using operators, like this:

```
var age = 25
"You are \(age) years old. In another \(age) years you will be
\(age * 2)."
```

Arrays

Arrays let you group lots of values together into a single collection, then access those values by their position in the collection. Swift uses type inference to figure out what type of data your array holds, like so:

```
var evenNumbers = [2, 4, 6, 8]
var songs = ["Shake it Off", "You Belong with Me", "Back to
December"]
```

As you can see, Swift uses brackets to mark the start and end of an array, and each item in the array is separated with a comma.

When it comes to reading items out an array, there's a catch: Swift starts counting at 0. This means the first item is 0, the second item is 1, the third is 2, and so on. Try putting this into your playground:

```
var songs = ["Shake it Off", "You Belong with Me", "Back to
December"]
songs[0]
songs[1]
songs[2]
```

That will print "Shake it Off", "You Belong with Me", and "Back to December" in the results pane.

An item's position in an array is called its index, and you can read any item from the array just by providing its index. However, you do need to be careful: our array has three items in, which means indexes 0, 1 and 2 work great. But if you try and read `songs[3]` your playground will stop working – and if you tried that in a real app it would crash!

Because you've created your array by giving it three strings, Swift knows this is an array of strings. You can confirm this by using a special command in the playground that will print out

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

the data type of any variable, like this:

```
var songs = ["Shake it Off", "You Belong with Me", "Back to December"]
type(of: songs)
```

That will print **Array<String>.Type** into the results pane, telling you that Swift considers **songs** to be an array of strings.

Let's say you made a mistake, and accidentally put a number on the end of the array. Try this now and see what the results pane prints:

```
var songs = ["Shake it Off", "You Belong with Me", "Back to December", 3]
type(of: songs)
```

This time you'll see an error. The error isn't because Swift can't handle mixed arrays like this one – I'll show you how to do that in just a moment! – but instead because Swift is being helpful. The error message you'll see is, “heterogenous collection literal could only be inferred to '[Any]'; add explicit type annotation if this is intentional.” Or, in plain English, “it looks like this array is designed to hold lots of types of data – if you really meant that, please make it explicit.”

Type safety is important, and although it's neat that Swift can make arrays hold any kind of data this particular case was an accident. Fortunately, I've already said that you can use type annotations to specify exactly what type of data you want an array to store. To specify the type of an array, write the data type you want to store with brackets around it, like this:

```
var songs: [String] = ["Shake it Off", "You Belong with Me",
"Back to December", 3]
```

Now that we've told Swift we want to store only strings in the array, it will always refuse to run the code because 3 is not a string.

If you really want the array to hold any kind of data, use the special **Any** data type, like this:

```
var songs: [Any] = ["Shake it Off", "You Belong with Me", "Back to December", 3]
```

Creating arrays

If you make an array using the syntax shown above, Swift creates the array and fills it with the values we specified. Things aren't quite so straightforward if you want to create the array then fill it later – this syntax doesn't work:

```
var songs: [String]
songs[0] = "Shake it Off"
```

The reason is one that will seem needlessly pedantic at first, but has deep underlying performance implications so I'm afraid you're just stuck with it. Put simply, writing **var songs: [String]** tells Swift "the **songs** variable will hold an array of strings," but *it doesn't actually create that array*. It doesn't allocate any RAM, or do any of the work to actually create a Swift array. It just says that at some point there will be an array, and it will hold strings.

There are a few ways to express this correctly, and the one that probably makes most sense at this time is this:

```
var songs: [String] = []
```

That uses a type annotation to make it clear we want an array of strings, and it assigns an empty array (that's the `[]` part) to it.

You'll also commonly see this construct:

```
var songs = [String]()
```

That means the same thing: the `()` tells Swift we want to create the array in question, which is then assigned to **songs** using type inference. This option is two characters shorter, so it's no

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

surprise programmers prefer it!

Array operators

You can use a limited set of operators on arrays. For example, you can merge two arrays by using the + operator, like this:

```
var songs = ["Shake it Off", "You Belong with Me", "Love Story"]
var songs2 = ["Today was a Fairytale", "Welcome to New York",
    "Fifteen"]
var both = songs + songs2
```

You can also use += to add and assign, like this:

```
both += [ "Everything has Changed" ]
```

Dictionaries

As you've seen, Swift arrays are a collection where you access each item using a numerical index, such as **songs[0]**. Dictionaries are another common type of collection, but they differ from arrays because they let you access values based on a key you specify.

To give you an example, let's imagine how we might store data about a person in an array:

```
var person = ["Taylor", "Alison", "Swift", "December",
    "taylorswift.com"]
```

To read out that person's middle name, we'd use **person[1]**, and to read out the month they were born we'd use **person[3]**. This has a few problems, not least that it's difficult to remember what index number is assigned to each value in the array! And what happens if the person has no middle name? Chances are all the other values would move down one place, causing chaos in your code.

With dictionaries we can re-write this to be far more sensible, because rather than arbitrary numbers you get to read and write values using a key you specify. For example:

```
var person = ["first": "Taylor", "middle": "Alison", "last": "Swift",
    "month": "December", "website": "taylorswift.com"]
person["middle"]
person["month"]
```

It might help if I use lots of whitespace to break up the dictionary on your screen, like this:

```
var person = [
    "first": "Taylor",
    "middle": "Alison",
    "last": "Swift",
    "month": "December",
    "website": "taylorswift.com"
]
```

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

```
person["middle"]  
person["month"]
```

As you can see, when you make a dictionary you write its key, then a colon, then its value. You can then read any value from the dictionary just by knowing its key, which is much easier to work with.

As with arrays, you can store a wide variety of values inside dictionaries, although the keys are most commonly strings.

Conditional statements

Sometimes you want code to execute only if a certain condition is true, and in Swift that is represented primarily by the **if** and **else** statements. You give Swift a condition to check, then a block of code to execute if that condition is true.

You can optionally also write **else** and provide a block of code to execute if the condition is false, or even **else if** and have more conditions. A "block" of code is just a chunk of code marked with an open brace – { – at its start and a close brace – } – at its end.

Here's a basic example:

```
var action: String
var person = "hater"

if person == "hater" {
    action = "hate"
}
```

That uses the `==` (equality) operator introduced previously to check whether the string inside **person** is exactly equivalent to the string "hater". If it is, it sets the **action** variable to "hate". Note that open and close braces, also known by their less technical name of "curly brackets" – that marks the start and end of the code that will be executed if the condition is true.

Let's add **else if** and **else** blocks:

```
var action: String
var person = "hater"

if person == "hater" {
    action = "hate"
} else if person == "player" {
    action = "play"
} else {
```

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

```
    action = "cruise"  
}
```

That will check each condition in order, and only one of the blocks will be executed: a person is either a hater, a player, or anything else.

Evaluating multiple conditions

You can ask Swift to evaluate as many conditions as you want, but they all need to be true in order for Swift to execute the block of code. To check multiple conditions, use the **&&** operator – it means "and". For example:

```
var action: String  
var stayOutTooLate = true  
var nothingInBrain = true  
  
if stayOutTooLate && nothingInBrain {  
    action = "cruise"  
}
```

Because **stayOutTooLate** and **nothingInBrain** are both true, the whole condition is true, and **action** gets set to "cruise." Swift uses something called short-circuit evaluation to boost performance: if it is evaluating multiple things that all need to be true, and the first one is false, it doesn't even bother evaluating the rest.

Looking for the opposite of truth

This might sound deeply philosophical, but actually this is important: sometimes you care whether a condition is not true, i.e. is false. You can do this with the **!** (not) operator that was introduced earlier. For example:

```
if !stayOutTooLate && !nothingInBrain {  
    action = "cruise"
```

}

This time, the **action** variable will only be set if both **stayOutTooLate** and **nothingInBrain** are false – the **!** has flipped them around.

Loops

Computers are great at doing boring tasks billions of times in the time it took you to read this sentence. When it comes to repeating tasks in code, you can either copy and paste your code multiple times, or you can use *loops* – simple programming constructs that repeat a block of code for as long as a condition is true.

To demonstrate this, I want to introduce you to a special debugging function called **print()**: you give it some text to print, and it will print it. If you're running in a playground like we are, you'll see your text appear in the results window. If you're running a real app in Xcode, you'll see your text appear in Xcode's log window. Either way, **print()** is a great way to get a sneak peek at the contents of a variable.

Take a look at this code:

```
print("1 x 10 is \1 * 10")
print("2 x 10 is \2 * 10")
print("3 x 10 is \3 * 10")
print("4 x 10 is \4 * 10")
print("5 x 10 is \5 * 10")
print("6 x 10 is \6 * 10")
print("7 x 10 is \7 * 10")
print("8 x 10 is \8 * 10")
print("9 x 10 is \9 * 10")
print("10 x 10 is \10 * 10")
```

When it has finished running, you'll have the 10 times table in your playground results pane. But it's hardly efficient code, and in fact a much cleaner way is to loop over a range of numbers using what's called the closed range operator, which is three periods in a row: ...

Using the closed range operator, we could re-write that whole thing in three lines:

```
for i in 1...10 {
    print("\i x 10 is \i * 10")
```

```
}
```

The results pane just shows "(10 times)" for our loop, meaning that the loop was run 10 times. If you want to know what the loop actually did, click the square immediately to the right of "(10 times)". You'll see a box saying "10 x 10 is 100" appear inside your code, and if you right-click on that you should see the option "Value History". Click on that now, and you should see the picture below:

The screenshot shows an Xcode playground window titled "MyPlayground.playground". The code in the editor is as follows:

```

1 import UIKit
2
3 print("1 x 10 is \(1 * 10)")
4 print("2 x 10 is \(2 * 10)")
5 print("3 x 10 is \(3 * 10)")
6 print("4 x 10 is \(4 * 10)")
7 print("5 x 10 is \(5 * 10)")
8 print("6 x 10 is \(6 * 10)")
9 print("7 x 10 is \(7 * 10)")
10 print("8 x 10 is \(8 * 10)")
11 print("9 x 10 is \(9 * 10)")
12 print("10 x 10 is \(10 * 10)")
13
14 for i in 1...10 {
15     print("\(i) x 10 is \(i * 10)")
16 }

```

The results pane shows the output of the code. A callout bubble highlights the value history for the expression "10 x 10 is 100". The value history shows the results of each iteration of the loop:

- "1 x 10 is 10"
- "2 x 10 is 20"
- "3 x 10 is 30"
- "4 x 10 is 40"
- "5 x 10 is 50"
- "6 x 10 is 60"
- "7 x 10 is 70"
- "8 x 10 is 80"
- "9 x 10 is 90"
- "10 x 10 is 100"

The status bar at the bottom of the results pane indicates "(10 times)".

What the loop does is count from 1 to 10 (including 1 and 10), assigns that number to the constant **i**, then runs the block of code inside the braces.

If you don't need to know what number you're on, you can use an underscore instead. For example, we could print some Taylor Swift lyrics like this:

```

var str = "Fakers gonna"

for _ in 1 ... 5 {
    str += " fake"
}

```

```
print(str)
```

That will print "Fakers gonna fake fake fake fake fake" by adding to the string each time the loop goes around.

If Swift doesn't have to assign each number to a variable each time the loop goes around, it can run your code a little faster. As a result, if you write **for i in...** then don't use **i**, Xcode will suggest you change it to **_**.

There's a variant of the closed range operator called the half open range operator, and they are easily confused. The half open range operator looks like **..<<** and counts from one number up to and *excluding* another. For example, **1 ..< 5** will count 1, 2, 3, 4.

Looping over arrays

Swift provides a very simple way to loop over all the elements in an array. Because Swift already knows what kind of data your array holds, it will go through every element in the array, assign it to a constant you name, then run a block of your code. For example, we could print out a list of great songs like this:

```
var songs = ["Shake it Off", "You Belong with Me", "Look What You Made Me Do"]  
  
for song in songs {  
    print("My favorite song is \(song)")  
}
```

You can also use the **for i in** loop construct to loop through arrays, because you can use that constant to index into an array. We could even use it to index into two arrays, like this:

```
var people = ["players", "haters", "heart-breakers", "fakers"]  
var actions = ["play", "hate", "break", "fake"]
```

```
for i in 0 ... 3 {
    print("\(people[i]) gonna \(actions[i])")
}
```

You might wonder what use the half open range operator has, but it's particularly useful for working with arrays because they count from zero. So, rather than counting from 0 up to and including 3, we could count from 0 up to and *excluding* the number of items in an array.

Remember: they count from zero, so if they have 4 items the maximum index is 3, which is why we need to use *excluding* for the loop.

To count how many items are in an array, use `someArray.count`. So, we could rewrite our code like this:

```
var people = ["players", "haters", "heart-breakers", "fakers"]
var actions = ["play", "hate", "break", "fake"]

for i in 0 ..< people.count {
    print("\(people[i]) gonna \(actions[i])")
}
```

Inner loops

You can put loops inside loops if you want, and even loops inside loops inside loops – although you might suddenly find you're doing something 10 million times, so be careful!

We can combine two of our previous loops to create this:

```
var people = ["players", "haters", "heart-breakers", "fakers"]
var actions = ["play", "hate", "break", "fake"]

for i in 0 ..< people.count {
    var str = "\(people[i]) gonna"
    for j in 0 ..< actions.count {
        str += " \(actions[j])"
    }
    print(str)
}
```

```
for _ in 1 ... 5 {  
    str += " \(actions[i])"  
}  
  
print(str)  
}
```

That outputs "players gonna play play play play play", then "haters gonna..." Well, you get the idea.

One important note: although programmers conventionally use **i**, **j** and even **k** for loop constants, you can name them whatever you please: **for personNumber in 0 ..< people.count** is perfectly valid.

While loops

There's a third kind of loop you'll see, which repeats a block of code until you tell it to stop. This is used for things like game loops where you have no idea in advance how long the game will last – you just keep repeating "check for touches, animate robots, draw screen, check for touches..." and so on, until eventually the user taps a button to exit the game and go back to the main menu.

These loops are called **while** loops, and they look like this:

```
var counter = 0  
  
while true {  
    print("Counter is now \(counter)")  
    counter += 1  
  
    if counter == 556 {  
        break
```

```

    }
}

```

That code introduces a new keyword, called **break**. It's used to exit a **while** or **for** loop at a point you decide. Without it, the code above would never end because the condition to check is just "true", and true is always true. Without that **break** statement the loop is an infinite loop, which is A Bad Thing.

These **while** loops work best when you're using unknown data, such as downloading things from the internet, reading from a file such as XML, looking through user input, and so on. This is because you only know when to stop the loop after you've run it a sufficient number of times.

There is a counterpart to **break** called **continue**. Whereas breaking out of a loop stops execution immediately and continues directly after the loop, continuing a loop only exits the current iteration of the loop – it will jump back to the top of the loop and pick up from there.

As an example, consider the code below:

```

var songs = ["Shake it Off", "You Belong with Me", "Look What
You Made Me Do"]

for song in songs {
    if song == "You Belong with Me" {
        continue
    }

    print("My favorite song is \(song)")
}

```

That loops through three Taylor Swift songs, but it will only print the name of two. The reason for this is the **continue** keyword: when the loop tries to use the song "You Belong with Me", **continue** gets called, which means the loop immediately jumps back to the start – the **print()**

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

call is never made, and instead the loop continues straight on to “Look What You Made Me Do”.

Switch case

You've seen **if** statements and now loops, but Swift has another type of flow control called **switch/case**. It's easiest to think of this as being an advanced form of **if**, because you can have lots of matches and Swift will execute the right one.

In the most basic form of a **switch/case** you tell Swift what variable you want to check, then provide a list of possible cases for that variable. Swift will find the first case that matches your variable, then run its block of code. When that block finishes, Swift exits the whole **switch/case** block.

Here's a basic example:

```
let liveAlbums = 2

switch liveAlbums {
    case 0:
        print("You're just starting out")

    case 1:
        print("You just released iTunes Live From SoHo")

    case 2:
        print("You just released Speak Now World Tour")

    default:
        print("Have you done something new?")
}
```

We could very well have written that using lots of **if** and **else if** blocks, but this way is clearer and that's important.

One advantage to **switch/case** is that Swift will ensure your cases are exhaustive. That is, if

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

there's the possibility of your variable having a value you don't check for, Xcode will refuse to build your app.

In situations where the values are effectively open ended, like our **liveAlbums** integer, you need to include a **default** case to catch these potential values. Yes, even if you "know" your data can only fall within a certain range, Swift wants to be absolutely sure.

Swift can apply some evaluation to your case statements in order to match against variables. For example, if you wanted to check for a range of possible values, you could use the closed range operator like this:

```
let studioAlbums = 5

switch studioAlbums {
    case 0...1:
        print("You're just starting out")

    case 2...3:
        print("You're a rising star")

    case 4...5:
        print("You're world famous!")

    default:
        print("Have you done something new?")
}
```

One thing you should know is that **switch/case** blocks in Swift don't fall through like they do in some other languages you might have seen. If you're used to writing **break** in your **case** blocks, you should know this isn't needed in Swift.

Instead, you use the **fallthrough** keyword to make one case fall into the next – it's effectively the opposite. Of course, if you have no idea what any of this means, that's even better: don't

Switch case

worry about it!

Functions

Functions let you define re-usable pieces of code that perform specific pieces of functionality. Usually functions are able to receive some values to modify the way they work, but it's not required.

Let's start with a simple function:

```
func favoriteAlbum() {  
    print("My favorite is Fearless")  
}
```

If you put that code into your playground, nothing will be printed. And yes, it is correct. The reason nothing is printed is that we've placed the "My favorite is Fearless" message into a function called **favoriteAlbum()**, and that code won't be called until we ask Swift to run the **favoriteAlbum()** function. To do that, add this line of code:

```
favoriteAlbum()
```

That runs the function (or "calls" it), so now you'll see "My favorite is Fearless" printed out.

As you can see, you define a function by writing **func**, then your function name, then open and close parentheses, then a block of code marked by open and close braces. You then call that function by writing its name followed by an open and close parentheses.

Of course, that's a silly example – that function does the same thing no matter what, so there's no point in it existing. But what if we wanted to print a different album each time? In that case, we could tell Swift we want our function to accept a value when it's called, then use that value inside it.

Let's do that now:

```
func favoriteAlbum(name: String) {  
    print("My favorite is \(name)")
```

```
}
```

That tells Swift we want the function to accept one value (called a "parameter"), named "name", that should be a string. We then use string interpolation to write that favorite album name directly into our output message. To call the function now, you'd write this:

```
favoriteAlbum(name: "Fearless")
```

You might still be wondering what the point is, given that it's still just one line of code. Well, imagine we used that function in 20 different places around a big app, then your head designer comes along and tells you to change the message to "I love Fearless so much – it's my favorite!" Do you really want to find and change all 20 instances in your code? Probably not. With a function you change it once, and everything updates.

You can make your functions accept as many parameters as you want, so let's make it accept a name and a year:

```
func printAlbumRelease(name: String, year: Int) {
    print(" \(name) was released in \(year)")
}

printAlbumRelease(name: "Fearless", year: 2008)
printAlbumRelease(name: "Speak Now", year: 2010)
printAlbumRelease(name: "Red", year: 2012)
```

These function parameter names are important, and actually form part of the function itself. Sometimes you'll see several functions with the same name, e.g. **handle()**, but with different parameter names to distinguish the different actions.

External and internal parameter names

Sometimes you want parameters to be named one way when a function is called, but another way inside the function itself. This means that when you call a function it uses almost natural

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

English, but inside the function the parameters have sensible names. This technique is employed very frequently in Swift, so it's worth understanding now.

To demonstrate this, let's write a function that prints the number of letters in a string. This is available using the **count** property of strings, so we could write this:

```
func countLettersInString(string: String) {  
    print("The string \(string) has \(string.count) letters.")  
}
```

With that function in place, we could call it like this:

```
countLettersInString(string: "Hello")
```

While that certainly works, it's a bit wordy. Plus it's not the kind of thing you would say aloud: "count letters in string string hello".

Swift's solution is to let you specify one name for the parameter when it's being called, and another inside the method. To use this, just write the parameter name twice – once for external, one for internal.

For example, we could name the parameter **myString** when it's being called, and **str** inside the method, like this:

```
func countLettersInString(myString str: String) {  
    print("The string \(str) has \(str.count) letters.")  
}  
  
countLettersInString(myString: "Hello")
```

You can also specify an underscore, **_**, as the external parameter name, which tells Swift that it shouldn't have any external name at all. For example:

```
func countLettersInString(_ str: String) {
```

```

    print("The string \(str) has \(str.count) letters.")
}

countLettersInString("Hello")

```

As you can see, that makes the line of code read like an English sentence: “count letters in string hello”.

While there are many cases when using `_` is the right choice, Swift programmers generally prefer to name all their parameters. And think about it: why do we need the word “String” in the function – what else would we want to count letters on?

So, what you’ll commonly see is external parameter names like “in”, “for”, and “with”, and more meaningful internal names. So, the “Swifty” way of writing this function is like so:

```

func countLetters(in string: String) {
    print("The string \(string) has \(string.count) letters.")
}

```

That means you call the function with the parameter name “in”, which would be meaningless inside the function. However, *inside* the function the same parameter is called “string”, which is more useful. So, the function can be called like this:

```
countLetters(in: "Hello")
```

And *that* is truly Swifty code: “count letters in hello” reads like natural English, but the code is also clear and concise.

Return values

Swift functions can return a value by writing `->` then a data type after their parameter list. Once you do this, Swift will ensure that your function will return a value no matter what, so again this is you making a promise about what your code does.

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

As an example, let's write a function that returns true if an album is one of Taylor Swift's, or false otherwise. This needs to accept one parameter (the name of the album to check) and will return a Boolean. Here's the code:

```
func albumIsTaylor(name: String) -> Bool {  
    if name == "Taylor Swift" { return true }  
    if name == "Fearless" { return true }  
    if name == "Speak Now" { return true }  
    if name == "Red" { return true }  
    if name == "1989" { return true }  
  
    return false  
}
```

If you wanted to try your new **switch/case** knowledge, this function is a place where it would work well.

You can now call that by passing the album name in and acting on the result:

```
if albumIsTaylor(name: "Red") {  
    print("That's one of hers!")  
} else {  
    print("Who made that?!")  
}  
  
if albumIsTaylor(name: "Blue") {  
    print("That's one of hers!")  
} else {  
    print("Who made that?!")  
}
```

Optionals

Swift is a very safe language, by which I mean it works hard to ensure your code never fails in surprising ways.

One of the most common ways that code fails is when it tries to use data that is bad or missing. For example, imagine a function like this:

```
func getHaterStatus() -> String {  
    return "Hate"  
}
```

That function doesn't accept any parameters, and it returns a string: "Hate". But what if today is a particularly sunny day, and those haters don't feel like hating – what then? Well, maybe we want to return nothing: this hater is doing no hating today.

Now, when it comes to a string you might think an empty string is a great way to communicate nothing, and that might be true sometimes. But how about numbers – is 0 an "empty number"? Or -1?

Before you start trying to create imaginary rules for yourself, Swift has a solution: optionals. An optional value is one that might have a value or might not. Most people find optionals hard to understand, and that's OK – I'm going to try explaining it in several ways, so hopefully one will work.

For now, imagine a survey where you ask someone, "On a scale of 1 to 5 how awesome is Taylor Swift?" – what would someone answer if they had never heard of her? 1 would be unfairly slating her, and 5 would be praising her when they had no idea who Taylor Swift was. The solution is optionals: "I don't want to provide a number at all."

When we used `-> String` it means "this will definitely return a string," which means this function *cannot* return no value, and thus can be called safe in the knowledge that you'll always get a value back that you can use as a string. If we wanted to tell Swift that this function might return a value or it might not, we need to use this instead:

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

```
func getHaterStatus() -> String? {
    return "Hate"
}
```

Note the extra question mark: **String?** means “optional string.” Now, in our case we’re still returning “Hate” no matter what, but let’s go ahead and modify that function further: if the weather is sunny, the haters have turned over a new leaf and have given up their life of hating, so we want to return no value. In Swift, this “no value” has a special name: **nil**.

Change the function to this:

```
func getHaterStatus(weather: String) -> String? {
    if weather == "sunny" {
        return nil
    } else {
        return "Hate"
    }
}
```

That accepts one string parameter (the weather) and returns one string (hating status), but that return value might be there or it might not – it’s nil. In this case, it means we might get a string, or we might get nil.

Now for the important stuff: Swift wants your code to be really safe, and trying to use a nil value is a bad idea. It might crash your code, it might screw up your app logic, or it might make your user interface show the wrong thing. As a result, when you declare a value as being optional, Swift will make sure you handle it safely.

Let’s try this now: add these lines of code to your playground:

```
var status: String
status = getHaterStatus(weather: "rainy")
```

The first line creates a string variable, and the second assigns to it the value from `getHaterStatus()` – and today the weather is rainy, so those haters are hating for sure.

That code will not run, because we said that `status` is of type `String`, which requires a value, but `getHaterStatus()` might not provide one because it returns an optional string. That is, we said there would *definitely* be a string in `status`, but `getHaterStatus()` might return nothing at all. Swift simply will not let you make this mistake, which is extremely helpful because it effectively stops dead a whole class of common bugs.

To fix the problem, we need to make the `status` variable a `String?`, or just remove the type annotation entirely and let Swift use type inference. The first option looks like this:

```
var status: String?
status = getHaterStatus(weather: "rainy")
```

And the second like this:

```
var status = getHaterStatus(weather: "rainy")
```

Regardless of which you choose, that value might be there or might not, and by default Swift won't let you use it dangerously. As an example, imagine a function like this:

```
func takeHaterAction(status: String) {
    if status == "Hate" {
        print("Hating")
    }
}
```

That takes a string and prints a message depending on its contents. This function takes a `String` value, and *not* a `String?` value – you can't pass in an optional here, it wants a real string, which means we can't call it using the `status` variable.

Swift has two solutions. Both are used, but one is definitely preferred over the other. The first solution is called optional unwrapping, and it's done inside a conditional statement using

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

special syntax. It does two things at the same time: checks whether an optional has a value, and if so unwraps it into a non-optional type then runs a code block.

The syntax looks like this:

```
if let unwrappedStatus = status {  
    // unwrappedStatus contains a non-optional value!  
} else {  
    // in case you want an else block, here you go...  
}
```

These **if let** statements check and unwrap in one succinct line of code, which makes them very common. Using this method, we can safely unwrap the return value of **getHaterStatus()** and be sure that we only call **takeHaterAction()** with a valid, non-optional string. Here's the complete code:

```
func getHaterStatus(weather: String) -> String? {  
    if weather == "sunny" {  
        return nil  
    } else {  
        return "Hate"  
    }  
}  
  
func takeHaterAction(status: String) {  
    if status == "Hate" {  
        print("Hating")  
    }  
}  
  
if let haterStatus = getHaterStatus(weather: "rainy") {  
    takeHaterAction(status: haterStatus)  
}
```

If you understand this concept, you're welcome to skip down to the title that says "Force unwrapping optionals". If you're still not quite sure about optionals, carry on reading.

OK, if you're still here it means the explanation above either made no sense, or you sort of understood but could probably use some clarification. Optionals are used extensively in Swift, so you really do need to understand them. I'm going to try explaining again, in a different way, and hopefully that will help!

Here's a new function:

```
func yearAlbumReleased(name: String) -> Int {
    if name == "Taylor Swift" { return 2006 }
    if name == "Fearless" { return 2008 }
    if name == "Speak Now" { return 2010 }
    if name == "Red" { return 2012 }
    if name == "1989" { return 2014 }

    return 0
}
```

That takes the name of a Taylor Swift album, and returns the year it was released. But if we call it with the album name "Lantern" because we mixed up Taylor Swift with Hudson Mohawke (an easy mistake to make, right?) then it returns 0 because it's not one of Taylor's albums.

But does 0 make sense here? Sure, if the album was released back in 0 AD when Caesar Augustus was emperor of Rome, 0 might make sense, but here it's just confusing – people need to know ahead of time that 0 means "not recognized."

A much better idea is to re-write that function so that it either returns an integer (when a year was found) or nil (when nothing was found), which is easy thanks to optionals. Here's the new function:

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

```
func yearAlbumReleased(name: String) -> Int? {
    if name == "Taylor Swift" { return 2006 }
    if name == "Fearless" { return 2008 }
    if name == "Speak Now" { return 2010 }
    if name == "Red" { return 2012 }
    if name == "1989" { return 2014 }

    return nil
}
```

Now that it returns `nil`, we need to unwrap the result using `if let` because we need to check whether a value exists or not.

If you understand the concept now, you're welcome to skip down to the title that says “Force unwrapping optionals”. If you're still not quite sure about optionals, carry on reading.

OK, if you're still here it means you're really struggling with optionals, so I'm going to have one last go at explaining them.

Here's an array of names:

```
var items = ["James", "John", "Sally"]
```

If we wanted to write a function that looked in that array and told us the index of a particular name, we might write something like this:

```
func position(of string: String, in array: [String]) -> Int {
    for i in 0 ..< array.count {
        if array[i] == string {
            return i
        }
    }

    return 0
}
```

```
}
```

That loops through all the items in the array, returning its position if it finds a match, otherwise returning 0.

Now try running these four lines of code:

```
let jamesPosition = position(of: "James", in: items)
let johnPosition = position(of: "John", in: items)
let sallyPosition = position(of: "Sally", in: items)
let bobPosition = position(of: "Bob", in: items)
```

That will output 0, 1, 2, 0 – the positions of James and Bob are the same, even though one exists and one doesn't. This is because I used 0 to mean "not found." The easy fix might be to make -1 not found, but whether it's 0 or -1 you still have a problem because you have to remember that specific number means "not found."

The solution is optionals: return an integer if you found the match, or nil otherwise. In fact, this is exactly the approach the built-in "find in array" methods use: **someArray.firstIndex(of: someValue)**.

When you work with these "might be there, might not be" values, Swift forces you to unwrap them before using them, thus acknowledging that there might not be a value. That's what **if let** syntax does: if the optional has a value then unwrap it and use it, otherwise don't use it at all. You can't use a possibly-empty value by accident, because Swift won't let you.

If you're *still* not sure how optionals work, then the best thing to do is ask me on Twitter and I'll try to help: you can find me **@twostraws**.

Force unwrapping optionals

Swift lets you override its safety by using the exclamation mark character: **!**. If you know that an optional definitely has a value, you can force unwrap it by placing this exclamation mark after it.

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

Please be careful, though: if you try this on a variable that does not have a value, your code will crash.

To put together a working example, here's some foundation code:

```
func yearAlbumReleased(name: String) -> Int? {
    if name == "Taylor Swift" { return 2006 }
    if name == "Fearless" { return 2008 }
    if name == "Speak Now" { return 2010 }
    if name == "Red" { return 2012 }
    if name == "1989" { return 2014 }

    return nil
}

var year = yearAlbumReleased(name: "Red")

if year == nil {
    print("There was an error")
} else {
    print("It was released in \(year)")
}
```

That gets the year an album was released. If the album couldn't be found, `year` will be set to `nil`, and an error message will be printed. Otherwise, the year will be printed.

Or will it? Well, `yearAlbumReleased()` returns an optional integer, and this code doesn't use `if let` to unwrap that optional. As a result, it will print out the following: "It was released in `Optional(2012)`" – probably not what we wanted!

At this point in the code, we have already checked that we have a valid value, so it's a bit pointless to have another `if let` in there to safely unwrap the optional. So, Swift provides a solution – change the second `print()` call to this:

```
print("It was released in \(year!)")
```

Note the exclamation mark: it means "I'm certain this contains a value, so force unwrap it now."

Implicitly unwrapped optionals

You can also use this exclamation mark syntax to create implicitly unwrapped optionals, which is where some people really start to get confused. So, please read this carefully!

- A regular variable must contain a value. Example: **String** must contain a string, even if that string is empty, i.e. `""`. It *cannot* be nil.
- An *optional* variable might contain a value, or might not. It must be unwrapped before it is used. Example: **String?** might contain a string, or it might contain nil. The only way to find out is to unwrap it.
- An implicitly unwrapped optional might contain a value, or might not. But it does *not* need to be unwrapped before it is used. Swift won't check for you, so you need to be extra careful. Example: **String!** might contain a string, or it might contain nil – and it's down to you to use it appropriately. It's like a regular optional, but Swift lets you access the value directly without the unwrapping safety. If you try to do it, it means you know there's a value there – but if you're wrong your app will crash.

The main times you're going to meet implicitly unwrapped optionals is when you're working with user interface elements in UIKit on iOS or AppKit on macOS. These need to be declared up front, but you can't use them until they have been created – and Apple likes to create user interface elements at the last possible moment to avoid any unnecessary work. Having to continually unwrap values you definitely know will be there is annoying, so these are made implicitly unwrapped.

Don't worry if you find implicitly unwrapped optionals a bit hard to grasp - it will become clear as you work with the language.

Optional chaining

Working with optionals can feel a bit clumsy sometimes, and all the unwrapping and checking can become so onerous that you might be tempted to throw some exclamation marks to force unwrap stuff so you can get on with work. Be careful, though: if you force unwrap an optional that doesn't have a value, your code will crash.

Swift has two techniques to help make your code less complicated. The first is called optional chaining, which lets you run code only if your optional has a value. Put the below code into your playground to get us started:

```
func albumReleased(year: Int) -> String? {
    switch year {
        case 2006: return "Taylor Swift"
        case 2008: return "Fearless"
        case 2010: return "Speak Now"
        case 2012: return "Red"
        case 2014: return "1989"
        default: return nil
    }
}

let album = albumReleased(year: 2006)
print("The album is \(album)")
```

That will output "The album is Optional("Taylor Swift")" into the results pane.

If we wanted to convert the return value of **albumReleased()** to be uppercase letters (that is, "TAYLOR SWIFT" rather than "Taylor Swift") we could call the **uppercase()** method of that string. For example:

```
let str = "Hello world"
print(str.uppercase())
```

The problem is, `albumReleased()` returns an optional string: it might return a string or it might return nothing at all. So, what we really mean is, "if we got a string back make it uppercase, otherwise do nothing." And that's where optional chaining comes in, because it provides exactly that behavior.

Try changing the last two lines of code to this:

```
let album = albumReleased(year: 2006)?.uppercased()
print("The album is \(album)")
```

Note that there's a question mark in there, which is the optional chaining: everything after the question mark will only be run if everything before the question mark has a value. This doesn't affect the underlying data type of `album`, because that line of code will now either return nil or will return the uppercase album name – it's still an optional string.

Your optional chains can be as long as you need, for example:

```
let album = albumReleased(year:
2006)?.someOptionalValue?.someOtherOptionalValue?.whatever
```

Swift will check them from left to right until it finds nil, at which point it stops.

The nil coalescing operator

This simple Swift feature makes your code much simpler and safer, and yet has such a grandiose name that many people are scared of it. This is a shame, because the nil coalescing operator will make your life easier if you take the time to figure it out!

What it does is let you say "use value A if you can, but if value A is nil then use value B." That's it. It's particularly helpful with optionals, because it effectively stops them from being optional because you provide a non-optional value B. So, if A is optional and has a value, it gets used (we have a value.) If A is present and has no value, B gets used (so we still have a value). Either way, we definitely have a value.

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

To give you a real context, try using this code in your playground:

```
let album = albumReleased(year: 2006) ?? "unknown"  
print("The album is \(album)")
```

That double question mark is the nil coalescing operator, and in this situation it means "if **albumReleased()** returned a value then put it into the **album** variable, but if **albumReleased()** returned nil then use 'unknown' instead."

If you look in the results pane now, you'll see "The album is Taylor Swift" printed in there – no more optionals. This is because Swift can now be sure it will get a real value back, either because the function returned one or because you're providing "unknown". This in turn means you don't need to unwrap anything or risk crashes – you're guaranteed to have real data to work with, which makes your code safer and easier to work with.

Enumerations

Enumerations – usually just called "enum" and pronounced "ee-num" - are a way for you to define your own kind of value in Swift. In some programming languages they are simple little things, but Swift adds a huge amount of power to them if you want to go beyond the basics.

Let's start with a simple example from earlier:

```
func getHaterStatus(weather: String) -> String? {
    if weather == "sunny" {
        return nil
    } else {
        return "Hate"
    }
}
```

That function accepts a string that defines the current weather. The problem is, a string is a poor choice for that kind of data – is it "rain", "rainy" or "raining"? Or perhaps "showering", "drizzly" or "stormy"? Worse, what if one person writes "Rain" with an uppercase R and someone else writes "Ran" because they weren't looking at what they typed?

Enums solve this problem by letting you define a new data type, then define the possible values it can hold. For example, we might say there are five kinds of weather: sun, cloud, rain, wind and snow. If we make this an enum, it means Swift will accept only those five values – anything else will trigger an error. And behind the scenes enums are usually just simple numbers, which are a lot faster than strings for computers to work with.

Let's put that into code:

```
enum WeatherType {
    case sun, cloud, rain, wind, snow
}

func getHaterStatus(weather: WeatherType) -> String? {
```

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

```
if weather == WeatherType.sun {
    return nil
} else {
    return "Hate"
}
}

getHaterStatus(weather: WeatherType.cloud)
```

Take a look at the first three lines: line 1 gives our type a name, **WeatherType**. This is what you'll use in place of **String** or **Int** in your code. Line 2 defines the five possible cases our enum can be, as I already outlined. Convention has these start with a lowercase letter, so “sun”, “cloud”, etc. And line 3 is just a closing brace, ending the enum.

Now take a look at how it's used: I modified the **getHaterStatus()** so that it takes a **WeatherType** value. The conditional statement is also rewritten to compare against **WeatherType.sun**, which is our value. Remember, this check is just a number behind the scenes, which is lightning fast.

Now, go back and read that code again, because I'm about to rewrite it with two changes that are important. All set?

```
enum WeatherType {
    case sun
    case cloud
    case rain
    case wind
    case snow
}

func getHaterStatus(weather: WeatherType) -> String? {
    if weather == .sun {
        return nil
    }
}
```

```

    } else {
        return "Hate"
    }
}

getHaterStatus(weather: .cloud)

```

I made two differences there. First, each of the weather types are now on their own line. This might seem like a small change, and indeed in this example it is, but it becomes important soon. The second change was that I wrote `if weather == .sun` – I didn't need to spell out that I meant `WeatherType.sun` because Swift knows I am comparing against a `WeatherType` variable, so it's using type inference.

Enums are particularly useful inside `switch/case` blocks, particularly because Swift knows all the values your enum can have so it can ensure you cover them all. For example, we might try to rewrite the `getHaterStatus()` method to this:

```

func getHaterStatus(weather: WeatherType) -> String? {
    switch weather {
    case .sun:
        return nil
    case .cloud, .wind:
        return "dislike"
    case .rain:
        return "hate"
    }
}

```

Yes, I realize "haters gonna dislike" is hardly a great lyric, but it's academic anyway because this code won't build: it doesn't handle the `.snow` case, and Swift wants all cases to be covered. You either have to add a case for it or add a default case.

Enums with additional values

One of the most powerful features of Swift is that enumerations can have values attached to them that you define. To extend our increasingly dubious example a bit further, I'm going to add a value to the `.wind` case so that we can say how fast the wind is. Modify your code to this:

```
enum WeatherType {
    case sun
    case cloud
    case rain
    case wind(speed: Int)
    case snow
}
```

As you can see, the other cases don't need a speed value – I put that just into `wind`. Now for the real magic: Swift lets us add extra conditions to the `switch/case` block so that a case will match only if those conditions are true. This uses the `let` keyword to access the value inside a case, then the `where` keyword for pattern matching.

Here's the new function:

```
func getHaterStatus(weather: WeatherType) -> String? {
    switch weather {
        case .sun:
            return nil
        case .wind(let speed) where speed < 10:
            return "meh"
        case .cloud, .wind:
            return "dislike"
        case .rain, .snow:
            return "hate"
    }
}
```

```
getHaterStatus(weather: WeatherType.wind(speed: 5))
```

You can see `.wind` appears in there twice, but the first time is true only if the wind is slower than 10 kilometers per hour. If the wind is 10 or above, that won't match. The key is that you use `let` to get hold of the value inside the enum (i.e. to declare a constant name you can reference) then use a `where` condition to check.

Swift evaluates `switch/case` from top to bottom, and stops as soon as it finds a match. This means that if `case .cloud, .wind:` appears before `case .wind(let speed) where speed < 10:` then it will be executed instead – and the output changes.

So, think carefully about how you order cases!

Tip: Swift's optionals are actually implemented using enums with associated values. There are two cases: `none`, and `some`, with `some` having whatever value is inside the optional.

Structs

Structs are complex data types, meaning that they are made up of multiple values. You then create an instance of the struct and fill in its values, then you can pass it around as a single value in your code. For example, we could define a **Person** struct type that contains two properties: **clothes** and **shoes**:

```
struct Person {  
    var clothes: String  
    var shoes: String  
}
```

When you define a struct, Swift makes them very easy to create because it automatically generates what's called a memberwise initializer. In plain speak, it means you create the struct by passing in initial values for its two properties, like this:

```
let taylor = Person(clothes: "T-shirts", shoes: "sneakers")  
let other = Person(clothes: "short skirts", shoes: "high  
heels")
```

Once you have created an instance of a struct, you can read its properties just by writing the name of the struct, a period, then the property you want to read:

```
print(taylor.clothes)  
print(other.shoes)
```

If you assign one struct to another, Swift copies it behind the scenes so that it is a complete, standalone duplicate of the original. Well, that's not strictly true: Swift uses a technique called "copy on write" which means it only actually copies your data if you try to change it.

To help you see how struct copies work, put this into your playground:

```
struct Person {  
    var clothes: String
```

```

var shoes: String
}

let taylor = Person(clothes: "T-shirts", shoes: "sneakers")
let other = Person(clothes: "short skirts", shoes: "high
heels")

var taylorCopy = taylor
taylorCopy.shoes = "flip flops"

print(taylor)
print(taylorCopy)

```

That creates two **Person** structs, then creates a third one called **taylorCopy** as a copy of **taylor**. What happens next is the interesting part: the code changes **taylorCopy**, and prints both it and **taylor**. If you look in your results pane (you might need to resize it to fit) you'll see that the copy has a different value to the original: changing one did not change the other.

Functions inside structs

You can place functions inside structs, and in fact it's a good idea to do so for all functions that read or change data inside the struct. For example, we could add a function to our **Person** struct to describe what they are wearing, like this:

```

struct Person {
    var clothes: String
    var shoes: String

    func describe() {
        print("I like wearing \(clothes) with \(shoes)")
    }
}

```

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

There's one more thing you ought to know but can't see in that code: when you write a function inside a struct, it's called a *method* instead. In Swift you write **func** whether it's a function or a method, but the distinction is preserved when you talk about them.

Classes

Swift has another way of building complex data types called classes. They look similar to structs, but have a number of important differences, including:

- You don't get an automatic memberwise initializer for your classes; you need to write your own.
- You can define a class as being based off another class, adding any new things you want.
- When you create an instance of a class it's called an object. If you copy that object, both copies point at the same data by default – change one, and the copy changes too.

All three of those are massive differences, so I'm going to cover them in more depth before continuing.

Initializing an object

If we were to convert our **Person** struct into a **Person** class, Swift wouldn't let us write this:

```
class Person {  
    var clothes: String  
    var shoes: String  
}
```

This is because we're declaring the two properties to be **String**, which if you remember means they absolutely must have a value. This was fine in a struct because Swift automatically produces a memberwise initializer for us that forced us to provide values for the two properties, but this doesn't happen with classes so Swift can't be sure they will be given values.

There are three solutions: make the two values optional strings, give them default values, or write our own initializer. The first option is clumsy because it introduces optionals all over our code where they don't need to be. The second option works, but it's a bit wasteful unless those default values will actually be used. That leaves the third option, and really it's the right one: write our own initializer.

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

To do this, create a method inside the class called **init()** that takes the two parameters we care about:

```
class Person {  
    var clothes: String  
    var shoes: String  
  
    init(clothes: String, shoes: String) {  
        self.clothes = clothes  
        self.shoes = shoes  
    }  
}
```

There are two things that might jump out at you in that code.

First, you don't write **func** before your **init()** method, because it's special. Second, because the parameter names being passed in are the same as the names of the properties we want to assign, you use **self.** to make your meaning clear – "the **clothes** property of this object should be set to the **clothes** parameter that was passed in." You can give them unique names if you want – it's down to you.

Important: Swift requires that all non-optional properties have a value by the end of the initializer, or by the time the initializer calls any other method – whichever comes first.

Class inheritance

The second difference between classes and structs are that classes can build on each other to produce greater things, known as *class inheritance*. This is a technique used extensively in Cocoa Touch, even in the most basic programs, so it's something you should get to grips with.

Let's start with something simple: a **Singer** class that has properties, which is their name and age. As for methods, there will be a simple initializer to handle setting the properties, plus a **sing()** method that outputs some words:

```

class Singer {
    var name: String
    var age: Int

    init(name: String, age: Int) {
        self.name = name
        self.age = age
    }

    func sing() {
        print("La la la la")
    }
}

```

We can now create an instance of that object by calling that initializer, then read out its properties and call its method:

```

var taylor = Singer(name: "Taylor", age: 25)
taylor.name
taylor.age
taylor.sing()

```

That's our basic class, but we're going to build on it: I want to define a **CountrySinger** class that has everything the **Singer** class does, but when I call **sing()** on it I want to print "Trucks, guitars, and liquor" instead.

You could of course just copy and paste the original **Singer** into a new class called **CountrySinger** but that's a lazy way to program and it will come back to haunt you if you make later changes to **Singer** and forget to copy them across. Instead, Swift has a smarter solution: we can define **CountrySinger** as being based off **Singer** and it will get all its properties and methods for us to build on:

```
class CountrySinger: Singer {
```

}

That colon is what does the magic: it means "**CountrySinger** extends **Singer**." Now, that new **CountrySinger** class (called a subclass) doesn't add anything to **Singer** (called the parent class, or superclass) yet. We want it to have its own **sing()** method, but in Swift you need to learn a new keyword: **override**. This means "I know this method was implemented by my parent class, but I want to change it for this subclass."

Having the **override** keyword is helpful, because it makes your intent clear. It also allows Swift to check your code: if you don't use **override** Swift won't let you change a method you got from your superclass, or if you use **override** and there wasn't anything to override, Swift will point out your error.

So, we need to use **override func**, like this:

```
class CountrySinger: Singer {  
    override func sing() {  
        print("Trucks, guitars, and liquor")  
    }  
}
```

Now modify the way the **taylor** object is created:

```
var taylor = CountrySinger(name: "Taylor", age: 25)  
taylor.sing()
```

If you change **CountrySinger** to just **Singer** you should be able to see the different messages appearing in the results pane.

Now, to make things more complicated, we're going to define a new class called **HeavyMetalSinger**. But this time we're going to store a new property called **noiseLevel** defining how loud this particular heavy metal singer likes to scream down their microphone.

This causes a problem, and it's one that needs to be solved in a very particular way:

- Swift wants all non-optional properties to have a value.
- Our **Singer** class doesn't have a **noiseLevel** property.
- So, we need to create a custom initializer for **HeavyMetalSinger** that accepts a noise level.
- That new initializer also needs to know the **name** and **age** of the heavy metal singer, so it can pass it onto the superclass **Singer**.
- Passing on data to the superclass is done through a method call, and you can't make method calls in initializers until you have given all your properties values.
- So, we need to set our own property first (**noiseLevel**) then pass on the other parameters for the superclass to use.

That might sound awfully complicated, but in code it's straightforward. Here's the **HeavyMetalSinger** class, complete with its own **sing()** method:

```
class HeavyMetalSinger: Singer {
    var noiseLevel: Int

    init(name: String, age: Int, noiseLevel: Int) {
        self.noiseLevel = noiseLevel
        super.init(name: name, age: age)
    }

    override func sing() {
        print("Grrrrr rargh rargh rarrrrgh!")
    }
}
```

Notice how its initializer takes three parameters, then calls **super.init()** to pass **name** and **age** on to the **Singer** superclass - but only after its own property has been set. You'll see **super** used a lot when working with objects, and it just means "call a method on the class I inherited from." It's usually used to mean "let my parent class do everything it needs to do first, then I'll

do my extra bits."

Class inheritance is a big topic so don't fret if it's not clear just yet. However, there is one more thing you need to know: class inheritance often spans many levels. For example, A could inherit from B, and B could inherit from C, and C could inherit from D, and so on. This lets you build functionality and re-use up over a number of classes, helping to keep your code modular and easy to understand.

Working with Objective-C code

If you want to have some part of Apple's operating system call your Swift class's method, you need to mark it with a special attribute: `@objc`. This is short for "Objective-C", and the attribute effectively marks the method as being available for older Objective-C code to run – which is almost all of iOS, macOS, watchOS, and tvOS. For example, if you ask the system to call your method after one second has passed, you'll need to mark it with `@objc`.

Don't worry too much about `@objc` for now – not only will I be explaining it in context later on, but Xcode will always tell you when it's needed. Alternatively, if you don't want to use `@objc` for individual methods you can put `@objcMembers` before your class to automatically make all its methods available to Objective-C.

Values vs References

When you copy a struct, the whole thing is duplicated, including all its values. This means that changing one copy of a struct doesn't change the other copies – they are all individual. With classes, each copy of an object points at the same original object, so if you change one they all change. Swift calls structs "value types" because they just point at a value, and classes "reference types" because objects are just shared references to the real value.

This is an important difference, and it means the choice between structs and classes is an important one:

- If you want to have one shared state that gets passed around and modified in place, you're looking for classes. You can pass them into functions or store them in arrays, modify them

in there, and have that change reflected in the rest of your program.

- If you want to avoid shared state where one copy can't affect all the others, you're looking for structs. You can pass them into functions or store them in arrays, modify them in there, and they won't change wherever else they are referenced.

If I were to summarize this key difference between structs and classes, I'd say this: classes offer more flexibility, whereas structs offer more safety. As a basic rule, you should always use structs until you have a specific reason to use classes.

Properties

Structs and classes (collectively: "types") can have their own variables and constants, and these are called properties. These let you attach values to your types to represent them uniquely, but because types can also have methods you can have them behave according to their own data.

Let's take a look at an example now:

```
struct Person {  
    var clothes: String  
    var shoes: String  
  
    func describe() {  
        print("I like wearing \(clothes) with \(shoes)")  
    }  
}  
  
let taylor = Person(clothes: "T-shirts", shoes: "sneakers")  
let other = Person(clothes: "short skirts", shoes: "high  
heels")  
taylor.describe()  
other.describe()
```

As you can see, when you use a property inside a method it will automatically use the value that belongs to the same object.

Property observers

Swift lets you add code to be run when a property is about to be changed or has been changed. This is frequently a good way to have a user interface update when a value changes, for example.

There are two kinds of property observer: **willSet** and **didSet**, and they are called before or

after a property is changed. In **willSet** Swift provides your code with a special value called **newValue** that contains what the new property value is going to be, and in **didSet** you are given **oldValue** to represent the previous value.

Let's attach two property observers to the **clothes** property of a **Person** struct:

```
struct Person {
    var clothes: String {
        willSet {
            updateUI(msg: "I'm changing from \(clothes) to \(newValue)")
        }

        didSet {
            updateUI(msg: "I just changed from \(oldValue) to \(clothes)")
        }
    }
}

func updateUI(msg: String) {
    print(msg)
}

var taylor = Person(clothes: "T-shirts")
taylor.clothes = "short skirts"
```

That will print out the messages "I'm changing from T-shirts to short skirts" and "I just changed from T-shirts to short skirts."

Computed properties

It's possible to make properties that are actually code behind the scenes. We already used the

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

uppercase() method of strings, for example, but there's also a property called **capitalized** that gets calculated as needed, rather than every string always storing a capitalized version of itself.

To make a computed property, place an open brace after your property then use either **get** or **set** to make an action happen at the appropriate time. For example, if we wanted to add a **ageInDogYears** property that automatically returned a person's age multiplied by seven, we'd do this:

```
struct Person {
    var age: Int

    var ageInDogYears: Int {
        get {
            return age * 7
        }
    }
}

var fan = Person(age: 25)
print(fan.ageInDogYears)
```

Computed properties are increasingly common in Apple's code, but less common in user code.

Note: If you intend to use them only for *reading* data you can just remove the **get** part entirely, like this:

```
var ageInDogYears: Int {
    return age * 7
}
```

Static properties and methods

Swift lets you create properties and methods that belong to a type, rather than to instances of a type. This is helpful for organizing your data meaningfully by storing shared data.

Swift calls these shared properties "static properties", and you create one just by using the **static** keyword. Once that's done, you access the property by using the full name of the type. Here's a simple example:

```
struct TaylorFan {  
    static var favoriteSong = "Look What You Made Me Do"  
  
    var name: String  
    var age: Int  
}  
  
let fan = TaylorFan(name: "James", age: 25)  
print(TaylorFan.favoriteSong)
```

So, a Taylor Swift fan has a name and age that belongs to them, but they all have the same favorite song.

Because static methods belong to the struct itself rather than to instances of that struct, you can't use it to access any non-static properties from the struct.

Access control

Access control lets you specify what data inside structs and classes should be exposed to the outside world, and you get to choose four modifiers:

- Public: this means everyone can read and write the property.
- Internal: this means only your Swift code can read and write the property. If you ship your code as a framework for others to use, they won't be able to read the property.
- File Private: this means that only Swift code in the same file as the type can read and write the property.
- Private: this is the most restrictive option, and means the property is available only inside methods that belong to the type, or its extensions.

Most of the time you don't need to specify access control, but sometimes you'll want to explicitly set a property to be private because it stops others from accessing it directly. This is useful because your own methods can work with that property, but others can't, thus forcing them to go through your code to perform certain actions.

To declare a property private, just do this:

```
class TaylorFan {  
    private var name: String?  
}
```

If you want to use “file private” access control, just write it as one word like so: **fileprivate**.

Polymorphism and typecasting

Because classes can inherit from each other (e.g. **CountrySinger** can inherit from **Singer**) it means one class is effectively a superset of another: class B has all the things A has, with a few extras. This in turn means that you can treat B as type B or as type A, depending on your needs.

Confused? Let's try some code:

```
class Album {
    var name: String

    init(name: String) {
        self.name = name
    }
}

class StudioAlbum: Album {
    var studio: String

    init(name: String, studio: String) {
        self.studio = studio
        super.init(name: name)
    }
}

class LiveAlbum: Album {
    var location: String

    init(name: String, location: String) {
        self.location = location
        super.init(name: name)
    }
}
```

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

```
}
```

That defines three classes: albums, studio albums and live albums, with the latter two both inheriting from **Album**. Because any instance of **LiveAlbum** is inherited from **Album** it can be treated just as either **Album** or **LiveAlbum** – it's both at the same time. This is called "polymorphism," but it means you can write code like this:

```
var taylorSwift = StudioAlbum(name: "Taylor Swift", studio:  
    "The Castles Studios")  
var fearless = StudioAlbum(name: "Speak Now", studio:  
    "Aimeeland Studio")  
var iTunesLive = LiveAlbum(name: "iTunes Live from SoHo",  
    location: "New York")  
  
var allAlbums: [Album] = [taylorSwift, fearless, iTunesLive]
```

There we create an array that holds only albums, but put inside it two studio albums and a live album. This is perfectly fine in Swift because they are all descended from the **Album** class, so they share the same basic behavior.

We can push this a step further to really demonstrate how polymorphism works. Let's add a **getPerformance()** method to all three classes:

```
class Album {  
    var name: String  
  
    init(name: String) {  
        self.name = name  
    }  
  
    func getPerformance() -> String {  
        return "The album \(name) sold lots"  
    }  
}
```

```

}

class StudioAlbum: Album {
    var studio: String

    init(name: String, studio: String) {
        self.studio = studio
        super.init(name: name)
    }

    override func getPerformance() -> String {
        return "The studio album \(name) sold lots"
    }
}

class LiveAlbum: Album {
    var location: String

    init(name: String, location: String) {
        self.location = location
        super.init(name: name)
    }

    override func getPerformance() -> String {
        return "The live album \(name) sold lots"
    }
}

```

The **getPerformance()** method exists in the **Album** class, but both child classes override it. When we create an array that holds **Albums**, we're actually filling it with subclasses of albums: **LiveAlbum** and **StudioAlbum**. They go into the array just fine because they inherit from the **Album** class, but they never lose their original class. So, we could write code like

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

this:

```
var taylorSwift = StudioAlbum(name: "Taylor Swift", studio:  
    "The Castles Studios")  
var fearless = StudioAlbum(name: "Speak Now", studio:  
    "Aimeeland Studio")  
var iTunesLive = LiveAlbum(name: "iTunes Live from SoHo",  
    location: "New York")  
  
var allAlbums: [Album] = [taylorSwift, fearless, iTunesLive]  
  
for album in allAlbums {  
    print(album.getPerformance())  
}
```

That will automatically use the override version of `getPerformance()` depending on the subclass in question. That's polymorphism in action: an object can work as its class and its parent classes, all at the same time.

Converting types with typecasting

You will often find you have an object of a certain type, but really you know it's a different type. Sadly, if Swift doesn't know what you know, it won't build your code. So, there's a solution, and it's called typecasting: converting an object of one type to another.

Chances are you're struggling to think why this might be necessary, but I can give you a very simple example:

```
for album in allAlbums {  
    print(album.getPerformance())  
}
```

That was our loop from a few minutes ago. The `allAlbums` array holds the type `Album`, but

we know that really it's holding one of the subclasses: **StudioAlbum** or **LiveAlbum**. Swift doesn't know that, so if you try to write something like **print(album.studio)** it will refuse to build because only **StudioAlbum** objects have that property.

Typecasting in Swift comes in three forms, but most of the time you'll only meet two: **as?** and **as!**, known as optional downcasting and forced downcasting. The former means "I think this conversion might be true, but it might fail," and the second means "I know this conversion is true, and I'm happy for my app to crash if I'm wrong."

Note: when I say "conversion" I don't mean that the object literally gets transformed. Instead, it's just converting how Swift treats the object – you're telling Swift that an object it thought was type A is actually type E.

The question and exclamation marks should give you a hint of what's going on, because this is very similar to optional territory. For example, if you write this:

```
for album in allAlbums {
    let studioAlbum = album as? StudioAlbum
}
```

Swift will make **studioAlbum** have the data type **StudioAlbum?**. That is, an optional studio album: the conversion might have worked, in which case you have a studio album you can work with, or it might have failed, in which case you have nil.

This is most commonly used with **if let** to automatically unwrap the optional result, like this:

```
for album in allAlbums {
    print(album.getPerformance())

    if let studioAlbum = album as? StudioAlbum {
        print(studioAlbum.studio)
    } else if let liveAlbum = album as? LiveAlbum {
        print(liveAlbum.location)
    }
}
```

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

}

That will go through every album and print its performance details, because that's common to the **Album** class and all its subclasses. It then checks whether it can convert the **album** value into a **StudioAlbum**, and if it can it prints out the studio name. The same thing is done for the **LiveAlbum** in the array.

Forced downcasting is when you're really sure an object of one type can be treated like a different type, but if you're wrong your program will just crash. Forced downcasting doesn't need to return an optional value, because you're saying the conversion is definitely going to work – if you're wrong, it means you wrote your code wrong.

To demonstrate this in a non-crashy way, let's strip out the live album so that we just have studio albums in the array:

```
var taylorSwift = StudioAlbum(name: "Taylor Swift", studio:  
    "The Castles Studios")  
var fearless = StudioAlbum(name: "Speak Now", studio:  
    "Aimeeland Studio")  
  
var allAlbums: [Album] = [taylorSwift, fearless]  
  
for album in allAlbums {  
    let studioAlbum = album as! StudioAlbum  
    print(studioAlbum.studio)  
}
```

That's obviously a contrived example, because if that really were your code you would just change **allAlbums** so that it had the data type **[StudioAlbum]**. Still, it shows how forced downcasting works, and the example won't crash because it makes the correct assumptions.

Swift lets you downcast as part of the array loop, which in this case would be more efficient. If you wanted to write that forced downcast at the array level, you would write this:

```
for album in allAlbums as! [StudioAlbum] {
    print(album.studio)
}
```

That no longer needs to downcast every item inside the loop, because it happens when the loop begins. Again, you had better be correct that all items in the array are **StudioAlbums**, otherwise your code will crash.

Swift also allows optional downcasting at the array level, although it's a bit more tricksy because you need to use the nil coalescing operator to ensure there's always a value for the loop. Here's an example:

```
for album in allAlbums as? [LiveAlbum] ?? [LiveAlbum]() {
    print(album.location)
}
```

What that means is, “try to convert **allAlbums** to be an array of **LiveAlbum** objects, but if that fails just create an empty array of live albums and use that instead” – i.e., do nothing.

Converting common types with initializers

Typecasting is useful when you know something that Swift doesn't, for example when you have an object of type **A** that Swift thinks is actually type **B**. However, typecasting is useful only when those types really are what you say – you can't force a type **A** into a type **Z** if they aren't actually related.

For example, if you have an integer called **number**, you couldn't write code like this to make it a string:

```
let number = 5
let text = number as! String
```

That is, you can't force an integer into a string, because they are two completely different

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

types. Instead, you need to create a new string by feeding it the integer, and Swift knows how to convert the two. The difference is subtle: this is a *new* value, rather than just a re-interpretation of the same value.

So, that code should be rewritten like this:

```
let number = 5
let text = String(number)
print(text)
```

This only works for some of Swift's built-in data types: you can convert integers and floats to strings and back again, for example, but if you created two custom structs Swift can't magically convert one to the other – you need to write that code yourself.

Closures

You've met integers, strings, doubles, floats, Booleans, arrays, dictionaries, structs and classes so far, but there's another type of data that is used extensively in Swift, and it's called a closure. These are complicated, but they are so powerful and expressive that they are used pervasively in Cocoa Touch, so you won't get very far without understanding them.

A closure can be thought of as a variable that holds code. So, where an integer holds 0 or 500, a closure holds lines of Swift code. Closures also capture the environment where they are created, which means they take a copy of the values that are used inside them.

You never *need* to design your own closures so don't be afraid if you find the following quite complicated. However, both Cocoa and Cocoa Touch will often ask you to write closures to match their needs, so you at least need to know how they work. Let's take a Cocoa Touch example first:

```
let vw = UIView()  
  
UIView.animate(withDuration: 0.5, animations: {  
    vw.alpha = 0  
})
```

UIView is an iOS data type in UIKit that represents the most basic kind of user interface container. Don't worry about what it does for now, all that matters is that it's the basic user interface component. **UIView** has a method called **animate()** and it lets you change the way your interface looks using animation – you describe what's changing and over how many seconds, and Cocoa Touch does the rest.

The **animate()** method takes two parameters in that code: the number of seconds to animate over, and a closure containing the code to be executed as part of the animation. I've specified half a second as the first parameter, and for the second I've asked UIKit to adjust the view's alpha (that's opacity) to 0, which means "completely transparent."

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

This method needs to use a closure because UIKit has to do all sorts of work to prepare for the animation to begin, so what happens is that UIKit takes a copy of the code inside the braces (that's our closure), stores it away, does all its prep work, then runs our code when it's ready. This wouldn't be possible if we just run our code directly.

The above code also shows how closures capture their environment: I declared the `vw` constant outside of the closure, then used it inside. Swift detects this, and makes that data available inside the closure too.

Swift's system of automatically capturing a closure's environment is very helpful, but can occasionally trip you up: if object A stores a closure as a property, and that property also references object A, you have something called a strong reference cycle and you'll have unhappy users. This is a substantially more advanced topic than you need to know right now, so don't worry too much about it just yet.

Trailing closures

As closures are used so frequently, Swift can apply a little syntactic sugar to make your code easier to read. The rule is this: if the last parameter to a method takes a closure, you can eliminate that parameter and instead provide it as a block of code inside braces. For example, we could convert the previous code to this:

```
let vw = UIView()  
  
UIView.animate(withDuration: 0.5) {  
    vw.alpha = 0  
}
```

It does make your code shorter and easier to read, so this syntax form – known as trailing closure syntax – is preferred.

Protocols

Protocols are effectively contracts in Swift: they define a set of methods and properties that a type must implement if it says it conforms to the protocol. This contract gives us the flexibility to use different types to solve the same problem – we don't get whether a **ThingA** or a **ThingB** is being used, as long as they both conform to the **Thing** protocol.

As an example, an **Employee** protocol might look like this:

```
protocol Employee {
    var name: String { get set }
    var jobTitle: String { get set }
    func doWork()
}
```

There are three important things in there.

First, both the properties have `{ get set }` after them. This means that conforming types must make them both gettable (readable) and settable (writeable), which in turn means if a type says it is compatible with the **Employee** protocol it must make those two properties variables rather than constants.

Second, `doWork()` has no code inside it. Protocols are contracts defining how something ought to be able to behave, and don't provide *implementations* of those behaviors.

Third, that protocol isn't a *type*, which means we can't create instances of it. But we *can* create classes and structs that conform to it, like this:

```
struct Executive: Employee {
    var name = "Steve Jobs"
    var jobTitle = "CEO"

    func doWork() {
        print("I'm strategizing!")
    }
}
```

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

```
    }
}

struct Manager: Employee {
    var name = "Maurice Moss"
    var jobTitle = "Head of IT"

    func doWork() {
        print("I'm turning it off and on again.")
    }
}
```

Now that we have a protocol and two types that conform to it, we can try using it:

```
let staff: [Employee] = [Executive(), Manager()]
```



```
for person in staff {
    person.doWork()
}
```

Because both types conform to **Employee** – they implement the properties and methods of that protocol – we can create an employee array and use the objects inside that array without knowing what their actual type is.

Extensions

Extensions let us modify Swift's data types to add new functionality, and so on in a really clean way – our new code is indistinguishable from existing code.

Let's start with an extension that adds one to an integer. Yes, I realize this is essentially just `+= 1`, but we're starting simple. First, add this integer:

```
var myInt = 0
```

Now add this to the playground, just beneath the `import UIKit` statement:

```
extension Int {  
    func plusOne() -> Int {  
        return self + 1  
    }  
}
```

`extension Int` tells Swift that we want to add functionality to its `Int` struct. We could have used `String`, `Array`, or whatever instead, but `Int` is a nice easy one to start.

How the extension works will become clear once you use it. Put this line just below the end of the extension:

```
myInt.plusOne()
```

In the playground output you'll now see 0 for the first line and 1 for the second, so calling `plusOne()` has returned a number one higher than the number we called it on.

The extension has been added to all integers, so you can even call it like this:

```
5.plusOne()
```

When you do that, you'll see 6 in the output column.

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

Our extension adds 1 to its input number and returns it to the caller, but *doesn't* modify the original value. Try typing this:

```
var myInt = 10
myInt.plusOne()
myInt
```

Using a variable by itself tells the playground just to output its value, so in the output column you'll see 10, then 11, then 10 again. This is the original value, the return from the **plusOne()** method, and the original, unchanged value.

To push things a little further, let's modify the **plusOne()** method so that it doesn't return anything, instead modifying the instance itself – i.e., the input integer.

To make that happen, you might think we need to do something like this:

```
extension Int {
    func plusOne() {
        self += 1
    }
}
```

That removes the return value because we aren't returning anything now, and it uses the `+
=` operator to add one to **self**. But this won't work, and in fact Xcode will give you a wonderfully indecipherable error message: "Left side of mutating operator isn't mutable: 'self' is immutable"

What Xcode really means is that it Swift doesn't let you modify **self** inside an extension by default. The reason is that we could call **plusOne()** using **5.plusOne()**, and clearly you can't modify the number 5 to mean something else.

So, Swift forces you to declare the method **mutating**, meaning that it will change its input. Change your extension to this:

```
extension Int {  
    mutating func plusOne() {  
        self += 1  
    }  
}
```

...and now the error message will go away. Once you have declared a method as being **mutating**, Swift knows it will change values so it won't let you use it with constants. For example:

```
var myInt = 10  
myInt.plusOne()  
  
let otherInt = 10  
otherInt.plusOne()
```

The first integer will be modified correctly, but the second will fail because Swift won't let you modify constants.

It's extremely common for developers to use extensions to add functionality to things. In some ways, extensions are similar to subclasses, so why use extensions at all?

The main reason is extensibility: extensions work across all data types, and they don't conflict when you have more than one. That is, we could make a **Dog** subclass that adds **bark()**, but what if we find some open source code that contains a **doTricks()** method? We would have to copy and paste it in to our subclass, or perhaps even subclass again.

With extensions you can have ten different pieces of functionality in ten different files – they can all modify the same type directly, and you don't need to subclass anything. A common naming scheme for naming your extension files is **Type+Modifier.swift**, for example **String+RandomLetter.swift**.

If you find yourself trimming whitespace off strings frequently, you'll probably get tired of

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

using this monstrosity:

```
str = str.trimmingCharacters(in: .whitespacesAndNewlines)
```

...so why not just make an extension like this:

```
extension String {
    mutating func trim() {
        self = trimmingCharacters(in: .whitespacesAndNewlines)
    }
}
```

You can extend as much as you want, although it's good practice to keep differing functionality separated into individual files.

Protocol extensions

One of Swift's most powerful features is its ability to extend whole swathes of data types at the same time. These are known as protocol extensions, and they are commonly used to build flexibility into large apps.

You've already seen how protocols let us define contracts that conforming types must adopt. Well, protocol *extensions* let us define implementations of things inside the protocol, adding the functionality to all types that conform to the protocol in a single place.

To demonstrate how this works, let's look at another simple extension for the **Int** data type: we're going to add a **clamp()** method that makes sure one number falls within the lower and upper bounds that are specified:

```
extension Int {  
    func clamp(low: Int, high: Int) -> Int {  
        if (self > high) {  
            // if we are higher than the upper bound, return the  
            // upper bound  
            return high  
        } else if (self < low) {  
            // if we are lower than the lower bound, return the  
            // lower bound  
            return low  
        }  
  
        // we are inside the range, so return our value  
        return self  
    }  
}  
  
let i: Int = 8  
print(i.clamp(low: 0, high: 5))
```

Because 8 is higher than the upper bound of 5, that will print 5.

I explicitly made **i** an **Int** for a reason: there are other kinds of integers available in Swift. For example, **UInt** is an unsigned integer, which means it sacrifices the ability to hold negative numbers in exchange for the ability to hold much larger positive numbers.

There are also integers of different sizes, e.g. **Int8** holds an integer made up of 8 binary digits, which holds a maximum value of 127, and **UInt64** is the largest type of integer and holds up to 18,446,744,073,709,551,615 – that’s 18 quintillion four hundred and forty-six quadrillion in case you were wondering.

Our extension modifies the **Int** data type specifically, rather than *all* variations of integers, which means code like this won’t work because **UInt64** doesn’t have the extension:

```
let j: UInt64 = 8
print(j.clamp(low: 0, high: 5))
```

Swift’s solution is to let us create protocol extensions: extensions that modify several data types at once.

You’ve already seen how the **self** keyword lets us refer to our current value, so **self * self** means “multiply my current number by itself.” Well, there’s also **Self** with a capital S, which has a subtly different meaning: it means “my current data type.” So, **self** means “my current value” and **Self** means “my current data type.”

This *matters* when it comes to extending protocols because of the way our **squared()** method is declared. Take a look again:

```
func clamp(low: Int, high: Int) -> Int {
    if (self > high) {
        return high
    } else if (self < low) {
        return low
    } else {
        return self
    }
}
```

```

    }

    return self
}

```

If we want `clamp()` to apply to all types of integer, we can't very well make it return `Int` – that's not big enough to hold the full range of a `UInt64`, so Swift will refuse to build. Instead, we need to make the method return `Self`, which means “I'll return whatever data type I was used with.”

Here's the rewritten extension:

```

extension BinaryInteger {
    func clamp(low: Self, high: Self) -> Self {
        if (self > high) {
            return high
        } else if (self < low) {
            return low
        }

        return self
    }
}

```

This time I've made it apply to `BinaryInteger`, which is a protocol that all of Swift's integer types conform to. This means *all* integer types get access to the `clamp()` method, and work as expected – we don't need to extend them all individually.

Protocol extensions are helpful for providing default method implementations so that conforming types don't need to implement those methods themselves unless they specifically want to.

As an example, we might define an extension for our `Employee` protocol so that all

Introduction: Swift for Complete Beginners

conforming types automatically get a **doWork()** method:

```
protocol Employee {
    var name: String { get set }
    var jobTitle: String { get set }
    func doWork()
}

extension Employee {
    func doWork() {
        print("I'm busy!")
    }
}
```

Wrap up

That's the end of our tour around the Swift programming language. I haven't tried to cover everything in the language, but that's OK because you have all the important stuff, all the sometimes-important stuff, and all the nice-to-know stuff – the many other features you'll either come across in a later project or through extended experience with the language.

From here on, we're going to focus primarily on building apps. If you want to learn more about the Swift language itself, you might want to consider my **Pro Swift** book.

Project 1

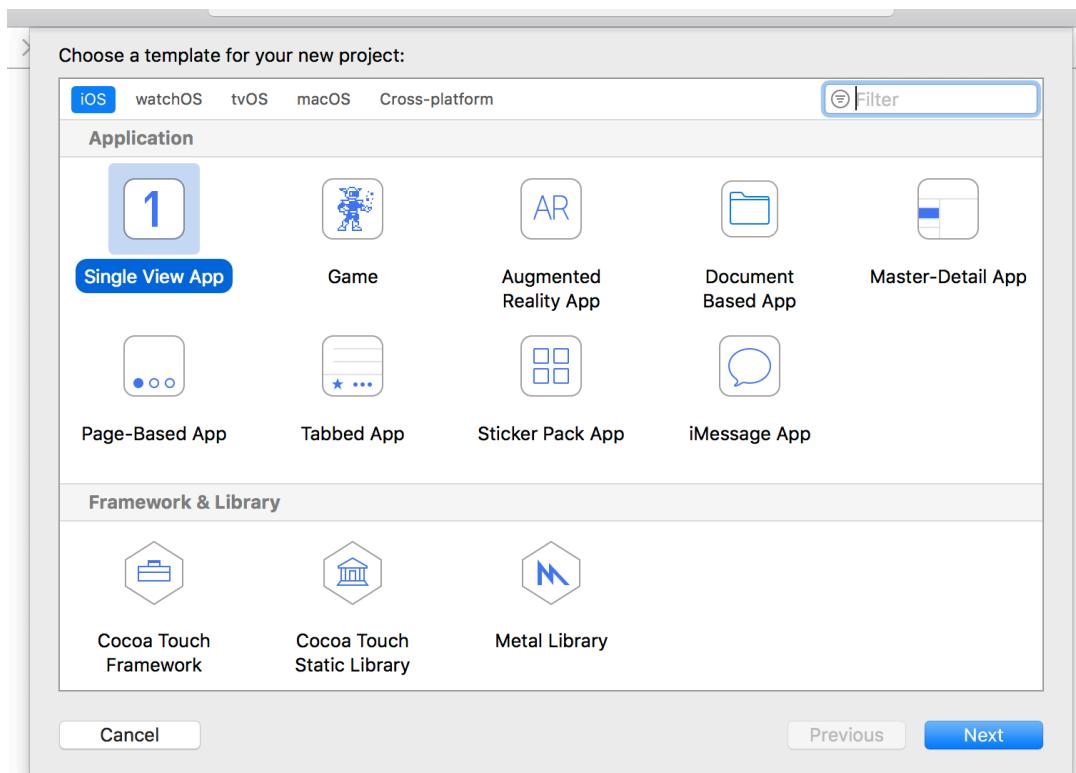
Storm Viewer

Get started coding in Swift by making an image viewer app and learning key concepts.

Setting up

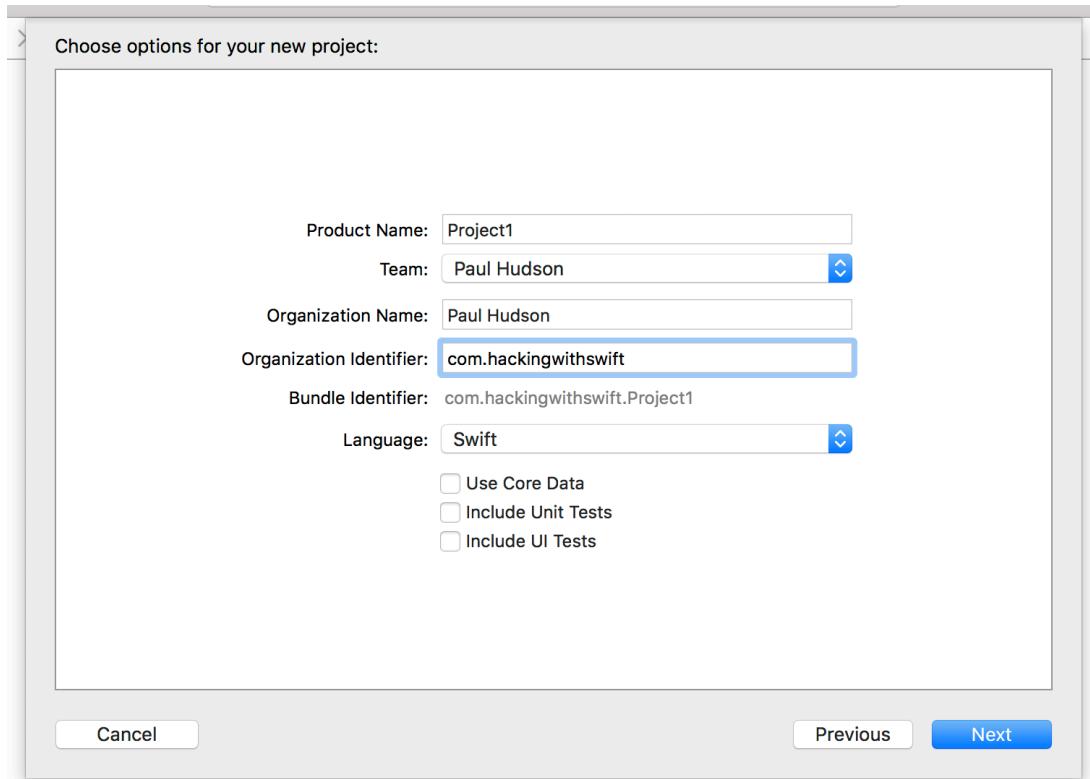
In this project you'll produce an application that lets users scroll through a list of images, then select one to view. It's deliberately simple, because there are many other things you'll need to learn along the way, so strap yourself in – this is going to be long!

Launch Xcode, and choose "Create a new Xcode project" from the welcome screen. Choose Single View App from the list and click Next. For Product Name enter Project1, then make sure you have Swift selected for the language.



One of the fields you'll be asked for is "Organization Identifier", which is a unique identifier usually made up of your personal web site domain name in reverse. For example, I would use **com.hackingwithswift** if I were making an app. You'll need to put something valid in there if you're deploying to devices, but otherwise you can just use **com.example**.

Project 1: Storm Viewer



Important note: some of Xcode's project templates have checkboxes saying "Use Core Data", "Include Unit Tests" and "Include UI Tests". Please ensure these boxes are unchecked for this project and indeed almost all projects in this series – there's only one project where this isn't the case, and it's made pretty clear there!

Now click Next again and you'll be asked where you want to save the project – your desktop is fine. Once that's done, you'll be presented with the example project that Xcode made for you. The first thing we need to do is make sure you have everything set up correctly, and that means running the project as-is.

When you run a project, you get to choose what kind of device the iOS Simulator should pretend to be, or you can also select a physical device if you have one plugged in. These options are listed under the Product > Destination menu, and you should see iPad Air, iPhone 8, and so on.

There's also a shortcut for this menu: at the top-left of Xcode's window is the play and stop

button, but to the right of that it should say Project1 then a device name. You can click on that device name to select a different device.

For now, please choose iPhone XR, and click the Play triangle button in the top-left corner. This will compile your code, which is the process of converting it to instructions that iPhones can understand, then launch the simulator and run the app. As you'll see when you interact with the app, our “app” just shows a large white screen – it does nothing at all, at least not yet.



Carrier ⌘ 12:30 AM

You'll be starting and stopping projects a lot as you learn, so there are three basic tips you need to know:

- You can run your project by pressing Cmd+R. This is equivalent to clicking the play button.
- You can stop a running project by pressing Cmd+. when Xcode is selected.
- If you have made changes to a running project, just press Cmd+R again. Xcode will

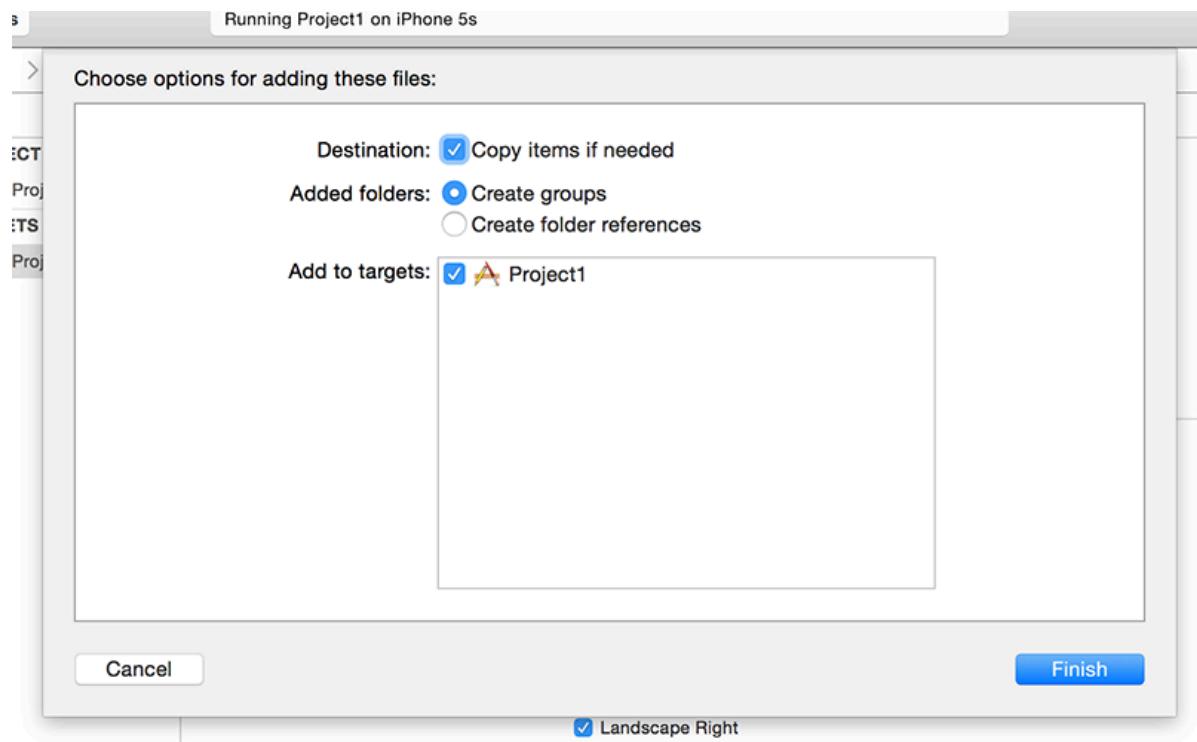
Project 1: Storm Viewer

prompt you to stop the current run before starting another. Make sure you check the "Do not show this message again" box to avoid being bothered in the future.

This project is all about letting users select images to view, so you're going to need to import some pictures. Download the files for this project from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>), and look in the “project1-files” folder. You'll see another folder in there called Content, and I'd like you to drag that Content folder straight into your Xcode project, just under where it says "Info.plist".

Tip: If you're not sure what to download, use this link: <https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift/archive/master.zip> – that's the zip file for all my project files.

A window will appear asking how you want to add the files: make sure "Copy items if needed" is checked, and "Create groups" is selected. **Important: do not choose "Create folder references" otherwise your project will not work.**



Click Finish and you'll see a yellow Content folder appear in Xcode. If you see a blue one, you

Setting up

didn't select "Create groups", and you'll have problems following this tutorial!

Listing images with FileManager

The images I've provided you with come from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which is a US government agency and thus produces public domain content that we can freely reuse. Once they are copied into your project, Xcode will automatically build them into your finished app so that you can access them.

Behind the scenes, an iOS app is actually a directory containing lots of files: the binary itself (that's the compiled version of your code, ready to run), all the media assets your app uses, any visual layout files you have, plus a variety of other things such as metadata and security entitlements.

These app directories are called bundles, and they have the file extension .app. Because our media files are loose inside the folder, we can ask the system to tell us all the files that are in there then pull out the ones we want. You may have noticed that all the images start with the name "nssl" (short for National Severe Storms Laboratory), so our task is simple: list all the files in our app's directory, and pull out the ones that start with "nssl".

For now, we'll load that list and just print it to Xcode's built in log viewer, but soon we'll make them appear in our app.

So, step 1: open ViewController.swift. A view controller is best thought of as being one screen of information, and for us that's just one big blank screen. ViewController.swift is responsible for showing that blank screen, and right now it won't contain much code. You should see something like this:

```
import UIKit

class ViewController: UIViewController {
    override func viewDidLoad() {
        super.viewDidLoad()
        // Do any additional setup after loading the view,
        typically from a nib.
```

```

    }
}

```

That contains four interesting things I want to discuss before moving on.

1. The file starts with **import UIKit**, which means “this file will reference the iOS user interface toolkit.”
2. The **class ViewController: UIViewController** line means “I want to create a new screen of data called ViewController, based on UIViewController.” When you see a data type that starts with “UI”, it means it comes from UIKit. **UIViewController** is Apple’s default screen type, which is empty and white until we change it.
3. The line **override func viewDidLoad()** starts a method. As you know, the **override** keyword is needed because it means “we want to change Apple’s default behavior from **UIViewController**.” **viewDidLoad()** is called by UIKit when the screen has loaded, and is ready for you to customize.
4. The **viewDidLoad()** method contains one line of code saying **super.viewDidLoad()** and one line of comment (that’s the line starting with //). This **super** call means “tell Apple’s **UIViewController** to run its own code before I run mine,” and you’ll see this used a lot.

We’ll come back to this code a *lot* in future projects; don’t worry if it’s all a bit hazy right now.

No line numbers? While you’re reading code, it’s frequently helpful to have line numbers enabled so you can refer to specific code more easily. If your Xcode isn’t showing line numbers by default, I suggest you turn them on now: go to the Xcode menu and choose Preferences, then choose the Text Editing tab and make sure “Line numbers” is checked.

As I said before, the **viewDidLoad()** method is called when the screen has loaded and is ready for you to customize. We’re going to put some more code into that method to load the NSSL images. Add this beneath the line that says **super.viewDidLoad()**:

```

let fm = FileManager.default
let path = Bundle.main.resourcePath!

```

Project 1: Storm Viewer

```
let items = try! fm.contentsOfDirectory(atPath: path)

for item in items {
    if item.hasPrefix("nssl") {
        // this is a picture to load!
    }
}
```

Note: Some experienced Swift developers will read that code, see `try!`, then write me an angry email. If you're considering doing just that, please continue reading first.

That's a big chunk of code, most of which is new. Let's walk through what it does line by line:

- The line `let fm = FileManager.default` declares a constant called `fm` and assigns it the value returned by `FileManager.default`. This is a data type that lets us work with the filesystem, and in our case we'll be using it to look for files.
- The line `let path = Bundle.main.resourcePath!` declares a constant called `path` that is set to the resource path of our app's bundle. Remember, a bundle is a directory containing our compiled program and all our assets. So, this line says, "tell me where I can find all those images I added to my app."
- The line `let items = try! fm.contentsOfDirectory(atPath: path)` declares a third constant called `items` that is set to the contents of the directory at a path. Which path? Well, the one that was returned by the line before. As you can see, Apple's long method names really does make their code quite self-descriptive! The `items` constant will be an array of strings containing filenames.
- The line `for item in items {` starts a loop that will execute once for every item we found in the app bundle. Remember: the line has an opening brace at the end, signaling the start of a new block of code, and there's a matching closing brace four lines beneath. Everything inside those braces will be executed each time the loop goes around.
- The line `if item.hasPrefix("nssl") {` is the first line inside our loop. By this point, we'll have the first filename ready to work with, and it'll be called `item`. To decide whether it's one we care about or not, we use the `hasPrefix()` method: it takes one parameter (the prefix

to search for) and returns either true or false. That "if" at the start means this line is a conditional statement: if the item has the prefix "nssl", then... that's right, another opening brace to mark another new code block. This time, the code will be executed only if **hasPrefix()** returned true.

- Finally, the line `// this is a picture to load!` is a comment – if we reach here, **item** contains the name of a picture to load from our bundle, so we need to store it somewhere.

In this instance it's perfectly fine to use **Bundle.main.resourcePath!** and **try!**, because if this code fails it means our app can't read its own data so something must be seriously wrong. Some Swift developers attempt to write code to handle these catastrophic errors at runtime, but sadly all too often they just mask the actual problem that occurred.

Right now our code loads the list of files that are inside our app bundle, then loops over them all to find the ones with a name that begins with "nssl". However, it doesn't actually *do* anything with those files, so our next step is to create an array of all the "nssl" pictures so we can refer to them later rather than having to re-read the resources directory again and again.

The three constants we already created – **fm**, **path**, and **items** – live inside the **viewDidLoad()** method, and will be destroyed as soon as that method finishes. What we want is a way to attach data to the whole **ViewController** type so that it will exist for as long as our screen exists. So, this a perfect example of when to use a property – we can give our **ViewController** class as many of these properties as we want, then read and write them as often as needed while the screen exists.

To create a property, you need to declare it *outside* of methods. We've been creating constants using **let** so far, but this array is going to be changed inside our loop so we need to make it variable. We also need to tell Swift exactly what kind of data it will hold – in our case that's an array of strings, where each item will be the name of an "nssl" picture.

Add this line of code *before* **viewDidLoad()**:

```
var pictures = [String]()
```

Project 1: Storm Viewer

If you've placed it correctly, your code should look like this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {  
    var pictures = [String]()  
  
    override func viewDidLoad() {  
        super.viewDidLoad()  
  
        let fm = FileManager.default
```

That **pictures** array will be created when the **ViewController** screen is created, and exist for as long as the screen exists. It will be empty, because we haven't actually filled it with anything, but at least it's there ready for us to fill.

What we *really* want is to add to the **pictures** array all the files we match inside our loop. To do that, we need to replace the existing **// this is a picture to load!** comment with code to add each picture to the **pictures** array.

Helpfully, Swift's arrays have a built-in method called **append** that we can use to add any items we want. So, replace the **// this is a picture to load!** comment with this:

```
pictures.append(item)
```

That's it! Annoyingly, after all that work our app won't appear to do anything when you press play – you'll see the same white screen as before. Did it work, or did things just silently fail?

To find out, add this line of code at the end of **viewDidLoad()**, just before the closing brace:

```
print(pictures)
```

That tells Swift to print the contents of **pictures** to the Xcode debug console. When you run the program now, you should see this text appear at the bottom of your Xcode window:

```
["nssl0033.jpg", "nssl0034.jpg", "nssl0041.jpg", "nssl0042.jpg", "nssl0043.jpg",  
 "nssl0045.jpg", "nssl0046.jpg", "nssl0049.jpg", "nssl0051.jpg", "nssl0091.jpg"]"
```

Listing images with FileManager

Note: iOS likes to print lots of uninteresting debug messages in the Xcode debug console. Don't fret if you see lots of other text in there that you don't recognize – just scroll around until you see the text above, and if you see that then you're good to go.

Designing our interface

Our app loads all the storm images correctly, but it doesn't do anything interesting with them – printing to the Xcode console is helpful for debugging, but I can promise you it doesn't make for a best-selling app!

To fix this, our next goal is to create a user interface that lists the images so users can select one. UIKit – the iOS user interface framework – has a lot of built-in user interface tools that we can draw on to build powerful apps that look and work the way users expect.

For this app, our main user interface component is called **UITableViewController**. It's based on **UIViewController** – Apple's most basic type of screen – but adds the ability to show rows of data that can be scrolled and selected. You can see **UITableViewController** in the Settings app, in Mail, in Notes, in Health, and many more – it's powerful, flexible, and extremely fast, so it's no surprise it gets used in so many apps.

Our existing **ViewController** screen is based on **UIViewController**, but what we want is to have it based on **UITableViewController** instead. This doesn't take much to do, but you're going to meet a new part of Xcode called Interface Builder.

We'll get on to Interface Builder in a moment. First, though, we need to make a tiny change in `ViewController.swift`. Find this line:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {
```

That's the line that says “create a new screen called **ViewController** and have it build on Apple's own **UIViewController** screen.” I want you to change it to this:

```
class ViewController: UITableViewController {
```

It's only a small difference, but it's an important one: it means **ViewController** now inherits its functionality from **UITableViewController** instead of **UIViewController**, which gives us a huge amount of extra functionality for free as you'll see in a moment.

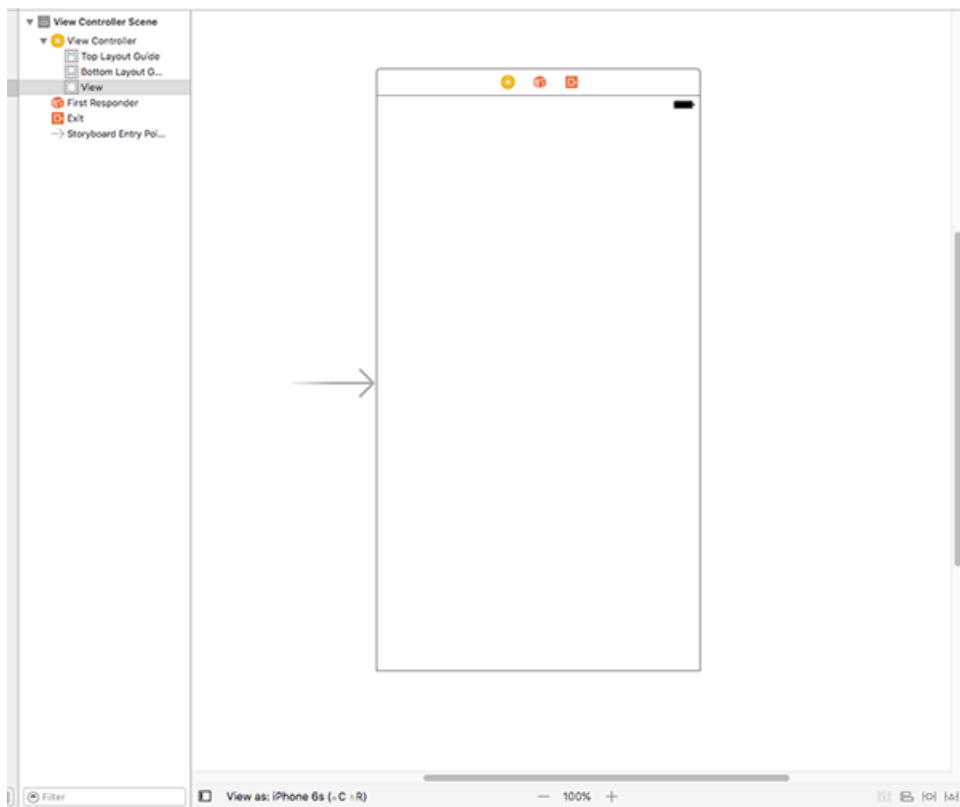
Behind the scenes, **UITableViewController** still builds on top of **UIViewController** – this is called a “class hierarchy”, and is a common way to build up functionality quickly.

We've changed the code for **ViewController** so that it builds on **UITableViewController**, but we also need to change the user interface to match. User interfaces can be written entirely in code if you want – and many developers do just that – but more commonly they are created using a graphical editor called Interface Builder. We need to tell Interface Builder (usually just called “IB”) that **ViewController** is a table view controller, so that it matches the change we just made in our code.

Up to this point we've been working entirely in the file `ViewController.swift`, but now I'd like you to use the project navigator (the pane on the left) to select the file `Main.storyboard`. Storyboards contain the user interface for your app, and let you visualize some or all of it on a single screen.

When you select `Main.storyboard`, you'll switch to the Interface Builder visual editor, and you should see something like the picture below:

Project 1: Storm Viewer



That big white space is what produces the big white space when the app runs. If you drop new components into that space, they would be visible when the app runs. However, we don't want to do that – in fact, we don't want that big white space at all, so we're going to delete it.

The best way to view, select, edit, and delete items in Interface Builder is to use the document outline, but there's a good chance it will be hidden for you so the first thing to do is show it. Go to the Editor menu and choose Show Document Outline – it's probably the third option from the top. If you see Hide Document Outline instead, it means the document outline is already visible.

The document outline shows you all the components in all the screens in your storyboard. You should see “View Controller Scene” already in there, so please select it, then press Backspace on your keyboard to remove it.

Instead of a boring old **UIViewController**, we want a fancy new **UITableViewController** to match the change we made in our code. To create one, press Cmd+Shift+L to show the object

library. Alternatively, if you dislike keyboard shortcuts you can go to the View menu and choose Libraries > Show Library instead.

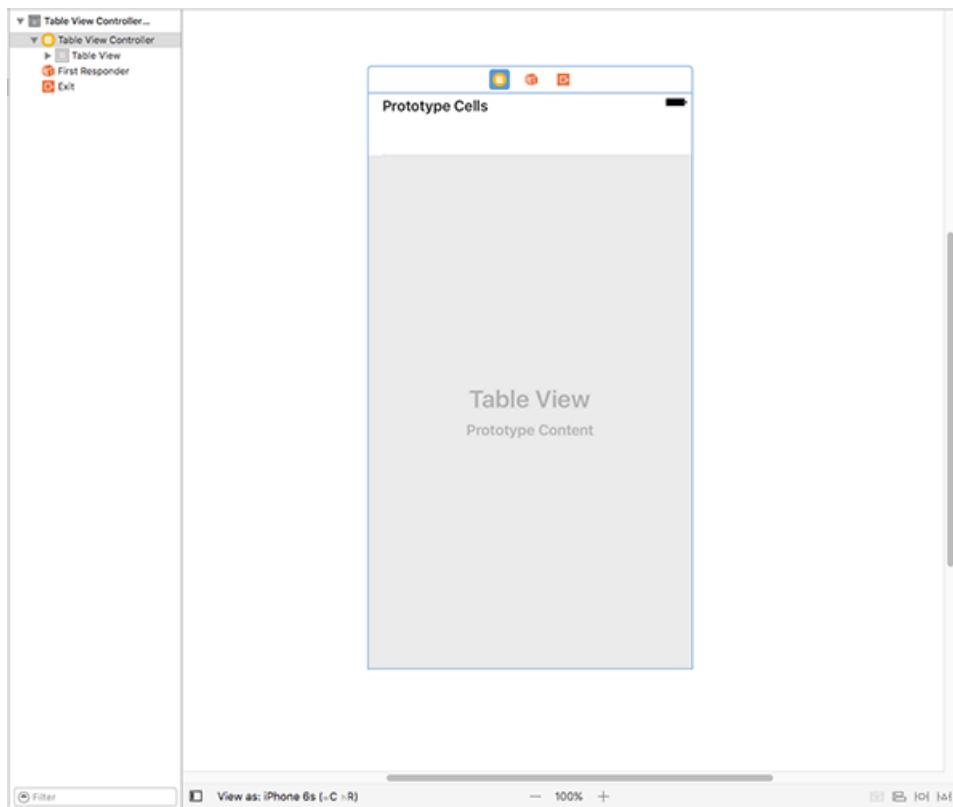
The object library floats over the Xcode window, and contains a selection of graphical components that you can drag out and re-arrange to your heart's content. It contains quite a lot of components, so you might find it useful to enter a few letters into the “Objects” box to slim down the selection.

Tip: If you want the object library to remain open after you drag something out, use Alt+Cmd+Shift+L and it will be a movable, resizable window when it appears.

Right now, the component we want is called Table View Controller. If you type “table” into the Filter box you’ll see Table View Controller, Table View, and Table View Cell. They are all different things, so please make sure you choose the Table View Controller – it has a yellow background in its icon.

Click on the Table View Controller component, then drag it out into the large open space that exists where the previous view controller was. When you let go to drop the table view controller onto the storyboard canvas, it will transform into a screen that looks like the below:

Project 1: Storm Viewer



Finishing touches for the user interface

Before we're done here, we need to make a few small changes.

First, we need to tell Xcode that this storyboard table view controller is the same one we have in code inside `ViewController.swift`. To do that, press `Alt+Cmd+3` to activate the identity inspector (or go to `View > Utilities > Show Identity Inspector`), then look at the very top for a box named "Class". It will have "UITableViewController" written in there in light gray text, but if you click the arrow on its right side you should see a dropdown menu that contains "ViewController" – please select that now.

Second, we need to tell Xcode that this new table view controller is what should be shown when the app first runs. To do that, press `Alt+Cmd+4` to activate the attributes inspector (or go to `View > Utilities > Show Attributes Inspector`), then look for the checkbox named "Is Initial View Controller" and make sure it's checked.

Third, I want you to use the document outline to look inside the new table view controller. Inside you should see it contains a “Table View”, which in turn contains “Cell”. A table view cell is responsible for displaying one row of data in a table, and we’re going to display one picture name in each cell.

Please select “Cell” then, in the attributes inspector, enter the text “Picture” into the text field marked Identifier. While you’re there, change the Style option at the top of the attributes inspector – it should be Custom right now, but please change it to Basic.

Finally, we’re going to place this whole table view controller inside something else. It’s something we don’t need to configure or worry about, but it’s an extremely common user interface element on iOS and I think you’ll recognize it immediately. It’s called a navigation controller, and you see it in action in apps like Settings and Mail – it provides the thin gray bar at the top of the screen, and is responsible for that right-to-left sliding animation that happens when you move between screens on iOS.

To place our table view controller into a navigation controller, all you need to do is go to the Editor menu and choose Embed In > Navigation Controller. Interface Builder will move your existing view controller to the right and add a navigation controller around it – you should see a simulated gray bar above your table view now. It will also move the “Is Initial View Controller” property to the navigation controller.

At this point you’ve done enough to take a look at the results of your work: press Xcode’s play button now, or press Cmd+R if you want to feel a bit elite. Once your code runs, you’ll now see the plain white box replaced with a large empty table view. If you click and drag your mouse around, you’ll see it scrolls and bounces as you would expect, although obviously there’s no data in there yet. You should also see a gray navigation bar at the top; that will be important later on.

Showing lots of rows

The next step is to make the table view show some data. Specifically, we want it to show the list of “nssl” pictures, one per row. Apple’s **UITableView** data type provides

Project 1: Storm Viewer

default behaviors for a lot of things, but by default it says there are zero rows.

Our **ViewController** screen builds on **UITableViewController** and gets to override the default behavior of Apple's table view to provide customization where needed. You only need to override the bits you want; the default values are all sensible.

To make the table show our rows, we need to override two behaviors: how many rows should be shown, and what each row should contain. This is done by writing two specially named methods, but when you're new to Swift they might look a little strange at first. To make sure everyone can follow along, I'm going to take this slowly – this is the very first project, after all!

Let's start with the method that sets how many rows should appear in the table. Add this code just after the *end* of **viewDidLoad()** – if you start typing “numberof” then you can use Xcode's code completion to do most of the work for you:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {  
    return pictures.count  
}
```

Note: that needs to be *after* the *end* of **viewDidLoad()**, which means after its closing brace.

That method contains the word “table view” three times, which is deeply confusing at first, so let's break down what it means.

- The **override** keyword means the method has been defined already, and we want to override the existing behavior with this new behavior. If you didn't override it, then the previously defined method would execute, and in this instance it would say there are no rows.
- The **func** keyword starts a new function or a new method; Swift uses the same keyword for both. Technically speaking a method is a function that appears inside a class, just like our **ViewController**, but otherwise there's no difference.
- The method's name comes next: **tableView**. That doesn't sound very useful, but the way

Apple defines methods to ensure that the information that gets passed into them – the parameters – are named usefully, and in this case the very first thing that gets passed in is the table view that triggered the code. A table view, as you might have gathered, is the scrolling thing that will contain all our image names, and is a core component in iOS.

- As promised, the next thing to come is **tableView: UITableView**, which is the table view that triggered the code. But this contains two pieces of information at once: **tableView** is the name that we can use to reference the table view inside the method, and **UITableView** is the data type – the bit that describes what it is.
- The most important part of the method comes next: **numberOfRowsInSection section: Int**. This describes what the method actually does. We know it involves a table view because that's the name of the method, but the **numberOfRowsInSection** part is the actual action: this code will be triggered when iOS wants to know how many rows are in the table view. The **section** part is there because table views can be split into sections, like the way the Contacts app separates names by first letter. We only have one section, so we can ignore this number. The **Int** part means “this will be an integer,” which means a whole number like 3, 30, or 35678 number.”
- Finally, **-> Int** means “this method must return an integer”, which ought to be the number of rows to show in the table.

There was one more thing I missed out, and I missed it out for a reason: it's a bit confusing at this point in your Swift career. Did you notice that `_` in there? I hope you can remember that means the first parameter isn't passed in using a name when called externally – this is a remnant of Objective-C, where the name of the first parameter was usually built right into the method name.

In this instance, the method is called **tableView()** because its first parameter is the table view that you're working with. It wouldn't make much sense to write **tableView(tableView: someTableView)**, so using the underscore means you would write **tableView(someTableView)** instead.

I'm not going to pretend it's easy to understand how Swift methods look and work, but the best thing to do is not worry too much if you don't understand right now because after a few hours

Project 1: Storm Viewer

of coding they will be second nature.

At the very least you do need to know that these methods are referred to using their name (**tableView**) and any named parameters. Parameters without names are just referenced as underscores: `_`. So, to give it its full name, the method you just wrote is referred to as **tableView(_:numberOfRowsInSection:)** – clumsy, I know, which is why most people usually just talk about the important bit, for example, "in the **numberOfRowsInSection** method."

We wrote only one line of code in the method, which was **return pictures.count**. That means "send back the number of pictures in our array," so we're asking that there be as many table rows as there are pictures.

Dequeuing cells

That's the first of two methods we need to write to complete this stage of the app. The second is to specify what each row should look like, and it follows a similar naming convention to the previous method. Add this code now:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Picture", for: indexPath)
    cell.textLabel?.text = pictures[indexPath.row]
    return cell
}
```

Let's break it down into parts again, so you can see exactly how it works.

First, **override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView** is identical to the previous method: the method name is just **tableView()**, and it will pass in a table view as its first parameter. The `_` means it doesn't need to have a name sent externally, because it's the same as the method name.

Second, **cellForRowAtIndexPath: IndexPath** is the important part of the method name. The method is called **cellForRowAt**, and will be called when you need to provide a row. The row to show is specified in the parameter: **indexPath**, which is of type **IndexPath**. This is a data type that contains both a section number and a row number. We only have one section, so we can ignore that and just use the row number.

Third, **-> UITableViewCell** means this method must return a table view cell. If you remember, we created one inside Interface Builder and gave it the identifier “Picture”, so we want to use that.

Here’s where a little bit of iOS magic comes in: if you look at the Settings app, you’ll see it can fit only about 12 rows on the screen at any given time, depending on the size of your phone.

To save CPU time and RAM, iOS only creates as many rows as it needs to work. When one row moves off the top of the screen, iOS will take it away and put it into a reuse queue ready to be recycled into a new row that comes in from the bottom. This means you can scroll through hundreds of rows a second, and iOS can behave lazily and avoid creating any new table view cells – it just recycles the existing ones.

This functionality is baked right into iOS, and it’s exactly what our code does on this line:

```
let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:  
    "Picture", for: indexPath)
```

That creates a new constant called **cell** by dequeuing a recycled cell from the table. We have to give it the identifier of the cell type we want to recycle, so we enter the same name we gave Interface Builder: “Picture”. We also pass along the index path that was requested; this gets used internally by the table view.

That will return to us a table view cell we can work with to display information. You can create your own custom table view cell designs if you want to (more on that much later!), but we’re using the built-in Basic style that has a text label. That’s where line two comes in: it gives the text label of the cell the same text as a picture in our array. Here’s the code again:

Project 1: Storm Viewer

```
cell.textLabel?.text = pictures[indexPath.row]
```

The **cell** has a property called **textLabel**, but it's optional: there might be a text label, or there might not be – if you had designed your own, for example. Rather than write checks to see if there is a text label or not, Swift lets us use a question mark – **textLabel?** – to mean “do this only if there is an actual text label there, or do nothing otherwise.”

We want to set the label text to be the name of the correct picture from our **pictures** array, and that's exactly what the code does. **indexPath.row** will contain the row number we're being asked to load, so we're going to use that to read the corresponding picture from **pictures**, and place it into the cell's text label.

The last line in the method is **return cell**. Remember, this method expects a table view cell to be returned, so we need to send back the one we created – that's what the **return cell** does.

With those two pretty small methods in place, you can run your code again now and see how it looks. All being well you should now see 10 table view cells, each one with a different picture name inside. If you click on one of them it will turn gray, but nothing else will happen. Let's fix that now...

Building a detail screen

At this point in our app, we have a list of pictures to choose from, but although we can tap on them nothing happens. Our next goal is to design a new screen that will be shown when the user taps any row. We're going to make it show their selected picture full screen, and it will slide in automatically when a picture is tapped.

This task can be split into two smaller tasks. First, we need to create some new code that will host this detail screen. Second, we need to draw the user interface for this screen inside Interface Builder.

Let's start with the easy bit: create new code to host the detail screen. From the menu bar, go to the File menu and choose New > File, and a window full of options will appear. From that list, choose iOS > Cocoa Touch Class, then click Next.

You'll be asked to name the new screen, and also tell iOS what it should build on. Please enter "DetailViewController" for the name, and "UIViewController" for "Subclass Of". Make sure "Also create XIB file" is deselected, then click Next and Create to add the new file.

That's the first job done – we have a new file that will contain code for the detail screen.

The second task takes a little more thinking. Go back to Main.storyboard, and you'll see our existing two view controllers there: that's the navigation view controller on the left, and the table view controller on the right. We're going to add a new view controller – a new screen – now, which will be our detail screen.

First, open the object library and find "View Controller" in there. Drag it out into the space to the right of your existing view controller. You could place it anywhere, really, but it's nice to arrange your screens so they flow logically from left to right.

Now, if you look in the document outline you'll see a second "View Controller scene" has appeared: one for the table view, and one for the detail view. If you're not sure which is which, just click in the new screen – in the big white empty space that just got created – and it should select the correct scene in the document outline.

Project 1: Storm Viewer

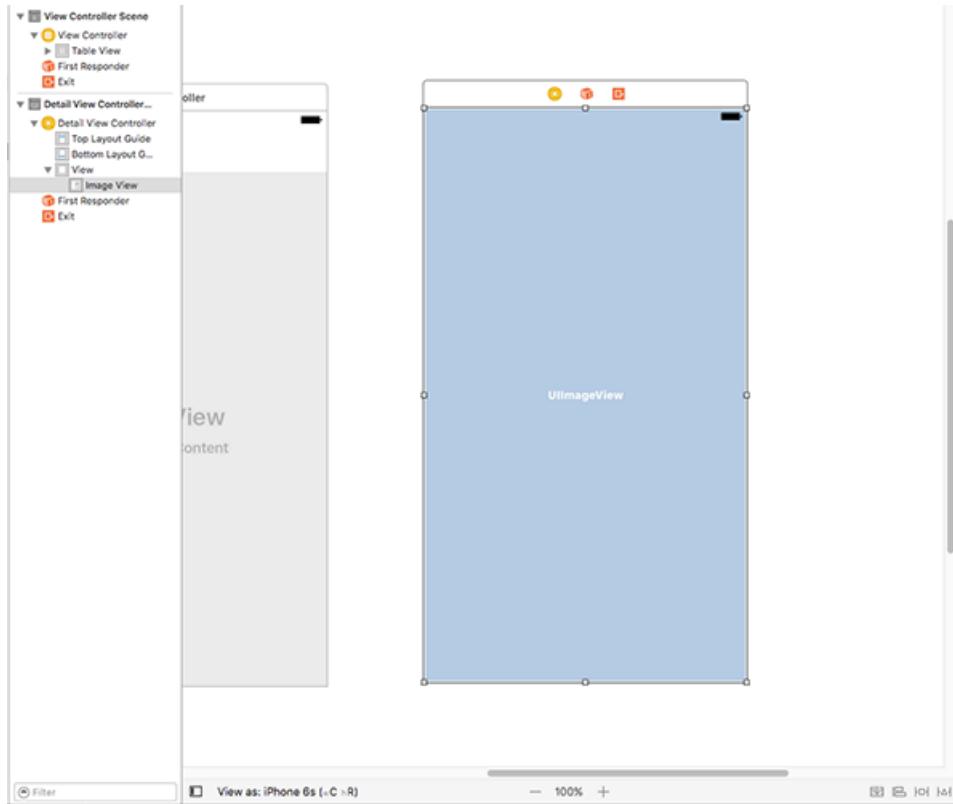
When we created our table view cell previously, we gave it an identifier so that we could load it in code. We need to do the same thing for this new screen. When you selected it a moment ago, it should have highlighted “View” in the document outline. Above that will be “View Controller” with a yellow icon next to it – please click on that to select the whole view controller now.

To give this view controller a name, go to the identity inspector by pressing Cmd+Alt+3 or by using the menu. Now enter “Detail” where it says “Storyboard ID”. That’s it: we can now refer to this view controller as “Detail” in code. While you’re there, please click the arrow next to the Class box and select “DetailViewController” so that our user interface is connected to the new code we made earlier.

Now for the interesting part: we want this screen to display the user’s selected image nice and big, so we need to use a new user interface component called **UIImageView**. As you should be able to tell from the name, this is a part of UIKit (hence the “UI”), and is responsible for viewing images – perfect!

Look in the object library to find Image View; you might find it easiest to use the filter box again. Click and drag the image view from the object library onto the detail view controller, then let go. Now, drag its edges so that it fills the entire view controller.

Building a detail screen



This image view has no content right now, so it's filled with a pale blue background and the word **UIImageView**. We won't be assigning any content to it right now, though – that's something we'll do when the program runs. Instead, we need to tell the image view how to size itself for our screen, whether that's iPhone or iPad.

This might seem strange at first, after all you just placed it to fill the view controller, and it has the same size as the view controller, so that should be it, right? Well, not quite. Think about it: there are lots of iOS devices your app might run on, all with different sizes. So, how should the image view respond when it's being shown on a 6 Plus or perhaps even an iPad?

iOS has an answer for this. And it's a brilliant answer that in many ways works like magic to do what you want. It's called Auto Layout: it lets you define rules for how your views should be laid out, and it automatically makes sure those rules are followed.

But – and this is a big but! – it has two rules of its own, both of which must be followed by you:

Project 1: Storm Viewer

- Your layout rules must be complete. That is, you can't specify only an X position for something, you must also specify a Y position. If it's been a while since you were at school, "X" is position from the left of the screen, and "Y" is position from the top of the screen.
- Your layout rules must not conflict. That is, you can't specify that a view must be 10 points away from the left edge, 10 points away from the right edge, and 1000 points wide. An iPhone 5 screen is only 320 points wide, so your layout is mathematically impossible. Auto Layout will try to recover from these problems by breaking rules until it finds a solution, but the end result is never what you want.

You can create Auto Layout rules – known as *constraints* – entirely inside Interface Builder, and it will warn you if you aren't following the two rules. It will even help you correct any mistakes you make by suggesting fixes. Note: the fixes it suggests *might* be correct, but they might not be – tread carefully!

We're going to create four constraints now: one each for the top, bottom, left and right of the image view so that it expands to fill the detail view controller regardless of its size. There are lots of ways of adding Auto Layout constraints, but the easiest way right now is to select the image view then go to the Editor menu and choose > Resolve Auto Layout Issues > Reset To Suggested Constraints.

You'll see that option listed twice in the menu because there are two subtly different options, but in this instance it doesn't matter which one you choose. If you prefer keyboard shortcuts, press Shift+Alt+Cmd+= to accomplish the same thing.

Visually, your layout will look pretty much identical once you've added the constraints, but there are two subtle differences. First, there's a thin blue line surrounding the **UIImageView** on the detail view controller, which is Interface Builder's way of showing you that the image view has a correct Auto Layout definition.

Second, in the document outline pane you'll see a new entry for "Constraints" beneath the image view. All four constraints that were added are hidden under that Constraints item, and you can expand it to view them individually if you're curious.

With the constraints added, there's one more thing to do here before we're finished with Interface Builder, and that's to connect our new image view to some code. You see, having the image view inside the layout isn't enough – if we actually want to *use* the image view inside code, we need to create a property for it that's attached to the layout.

This property is like the **pictures** array we made previously, but it has a little bit more “interesting” Swift syntax we need to cover. Even more cunningly, it's created using a really bizarre piece of user interface design that will send your brain for a loop if you've used other graphical IDEs.

Let's dive in, and I'll explain on the way. Xcode has a special display layout called the Assistant Editor, which splits your Xcode editor in two: the view you had before on top, and a related view at the bottom. In this case, it's going to show us Interface Builder on top, and the code for the detail view controller below.

Xcode decides what code to show based on what item is selected in Interface Builder, so make sure the image view is still selected and choose View > Assistant Editor > Show Assistant Editor from the menu. You can also use the keyboard shortcut Alt+Cmd+Return if you prefer.

Xcode can display the assistant editor as two vertical panes rather than two horizontal panes. I find the horizontal panes easiest – i.e., one above the other. You can switch between them by going to View > Assistant Editor and choosing either Assistant Editors On Right or Assistant Editors on Bottom.

Regardless of which you prefer, you should now see the detail view controller in Interface Builder in one pane, and in the other pane the source code for DetailViewController.swift. Xcode knows to load DetailViewController.swift because you changed the class for this screen to be “DetailViewController” just after you changed its storyboard ID.

Now for the bizarre piece of UI. What I want you to do is this:

1. Make sure the image view is selected.
2. Hold down the Ctrl key on your keyboard.
3. Press your mouse button down on the image view, but hold it down – don't release it.

Project 1: Storm Viewer

4. While continuing to hold down Ctrl and your mouse button, drag from the image view into your code – into the other assistant editor pane.
5. As you move your mouse cursor, you should see a blue line stretch out from the image view into your code. Stretch that line so that it points between **class DetailViewController:** **UIViewController {** and **override func viewDidLoad() {**
6. When you’re between those two, a horizontal blue line should appear, along with a tooltip saying Insert Outlet Or Outlet Connection. When you see that, let go of both Ctrl and your mouse button. (It doesn’t matter which one you release first.)

If you follow those steps, a balloon should appear with five fields: Connection, Object, Name, Type, and Storage.



By default the options should be “Outlet” for connection, “Detail View Controller” for Object, nothing for name, “UIImageView” for type, and “Strong” for storage. If you see “Weak” for storage please change it to “Strong” – Xcode will remember that setting from now on.

Leave all of them alone except for Name – I’d like you to enter “imageView” in there. When you’ve done that click the Connect button, and Xcode will insert a line of code into DetailViewController.swift. You should see this:

```
class DetailViewController: UIViewController {
    @IBOutlet var imageView: UIImageView!

    override func viewDidLoad() {
        super.viewDidLoad()
```

To the left of the new line of code, in the gutter next to the line number, is a gray circle with a

line around it. If you move your mouse cursor over that you'll see the image view flash – that little circle is Xcode's way of telling you the line of code is connected to the image view in your storyboard.

So, we Ctrl-dragged from Interface Builder straight into our Swift file, and Xcode wrote a line of code for us as a result. Some bits of that code are new, so let's break down the whole line:

- **@IBOutlet**: This attribute is used to tell Xcode that there's a connection between this line of code and Interface Builder.
- **var**: This declares a new variable or variable property.
- **imageView**: This was the property name assigned to the **UIImageView**. Note the way capital letters are used: variables and constants should start with a lowercase letter, then use a capital letter at the start of any subsequent words. For example, **myAwesomeVariable**. This is sometimes called camel case.
- **UIImageView!**: This declares the property to be of type **UIImageView**, and again we see the implicitly unwrapped optional symbol: **!**. This means that that **UIImageView** may be there or it may not be there, but we're certain it definitely will be there by the time we want to use it.

If you were struggling to understand implicitly unwrapped optionals (don't worry; they are complicated!), this code might make it a bit clearer. You see, when the detail view controller is being created, its view hasn't been loaded yet – it's just some code running on the CPU.

When the basic stuff has been done (allocating enough memory to hold it all, for example), iOS goes ahead and loads the layout from the storyboard, then connects all the outlets from the storyboard to the code.

So, when the detail controller is first made, the **UIImageView** doesn't exist because it hasn't been created yet – but we still need to have some space for it in memory. At this point, the property is **nil**, or just some empty memory. But when the view gets loaded and the outlet gets connected, the **UIImageView** will point to a real **UIImageView**, not to **nil**, so we can start using it.

Project 1: Storm Viewer

In short: it starts life as **nil**, then gets set to a value before we use it, so we're certain it won't ever be **nil** by the time we want to use it – a textbook case of implicitly unwrapped optionals. If you still don't understand implicitly unwrapped optionals, that's perfectly fine – keep on going and they'll become clear over time.

That's our detail screen complete – we're done with Interface Builder for now, and can return to code. This also means we're done with the assistant editor, so you can return to the full-screen editor by going to View > Standard Editor > Show Standard Editor.

Loading images with `UIImage`

At this point we have our original table view controller full of pictures to select, plus a detail view controller in our storyboard. The next goal is to show the detail screen when any table row is tapped, and have it show the selected image.

To make this work we need to add another specially named method to **ViewController**. This one is called **tableView(_ didSelectRowAt:)**, which takes an **IndexPath** value just like **cellForRowAt** that tells us what row we're working with. This time we need to do a bit more work:

1. We need to create a property in **DetailViewController** that will hold the name of the image to load.
2. We'll implement the **didSelectRowAt** method so that it loads a **DetailViewController** from the storyboard.
3. Finally, we'll fill in **viewDidLoad()** inside **DetailViewController** so that it loads an image into its image view based on the name we set earlier.

Let's solve each of those in order, starting with the first one: creating a property in **DetailViewController** that will hold the name of the image to load.

This property will be a string – the name of the image to load – but it needs to be an *optional* string because when the view controller is first created it won't exist. We'll be setting it straight away, but it still starts off life empty.

So, add this property to **DetailViewController** now, just below the existing **@IBOutlet** line:

```
var selectedImage: String?
```

That's the first task done, so onto the second: implement **didSelectRowAt** so that it loads a **DetailViewController** from the storyboard.

When we created the detail view controller, you gave it the storyboard ID "Detail", which allows us to load it from the storyboard using a method called

Project 1: Storm Viewer

instantiateViewController(withIdentifier:). Every view controller has a property called **storyboard** that is either the storyboard it was loaded from or nil. In the case of **ViewController** it will be Main.storyboard, which is the same storyboard that contains the detail view controller, so we'll be loading from there.

We can break this task down into three smaller tasks, two of which are new:

1. Load the detail view controller layout from our storyboard.
2. Set its **selectedImage** property to be the correct item from the **pictures** array.
3. Show the new view controller.

The first of those is done by calling **instantiateViewController**, but it has two small complexities. First, we call it on the **storyboard** property that we get from Apple's **UIViewController** type, but it's optional because Swift doesn't know we came from a storyboard. So, we need to use `? just like when we were setting the text label of our cell: "try doing this, but do nothing if there was a problem."`

Second, even though **instantiateViewController()** will send us back a **DetailViewController** if everything worked correctly, Swift *thinks* it will return back a **UIViewController** because it can't see inside the storyboard to know what's what.

This will seem confusing if you're new to programming, so let me try to explain using an analogy. Let's say you want to go out on a date tonight, so you ask me to arrange a couple of tickets to an event. I go off, find tickets, then hand them to you in an envelope. I fulfilled my part of the deal: you asked for tickets, I got you tickets. But what tickets are they – tickets for a sporting event? Tickets for an opera? Train tickets? The only way for you to find out is to open the envelope and look.

Swift has the same problem: **instantiateViewController()** has the return type **UIViewController**, so as far as Swift is concerned any view controller created with it is actually a **UIViewController**. This causes a problem for us because we want to adjust the property we just made in **DetailViewController**. The solution: we need to tell Swift that what it has is not what it thinks it is.

The technical term for this is “typecasting”: asking Swift to treat a value as a different type. Swift has several ways of doing this, but we’re going to use the safest version: it effectively means, “please try to treat this as a DetailViewController, but if it fails then do nothing and move on.”

Once we have a detail view controller on our hands, we can set its **selectedImage** property to be equal to **pictures[indexPath.row]** just like we were doing in **cellForRowAt** – that’s the easy bit.

The third mini-step is to make the new screen show itself. You already saw that view controllers have an optional **storyboard** property that either contains the storyboard they were loaded from or nil. Well, they also have an optional **navigationController** property that contains the navigation controller they are inside if it exists, or nil otherwise.

This is perfect for us, because navigation controllers are responsible for showing screens. Sure, they provide that nice gray bar across the top that you see in lots of apps, but they are also responsible for maintaining a big stack of screens that users navigate through.

By default they contain the first view controller you created for them in the storyboard, but when new screens are created you can push them onto the navigation controller’s stack to have them slide in smoothly just like you see in Settings. As more screens are pushed on, they just keep sliding in. When users go back a screen – i.e. by tapping Back or by swiping from left to right – the navigation controller will automatically destroy the old view controller and free up its memory.

Those three mini-steps complete the new method, so it’s time for the code. Please add this method to ViewController.swift – I’ve added comments to make it easier to understand:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
didSelectRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) {  
    // 1: try loading the "Detail" view controller and  
    // typecasting it to be DetailViewController  
    if let vc =  
        storyboard?.instantiateViewController(withIdentifier: "Detail")
```

Project 1: Storm Viewer

```
as? DetailViewController {
    // 2: success! Set its selectedImage property
    vc.selectedImage = pictures[indexPath.row]

    // 3: now push it onto the navigation controller
    navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated:
true)
}
```

Let's look at the **if let** line a bit more closely for a moment. There are three parts of it that might fail: the **Storyboard** property might be nil (in which case the `?` will stop the rest of the line from executing), the **instantiateViewController()** call might fail if we had requested "Fzzzzz" or some other invalid storyboard ID, and the typecast – the `as?` part – also might fail, because we might have received back a view controller of a different type.

So, three things in that one line have the potential to fail. If you've followed all my steps correctly they *won't* fail, but they have the *potential* to fail. That's where **if let** is clever: if any of those things return nil (i.e., they fail), then the code inside the **if let** braces won't execute. This guarantees your program is in a safe state before any action is taken.

There's only one small thing left to do before you can take a look at the results: we need to make the image actually load into the image view in **DetailViewController**.

This new code will draw on a new data type, called **UIImage**. This doesn't have "View" in its name like **UIImageView** does, so it's not something you can view – it's not something that's actually visible to users. Instead, **UIImage** is the data type you'll use to load image data, such as PNG or JPEGs.

When you create a **UIImage**, it takes a parameter called **named** that lets you specify the name of the image to load. **UIImage** then looks for this filename in your app's bundle, and loads it. By passing in the **selectedImage** property here, which was sent from **ViewController**, this will load the image that was selected by the user.

However, we can't use `selectedImage` directly. If you remember, we created it like this:

```
var selectedImage: String?
```

That `?` means it might have a value or it might not, and Swift doesn't let you use these "maybes" without checking them first. This is another opportunity for `if let`: we can check that `selectedImage` has a value, and if so pull it out for usage; otherwise, do nothing.

Add this code to `viewDidLoad()` inside `DetailViewController`, *after* the call to `super.viewDidLoad()`:

```
if let imageToLoad = selectedImage {  
    imageView.image = UIImage(named: imageToLoad)  
}
```

The first line is what checks and unwraps the optional in `selectedImage`. If for some reason `selectedImage` is `nil` (which it should never be, in theory) then the `imageView.image` line will never be executed. If it has a value, it will be placed into `imageToLoad`, then passed to `UIImage` and loaded.

OK, that's it: press play or Cmd+R now to run the app and try it out! You should be able to select any of the pictures to have them slide in and displayed full screen.

Notice that we get a Back button in the navigation bar that lets us return back to `ViewController`. If you click and drag carefully, you'll find you can create a swipe gesture too – click at the very left edge of the screen, then drag to the right, just as you would do with your thumb on a phone.

Final tweaks: hidesBarsOnTap and large titles

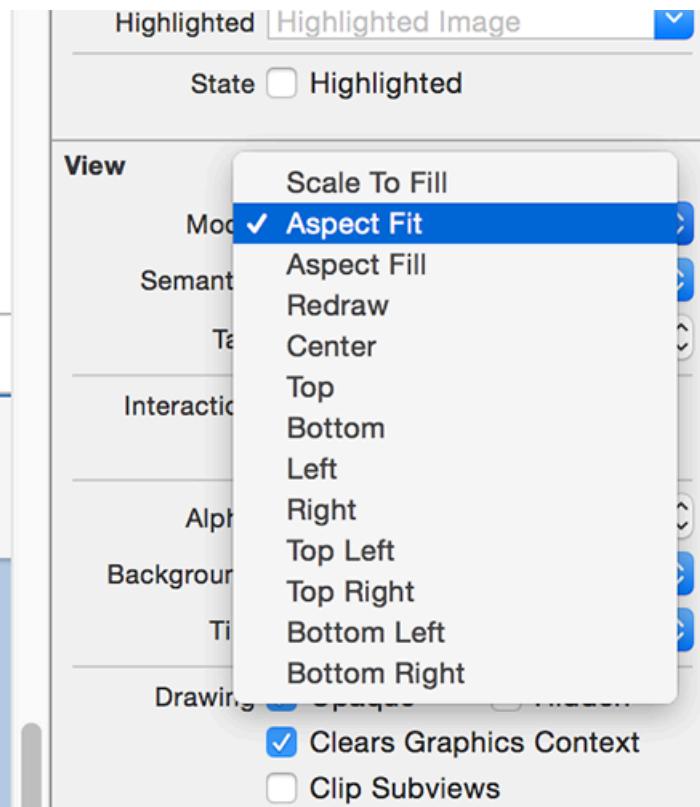
At this point you have a working project: you can press Cmd+R to run it, flick through the images in the table, then tap one to view it. But before this project is complete, there are several other small changes we're going to make that makes the end result a little more polished.

First, you might have noticed that all the images are being stretched to fit the screen. This isn't an accident – it's the default setting of **UIImageView**.

This takes just a few clicks to fix: choose Main.storyboard, select the image view in the detail view controller, then choose the attributes inspector. This is in the right-hand pane, near the top, and is the fourth of six inspectors, just to the left of the ruler icon.

If you don't fancy hunting around for it, just press Cmd+Alt+4 to bring it up. The stretching is caused by the view mode, which is a dropdown button that defaults to either "Aspect Fit" or "Aspect Fill" depending on your version of Xcode Try changing that to "Aspect Fill" to see the image scaled up to fit the available space.

Final tweaks: hidesBarsOnTap and large titles



If you were wondering, Aspect Fit sizes the image so that it's all visible. There's also Scale to Fill, which sizes the image so that there's no space left blank by stretching it on both axes. If you use Aspect Fill, the image effectively hangs outside its view area, so you should make sure you enable Clip To Bounds to avoid the image overspilling.

The second change we're going to make is to allow users to view the images fullscreen, with no navigation bar getting in their way. There's a really easy way to make this happen, and it's a property on **UINavigationController** called **hidesBarsOnTap**. When this is set to true, the user can tap anywhere on the current view controller to hide the navigation bar, then tap again to show it.

Be warned: you need to set it carefully when working with iPhones. If we had it set on all the time then it would affect taps in the table view, which would cause havoc when the user tried to select things. So, we need to enable it when showing the detail view controller, then disable it when hiding.

Project 1: Storm Viewer

You already met the method **viewDidLoad()**, which is called when the view controller's layout has been loaded. There are several others that get called when the view is about to be shown, when it has been shown, when it's about to go away, and when it has gone away. These are called, respectively, **viewWillAppear()**, **viewDidAppear()**, **viewWillDisappear()** and **viewDidDisappear()**. We're going to use **viewWillAppear()** and **viewWillDisappear()** to modify the **hidesBarsOnTap** property so that it's set to true only when the detail view controller is showing.

Open `DetailViewController.swift`, then add these two new methods directly below the end of the **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
override func viewWillAppear(_ animated: Bool) {
    super.viewWillAppear(animated)
    navigationController?.hidesBarsOnTap = true
}

override func viewWillDisappear(_ animated: Bool) {
    super.viewWillDisappear(animated)
    navigationController?.hidesBarsOnTap = false
}
```

There are some important things to note in there:

- We're using **override** for each of these methods, because they already have defaults defined in **UIViewController** and we're asking it to use ours instead. Don't worry if you aren't sure when to use override and when not, because if you don't use it and it's required Xcode will tell you.
- Both methods have a single parameter: whether the action is animated or not. We don't really care in this instance, so we ignore it.
- Both methods use the **super** prefix again: **super.viewWillAppear()** and **super.viewWillDisappear()**. This means "tell my parent data type that these methods were called." In this instance, it means that it passes the method on to **UIViewController**, which may do its own processing.

- We're using the **navigationController** property again, which will work fine because we were pushed onto the navigation controller stack from **ViewController**. We're accessing the property using `?`, so if somehow we weren't inside a navigation controller the **hidesBarsOnTap** lines will do nothing.

If you run the app now, you'll see that you can tap to see a picture full size, and it will no longer be stretched. While you're viewing a picture you can tap to hide the navigation bar at the top, then tap to show it again.

The third change is a small but important one. If you look at other apps that use table views and navigation controllers to display screens (again, Settings is great for this), you might notice gray arrows at the right of the table view cells. This is called a disclosure indicator, and it's a subtle user interface hint that tapping this row will show more information.

It only takes a few clicks in Interface Builder to get this disclosure arrow in our table view. Open Main.storyboard, then click on the table view cell – that's the one that says "Title", directly below "Prototype Cells". The table view contains a cell, the cell contains a content view, and the content view contains a label called "Title" so it's easy to select the wrong thing. As a result, you're likely to find it easiest to use the document outline to select exactly the right thing – you want to select the thing marked "Picture", which is the reuse identifier we attached to our table view cell.

When that's selected, you should be able go to the attributes inspector and see "Style: Basic", "Identifier: Picture", and so on. You will also see "Accessory: None" – please change that to "Disclosure Indicator", which will cause the gray arrow to show.

The fourth is small but important: we're going to place some text in the gray bar at the top. You've already seen that view controllers have **storyboard** and **navigationController** properties that we get from **UIViewController**. Well, they also have a **title** property that automatically gets read by navigation controller: if you provide this title, it will be displayed in the gray navigation bar at the top.

In **ViewController**, add this code to **viewDidLoad()** after the call to **super.viewDidLoad()**:

Project 1: Storm Viewer

```
title = "Storm Viewer"
```

This title is also automatically used for the “Back” button, so that users know what they are going back to.

In **DetailViewController** we *could* add something like this to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
title = "View Picture"
```

That would work fine, but instead we’re going to use some dynamic text: we’re going to display the name of the selected picture instead.

Add this to **viewDidLoad()** in **DetailViewController**:

```
title = selectedImage
```

We don’t need to unwrap **selectedImage** here because both **selectedImage** and **title** are optional strings – we’re assigning one optional string to another. **title** is optional because it’s nil by default: view controllers have no title, thus showing no text in the navigation bar.

Large titles

This is an entirely optional change, but I wanted to introduce it to you nice and early so you can try it for yourself and see what you think.

One of Apple’s design guidelines is the use of *large titles* – the text that appears in the gray bar at the top of apps. The default style is small text, which is what we’ve had so far, but with a couple of lines of code we can adopt the new design.

First, add this to **viewDidLoad()** in **ViewController.swift**:

```
navigationController?.navigationBar.prefersLargeTitles = true
```

That enables large titles across our app, and you’ll see an immediate difference: “Storm

Final tweaks: hidesBarsOnTap and large titles

Viewer” becomes much bigger, and in the detail view controller all the image titles are also big. You’ll notice the title is no longer static either – if you pull down gently you’ll see it stretches ever so slightly, and if you try scrolling up in our table view you’ll see the titles shrink away.

Apple recommends you use large titles only when it makes sense, and that usually means only on the first screen of your app. As you’ve seen, the default behavior when enabled is to have large titles everywhere, but that’s because each new view controller that pushed onto the navigation controller stack inherits the style of its predecessor.

In this app we want “Storm Viewer” to appear big, but the detail screen to look normal. To make that happen we need to add a line of code to **viewDidLoad()** in DetailViewController.swift:

```
navigationItem.largeTitleDisplayMode = .never
```

That’s all it takes – the large titles should behave properly now.

Wrap up

This has been a very simple project in terms of what it can do, but you've also learned a huge amount about Swift, Xcode and storyboards. I know it's not easy, but trust me: you've made it this far, so you're through the hardest part.

To give you an idea of how far you've come, here are just some of the things we've covered: table views and image views, app bundles, **FileManager**, typecasting, view controllers, storyboards, outlets, Auto Layout, **UIImage**, and more.

Yes, that's a *huge* amount, and to be brutally honest chances are you'll forget half of it. But that's OK, because we all learn through repetition, and if you continue to follow the rest of this series you'll be using all these and more again and again until you know them like the back of your hand.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 1.](#)

Challenge

This has the beginnings of a useful app, but if you really want your new knowledge to sink in you need to start writing some new code yourself – without following a tutorial, or having an answer you can just look up online.

So, each time you complete a project I'll be setting you a challenge to modify it somehow. Yes, this will take some work, but there is no learning without struggle – all the challenges are completely within your grasp based on what you've learned so far.

For this project, your challenges are:

- Use Interface Builder to select the text label inside your table view cell and adjust its font size to something larger – experiment and see what looks good.
- In your main table view, show the image names in sorted order, so “nssl0033.jpg” comes before “nssl0034.jpg”.
- Rather than show image names in the detail title bar, show “Picture X of Y”, where Y is the total number of images and X is the selected picture’s position in the array. Make sure you count from 1 rather than 0.

Hints

It is *vital* to your learning that you try the challenges above yourself, and not just for a handful of minutes before you give up.

Every time you try something wrong, you learn that it’s wrong and you’ll remember that it’s wrong. By the time you find the *correct* solution, you’ll remember it much more thoroughly, while also remembering a lot of the wrong turns you took.

This is what I mean by “there is no learning without struggle”: if something comes easily to you, it can go just as easily. But when you have to really mentally fight for something, it will stick much longer.

But if you’ve already worked hard at the challenges above and are still struggling to implement them, I’m going to write some hints below that should guide you to the correct answer.

If you ignore me and read these hints without having spent at least 30 minutes trying the challenges above, the only person you’re cheating is yourself.

Still here? OK. Let’s take a look at the challenges...

Use Interface Builder to select the text label inside your table view cell and adjust its font size to something larger – experiment and see what looks good.

This ought to be easy enough: open Main.storyboard, then use the document outline to select the table view, select the Picture cell inside it, select the Content View inside *that*, and finally

Project 1: Storm Viewer

select the Title label. In the attributes inspector you'll find a number of options – try to figure out which one controls the font size.

In your main table view, show the image names in sorted order, so “nssl0033.jpg” comes before “nssl0034.jpg”.

These pictures may or may not already be sorted for you, but your challenge here is to make sure they are *always* sorted. We've covered sorting arrays previously, and you should remember there's a **sort()** method you can use.

However, the question is: where should it be called? You *could* call this method each time you append an “nssl” picture to the **pictures** array, but that just causes extra work. Where could you put a call to **sort()** so its done only once, when the images have all been loaded?

Rather than show image names in the detail title bar, show “Picture X of Y”, where Y is the total number of images and X is the selected picture’s position in the array. Make sure you count from 1 rather than 0.

In this project you learned how to create properties like this one:

```
var selectedImage: String?
```

You also learned how to *set* those properties from somewhere else, like this:

```
vc.selectedImage = pictures[indexPath.row]
```

This challenge requires you to make two new properties in **DetailViewController**: one to contain the image’s position in the array, and one to contain the number of pictures.

For example, you might add these two properties to **DetailViewController**:

```
var selectedPictureNumber = 0  
var totalPictures = 0
```

You can then use those for the title in the navigation bar by using string interpolation.

Remember, string interpolation looks like this:

```
title = "This image is \(selectedImage)"
```

How can you use that with **selectedPictureNumber** and **totalPictures**?

Once that's done, you need to pass in some values for those properties. We create **DetailViewController** here:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
didSelectRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) {
    if let vc =
        storyboard?.instantiateViewController(withIdentifier: "Detail")
        as? DetailViewController {
        vc.selectedImage = pictures[indexPath.row]
        navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated:
true)
    }
}
```

That sets the **selectedImage** property using one of the strings from the **pictures** array. Which string? Well, we use **indexPath.row** for that, because that tells us which table view cell was selected.

So, we can use **indexPath.row** to set the **selectedPictureNumber** property in **DetailViewController** – just make sure you add 1 to it so that it counts from 1 rather than 0.

As for the **totalPictures** property in **DetailViewController**, which needs to contain the total number of pictures in our array. We already wrote code to read the size of the array inside the **numberOfRowsInSection** method – how can you use similar code to set **totalPictures**?

Project 2

Guess the Flag

Make a game using UIKit, and learn about integers, buttons, colors and actions.

Setting up

In this project you'll produce a game that shows some random flags to users and asks them to choose which one belongs to a particular country.

Now, when some people hear that a tutorial is about a game, they skip on. But that's a mistake, and I'll tell you why: the reason I mix up apps and games in Hacking with Swift is because it forces your brain to use all your skills in different ways and different contexts, which in turn helps you learn more thoroughly.

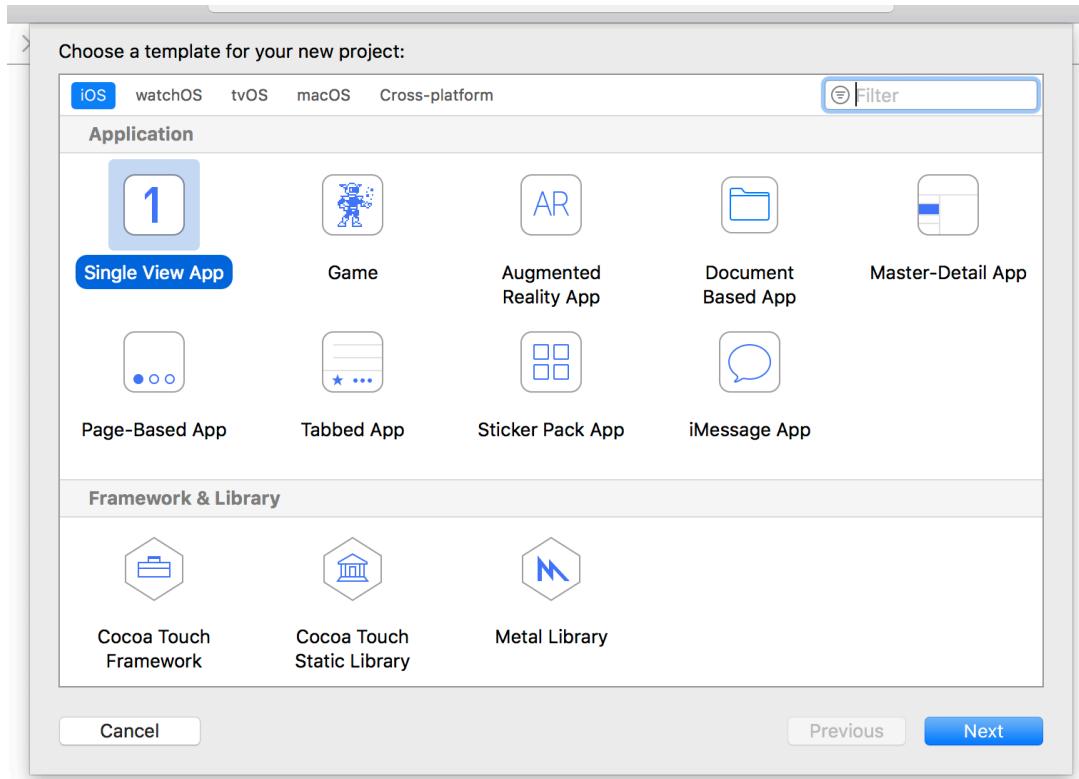
At the same time, one of the keys to learning is to use what you've learned several times over in various ways, so that your new knowledge really sinks in. The purpose of this project is to do exactly that: it's not complicated, it's about giving you the chance to use the things you just learned so that you really start to internalize it all.

That being said, there's still lots to learn – we'll look at asset catalogs, buttons, layers, actions, random numbers, alerts, and more.

Warning: if you skipped project 1 thinking it would all be about history or some other tedium, you were wrong. This project will be very hard if you haven't completed project 1!

So, launch Xcode, and choose "Create a new project" from the welcome screen. Choose Single View App from the list and click Next. For Product Name enter "Project2", then make sure you have Swift selected for language. Now click Next again and you'll be asked where you want to save the project – your desktop is fine.

Project 2: Guess the Flag



Designing your layout

When working on my own projects, I find designing the user interface the easiest way to begin any project – it's fun, it's immediately clear whether your idea is feasible, and it also forces you to think about user journeys while you work. This project isn't complicated, but still Interface Builder is where we're going to begin.

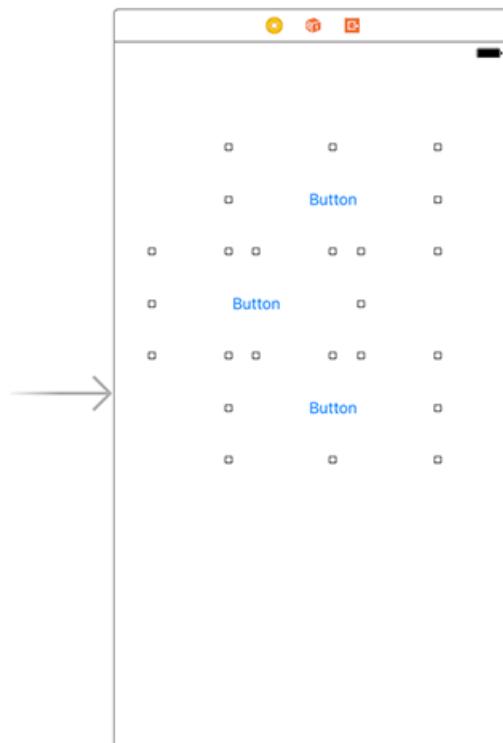
Just as in project 1, the Single View App template gives you one **UIViewController**, called **ViewController**, and a storyboard called Main.storyboard that contains the layout for our single view controller. Choose that storyboard now to open Interface Builder, and you'll see a big, blank space ready for your genius to begin.

In our game, we're going to show users three flags, with the name of the country to guess shown in the navigation bar at the top. What navigation bar? Well, there isn't one, or at least not yet. We need to add one, just like we did with the previous project.

We covered a *lot* in project 1, so you've probably forgotten how to do this, but that's OK: Single View App projects don't come with a navigation controller as standard, but it's trivial to add one: click inside the view controller, then go to the Editor menu and choose Embed In > Navigation Controller.

With the new navigation controller in place, scroll so you can see our empty view controller again, then use the object library to draw out three buttons onto the canvas. This is a new view type, but as you might imagine it's just a button that users can tap. Each of them should be 200 wide by 100 high. You can set these values exactly by using the size inspector in the top-right of the Xcode window.

Project 2: Guess the Flag



In the early days of iOS, buttons had a white background color and rounded edges so they were visibly tappable, but these days buttons are completely flat with just some text. That's OK, though; we'll make them more interesting soon.

You can jump to the size inspector directly by pressing the keyboard shortcut Alt+Cmd+5 or by going to the View menu and choosing Utilities > Show Size Inspector. Don't worry about the X positions, but the Y positions should be 100 for the first flag, 230 for the second, and 360 for the third. This should make them more or less evenly spaced in the view controller.

In the picture below you can see the size inspector, which is the quickest and easiest way to position and size views if you know exactly where you want them.

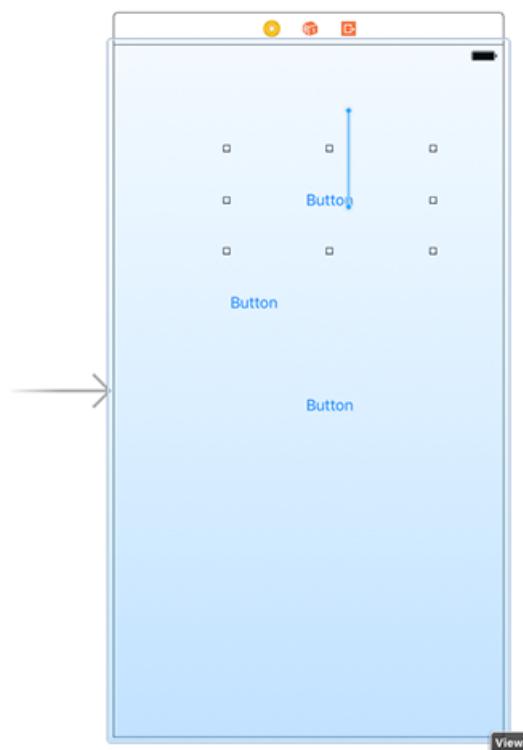


The next step is to bring in Auto Layout so that we lay down our layout as rules that can be adapted based on whatever device the user has. The rules in this case aren't complicated, but I hope will begin to show you just how clever Auto Layout is.

We're going to create our Auto Layout rules differently from in Project 1. This is not because one way is better than another, instead just so that you can see the various possibilities and decide which one suits you best.

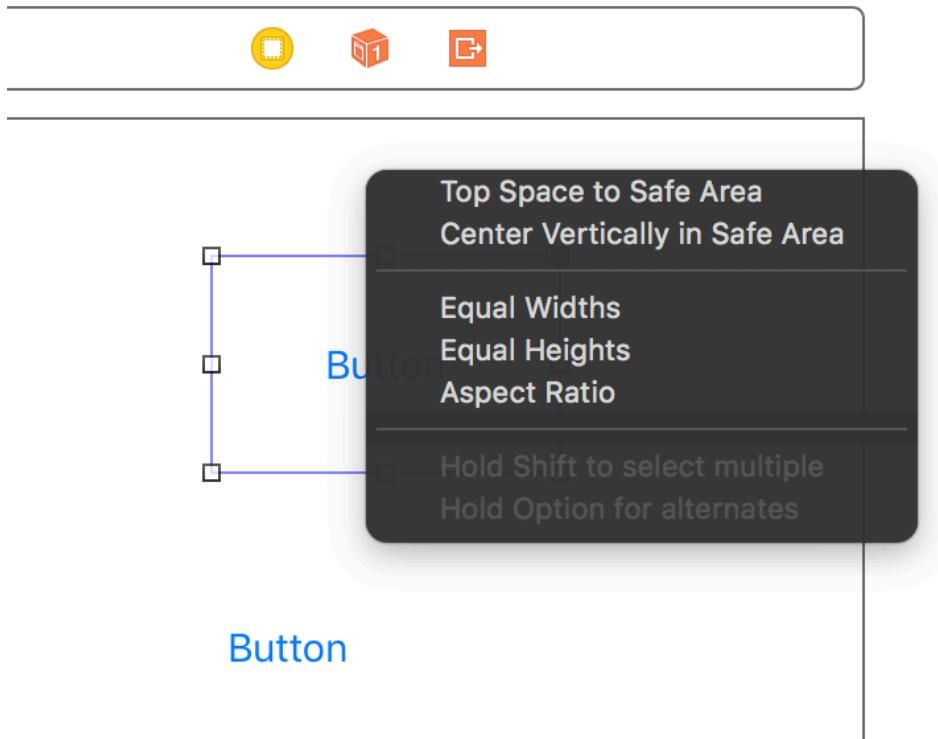
Select the top button, then Ctrl-drag from there directly upwards to just outside itself – i.e., onto the white area of the view controller. As you do this, the white area will turn blue to show that it's going to be used for Auto Layout.

Project 2: Guess the Flag



When you let go of the mouse button, you'll be presented with a list of possible constraints to create. In that list are two we care about: "Top Space to Safe Area" and "Center Horizontally in Safe Area."

You have two options when creating multiple constraints like this: you can either select one then Ctrl-drag again and select the other, or you can hold down shift before selecting an item in the menu, and you'll be able to select more than one at a time. That is, Ctrl-drag from the button straight up to the white space in the view controller, let go of the mouse button and Ctrl so the menu appears, then hold down Shift and choose "Top Space to Safe Area" and "Center Horizontally in Safe Area." When that's done, click outside the menu to close it.



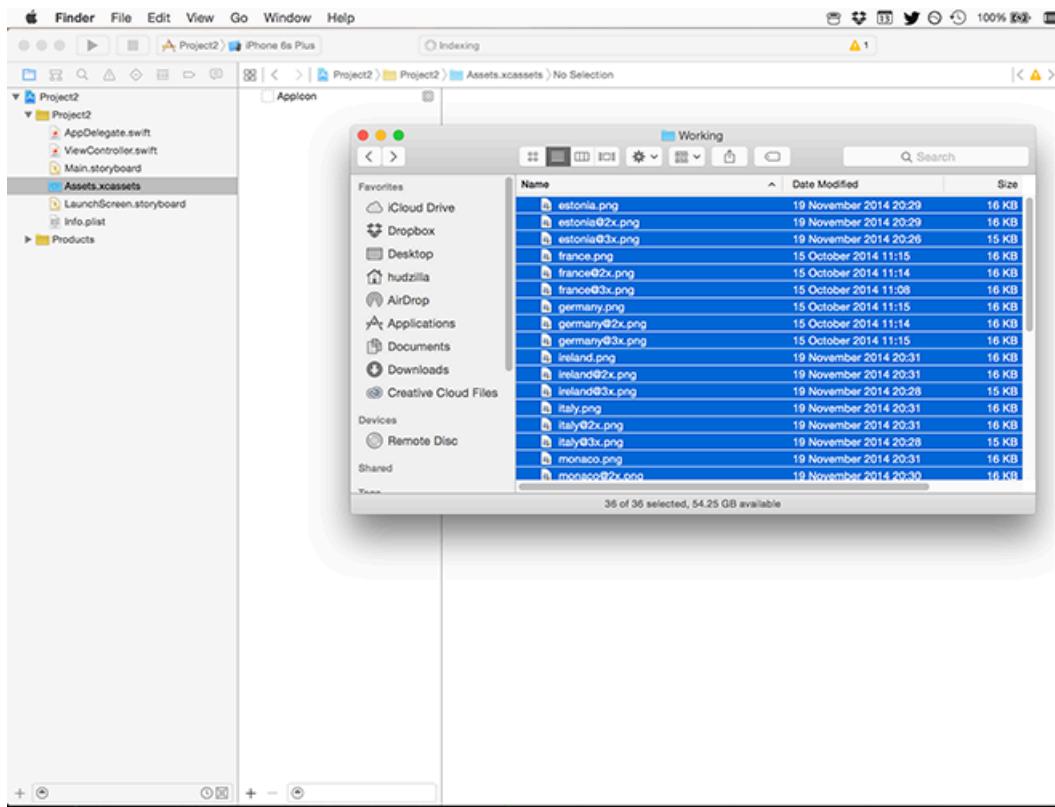
That's the first flag complete, so before we go any further let's bring it to life by adding some example content so you can see how it looks.

In Project 1, we added images to a project just by dragging a folder called Content into our Xcode project. That's perfectly fine and you're welcome to continue doing that for your other projects, but I want to introduce you to another option called *asset catalogs*. These are highly optimized ways of importing and using images in iOS projects, and are just as easy to use as a content folder.

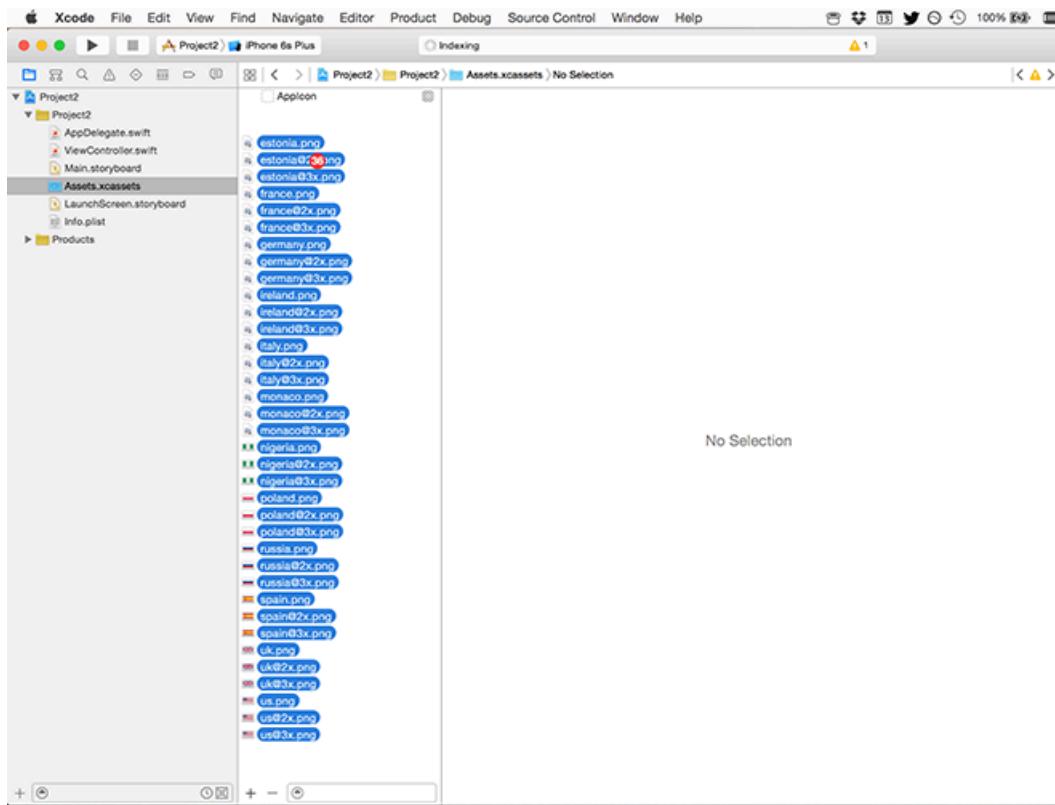
In your Xcode project, select the file called Assets.xcassets. This isn't really a file, instead it's our default Xcode asset catalog. If you haven't already downloaded the files for this project, please do so now from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>).

Select all 24 flag pictures from the project files, and drag them into the Xcode window to beneath where it says "AppIcon" in our asset catalog. This will create 12 new entries in the asset catalog, one for each country.

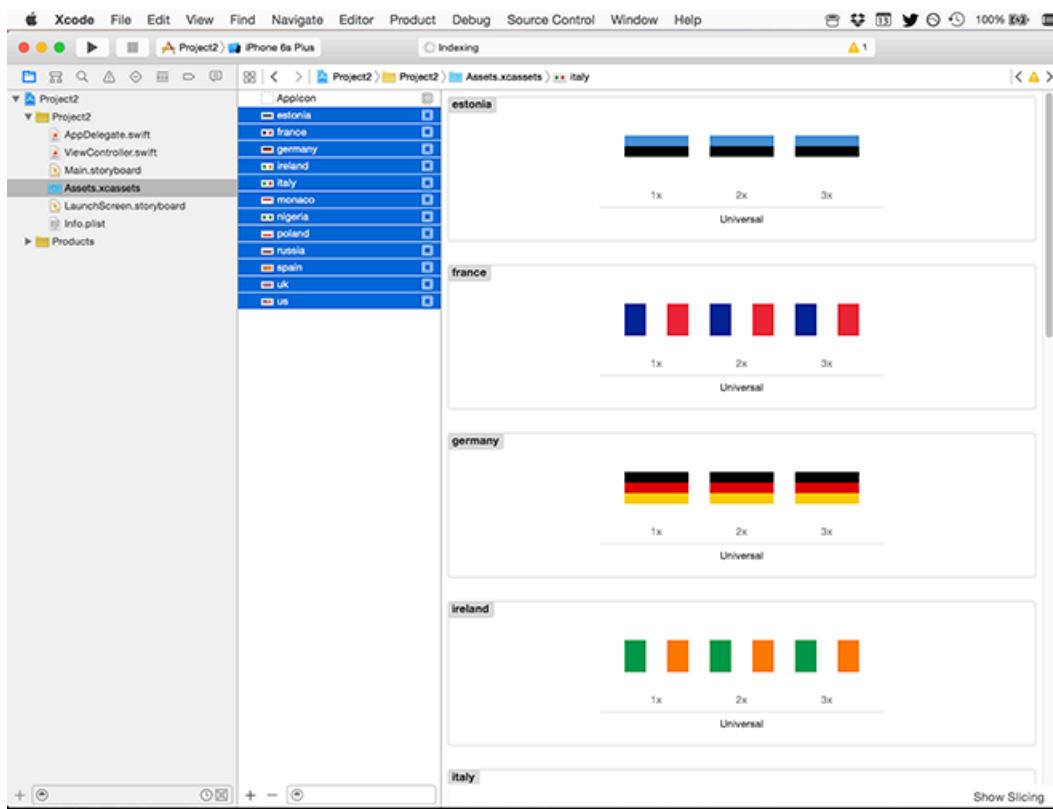
Project 2: Guess the Flag



Designing your layout



Project 2: Guess the Flag



As much as I hate diversions, this one is important: iOS assets come in the sizes 2x and 3x, which are two times and three times the size of the layout you created in Interface Builder. This might seem strange, but it's a little bit of iOS magic that takes away a huge amount of work from developers.

Early iOS devices had non-retina screens. This meant a screen resolution of 320x480 pixels, and you could place things exactly where you wanted them – you asked for 10 pixels in from the left and 10 from the top, and that was what you got.

With iPhone 4, Apple introduced retina screens that had double the number of pixels as previous screens. Rather than make you design all your interfaces twice, Apple automatically switched sizes from pixels to “points” – virtual pixels. On non-retina devices, a width of 10 points became 10 pixels, but on retina devices it became 20 pixels. This meant that everything looked the same size and shape on both devices, with a single layout.

Of course, the whole point of retina screens was that the screen had more pixels, so everything

looked sharper – just resizing everything to be larger wasn't enough. So, Apple took things a step further: if you create hello.png that was 200x100 in size, you could also include a file called hello@2x.png that was 400x200 in size – exactly double – and iOS would load the correct one. So, you write hello.png in your code, but iOS knows to look for and load hello@2x.png on retina devices.

Later, introduced retina HD screens that have a 3x resolution, and these follow the same naming convention: hello@2x.png is for retina devices, and hello@3x for retina HD devices. You still just write “hello” in your code and user interfaces, and iOS does the rest.

You might think this sounds awfully heavy – why should a retina device have to download apps that include Retina HD content that it can't show? Fortunately, the App Store uses a technology called app thinning that automatically delivers only the content each device is capable of showing – it strips out the other assets when the app is being downloaded, so there's no space wasted.

Cunningly, as of iOS 10 no non-retina devices are supported, so if you're supporting only iOS 10 or later devices you only need to include the @2x and @3x images.

Now, all this is important because when we imported the images into our asset catalog they were automatically placed into 2x and 3x buckets. This is because I had named the files correctly: france@2x.png, france@3x.png, and so on. Xcode recognized these names, and arranged all the images correctly.

Once the images are imported, you can go ahead and use them either in code or in Interface Builder, just as you would do if they were loose files inside a content folder. So, go back to your storyboard, choose the first button and select the attributes inspector (Alt+Cmd+4). You'll see it has the title "Button" right now (this is in a text field directly beneath where it says "Title: Plain"), so please delete that text. Now click the arrow next to the Image dropdown menu and choose "us".

As soon as you set a picture inside the button, our constraints for the button are complete: it has a Y position because we placed a constraint, it has an X position because we're centering it

Project 2: Guess the Flag

horizontally, and it has a width and a height because it's reading it from the image we assigned. Go ahead and assign the US flag to the other two buttons while you're there.

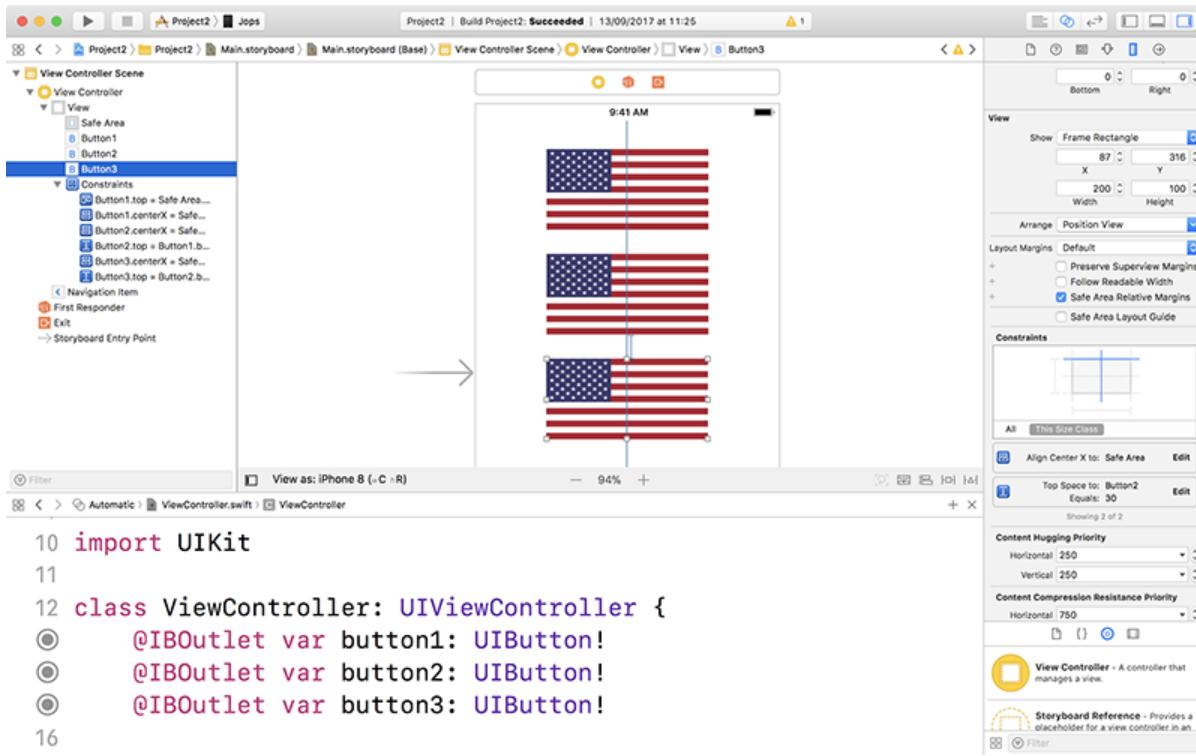
To complete our Auto Layout constraints, we need to assign Auto Layout constraints for the middle and bottom buttons. Select the middle button, then Ctrl-drag to the first button – not to the view controller. Let go, and you'll see "Vertical Spacing" and "Center Horizontally." Choose both of these. Now choose the third button and Ctrl-drag to the second button, and again choose "Vertical Spacing" and "Center Horizontally."

At this point, our Auto Layout is almost complete, but you'll notice that even though we chose to center the flags horizontally, they all seem to be stuck where they were placed. The reason for this is that you need to tell Interface Builder to update all the frames of your buttons to match the Auto Layout rules you just created.

This is easy enough to do: select all three image views, then go to the Editor menu and choose Resolve Auto Layout Issues > Update Frames. Again, you'll see that option appears twice in the menu, but both do the same thing here so you can select either. This command will update the frames – the positions and sizes – of each image view so that it matches the Auto Layout constraints we set.

The last step before we're finished with Interface Builder for now is to add some outlets for our three flag buttons, so that we can reference them in code. Activate the assistant editor by pressing Alt+Cmd+Return or by going to View > Assistant Editor > Show Assistant Editor. Now Ctrl-drag from the first flag to your code in order to create an outlet called **button1**, then from the second flag to create **button2**, and from the third flag to create **button3**.

Designing your layout



We'll come back to it later on, but for now we're done with Interface Builder. Select `ViewController.swift` and go back to the standard editor (that is, press `Cmd+return` to turn off the assistant editor) so we can get busy with some coding.

Making the basic game work: UIButton and CALayer

We're going to create an array of strings that will hold all the countries that will be used for our game, and at the same time we're going to create another property that will hold the player's current score – it's a game, after all!

Let's start with the new properties. Add these two lines directly beneath the `@IBOutlet` lines you added earlier in `ViewController.swift`:

```
var countries = [String]()
var score = 0
```

The first line is something you saw in project 1: it creates a new property called `countries` that will hold a new array of strings. The second one creates a new property called `score` that is set to 0. As you've seen previously, Swift's type inference works wonders here – it figures out what data type a variable or constant should be based on what we put into it.

We're going to be putting all this into practice over the next few minutes. First, let's fill our `countries` array with the flags we have, so add this code inside the `viewDidLoad()` method:

```
countries.append("estonia")
countries.append("france")
countries.append("germany")
countries.append("ireland")
countries.append("italy")
countries.append("monaco")
countries.append("nigeria")
countries.append("poland")
countries.append("russia")
countries.append("spain")
countries.append("uk")
```

Making the basic game work: UIButton and CALayer

```
countries.append("us")
```

This is identical to the code you saw in project 1, so there's nothing to learn here. If you recall your Swift introduction, you'll know there's a more efficient way of doing this, which is to create it all on one line. To do that, you would write:

```
countries += ["estonia", "france", "germany", "ireland",
"italy", "monaco", "nigeria", "poland", "russia", "spain",
"uk", "us"]
```

The next step is to write a method that shows three random flag images on the screen. Buttons have a **setImage()** method that lets us control what picture is shown inside and when, so we can use that with **UIImage** to display our flags.

Add this new method underneath **viewDidLoad()**:

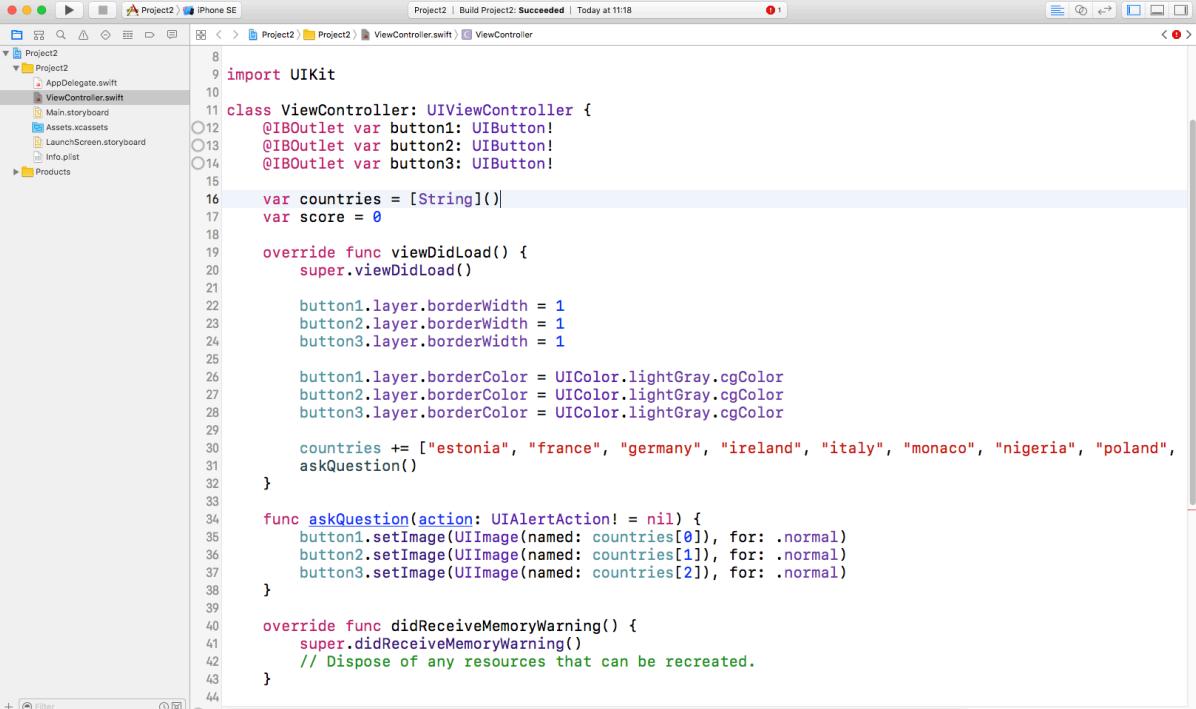
```
func askQuestion() {
    button1.setImage(UIImage(named: countries[0]), for: .normal)
    button2.setImage(UIImage(named: countries[1]), for: .normal)
    button3.setImage(UIImage(named: countries[2]), for: .normal)
}
```

The first line is easy enough: we're declaring a new method called **askQuestion()**, and it takes no parameters. The next three use **UIImage(named:)** and read from an array by position, both of which we used in project 1, so that bit isn't new either. However, the rest of those lines is new, and shows off two things:

- **button1.setImage()** assigns a **UIImage** to the button. We have the US flag in there right now, but this will change it when **askQuestion()** is called.
- **for: .normal** The **setImage()** method takes a second parameter that describes which state of the button should be changed. We're specifying **.normal**, which means "the standard state of the button."

Project 2: Guess the Flag

That **.normal** parameter looks like an enum, but it's actually a static property of a struct called **UIControlState**. In Objective-C – the language UIKit was written in – it's an enum, but in Swift it gets mapped to a struct that just happens to be *used* like an enum, so if you want to be technically correct it's not a true enum in Swift. At this point in your Swift career there is no difference, but let's face it: “technically correct” is the best kind of correct.



The screenshot shows the Xcode interface with the Project2 project selected. The ViewController.swift file is open in the editor. The code defines a ViewController class that overrides viewDidLoad() and adds three buttons with specific border styles and colors. It also contains an askQuestion() function and overrides didReceiveMemoryWarning().

```
8 import UIKit
9
10 class ViewController: UIViewController {
11     @IBOutlet var button1: UIButton!
12     @IBOutlet var button2: UIButton!
13     @IBOutlet var button3: UIButton!
14
15     var countries = [String]()
16     var score = 0
17
18     override func viewDidLoad() {
19         super.viewDidLoad()
20
21         button1.layer.borderWidth = 1
22         button2.layer.borderWidth = 1
23         button3.layer.borderWidth = 1
24
25         button1.layer.borderColor = UIColor.lightGray.cgColor
26         button2.layer.borderColor = UIColor.lightGray.cgColor
27         button3.layer.borderColor = UIColor.lightGray.cgColor
28
29         countries += ["estonia", "france", "germany", "ireland", "italy", "monaco", "nigeria", "poland",
30             "askQuestion()")
31     }
32
33     func askQuestion(action: UIAlertAction! = nil) {
34         button1.setImage(UIImage(named: countries[0]), for: .normal)
35         button2.setImage(UIImage(named: countries[1]), for: .normal)
36         button3.setImage(UIImage(named: countries[2]), for: .normal)
37     }
38
39     override func didReceiveMemoryWarning() {
40         super.didReceiveMemoryWarning()
41         // Dispose of any resources that can be recreated.
42     }
43 }
44
```

Now that we have the countries all set up and a method that displays flags, all we need to do is add one more line just before the end of **viewDidLoad()** to make it all spring to life:

```
askQuestion()
```

At this point the game is in a fit state to run, so let's give it a try.

First, select the iPhone XR simulator by going to the Product menu and choosing Destination > iPhone XR. Now press Cmd+R now to launch the Simulator and give it a try.

You'll immediately notice two problems

1. We're showing the Estonian and French flags, both of which have white in them so it's hard

Making the basic game work: UIButton and CALayer

to tell whether they are flags or just blocks of color

2. The "game" isn't much fun, because it's always the same three flags!

The second problem is going to have to wait a few minutes, but we can fix the first problem now. One of the many powerful things about views in iOS is that they are backed by what's called a **CALayer**, which is a Core Animation data type responsible for managing the way your view looks.

Conceptually, **CALayer** sits beneath all your **UIViews** (that's the parent of **UIButton**, **UITableView**, and so on), so it's like an exposed underbelly giving you lots of options for modifying the appearance of views, as long as you don't mind dealing with a little more complexity. We're going to use one of these appearance options now: **borderWidth**.

The Estonian flag has a white stripe at the bottom, and because our view controller has a white background that whole stripe is invisible. We can fix that by giving the layer of our buttons a **borderWidth** of 1, which will draw a one point black line around them. Put these three lines in **viewDidLoad()** directly before it calls **askQuestion()**:

```
button1.layer.borderWidth = 1  
button2.layer.borderWidth = 1  
button3.layer.borderWidth = 1
```

Remember how points and pixels are different things? In this case, our border will be 1 pixel on non-retina devices, 2 pixels on retina devices, and 3 on retina HD devices. Thanks to the automatic point-to-pixel multiplication, this border will visually appear to have more or less the same thickness on all devices.

By default, the border of **CALayer** is black, but you can change that if you want by using the **UIColor** data type. I said that **CALayer** brings with it a little more complexity, and here's where it starts to be visible: **CALayer** sits at a lower technical level than **UIButton**, which means it doesn't understand what a **UIColor** is. **UIButton** knows what a **UIColor** is because they are both at the same technical level, but **CALayer** is below **UIButton**, so **UIColor** is a mystery.

Project 2: Guess the Flag

Don't despair, though: **CALayer** has its own way of setting colors called **CGColor**, which comes from Apple's Core Graphics framework. This, like **CALayer**, is at a lower level than **UIButton**, so the two can talk happily – again, as long as you're happy with the extra complexity.

Even better, **UIColor** (which sits above **CGColor**) is able to convert to and from **CGColor** easily, which means you don't need to worry about the complexity – hurray!

So, let's put all that together into some code that changes the border color using **UIColor** and **CGColor** together. Put these three just below the three **borderWidth** lines in **viewDidLoad()**:

```
button1.layer.borderColor = UIColor.lightGray.cgColor  
button2.layer.borderColor = UIColor.lightGray.cgColor  
button3.layer.borderColor = UIColor.lightGray.cgColor
```

As you can see, **UIColor** has a property called **lightGray** that returns (shock!) a **UIColor** instance that represents a light gray color. But we can't put a **UIColor** into the **borderColor** property because it belongs to a **CALayer**, which doesn't understand what a **UIColor** is. So, we add **.cgColor** to the end of the **UIColor** to have it automagically converted to a **CGColor**. Perfect.

If **lightGray** doesn't interest you, you can create your own color like this:

```
UIColor(red: 1.0, green: 0.6, blue: 0.2, alpha: 1.0).cgColor
```

You need to specify four values: red, green, blue and alpha, each of which should range from 0 (none of that color) to 1.0 (all of that color). The code above generates an orange color, then converts it to a **CGColor** so it can be assigned to a **CALayer**'s **borderColor** property.

That's enough with the styling, I think – if you run the app now it should look better.

Guess which flag: random numbers

Our current code chooses the first three items in the countries array, and places them into the three buttons on our view controller. This is fine to begin with, but really we need to choose random countries each time. There are two ways of doing this:

1. Pick three random numbers, and use those to read the flags from the array.
2. Shuffle up the order of the array, then pick the first three items.

Both approaches are valid, but the former takes a little more work because we need to ensure that all three numbers are different – this game would be even less fun if all three flags were the same!

The second approach is easier to do, because Swift has built-in methods for shuffling arrays: **shuffle()** for in-place shuffling, and **shuffled()** to return a new, shuffled array.

At the start of the **askQuestion()** method, just before you call the first **setImage()** method, add this line of code:

```
countries.shuffle()
```

That will automatically randomize the order of the countries in the array, meaning that **countries[0]**, **countries[1]** and **countries[2]** will refer to different flags each time the **askQuestion()** method is called. To try it out, press Cmd+R to run your program a few times to see different flags each time.

The next step is to track which answer should be the correct one, and to do that we're going to create a new property for our view controller called **correctAnswer**. Put this near the top, just above **var score = 0**:

```
var correctAnswer = 0
```

Project 2: Guess the Flag

This gives us a new integer property that will store whether it's flag 0, 1 or 2 that holds the correct answer.

To choose which should be the right answer requires using Swift's random system again, because we need to choose a random number for the correct answer. All Swift's numeric types, such as **Int**, **Double**, and **CGFloat**, have a **random(in:)** method that generates a random number in a range. So, to generate a random number between 0 and 2 inclusive you need to put this line just below the three **setImage()** calls in **askQuestion()**:

```
correctAnswer = Int.random(in: 0...2)
```

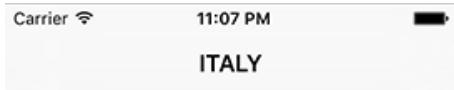
Now that we have the correct answer, we just need to put its text into the navigation bar. This can be done by using the **title** property of our view controller, but we need to add one more thing: we don't want to write "france" or "uk" in the navigation bar, because it looks ugly. We could capitalize the first letter, and that would work great for France, Germany, and so on, but it would look poor for "Us" and "Uk", which should be "US" and "UK".

The solution here is simple: uppercase the entire string. This is done using the **uppercased()** method of any string, so all we need to do is read the string out from the countries array at the position of **correctAnswer**, then uppercase it. Add this to the end of the **askQuestion()** method, just after **correctAnswer** is set:

```
title = countries[correctAnswer].uppercased()
```

With that done, you can run the game and it's now almost playable: you'll get three different flags each time, and the flag the player needs to tap on will have its name shown at the top.

Guess which flag: random numbers



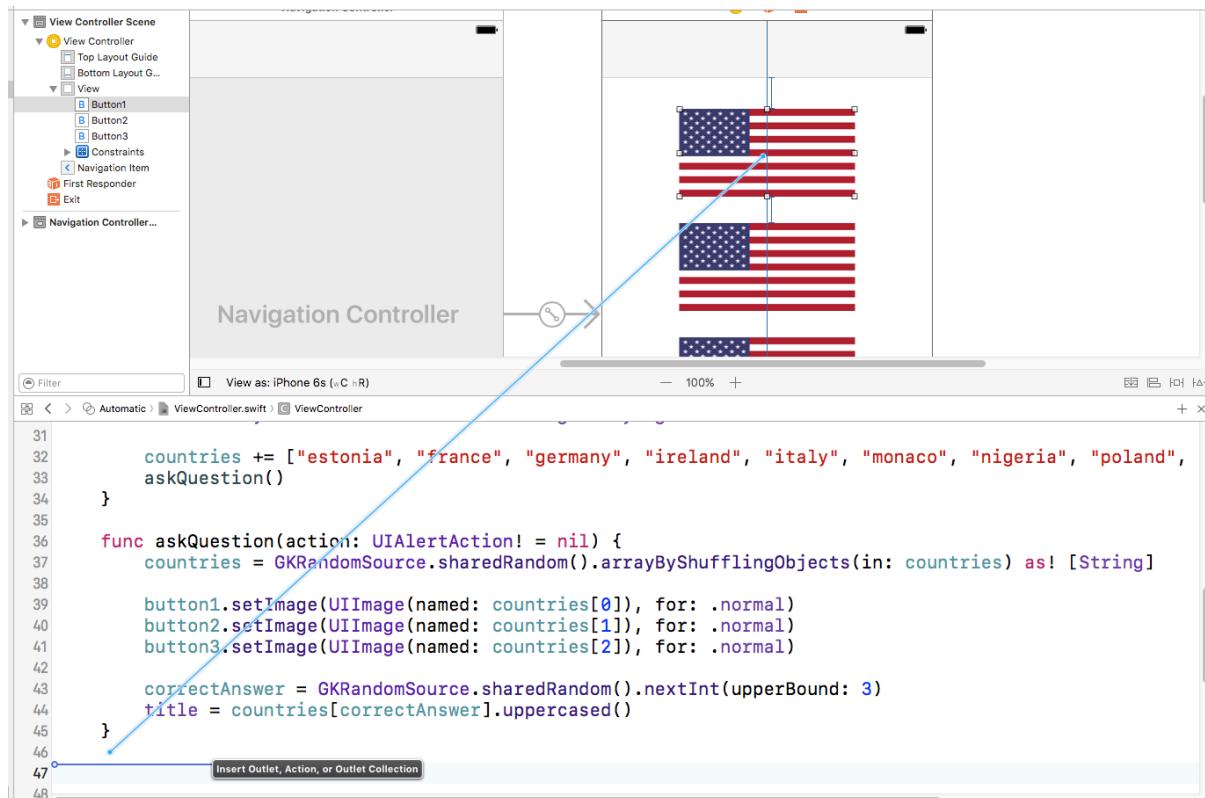
Of course, there's one piece missing: the user can tap on the flag buttons, but they don't actually *do* anything. Let's fix that...

From outlets to actions: creating an IBAction

I said we'd return to Interface Builder, and now the time has come: we're going to connect the "tap" action of our **UIButtons** to some code. So, select Main.storyboard, then change to the assistant editor so you can see the code alongside the layout.

Warning: please read the following text very carefully. In my haste I screw this up all the time, and I don't want it to confuse you!

Select the first button, then Ctrl+drag from it down to the space in your code immediately after the end of the **askQuestion()** method. If you're doing it correctly, you should see a tooltip saying, "Insert Outlet, Action, or Outlet Collection." When you let go, you'll see the same popup you normally see when creating outlets, but here's the catch: **don't choose outlet**.



That's right: where it says "Connection: Outlet" at the top of the popup, I want you to change

that to be “Action”. If you choose Outlet here (which I do all too often because I’m in a rush), you’ll cause problems for yourself!

When you choose Action rather than Outlet, the popup changes a little. You’ll still get asked for a name, but now you’ll see an Event field, and the Type field has changed from **UIButton** to **Any**. Please change Type back to **UIButton**, then enter **buttonTapped** for the name, and click Connect.

Here’s what Xcode will write for you:

```
@IBAction func buttonTapped(_ sender: UIButton) {  
}
```

...and again, notice the gray circle with a ring around it on the left, signifying this has a connection in Interface Builder.

Before we look at what this is doing, I want you to make two more connections. This time it’s a bit different, because we’re connecting the other two flag buttons to the same **buttonTapped()** method. To do that, select each of the remaining two buttons, then Ctrl-drag onto the **buttonTapped()** method that was just created. The whole method will turn blue signifying that it’s going to be connected, so you can just let go to make it happen. If the method flashes after you let go, it means the connection was made.

So, what do we have? Well, we have a single method called **buttonTapped()**, which is connected to all three **UIButtons**. The event used for the attachment is called **TouchUpInside**, which is the iOS way of saying, “the user touched this button, then released their finger while they were still over it” – i.e., the button was tapped.

Again, Xcode has inserted an attribute to the start of this line so it knows that this is relevant to Interface Builder, and this time it’s **@IBAction**. **@IBAction** is similar to **@IBOutlet**, but goes the other way: **@IBOutlet** is a way of connecting code to storyboard layouts, and **@IBAction** is a way of making storyboard layouts trigger code.

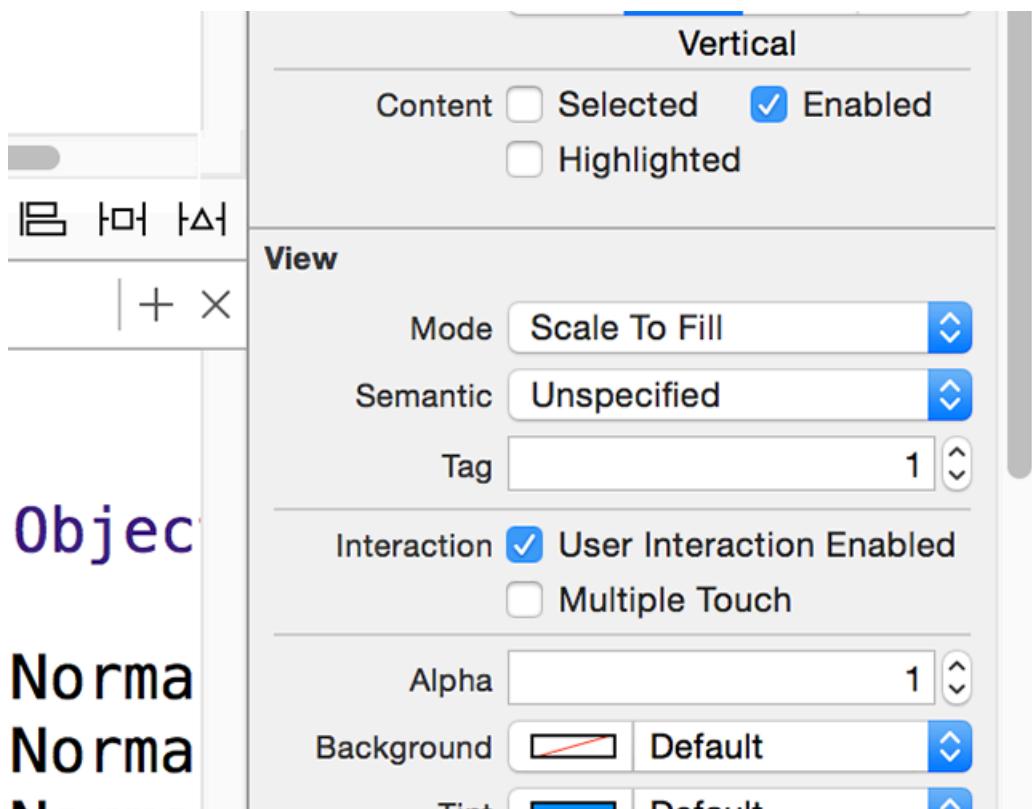
This method takes one parameter, called **sender**. It’s of type **UIButton** because we know that’s

Project 2: Guess the Flag

what will be calling the method. And this is important: all three buttons are calling the same method, so it's important we know which button was tapped so we can judge whether the answer was correct.

But how do we know whether the correct button was tapped? Right now, all the buttons look the same, but behind the scenes all views have a special identifying number that we can set, called its Tag. This can be any number you want, so we're going to give our buttons the numbers 0, 1 and 2. This isn't a coincidence: our code is already set to put flags 0, 1 and 2 into those buttons, so if we give them the same tags we know exactly what flag was tapped.

Select the second flag (not the first one!), then look in the attributes inspector (Alt+Cmd+4) for the input box marked Tag. You might need to scroll down, because **UIButtons** have lots of properties to work with! Once you find it (it's about two-thirds of the way down, just above the color and alpha properties), make sure it's set to 1.



Now choose the third flag and set its tag to be 2. We don't need to change the tag of the first

flag because 0 is the default.

We're done with Interface Builder for now, so go back to the standard editor and select ViewController.swift – it's time to finish up by filling in the contents of the **buttonTapped()** method.

This method needs to do three things:

1. Check whether the answer was correct.
2. Adjust the player's score up or down.
3. Show a message telling them what their new score is.

The first task is quite simple, because each button has a tag matching its position in the array, and we stored the position of the correct answer in the **correctAnswer** variable. So, the answer is correct if **sender.tag** is equal to **correctAnswer**.

The second task is also simple, because you've already met the `+ =` operator that adds to a value. We'll be using that and its counterpart, `- =`, to add or subtract score as needed. The third task is more complicated, so we're going to come to it in a minute.

Put this code into the **buttonTapped()** method:

```
var title: String

if sender.tag == correctAnswer {
    title = "Correct"
    score += 1
} else {
    title = "Wrong"
    score -= 1
}
```

Now for the tough bit: we're going to use a new data type called **UIAlertController()**. This is used to show an alert with options to the user. To make this work you're going to need to use a

Project 2: Guess the Flag

closure – something you've learned about in theory, but at last finally get to use in practice.

If you remember, closures is a special kind of code block that can be used like a variable – Swift literally takes a copy of the block of code so that it can be called later. Swift also copies anything referenced inside the code, so you need to be careful how you use them. We're going to be using closures extensively later, but for now we'll take two shortcuts.

Enter this just before the end of the **buttonTapped()** method:

```
let ac = UIAlertController(title: title, message: "Your score  
is \(score).", preferredStyle: .alert)  
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Continue", style: .default,  
handler: askQuestion))  
present(ac, animated: true)
```

That code will produce an error for a moment, but that's OK.

The **title** variable was set in our if statement to be either "correct" or "wrong", and you've already learned about string interpolation, so the first new thing there is the **.alert** parameter being used for **preferredStyle**. **UIAlertController()** gives us two kinds of style: **.alert**, which pops up a message box over the center of the screen, and **.actionSheet**, which slides options up from the bottom. They are similar, but Apple recommends you use **.alert** when telling users about a situation change, and **.actionSheet** when asking them to choose from a set of options.

The second line uses the **UIAlertAction** data type to add a button to the alert that says "Continue", and gives it the style "default". There are three possible styles: **.default**, **.cancel**, and **.destructive**. What these look like depends on iOS, but it's important you use them appropriately because they provide subtle user interface hints to users.

The sting in the tail is at the end of that line: **handler: askQuestion**. The **handler** parameter is looking for a closure, which is some code that it can execute when the button is tapped. You can write custom code in there if you want, but in our case we want the game to continue when the button is tapped, so we pass in **askQuestion** so that iOS will call our **askQuestion()** method.

Warning: We must use **askQuestion** and not **askQuestion()**. If you use the former, it means "here's the name of the method to run," but if you use the latter it means "run the **askQuestion()** method now, and it will tell you the name of the method to run."

There are many good reasons to use closures, but in the example here just passing in **askQuestion** is a neat shortcut – although it does break something that we'll need to fix in a moment.

The final line calls **present()**, which takes two parameters: a view controller to present and whether to animate the presentation. It has an optional third parameter that is another closure that should be executed when the presentation animation has finished, but we don't need it here. We send our **UIAlertController** for the first parameter, and true for the second because animation is always nice.

Before the code completes, there's a problem, and Xcode is probably telling you what it is: "Cannot convert value of type '(() -> ())' to expected argument type '((UIAlertAction) -> Void)?'."

This is a good example of Swift's terrible error messages, and it's something I'm afraid you'll have to get used to. What it *means* to say is that using a method for this closure is fine, but Swift wants the method to accept a **UIAlertAction** parameter saying which **UIAlertAction** was tapped.

To make this problem go away, we need to change the way the **askQuestion()** method is defined. So, scroll up and change **askQuestion()** from this:

```
func askQuestion() {
```

...to this:

```
func askQuestion(action: UIAlertAction!) {
```

That will fix the **UIAlertAction** error. However, it will introduce *another* problem: when the

Project 2: Guess the Flag

app first runs, we call **askQuestion()** inside **viewDidLoad()**, and we don't pass it a parameter. There are two ways to fix this:

1. When using **askQuestion()** in **viewDidLoad()**, we could send it the parameter **nil** to mean "there is no **UIAlertAction** for this."
2. We could redefine **askQuestion()** so that the action has a default parameter of **nil**, meaning that if it isn't specified it automatically becomes **nil**.

There's no right or wrong answer here, so I'll show you both and you can choose. If you want to go with the first option, change the **askQuestion()** call in **viewDidLoad()** to this:

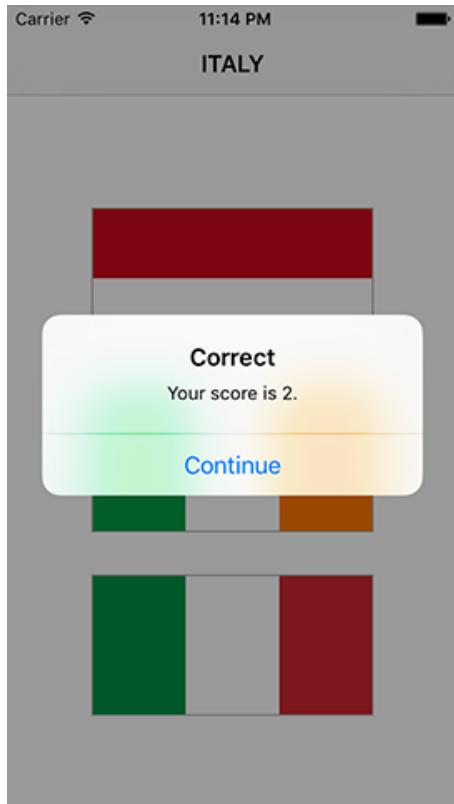
```
askQuestion(action: nil)
```

And if you want to go with the second option, change the **askQuestion()** method definition to this:

```
func askQuestion(action: UIAlertAction! = nil) {
```

Now, go ahead and run your program in the simulator, because it's done!

From outlets to actions: creating an IBAction



Wrap up

This was another relatively simple project, but it's given you the chance to go over some concepts in a little more detail, while also squeezing in a few more concepts alongside. Going over things again in a different way is always helpful to learning, so I hope you don't view this game (or any of the games we'll make in this series!) as a waste of time.

Yes, in this project we revisited Interface Builder, Auto Layout, outlets and other things, but at the same time you've learned about @2x and @3x images, asset catalogs, **UIButton**, **CALayer**, **UIColor**, random numbers, actions, **UIAlertController**, and more. And you have a finished game too!

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 2.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try extending this app to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Try showing the player's score in the navigation bar, alongside the flag to guess.
2. Keep track of how many questions have been asked, and show one final alert controller after they have answered 10. This should show their final score.
3. When someone chooses the wrong flag, tell them their mistake in your alert message – something like "Wrong! That's the flag of France," for example.

Project 3

Social Media

Let users share to Facebook and Twitter by modifying project 1.

About technique projects

As you should know, this series follows the order app, game, technique. Project 1 was an app letting users browse images on their phone, project 2 was a game that lets players guess flags, so now it's time for the first technique project.

The goal with technique projects is to pick out one iOS technology and focus on it in depth. Some will be easy, some others not so much, but I promise to try to keep them as short as possible because I know you want to focus on making real things.

This first technique project is going to be really simple, because we're going to modify project 1 to do something it doesn't currently do: allow users to share images with their friends.

UIActivityViewController explained

Sharing things using iOS uses a standard, powerful component that other apps can plug into. As a result, it should be your first port of call when adding sharing to an app. This component is called **UIActivityViewController**: you tell it what kind of data you want to share, and it figures out how best to share it.

As we're working with images, **UIActivityViewController** will automatically give us functionality to share by iMessage, by email and by Twitter and Facebook, as well as saving the image to the photo library, assigning it to contact, printing it out via AirPrint, and more. It even hooks into AirDrop and the iOS extensions system so that other apps can read the image straight from us.

Best of all, it takes just a handful of lines of code to make it all work. But before we touch **UIActivityViewController**, we first need to give users a way to trigger sharing, and the way we're going to use it is to add a bar button item.

Project 1, if you recall, used a **UINavigationController** to let users move between two screens. By default, a **UINavigationController** has a bar across the top, called a **UINavigationBar**, and as developers we can add buttons to this navigation bar that call our methods.

Let's create one of those buttons now. First, take a copy of your existing Project1 folder (the whole thing), and rename it to be Project3. Now launch it in Xcode, open the file DetailViewController.swift, and find the **viewDidLoad()** method. Directly beneath the **title =** line,

```
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .action, target: self,
action: #selector(shareTapped))
```

You'll get an error for a moment, but that's OK; please read on.

This is easily split into two parts: on the left we're assigning to the **rightBarButtonItem** of our

Project 3: Social Media

view controller's **navigationItem**. This navigation item is used by the navigation bar so that it can show relevant information. In this case, we're setting the right bar button item, which is a button that appears on the right of the navigation bar when this view controller is visible.

On the right we create a new instance of the **UIBarButtonItem** data type, setting it up with three parameters: a system item, a target, and an action. The system item we specify is **.action**, but you can type **.** to have code completion tell you the many other options available.

The **.action** system item displays an arrow coming out of a box, signaling the user can do something when it's tapped.

The **target** and **action** parameters go hand in hand, because combined they tell the **UIBarButtonItem** what method should be called. The **action** parameter is saying "when you're tapped, call the **shareTapped()** method," and the target parameter tells the button that the method belongs to the current view controller – **self**.

The part in **#selector** bears explaining a bit more, because it's new and unusual syntax. What it does is tell the Swift compiler that a method called "shareTapped" will exist, and should be triggered when the button is tapped. Swift will check this for you: if we had written "shareTaped" by accident – missing the second P – Xcode will refuse to build our app until we fix the typo.

If you don't like the look of the various system bar button items available, you can create one with your own title or image instead. However, it's generally preferred to use the system items where possible because users already know what they do.

With the bar button created, it's time to create the **shareTapped()** method. Are you ready for this huge, complicated amount of code? Here goes! Put this just after the **viewWillDisappear()** method:

```
@objc func shareTapped() {
    guard let image =
        imageView.image?.jpegData(compressionQuality: 0.8) else {
        print("No image found")
        return
    }
```

```

    }

    let vc = UIActivityViewController(activityItems: [image],
applicationActivities: [])
    vc.popoverPresentationController?.barButtonItem =
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem
    present(vc, animated: true)
}

```

That's it. With those handful of lines of code, **shareTapped()** can send photos via AirDrop, post to Twitter, and much more. You have to admit, iOS can be pretty amazing sometimes!

A lot of that code is old; we already learned about **present()** in project 2. However, some other parts are new, so let me explain what they do:

- We start with the method name, marked with **@objc** because this method will get called by the underlying Objective-C operating system (the **UIBarButtonItem**) so we need to mark it as being available to Objective-C code. When you call a method using **#selector** you'll always need to use **@objc** too.
- Our image view may or may not have an image inside, so we'll read it out safely and convert it to JPEG data. This has a **compressionQuality** parameter where you can specify a value between 1.0 (maximum quality) and 0.0 (minimum quality_).
- Next we create a **UIActivityViewController**, which is the iOS method of sharing content with other apps and services.
- Finally, we tell iOS where the activity view controller should be anchored – where it should appear from.

On iPhone, activity view controllers automatically take up the full screen, but on iPad they appear as a popover that allows the user to see what they were working on below. This line of code tells iOS to anchor the activity view controller to the right bar button item (our share button), but this only has an effect on iPad – on iPhone it's ignored.

Tip: In case you were wondering, when you use **@IBAction** to make storyboards call your

Project 3: Social Media

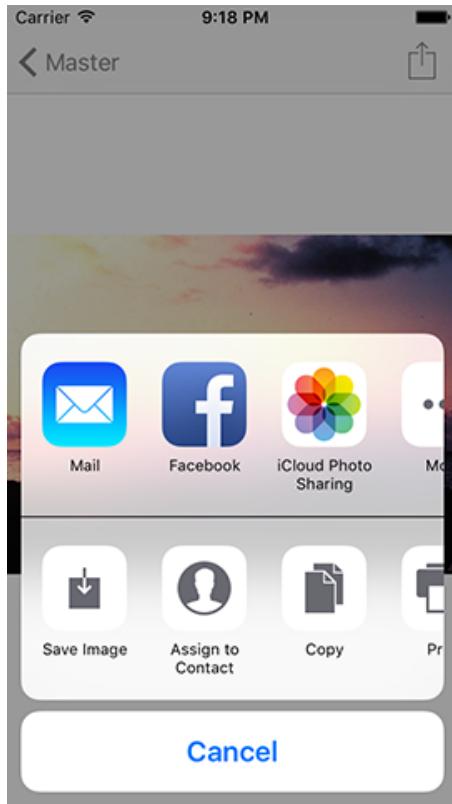
code, that automatically implies `@objc` – Swift knows that no `@IBAction` makes sense unless it can be called by Objective-C code.

Let's focus on how activity view controllers are created. As you can see in the code, you pass in two items: an array of items you want to share, and an array of any of your own app's services you want to make sure are in the list. We're passing an empty array into the second parameter, because our app doesn't have any services to offer. But if you were to extend this app to have something like "Other pictures like this", for example, then you would include that functionality here.

So, the real focus is on the first parameter: we're passing in `[image]`. This is the JPEG data that describes the user's selected image, and iOS understands that it's an image so it can post it to Twitter, Facebook, and other places.

And... that's it. No, really. We're pretty much done: your app now supports sharing.

Don't worry if you're not sure about `@objc` just yet – we'll be coming back to it again and again. The main thing to remember is that when Swift code calls a Swift method that method doesn't need to be marked `@objc`. On the other hand, when Objective-C code needs to call a Swift method – and that's any time it gets called by one of Apple's UI components, for example – then the `@objc` is required.



Fixing a small bug

There's one small but important bug with the current code: if you select Save Image inside the activity view controller, you'll see the app crashes immediately. What's happening here is that our app tries to access the user's photo library so it can write the image there, but that isn't allowed on iOS unless the user grants permission first.

To fix this we need to edit the Info.plist file for our project. We haven't touched this yet, but it's designed to hold configuration settings for your app that won't ever change over time.

Select Info.plist in the project navigator, then when you see a big table full of data please right-click in the white space below that. Click "Add Row" from the menu that appears, and you should see a new list of options appear that starts with "Application Category".

What I'd like you to do is scroll down in that list and find the name "Privacy - Photo Library Additions Usage Description". This is what will be shown to the user when your app needs to

Project 3: Social Media

add to their photo library.

When you select “Privacy - Photo Library Additions Usage Description” you’ll see “String” appear to the right of it, and to the right of “String” will be an empty white space. That white space is where you can type some text to show to the user that explains what your app intends to do with their photo library.

In this app we only need to save images, so put this text in the box: “We need to save photos you like.”

Now try running the app again, and this time selecting “Save Image” will show a message asking whether the user is OK with the app writing to their photos – much better!

Wrap up

This was a deliberately short technique project taking an existing app and making it better. I hope you didn't get too bored, and hope even more that some of the new material sunk in because we covered **UIBarButtonItem** and **UIActivityViewController**.

As you've seen, it really is trivial to add social media to your apps, and it can make a huge difference to helping spread the word about your work once your apps are on the App Store. All being well, this project has also shown you how easy it is to go back to previous projects and improve them with only a little extra effort.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 3.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you can apply your knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Try adding the image name to the list of items that are shared. The **activityItems** parameter is an array, so you can add strings and other things freely. Note: Facebook won't let you share text, but most other share options will.
2. Go back to project 1 and add a bar button item to the main view controller that recommends the app to other people.
3. Go back to project 2 and add a bar button item that shows their score when tapped.

Project 4

Easy Browser

Embed Web Kit and learn about delegation, KVO, classes and UIToolbar.

Setting up

In this project you're going to build on your new knowledge of **UIBarButtonItem** and **UIAlertController** by producing a simple web browser app. Yes, I realize this is another easy project, but learning is as much about tackling new challenges as going over what you've already learned.

To sweeten the deal, I'm going to use this opportunity to teach you lots of new things: **WKWebView** (Apple's extraordinary web widget), **UIToolbar** (a toolbar component that holds **UIBarButtonItem**s), **UIProgressView**, delegation, key-value observing, and how to create your views in code. Plus, this is the last easy app project, so enjoy it while it lasts!

To get started, create a new Xcode project using the Single View App template, and call it Project4. Make sure Swift is selected for the language, then save the project on your desktop.

Open up Main.storyboard, select the view controller, and choose Editor > Embed In > Navigation Controller – that's our storyboard finished. Nice!

Creating a simple browser with WKWebView

In our first two projects we used Interface Builder for a lot of layout work, but here our layout will be so simple that we can do the entire thing in code. You see, before we were adding buttons and images to our view, but in this project the web view is going to take up all the space so it might as well *be* the view controller's main view.

So far, we've been using the `viewDidLoad()` method to configure our view once its layout has loaded. This time we need to override the actual loading of the view because we don't want that empty thing on the storyboard, we want our own code. It will still be placed inside the navigation controller, but the rest is up to us.

iOS has two different ways of working with web views, but the one we'll be using for this project is called **WKWebView**. It's part of the WebKit framework rather than the UIKit framework, but we can import it by adding this line to the top of `ViewController.swift`:

```
import WebKit
```

When we create the web view, we need to store it as a property so we can reference it later on. So, add this property to the class now:

```
var webView: WKWebView!
```

Finally, add this new method *before* `viewDidLoad()`:

```
override func loadView() {
    webView = WKWebView()
    webView.navigationDelegate = self
    view = webView
}
```

That code will trigger a compiler error for now, but we'll fix it in a moment.

Note: You don't need to put **loadView()** before **viewDidLoad()**, and in fact you could put it anywhere between **class ViewController: UIViewController {** down to the last closing brace in the file. However, I encourage you to structure your methods in an organized way, and because **loadView()** gets called before **viewDidLoad()** it makes sense to position the code above it too.

Anyway, there are only three things we care about, because by now you should understand why we need to use the **override** keyword. (Hint: it's because there's a default implementation, which is to load the layout from the storyboard.)

First, we create a new instance of Apple's **WKWebView** web browser component and assign it to the **webView** property. Third, we make our view (the root view of the view controller) that web view.

Yes, I missed out the second line, and that's because it introduces new concept: delegation. Delegation is what's called a *programming pattern* – a way of writing code – and it's used extensively in iOS. And for good reason: it's easy to understand, easy to use, and extremely flexible.

A *delegate* is one thing acting in place of another, effectively answering questions and responding to events on its behalf. In our example, we're using WKWebView: Apple's powerful, flexible and efficient web renderer. But as smart as **WKWebView** is, it doesn't know (or care) how our application wants to behave, because that's our custom code.

The delegation solution is brilliant: we can tell **WKWebView** that we want to be informed when something interesting happens. In our code, we're setting the web view's **navigationDelegate** property to **self**, which means "when any web page navigation happens, please tell me – the current view controller."

When you do this, two things happen:

1. You must conform to the protocol. This is a fancy way of saying, "if you're telling me you can handle being my delegate, here are the methods you need to implement." In the case of

Project 4: Easy Browser

navigationDelegate, all these methods are optional, meaning that we don't *need* to implement any methods.

2. Any methods you do implement will now be given control over the **WKWebView**'s behavior. Any you don't implement will use the default behavior of **WKWebView**.

Before we go any further, it's time to fix the compilation error. When you set any delegate, you need to conform to the protocol that matches the delegate. Yes, all the **navigationDelegate** protocol methods are optional, but Swift doesn't know that yet. All it knows is that we're promising we're a suitable delegate for the web view, and yet haven't implemented the protocol.

The fix for this is simple, but I'm going to hijack it to introduce something else at the same time, because this is an opportune moment. First, the fix: find this line:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {
```

...and change it to this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController, WKNavigationDelegate {
```

That's the fix. But what I want to discuss is the way **ViewController** now appears to inherit from two things, which isn't possible in Swift. As you know, when we say **class A: B** we're defining a new class called **A** that builds on the functionality provided by class **B**. However, when we say **class A: B, C** we're saying it inherits from **UIViewController** (the first item in the list), *and* promises it implements the **WKNavigationDelegate** protocol.

The order here really is important: the parent class (superclass) comes first, then all protocols implemented come next, all separated by commas. We're saying that we conform to only one protocol here (**WKNavigationDelegate**) but you can specify as many as you need to.

So, the complete meaning of this line is "create a new subclass of **UIViewController** called **ViewController**, and tell the compiler that we promise we're safe to use as a **WKNavigationDelegate**."

This program is almost doing something useful, so before you run it let's add three more lines. Please place these in the **viewDidLoad()** method, just after the **super** call:

```
let url = URL(string: "https://www.hackingwithswift.com")!
webView.load(URLRequest(url: url))
webView.allowsBackForwardNavigationGestures = true
```

The first line creates a new data type called **URL**, which is Swift's way of storing the location of files. You're probably already familiar with URLs as being used online, like with **https://www.hackingwithswift.com**, but they are just as important for storing local filenames too – they are flexible little things!

Even though we're used to URLs being strings of text, Swift stores URLs in a specific **URL** data type that adds a lot of extra functionality. So, that first line of code creates a new **URL** out of the string "**https://www.hackingwithswift.com**". I'm using [hackingwithswift.com](https://www.hackingwithswift.com) as an example website, but please change it to something you like.

Warning: **you need to ensure you use https:// for your websites, because iOS does not like apps sending or receiving data insecurely.** If this is something you want to override, I wrote an article specifically about App Transport Security: <[example-code/system/how-to-handle-the-https-requirements-in-ios-9-with-app-transport-security](https://www.hackingwithswift.com/example-code/system/how-to-handle-the-https-requirements-in-ios-9-with-app-transport-security)>.

The second line does two things: it creates a new **URLRequest** object from that URL, and gives it to our web view to load.

Now, this probably seems like pointless obfuscation from Apple, but **WKWebViews** don't load websites from strings like www.hackingwithswift.com, or even from a **URL** made out of those strings. You need to turn the string into a **URL**, then put the **URL** into an **URLRequest**, and **WKWebView** will load *that*. Fortunately it's not hard to do!

Warning: Your URL must be complete, and valid, in order for this process to work. That means including the **https://** part.

The third line enables a property on the web view that allows users to swipe from the left or

Project 4: Easy Browser

right edge to move backward or forward in their web browsing. This is a feature from the Safari browser that many users rely on, so it's nice to keep it around.

It's time to run the app, so please press Cmd+R to run your app, and you should be able to view your website. Step one done!



Choosing a website: UIAlertController action sheets

We're going to lock this app down so that it opens websites selected by the user. The first step to doing this is to give the user the option to choose from one of our selected websites, and that means adding a button to the navigation bar.

Somewhere in `viewDidLoad()` (but always after it has called `super.viewDidLoad()`), add this:

```
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:  
    "Open", style: .plain, target: self, action:  
    #selector(openTapped))
```

We did exactly this in the previous project, except here we're using a custom title for our bar button rather than a system icon. It's going to call the `openTapped()` method when the button is tapped, so let's add that now. Put this method below `viewDidLoad()`:

```
@objc func openTapped() {  
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Open page...", message:  
        nil, preferredStyle: .actionSheet)  
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "apple.com",  
        style: .default, handler: openPage))  
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "hackingwithswift.com",  
        style: .default, handler: openPage))  
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Cancel", style: .cancel))  
    ac.popoverPresentationController?.barButtonItem =  
        self.navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem  
    present(ac, animated: true)  
}
```

We haven't written the `openPage()` method yet, so ignore any warnings you see about it for the time being. Just like in project 3 we're calling `openTapped()` from Apple's own Objective-

Project 4: Easy Browser

C code in **UIBarButtonItem**, so the method must be marked **@objc**.

Just like in project 3, setting the alert controller's **popoverPresentationController?.barButtonItem** property is used only on iPad, and tells iOS where it should make the action sheet be anchored.

We used the **UIAlertController** class in project 2, but here it's slightly different for three reason:

1. We're using **nil** for the message, because this alert doesn't need one.
2. We're using the **preferredStyle** of **.actionSheet** because we're prompting the user for more information.
3. We're adding a dedicated Cancel button using style **.cancel**. It doesn't provide a **handler** parameter, which means iOS will just dismiss the alert controller if it's tapped.

Both our website buttons point to the **openPage()** method, which, again, doesn't exist yet. This is going to be very similar to how we loaded the web page before, but now you will at least see why the handler method of **UIAlertAction** takes a parameter telling you which action was selected!

Add this method directly beneath the **openTapped()** method you just made:

```
func openPage(action: UIAlertAction) {  
    let url = URL(string: "https://" + action.title!)!  
    webView.load(URLRequest(url: url))  
}
```

This method takes one parameter, which is the **UIAlertAction** object that was selected by the user. Obviously it won't be called if Cancel was tapped, because that had a **nil** handler rather than **openPage**.

What the method does is use the **title** property of the action (`apple.com`, `hackingwithswift.com`), put "https://" in front of it to satisfy App Transport Security, then construct a **URL** out of it. It then wraps that inside an **URLRequest**, and gives it to the web

Choosing a website: UIAlertController action sheets

view to load. All you need to do is make sure the websites in the **UIAlertController** are correct, and this method will load anything.

You can go ahead and test the app now, but there's one small change we can add to make the whole experience more pleasant: setting the title in the navigation bar. Now, we are the web view's navigation delegate, which means we will be told when any interesting navigation happens, such as when the web page has finished loading. We're going to use this to set the navigation bar title.

As soon as we told Swift that our **ViewController** class conformed to the **WKNavigationDelegate** protocol, Xcode updated its code completion system to support all the **WKNavigationDelegate** methods that can be called. As a result, if you go below the **openPage()** method and start typing "web" you'll see a list of all the **WKNavigationDelegate** methods we can use.

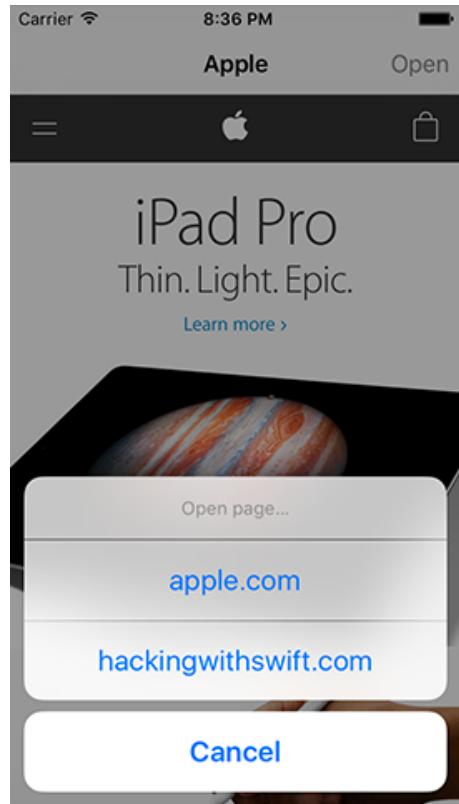
Scroll through the list of options until you see **didFinish** and press return to have Xcode fill in the method for you. Now modify it to this:

```
func webView(_ webView: WKWebView, didFinish navigation:  
WKNavigation!) {  
    title = webView.title  
}
```

All this method does is update our view controller's **title** property to be the title of the web view, which will automatically be set to the page title of the web page that was most recently loaded.

Press Cmd+R now to run the app, and you'll see things are starting to come together: your initial web page will load, and when the load finishes you'll see its page title in the navigation bar.

Project 4: Easy Browser



Monitoring page loads: UIToolbar and UIProgressView

Now is a great time to meet two new **UIView** subclasses: **UIToolbar** and **UIProgressView**. **UIToolbar** holds and shows a collection of **UIBarButtonItem** objects that the user can tap on. We already saw how each view controller has a **rightBarButtonItem** item, so a **UIToolbar** is like having a whole bar of these items. **UIProgressView** is a colored bar that shows how far a task is through its work, sometimes called a "progress bar."

The way we're going to use **UIToolbar** is quite simple: all view controllers automatically come with a **toolbarItems** array that automatically gets read in when the view controller is active inside a **UINavigationController**.

This is very similar to the way **rightBarButtonItem** is shown only when the view controller is active. All we need to do is set the array, then tell our navigation controller to show its toolbar, and it will do the rest of the work for us.

We're going to create two **UIBarButtonItem**s at first, although one is special because it's a flexible space. This is a unique **UIBarButtonItem** type that acts like a spring, pushing other buttons to one side until all the space is used.

In **viewDidLoad()**, put this new code directly below where we set the **rightBarButtonItem**:

```
let spacer =  
    UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .flexibleSpace, target:  
        nil, action: nil)  
let refresh = UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .refresh,  
    target: webView, action: #selector(webView.reload))  
  
toolbarItems = [spacer, refresh]  
navigationController?.isToolbarHidden = false
```

The first line is new, or at least part of it is: we're creating a new bar button item using the

Project 4: Easy Browser

special system item type **.flexibleSpace**, which creates a flexible space. It doesn't need a target or action because it can't be tapped. The second line you've seen before, although now it's calling the **reload()** method on the web view rather than using a method of our own.

The last two lines are new: the first creates an array containing the flexible space and the refresh button, then sets it to be our view controller's **toolbarItems** array. The second sets the navigation controller's **isToolbarHidden** property to be false, so the toolbar will be shown – and its items will be loaded from our current view.

That code will compile and run, and you'll see the refresh button neatly aligned to the right – that's the effect of the flexible space automatically taking up as much room as it can on the left.

The next step is going to be to add a **UIProgressView** to our toolbar, which will show how far the page is through loading. However, this requires two new pieces of information:

- You can't just add random **UIView** subclasses to a **UIToolbar**, or to the **rightBarButtonItem** property. Instead, you need to wrap them in a special **UIBarButtonItem**, and use that instead.
- Although **WKWebView** tells us how much of the page has loaded using its **estimatedProgress** property, the **WKNavigationDelegate** system doesn't tell us when this value has changed. So, we're going to ask iOS to tell us using a powerful technique called key-value observing, or KVO.

First, let's create the progress view and place it inside the bar button item. Begin by declaring the property at the top of the **ViewController** class next to the existing **WKWebView** property:

```
var progressView: UIProgressView!
```

Now place this code directly before the **let spacer =** line in **viewDidLoad()**:

```
progressView = UIProgressView(progressViewStyle: .default)
progressView.sizeToFit()
let progressButton = UIBarButtonItem(customView: progressView)
```

All three of those lines are new, so let's go over them:

1. The first line creates a new **UIProgressView** instance, giving it the default style. There is an alternative style called **.bar**, which doesn't draw an unfilled line to show the extent of the progress view, but the default style looks best here.
2. The second line tells the progress view to set its layout size so that it fits its contents fully.
3. The last line creates a new **UIBarButtonItem** using the **customView** parameter, which is where we wrap up our **UIProgressView** in a **UIBarButtonItem** so that it can go into our toolbar.

With the new **progressButton** item created, we can put it into our toolbar items anywhere we want it. The existing spacer will automatically make itself smaller to give space to the progress button, so I'm going to modify my **toolbarItems** array to this:

```
toolbarItems = [progressButton, spacer, refresh]
```

That is, progress view first, then a space in the center, then the refresh button on the right.

If you run the app now, you'll just see a thin gray line for our progress view – that's because it's default value is 0, so there's nothing colored in. Ideally we want to set this to match our **webView's estimatedProgress** value, which is a number from 0 to 1, but **WKNavigationDelegate** doesn't tell us when this value has changed.

Apple's solution to this is huge. Apple's solution is powerful. And, best of all, Apple's solution is almost everywhere in its toolkits, so once you learn how it works you can apply it elsewhere. It's called key-value observing (KVO), and it effectively lets you say, "please tell me when the property X of object Y gets changed by anyone at any time."

We're going to use KVO to watch the **estimatedProgress** property, and I hope you'll agree that it's useful. First, we add ourselves as an observer of the property on the web view by adding this to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
webView.addObserver(self, forKeyPath:
```

Project 4: Easy Browser

```
#keyPath(WKWebView.estimatedProgress), options: .new, context:  
nil)
```

The **addObserver()** method takes four parameters: who the observer is (we're the observer, so we use **self**), what property we want to observe (we want the **estimatedProgress** property of **WKWebView**), which value we want (we want the value that was just set, so we want the new one), and a context value.

forKeyPath and **context** bear a little more explanation. **forKeyPath** isn't named **forProperty** because it's not just about entering a property name. You can actually specify a path: one property inside another, inside another, and so on. More advanced key paths can even add functionality, such as averaging all elements in an array! Swift has a special keyword, **#keyPath**, which works like the **#selector** keyword you saw previously: it allows the compiler to check that your code is correct – that the **WKWebView** class actually has an **estimatedProgress** property.

context is easier: if you provide a unique value, that same context value gets sent back to you when you get your notification that the value has changed. This allows you to check the context to make sure it was your observer that was called. There are some corner cases where specifying (and checking) a context is required to avoid bugs, but you won't reach them during any of this series.

Warning: in more complex applications, all calls to **addObserver()** should be matched with a call to **removeObserver()** when you're finished observing – for example, when you're done with the view controller.

Once you have registered as an observer using KVO, you *must* implement a method called **observeValue()**. This tells you when an observed value has changed, so add this method now:

```
override func observeValue(forKeyPath keyPath: String?, of  
object: Any?, change: [NSKeyValueChangeKey : Any]?, context:  
UnsafeMutableRawPointer?) {  
    if keyPath == "estimatedProgress" {
```

Monitoring page loads: UIToolbar and UIProgressView

```
    progressView.progress = Float(webView.estimatedProgress)  
}  
}
```

As you can see it's telling us which key path was changed, and it also sends us back the context we registered earlier so you can check whether this callback is for you or not.

In this project, all we care about is whether the **keyPath** parameter is set to **estimatedProgress** – that is, if the **estimatedProgress** value of the web view has changed. And if it has, we set the **progress** property of our progress view to the new **estimatedProgress** value.

Minor note: **estimatedProgress** is a **Double**, which as you should remember is one way of representing decimal numbers like 0.5 or 0.55555. Unhelpfully, **UIProgressView's progress** property is a **Float**, which is another (lower-precision) way of representing decimal numbers. Swift doesn't let you put a **Double** into a **Float**, so we need to create a new **Float** from the **Double**.

If you run your project now, you'll see the progress view fills up with blue as the page loads.

Refactoring for the win

Our app has a fatal flaw, and there are two ways to fix it: double up on code, or refactor.

Cunningly, the first option is nearly always the easiest, and yet counter-intuitively also the hardest.

The flaw is this: we let users select from a list of websites, but once they are on that website they can get pretty much anywhere else they want just by following links. Wouldn't it be nice if we could check every link that was followed so that we can make sure it's on our safe list?

One solution – doubling up on code – would have us writing the list of accessible websites twice: once in the **UIAlertController** and once when we're checking the link. This is extremely easy to write, but it can be a trap: you now have two lists of websites, and it's down to you to keep them both up to date. And if you find a bug in your duplicated code, will you remember to fix it in the other place too?

The second solution is called refactoring, and it's effectively a rewrite of the code. The end result should do the same thing, though. The purpose of the rewrite is to make it more efficient, make it easier to read, reduce its complexity, and to make it more flexible. This last use is what we'll be shooting for: we want to refactor our code so there's a shared array of allowed websites.

Up where we declared our two properties **webView** and **progressView**, add this:

```
var websites = ["apple.com", "hackingwithswift.com"]
```

That's an array containing the websites we want the user to be able to visit.

With that array, we can modify the web view's initial web page so that it's not hard-coded. In **viewDidLoad()**, change the initial web page to this:

```
let url = URL(string: "https://" + websites[0])!
webView.load(URLRequest(url: url))
```

So far, so easy. The next change is to make our **UIAlertController** use the websites for its list of **UIAlertAction**s. Go down to the **openTapped()** method and replace these two lines:

```
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "apple.com", style: .default,
handler: openPage))
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "hackingwithswift.com",
style: .default, handler: openPage))
```

...with this loop:

```
for website in websites {
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: website, style: .default,
handler: openPage))
}
```

That will add one **UIAlertAction** object for each item in our array. Again, not too complicated.

The final change is something new, and it belongs to the **WKNavigationDelegate** protocol. If you find space for a new method and start typing "web" you'll see the list of **WKWebView**-related code completion options. Look for the one called **decidePolicyFor** and let Xcode fill in the method for you.

This delegate callback allows us to decide whether we want to allow navigation to happen or not every time something happens. We can check which part of the page started the navigation, we can see whether it was triggered by a link being clicked or a form being submitted, or, in our case, we can check the URL to see whether we like it.

Now that we've implemented this method, it expects a response: should we load the page or should we not? When this method is called, you get passed in a parameter called **decisionHandler**. This actually holds a function, which means if you "call" the parameter, you're actually calling the function.

In project 2 I talked about closures: chunks of code that you can pass into a function like a

Project 4: Easy Browser

variable and have executed at a later date. This **decisionHandler** is also a closure, except it's the other way around – rather than giving someone else a chunk of code to execute, you're being given it and are required to execute it.

And make no mistake: you *are required* to do something with that **decisionHandler** closure. That might make sound an extremely complicated way of returning a value from a method, and that's true – but it's also underestimating the power a little! Having this **decisionHandler** variable/function means you can show some user interface to the user "Do you really want to load this page?" and call the closure when you have an answer.

You might think that already sounds complicated, but I'm afraid there's one more thing that might hurt your head. Because you might call the **decisionHandler** closure straight away, or you might call it later on (perhaps after asking the user what they want to do), Swift considers it to be an *escaping* closure. That is, the closure has the potential to escape the current method, and be used at a later date. We won't be using it that way, but it has the *potential* and that's what matters.

Because of this, Swift wants us to add the special keyword **@escaping** when specifying this method, so we're acknowledging that the closure might be used later. You don't need to do anything else – just add that one keyword, as you'll see in the code below.

So, we need to evaluate the URL to see whether it's in our safe list, then call the **decisionHandler** with a negative or positive answer. Here's the code for the method:

```
func webView(_ webView: WKWebView, decidePolicyFor
navigationAction: WKNavigationAction, decisionHandler:
@escaping (WKNavigationActionPolicy) -> Void) {
    let url = navigationAction.request.url

    if let host = url?.host {
        for website in websites {
            if host.contains(website) {
                decisionHandler(.allow)
```

```

        return
    }
}

}

decisionHandler(.cancel)
}

```

There are some easy bits, but they are outweighed by the hard bits so let's go through every line in detail to make sure:

1. First, we set the constant **url** to be equal to the **URL** of the navigation. This is just to make the code clearer.
2. Second, we use **if let** syntax to unwrap the value of the optional **url.host**. Remember I said that **URL** does a lot of work for you in parsing URLs properly? Well, here's a good example: this line says, "if there is a host for this URL, pull it out" – and by "host" it means "website domain" like apple.com. Note: we need to unwrap this carefully because not all URLs have hosts.
3. Third, we loop through all sites in our safe list, placing the name of the site in the **website** variable.
4. Fourth, we use the **contains()** String method to see whether each safe website exists somewhere in the host name.
5. Fifth, if the website was found then we call the decision handler with a positive response - we want to allow loading.
6. Sixth, if the website was found, after calling the **decisionHandler** we use the **return** statement. This means "exit the method now."
7. Last, if there is no host set, or if we've gone through all the loop and found nothing, we call the decision handler with a negative response: cancel loading.

You give the **contains()** method a string to check, and it will return true if it is found inside whichever string you used with **contains()**. You've already met the **hasPrefix()** method in project 1, but **hasPrefix()** isn't suitable here because our safe site name could appear anywhere

Project 4: Easy Browser

in the URL. For example, slashdot.org redirects to m.slashdot.org for mobile devices, and `hasPrefix()` would fail that test.

The `return` statement is new, but it's one you'll be using a lot from now on. It exits the method immediately, executing no further code. If you said your method returns a value, you'll use the `return` statement to return that value.

Your project is complete: press Cmd+R to run the finished app, and enjoy!

Wrap up

That's another project done, and another huge collection of things learned. You should be starting to get into the swing of things by now, but don't let yourself become immune to your achievements.

In this tutorial alone you've learned about **loadView()**, **WKWebView**, delegation, **URL**, **URLRequest**, **UIToolbar**, **UIProgressView**, KVO and more, so you should be proud of your fantastic accomplishments!

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 4.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try extending this app to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. If users try to visit a URL that isn't allowed, show an alert saying it's blocked.
2. Try making two new toolbar items with the titles Back and Forward. You should make them use **webView.goBack** and **webView.goForward**.
3. For more of a challenge, try changing the initial view controller to a table view like in project 1, where users can choose their website from a list rather than just having the first in the array loaded up front.

Tip: Once you have completed project 5, you might like to return here to add in the option to load the list of websites from a file, rather than having them hard-coded in an array.

Project 5

Word Scramble

Create an anagram game while learning about closures and booleans.

Setting up

Projects 1 to 4 were all fairly easy, because my goal was to teach you the basics of iOS development while also trying to make something useful. But now that you're hopefully starting to become familiar with the core tools we have, it's time to change up a gear and tackle something a bit harder.

In this project you're going to learn how to make a word game that deals with anagrams, but as per usual I'll be hijacking it as a method to teach you more about iOS development. This time around we're going back to the table views as seen in project 1, but you're also going to learn how to load text from files, how to ask for user input in **UIAlertController**, and get a little more insight to how closures work.

In Xcode, create a new Single View App called Project5. We're going to turn this into a table view controller, just like we did in project 1. So, open ViewController.swift and find this line:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {
```

Please change it to read this instead:

```
class ViewController: UITableViewController {
```

If you remember, that only changes the definition of our view controller *in code*. We need to change in the storyboard too, so open Main.storyboard now.

Inside Interface Builder, use the document outline to select the existing view controller so that the document is blank, then replace it with a new table view controller. Use the identity inspector to change the class of the new controller to be “ViewController”, then select its prototype cell and give it the re-use identifier “Word” and the cell style Basic.

All this was covered in project 1, but it's OK if you forgot – don't be afraid to go back to project 1 and re-read any bits you're not sure about.

Now select the view controller again (use the document outline – it's easier!) then make sure

Project 5: Word Scramble

the “Is Initial View Controller” box is checked under the attributes inspector. Finally, go to the Editor menu and choose Embed In > Navigation Controller. We won’t be pushing anything onto the navigation controller stack like we did with project 1, but it does automatically provide the navigation bar at the top, which we *will* be using.

Note: This app asks users to make anagrams out of a word, e.g. when given the word “anagrams” they might provide “rags”. If you look at that and think “that’s not an anagram – it doesn’t use all the letters!” then you need to search the internet for “well actually” and have a good, long think about life.

Reading from disk: contentsOf

We're going to make an anagram game, where the user is asked to make words out of a larger word. We're going to put together a list of possible starter words for the game, and that list will be stored in a separate file. But how do we get the text from the file into the app? Well, it turns out that Swift's **String** data type makes it a cinch – thanks, Apple!

If you haven't already downloaded the assets for this project from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>), please do so now. In the project5-files folder you'll find the file start.txt – please drag that into your Xcode project, making sure that "Copy items if needed" is checked.

The start.txt file contains over 12,000 eight-letter words we can use for our game, all stored one word per line. We need to turn that into an array of words we can play with. Behind the scenes, those line breaks are marked with a special line break character that is usually expressed as `\n`. So, we need to load that word list into a string, then split it into an array by breaking up wherever we see `\n`.

First, go to the start of your class and make two new arrays. We're going to use the first one to hold all the words in the input file, and the second one will hold all the words the player has currently used in the game.

So, open ViewController.swift and add these two properties:

```
var allWords = [String]()
var usedWords = [String]()
```

Second, loading our array. This is done in three parts: finding the path to our start.txt file, loading the contents of that file, then splitting it into an array.

Finding a path to a file is something you'll do a lot, because even though you know the file is called "start.txt" you don't know where it might be on the filesystem. So, we use a built-in method of **Bundle** to find it: `path(forResource:)`. This takes as its parameters the name of the file and its path extension, and returns a **String?** – i.e., you either get the path back or you get

Project 5: Word Scramble

nil if it didn't exist.

Loading a file into a string is also something you'll need to get familiar with, and again there's an easy way to do it: when you create a **String** instance, you can ask it to create itself from the contents of a file at a particular path.

Finally, we need to split our single string into an array of strings based on wherever we find a line break (`\n`). This is as simple as another method call on **String**:

components(separatedBy:): Tell it what string you want to use as a separator (for us, that's `\n`), and you'll get back an array.

Before we get onto the code, there are two things you should know: **path(forResource:)** and creating a **String** from the contents of a file both return **String?**, which means we need to check and unwrap the optional using **if let** syntax.

OK, time for some code. Put this into **viewDidLoad()**, after the **super** call:

```
if let startWordsURL = Bundle.main.url(forResource: "start",
withExtension: "txt") {
    if let startWords = try? String(contentsOf: startWordsURL) {
        allWords = startWords.components(separatedBy: "\n")
    }
}

if allWords.isEmpty {
    allWords = ["silkworm"]
}
```

If you look carefully, there's a new keyword in there: **try?**. You already saw **try!** previously, and really we could use that here too because we're loading a file from our app's bundle so any failure is likely to be catastrophic. However, this way I have a chance to teach you something new: **try?** means "call this code, and if it throws an error just send me back **nil** instead." This means the code you call will always work, but you need to unwrap the result carefully.

I also added in a new and useful property of arrays: **isEmpty**. This returns true if the array is empty, and is effectively equal to writing **allWords.count == 0**. The reason we use **isEmpty** is because some collection types, such as string, have to calculate their size by counting over all the elements they contain, so reading **count == 0** can be significantly slower than using **isEmpty**.

As you can see, that code carefully checks for and unwraps the contents of our start file, then converts it to an array. When it has finished, **allWords** will contain 12,000+ strings ready for us to use in our game.

To prove that everything is working before we continue, let's create a new method called **startGame()**. This will be called every time we want to generate a new word for the player to work with, and it will use the **randomElement()** method of Swift's arrays to choose one random item from all the strings.

Here's the code:

```
func startGame() {
    title = allWords.randomElement()
    usedWords.removeAll(keepingCapacity: true)
    tableView.reloadData()
}
```

Line 1 sets our view controller's title to be a random word in the array, which will be the word the player has to find.

Line 2 removes all values from the **usedWords** array, which we'll be using to store the player's answers so far. We aren't adding anything to it right now, so **removeAll()** won't do anything just yet.

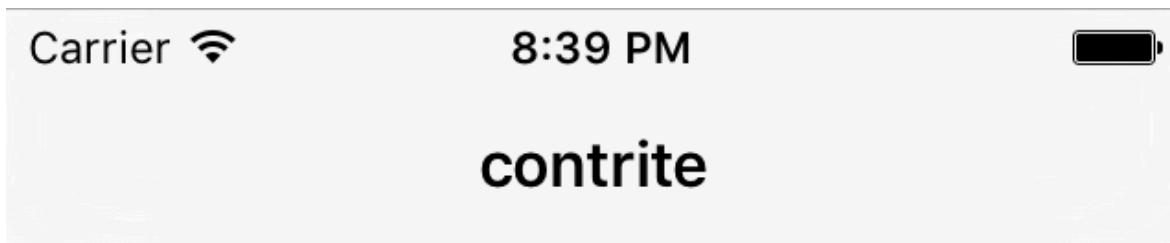
Line 3 is the interesting part: it calls the **reloadData()** method of **tableView**. That table view is given to us as a property because our **ViewController** class comes from **UITableViewController**, and calling **reloadData()** forces it to call **numberOfRowsInSection** again, as well as calling **cellForRowAt** repeatedly. Our table view

Project 5: Word Scramble

doesn't have any rows yet, so this won't do anything for a few moments. However, the method is ready to be used, and allows us to check we've loaded all the data correctly, so add this just before the end of `viewDidLoad()`:

```
startGame()
```

Now press Cmd+R to run the app, and you ought to see an eight-letter word at the top, ready for play to begin.



Before we're done, we need to add a few methods to handle the table view data:

`numberOfRowsInSection` and `cellForRowAt`. These are identical to the implementations in project 1, except now we're drawing on the `usedWords` array and the "Word" cell identifier. Add these two methods now:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
```

Reading from disk: contentsOf

```
    return usedWords.count
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Word", for: indexPath)
    cell.textLabel?.text = usedWords[indexPath.row]
    return cell
}
```

They won't have any effect just yet because the **usedWords** array never changes, but at least the foundation is in place now.

Pick a word, any word: UIAlertController

This game will prompt the user to enter a word that can be made from the eight-letter prompt word. For example, if the eight-letter word is "agencies", the user could enter "cease." We're going to solve this with **UIAlertController**, because it's a nice fit, and also gives me the chance to introduce some new teaching. I'm all about ulterior motives!

Add this code to **viewDidLoad()**, just after the call to **super**:

```
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target: self,
action: #selector(promptForAnswer))
```

That created a new UIBarButtonItem using the "add" system item, and configured it to run a method called **promptForAnswer()** when tapped – we haven't created it yet, so you'll get a compiler error for a few minutes as you read on. This new method will show a **UIAlertController** with space for the user to enter an answer, and when the user clicks Submit to that alert controller the answer is checked to make sure it's valid.

Before I give you the code, let me explain what you need to know.

You see, we're about to use a closure, and things get a little complicated. As a reminder, these are chunks of code that can be treated like a variable – we can send the closure somewhere, where it gets stored away and executed later. To make this work, Swift takes a copy of the code and captures any data it references, so it can use them later.

But there's a problem: what if the closure references the view controller? Then what could happen is a strong reference cycle: the view controller owns an object that owns a closure that owns the view controller, and nothing could ever be destroyed.

I'm going to try (and likely fail!) to give you a metaphorical example, so please bear with me. Imagine if you built two cleaning robots, red and blue. You told the red robot, "don't stop

cleaning until the blue robot stops," and you told the blue robot "don't stop cleaning until the red robot stops."

When would they stop cleaning? The answer is “never”, because neither will make the first move.

This is the problem we are facing with a strong reference cycle: object A owns object B, and object B owns a closure that referenced object A. And when closures are created, they capture everything they use, thus object B owns object A.

Strong reference cycles used to be hard to find, but you'll be glad to know Swift makes them trivial. In fact, Swift makes it so easy that you will use its solution even when you're not sure if there's a cycle simply because you might as well.

So, please brace yourself: we're about to take our first look at actual closures. The syntax will hurt. And when you finally understand it, you'll come across examples online that make your brain hurt all over again.

Ready? Here's the **promptForAnswer()** method:

```
@objc func promptForAnswer() {
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Enter answer", message:
nil, preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addTextField()

    let submitAction = UIAlertAction(title: "Submit",
style: .default) { [weak self, weak ac] action in
        guard let answer = ac?.textFields?[0].text else
{ return }
        self?.submit(answer)
    }

    ac.addAction(submitAction)
    present(ac, animated: true)
```

Project 5: Word Scramble

}

That code won't build just yet, so don't worry if you see errors – we'll fix them soon. But first, let's talk about what the code above does. It introduces quite a few new things, but before we look at them let's eliminate the easy stuff.

- It needs to be called from a **UIBarButton Item** action, so we must mark it **@objc**. Hopefully you're starting to sense when this is needed, but don't worry if you forget – Xcode will always complain loudly if **@objc** is required and not present!
- Creating a new **UIAlertController**: we did that in project 2.
- The **addTextField()** method just adds an editable text input field to the **UIAlertController**. We could do more with it, but it's enough for now.
- The **addAction()** method is used to add a **UIAlertAction** to a **UIAlertController**. We used this in project 2 also.
- The **present()** method is also from project 2. Clearly project 2 was brilliant!

That leaves the tricky stuff: creating **submitAction**. These handful of lines of code demonstrate no fewer than four new things to learn, all of which are important. I'm going to sort them easiest first, starting with **UITextField**.

UITextField is a simple editable text box that shows the keyboard so the user can enter something. We added a single text field to the **UIAlertController** using its **addTextField()** method, and we now read out the value that was inserted.

Next up is *trailing closure syntax*. We covered this while you were learning the Swift fundamentals, but now you can see it in action: rather than specifying a **handler** parameter, we pass the code we want to run in braces *after* the method call.

Next, **action in**. If you remember project 2, we had to modify the **askQuestion()** method so that it accepted a **UIAlertAction** parameter saying what button was tapped, like this:

```
func askQuestion(action: UIAlertAction!) {
```

We had no choice but to do that, because the **handler** parameter for **UIAlertAction** expects a method that takes itself as a parameter, and we also added a default value of “nil” so we could call it ourselves – hence the `!` part. And that's what's happening here: we're giving the **UIAlertAction** some code to execute when it is tapped, and it wants to know that that code accepts a parameter of type **UIAlertAction**.

The **in** keyword is important: everything before that describes the closure; everything after that is the closure. So **action in** means that it accepts one parameter in, of type **UIAlertAction**.

In our current project, we could simplify this even further: we don't make any reference to the **action** parameter inside the closure, which means we don't need to give it a name at all. In Swift, to leave a parameter unnamed you just use an underscore character, like this:

_ in

Fourth is **weak**. Swift "captures" any constants and variables that are used in a closure, based on the values of the closure's surrounding context. That is, if you create an integer, a string, an array and another class outside of the closure, then use them inside the closure, Swift captures them.

This is important, because the closure references the variables, and might even change them. But I haven't said yet what "capture" actually means, and that's because it depends what kind of data you're using. Fortunately, Swift hides it all away so you don't have to worry about it...

...except for those strong reference cycles I mentioned. *Those* you need to worry about. That's where objects can't even be destroyed because they all hold tightly on to each other – known as *strong referencing*.

Swift's solution is to let you declare that some variables aren't held onto quite so tightly. It's a two-step process, and it's so easy you'll find yourself doing it for everything just in case. In the event that Xcode thinks you're taking it a bit too far, you'll get a warning saying you can relax a bit.

First, you must tell Swift what variables you don't want strong references for. This is done in

Project 5: Word Scramble

one of two ways: **unowned** or **weak**. These are somewhat equivalent to implicitly unwrapped optionals (unowned) and regular optionals (weak): a weakly owned reference might be **nil**, so you need to unwrap it or use optional chaining; an unowned reference is one you're certifying cannot be **nil** and so doesn't need to be unwrapped, however you'll hit a problem if you were wrong.

In our code we use this: **[weak self, weak ac]**. That declares **self** (the current view controller) and **ac** (our **UIAlertController**) to be captured as weak references inside the closure. It means the closure can use them, but won't create a strong reference cycle because we've made it clear the closure doesn't own either of them.

But that's not enough for Swift. Inside our method we're calling the **submit()** method of our view controller. We haven't created it yet, but you should be able to see it's going to take the answer the user entered and try it out in the game.

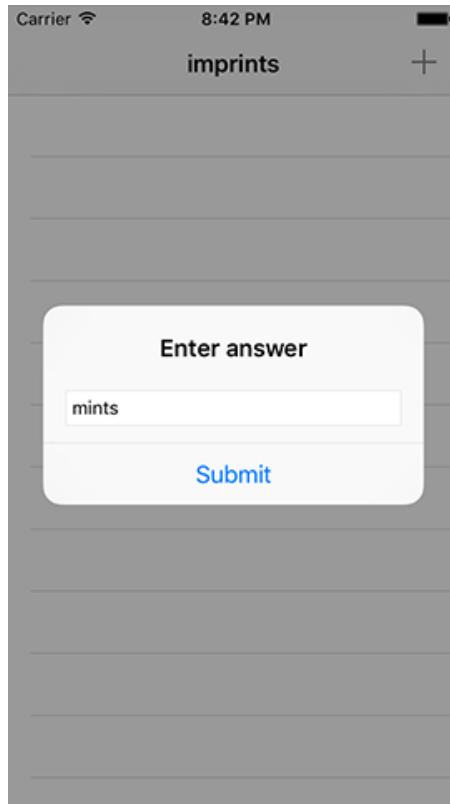
This **submit()** method is external to the closure's current context, so when you're writing it you might not realize that calling **submit()** implicitly requires that **self** be captured by the closure. That is, the closure can't call **submit()** if it doesn't capture the view controller.

We've already declared that **self** is weakly owned by the closure, but Swift wants us to be absolutely sure we know what we're doing: every call to a method or property of the current view controller must prefixed with "**self?.**", as in **self?.submit()**.

In project 1, I told you there were two trains of thought regarding use of **self**, and said, "The first group of people never like to use **self** unless it's required, because when it's required it's actually important and meaningful, so using it in places where it isn't required can confuse matters."

Implicit capture of **self** in closures is that place when using **self** is required and meaningful: Swift won't let you avoid it here. By restricting your use of **self** to closures you can easily check your code doesn't have any reference cycles by searching for "**self**" – there ought not to be too many to look through!

Pick a word, any word: UIAlertController



I realize all that sounds very dense, but let's take a look at the code again:

```
let submitAction = UIAlertAction(title: "Submit",
style: .default) { [weak self, weak ac] action in
    guard let answer = ac?.textFields?[0].text else { return }
    self?.submit(answer)
}
```

Hopefully you can start to see how it breaks down:

- We use trailing closure syntax to provide some code to run when the alert action is selected.
- That code will use **self** and **ac** so we declare them as being **weak** so that Swift won't create a strong reference cycle.
- The closure expects to receive a **UIAlertAction** as its parameter, so we write that inside the opening brace.

Project 5: Word Scramble

- Everything after **in** is the actual code of the closure.
- Inside the closure we need to reference methods on our view controller using **self** so that we're clearly acknowledging the possibility of a strong reference cycle.

It's complicated and I'm not going to pretend otherwise, but we are going to be coming back to this repeatedly in the future – you'll have more than enough chance to understand it better.

Before we move on, let's make your code compile again because right now it's calling **self?.submit()** and we haven't made that method yet. So, add this new method somewhere in the class:

```
func submit(_ answer: String) {  
}
```

That's right, it's empty – but it's enough to make the code compile cleanly so we can carry on.

Prepare for submission: lowercased() and IndexPath

You can breathe again: we're done with closures for now. I know that wasn't easy, but once you understand basic closures you really have come a long way in your Swift adventure.

We're going to do some much easier coding now, because believe it or not we're not that far from making this game actually work!

We have now gone over the structure of a closure: trailing closure syntax, unowned self, a parameter being passed in, then the need for **self**. to make capturing clear. We haven't really talked about the actual content of our closure, because there isn't a lot to it. As a reminder, here's how it looks:

```
guard let answer = ac?.textFields?[0].text else { return }
self?.submit(answer)
```

The first line safely unwraps the array of text fields – it's optional because there might not be any. The second line pulls out the text from the text field and passes it to our (all-new-albeit-empty) **submit()** method.

This method needs to check whether the player's word can be made from the given letters. It needs to check whether the word has been used already, because obviously we don't want duplicate words. It also needs to check whether the word is actually a valid English word, because otherwise the user can just type in nonsense.

If all three of those checks pass, **submit()** needs to add the word to the **usedWords** array, then insert a new row in the table view. We could just use the table view's **reloadData()** method to force a full reload, but that's not very efficient when we're changing just one row.

First, let's create dummy methods for the three checks we're going to do: is the word possible, is it original, and is it real? Each of these will accept a word string and return true or false, but for now we'll just always return true – we'll come back to these soon. Add these methods now:

Project 5: Word Scramble

```
func isPossible(word: String) -> Bool {
    return true
}

func isOriginal(word: String) -> Bool {
    return true
}

func isReal(word: String) -> Bool {
    return true
}
```

With those three methods in place, we can write our first pass at the **submit()** method:

```
func submit(_ answer: String) {
    let lowerAnswer = answer.lowercased()

    if isPossible(word: lowerAnswer) {
        if isOriginal(word: lowerAnswer) {
            if isReal(word: lowerAnswer) {
                usedWords.insert(answer, at: 0)

                let indexPath = IndexPath(row: 0, section: 0)
                tableView.insertRows(at: [indexPath],
with: .automatic)
            }
        }
    }
}
```

If a user types "cease" as a word that can be made out of our started word "agencies", it's clear that is correct because there is one "c", two "e"s, one "a" and one "s". But what if they type

"Cease"? Now it has a capital C, and "agencies" doesn't have a capital C. Yes, that's right: strings are case-sensitive, which means Cease is not cease is not CeasE is not CeAsE.

The solution to this is quite simple: all the starter words are lowercase, so when we check the player's answer we immediately lowercase it using its **lowercased()** method. This is stored in the **lowerAnswer** constant because we want to use it several times.

We then have three **if** statements, one inside another. These are called nested statements, because you nest one inside the other. Only if all three statements are true (the word is possible, the word hasn't been used yet, and the word is a real word), does the main block of code execute.

Once we know the word is good, we do three things: insert the new word into our **usedWords** array at index 0. This means "add it to the start of the array," and means that the newest words will appear at the top of the table view.

The next two things are related: we insert a new row into the table view. Given that the table view gets all its data from the used words array, this might seem strange. After all, we just inserted the word into the **usedWords** array, so why do we need to insert anything into the table view?

The answer is animation. Like I said, we could just call the **reloadData()** method and have the table do a full reload of all rows, but it means a lot of extra work for one small change, and also causes a jump – the word wasn't there, and now it is.

This can be hard for users to track visually, so using **insertRows()** lets us tell the table view that a new row has been placed at a specific place in the array so that it can animate the new cell appearing. Adding one cell is also significantly easier than having to reload everything, as you might imagine!

There are two quirks here that require a little more detail. First, **IndexPath** is something we looked at briefly in project 1, as it contains a section and a row for every item in your table. As with project 1 we aren't using sections here, but the row number should equal the position we added the item in the array – position 0, in this case.

Project 5: Word Scramble

Second, the **with** parameter lets you specify how the row should be animated in. Whenever you're adding and removing things from a table, the **.automatic** value means "do whatever is the standard system animation for this change." In this case, it means "slide the new row in from the top."

Our three checking methods always return true regardless of what word is entered, but apart from that the game is starting to come together. Press Cmd+R to play back what you have: you should be able to tap the + button and enter words into the alert.

Checking for valid answers

As you've seen, the **return** keyword exits a method at any time it's used. If you use **return** by itself, it exits the method and does nothing else. But if you use **return** with a value, it sends that value back to whatever called the method. We've used it previously to send back the number of rows in a table, for example.

Before you can send a value back, you need to tell Swift that you expect to return a value. Swift will automatically check that a value is returned and it's of the right data type, so this is important. We just put in stubs (empty methods that do nothing) for three new methods, each of which returns a value. Let's take a look at one in more detail:

```
func isOriginal(word: String) -> Bool {  
    return true  
}
```

The method is called **isOriginal()**, and it takes one parameter that's a string. But before the opening brace there's something important: **-> Bool**. This tells Swift that the method will return a boolean value, which is the name for a value that can be either true or false.

The body of the method has just one line of code: **return true**. This is how the **return** statement is used to send a value back to its caller: we're returning true from this method, so the caller can use this method inside an **if** statement to check for true or false.

This method can have as much code as it needs in order to evaluate fully whether the word has been used or not, including calling any other methods it needs. We're going to change it so that it calls another method, which will check whether our **usedWords** array already contains the word that was provided. Replace its current **return true** code with this:

```
return !usedWords.contains(word)
```

There are two new things here. First, **contains()** is a method that checks whether the array it's called on (**usedWords**) contains the value specified in parameter 2 (**word**). If it does contain

Project 5: Word Scramble

the value, **contains()** returns true; if not, it returns false. Second, the **!** symbol. You've seen this before as the way to force unwrap optional variables, but here it's something different: it means *not*.

The difference is small but important: when used before a variable or constant, **!** means "not" or "opposite". So if **contains()** returns true, **!** flips it around to make it false, and vice versa. When used after a variable or constant, **!** means "force unwrap this optional variable."

This is used because our method is called **isOriginal()**, and should return true if the word has never been used before. If we had used **return usedWords.contains(word)**, then it would do the opposite: it would return true if the word had been used and false otherwise. So, by using **!** we're flipping it around so that the method returns true if the word is new.

That's one method down. Next is the **isPossible()**, which also takes a string as its only parameter and returns a **Bool** – true or false. This one is more complicated, but I've tried to make the algorithm as simple as possible.

How can we be sure that "cease" can be made from "agencies", using each letter only once? The solution I've adopted is to loop through every letter in the player's answer, seeing whether it exists in the eight-letter start word we are playing with. If it does exist, we remove the letter from the start word, then continue the loop. So, if we try to use a letter twice, it will exist the first time, but then get removed so it doesn't exist the next time, and the check will fail.

In project 4 we used the **contains()** method to see if one string exists inside another. Here we need something more precise: if it exists, *where*? That extra information allows us to remove the character from our word so that it won't be used twice. Swift has a separate method for this called **firstIndex(of:)**, which will return the first position of the substring if it exists or nil otherwise.

To put that into practice, here's the **isPossible()** method:

```
func isPossible(word: String) -> Bool {  
    guard var tempWord = title?.lowercased() else { return  
        false }  
    ...
```

```

for letter in word {
    if let position = tempWord.firstIndex(of: letter) {
        tempWord.remove(at: position)
    } else {
        return false
    }
}

return true
}

```

If the letter was found in the string, we use **remove(at:)** to remove the used letter from the **tempWord** variable. This is why we need the **tempWord** variable at all: because we'll be removing letters from it so we can check again the next time the loop goes around.

The method ends with **return true**, because this line is reached only if every letter in the user's word was found in the start word no more than once. If any letter isn't found, or is used more than possible, one of the **return false** lines would have been hit, so by this point we're sure the word is good.

Important: we have told Swift that we are returning a boolean value from this method, and it will check every possible outcome of the code to make sure a boolean value is returned no matter what.

Time for the final method. Replace the current **isReal()** method with this:

```

func isReal(word: String) -> Bool {
    let checker = UITextChecker()
    let range = NSRange(location: 0, length: word.utf16.count)
    let misspelledRange = checker.rangeOfMisspelledWord(in:
word, range: range, startingAt: 0, wrap: false, language: "en")

```

Project 5: Word Scramble

```
    return misspelledRange.location == NSNotFound  
}
```

There's a new class here, called **UITextChecker**. This is an iOS class that is designed to spot spelling errors, which makes it perfect for knowing if a given word is real or not. We're creating a new instance of the class and putting it into the **checker** constant for later.

There's a new type here too, called **NSRange**. This is used to store a string range, which is a value that holds a start position and a length. We want to examine the whole string, so we use 0 for the start position and the string's length for the length.

Next, we call the **rangeOfMisspelledWord(in:)** method of our **UITextChecker** instance. This wants five parameters, but we only care about the first two and the last one: the first parameter is our string, **word**, the second is our range to scan (the whole string), and the last is the language we should be checking with, where **en** selects English.

Parameters three and four aren't useful here, but for the sake of completeness: parameter three selects a point in the range where the text checker should start scanning, and parameter four lets us set whether the **UITextChecker** should start at the beginning of the range if no misspelled words were found starting from parameter three. Neat, but not helpful here.

Calling **rangeOfMisspelledWord(in:)** returns another **NSRange** structure, which tells us where the misspelling was found. But what we care about was whether any misspelling was found, and if nothing was found our **NSRange** will have the special location **NSNotFound**. Usually **location** would tell you where the misspelling started, but **NSNotFound** is telling us the word is spelled correctly – i.e., it's a valid word.

Note: In case you were curious, **NSRange** pre-dates Swift, and therefore doesn't have access to optionals – **NSNotFound** is effectively a magic number that means “not found”, assigned to a constant to make it easier to use.

Here the **return** statement is used in a new way: as part of an operation involving **==**. This is a very common way to code, and what happens is that **==** returns true or false depending on whether **misspelledRange.location** is equal to **NSNotFound**. That true or false is then given

to **return** as the return value for the method.

We could have written that same line across multiple lines, but it's not common:

```
if misspelledRange.location == NSNotFound {  
    return true  
} else {  
    return false  
}
```

That completes the third of our missing methods, so the project is almost complete. Run it now and give it a thorough test!

Before we continue, there's one small thing I want to touch on briefly. In the **isPossible()** method we looped over each letter by treating the word as an array, but in this new code we use **word.utf16** instead. Why?

The answer is an annoying backwards compatibility quirk: Swift's strings natively store international characters as individual characters, e.g. the letter “é” is stored as precisely that. However, UIKit was written in Objective-C before Swift's strings came along, and it uses a different character system called UTF-16 – short for 16-bit Unicode Transformation Format – where the accent and the letter are stored separately.

It's a subtle difference, and often it isn't a difference at all, but it's becoming increasingly problematic because of the rise of emoji – those little images that are frequently used in messages. Emoji are actually just special character combinations behind the scenes, and they are measured differently with Swift strings and UTF-16 strings: Swift strings count them as 1-letter strings, but UTF-16 considers them to be 2-letter strings. This means if you use **count** with UIKit methods, you run the risk of miscounting the string length.

I realize this seems like pointless additional complexity, so let me try to give you a simple rule: when you're working with UIKit, SpriteKit, or any other Apple framework, use **utf16.count** for the character count. If it's just your own code - i.e. looping over characters and processing each one individually – then use **count** instead.

Project 5: Word Scramble

Or else what?

There remains one problem to fix with our code, and it's quite a tedious problem. If the word is possible and original and real, we add it to the list of found words then insert it into the table view. But what if the word isn't possible? Or if it's possible but not original? In this case, we reject the word and don't say why, so the user gets no feedback.

So, the final part of our project is to give users feedback when they make an invalid move. This is tedious because it's just adding **else** statements to all the **if** statements in **submit()**, each time configuring a message to show to users.

Here's the adjusted method:

```
func submit(answer: String) {
    let lowerAnswer = answer.lowercased()

    let errorTitle: String
    let errorMessage: String

    if isPossible(word: lowerAnswer) {
        if isOriginal(word: lowerAnswer) {
            if isReal(word: lowerAnswer) {
                usedWords.insert(answer, at: 0)

                let indexPath = IndexPath(row: 0, section: 0)
                tableView.insertRows(at: [indexPath],
                                     with: .automatic)

                return
            } else {
                errorTitle = "Word not recognised"
                errorMessage = "You can't just make them up, you
know!"
            }
        }
    }
}
```

Project 5: Word Scramble

```
        }
    } else {
        errorTitle = "Word used already"
        errorMessage = "Be more original!"
    }
} else {
    guard let title = title?.lowercased() else { return }
    errorTitle = "Word not possible"
    errorMessage = "You can't spell that word from \(title)"
}

let ac = UIAlertController(title: errorTitle, message:
errorMessage, preferredStyle: .alert)
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
present(ac, animated: true)
}
```

As you can see, every **if** statement now has a matching **else** statement so that the user gets appropriate feedback. All the **elses** are effectively the same (albeit with changing text): set the values for **errorTitle** and **errorMessage** to something useful for the user. The only interesting exception is the last one, where we use string interpolation to show the view controller's title as a lowercase string.

If the user enters a valid answer, a call to **return** forces Swift to exit the method immediately once the table has been updated. This is helpful, because at the end of the method there is code to create a new **UIAlertController** with the error title and message that was set, add an OK button without a handler (i.e., just dismiss the alert), then show the alert. So, this error will only be shown if something went wrong.

This demonstrates one important tip about Swift constants: both **errorTitle** and **errorMessage** were declared as constants, which means their value cannot be changed once set. I didn't give either of them an initial value, and that's OK – Swift lets you do this as long as you do provide a value before the constants are read, and also as long as you don't try to change the value

Or else what?

again later on.

Other than that, your project is done. Go and play!

Wrap up

You've made it this far, so your Swift learning really is starting to come together, and I hope this project has shown you that you can make some pretty advanced things with your knowledge.

In this project, you learned a little bit more about **UITableView**: how to reload their data and how to insert rows. You also learned how to add text fields to **UIAlertController** so that you can accept user input. But you also learned some serious core stuff: more about Swift strings, closures, **NSRange**, and more. These are things you're going to use in dozens of projects over your Swift coding career, and things we'll be returning to again and again in this series.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 5.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try extending this app to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Disallow answers that are shorter than three letters or are just our start word. For the three-letter check, the easiest thing to do is put a check into **isReal()** that returns false if the word length is under three letters. For the second part, just compare the start word against their input word and return false if they are the same.
2. Refactor all the **else** statements we just added so that they call a new method called **showErrorMessage()**. This should accept an error message and a title, and do all the **UIAlertController** work from there.
3. Add a left bar button item that calls **startGame()**, so users can restart with a new word

whenever they want to.

Bonus: Once you've done those three, there's a really subtle bug in our game and I'd like you to try finding and fixing it.

To trigger the bug, look for a three-letter word in your starting word, and enter it with an uppercase letter. Once it appears in the table, try entering it again all lowercase – you'll see it gets entered. Can you figure out what causes this and how to fix it?

Hints

It is *vital* to your learning that you try the challenges above yourself, and not just for a handful of minutes before you give up.

Every time you try something wrong, you learn that it's wrong and you'll remember that it's wrong. By the time you find the *correct* solution, you'll remember it much more thoroughly, while also remembering a lot of the wrong turns you took.

This is what I mean by “there is no learning without struggle”: if something comes easily to you, it can go just as easily. But when you have to really mentally fight for something, it will stick much longer.

But if you've already worked hard at the challenges above and are still struggling to implement them, I'm going to write some hints below that should guide you to the correct answer.

If you ignore me and read these hints without having spent at least 30 minutes trying the challenges above, the only person you're cheating is yourself.

Still here? OK. If you're stuck on the bug finding bonus challenge, take a look at this line of code:

```
usedWords.insert(answer, at: 0)
```

Is that what it should be?

Project 6

Auto Layout

Get to grips with Auto Layout using practical examples and code.

Setting up

In this technique project you're going to learn more about Auto Layout, the powerful and expressive way iOS lets you design your layouts. We used it in project 2 to make sure our flag buttons were positioned correctly, but that project has a problem: if you rotate your device, the flags don't fit on the screen!

So, we're first going to fix project 2 so that it demonstrates more advanced Auto Layout techniques (while also making the flags stay on the screen correctly!), then take a look at ways you can use Auto Layout in code.

First: take a copy of project 2, call it project6a, then open it in Xcode. All set? Then let's begin...

Advanced Auto Layout

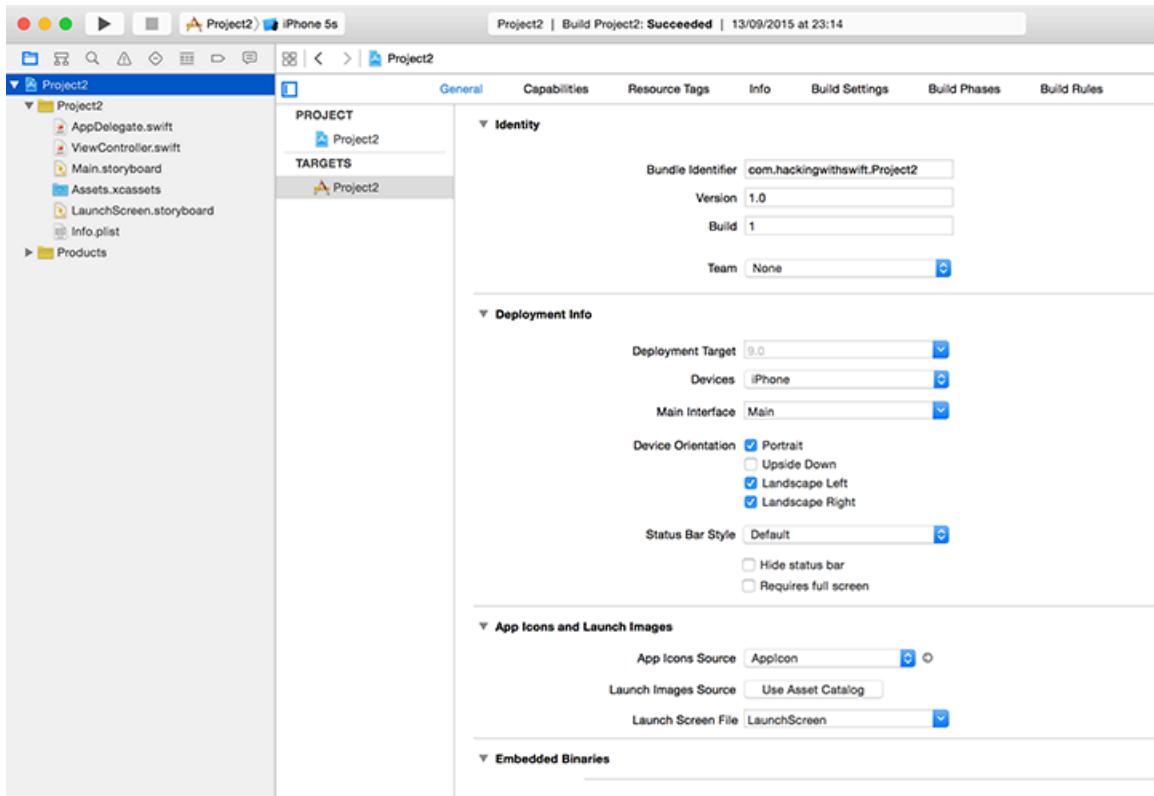
When you run the project, it looks fine in portrait, but is unplayable on landscape because some of the buttons are hidden. You have two options: either disable landscape mode, or make your layout work across both orientations.

Disabling orientations isn't a great solution, but sometimes it's the *right* solution. Most games, for example, fix their orientation because it just doesn't make sense to support both. If you want to do this, press Cmd+1 to show the project navigator on the left of your Xcode window, select your project (it's the first item in the pane), then to the right of where you just clicked will appear another pane showing "PROJECT" and "TARGETS", along with some more information in the center.

Please note: This project and targets list can be hidden by clicking the disclosure button in the top-left of the project editor (directly beneath the icon with four squares), and you may find yours is already hidden. I strongly recommend you show this list – hiding it will only make things harder to find, so please make sure it's visible!

In the picture below you can see the project editor, with the device orientations at the bottom. This is the collapsed view of projects and targets, so there's a dropdown arrow at the top that says "Project2" (just above where it says Identity in bold), and to the left of that is the button to show the projects and targets list.

Advanced Auto Layout



This view is called the project editor, and contains a huge number of options that affect the way your app works. You'll be using this a lot in the future, so remember how to get here! Select Project 2 under TARGETS, then choose the General tab, and scroll down until you see four checkboxes called Device Orientation. You can select only the ones you want to support.

You'll need to support selective orientations in some later projects, but for now let's take the smart solution: add extra rules to Auto Layout so it can make the layout work great in landscape mode.

Open Main.storyboard in Interface Builder, select the bottom flag, then Ctrl-drag from the flag to the white space directly below the flag – in the view controller itself. The direction you drag is important, so please drag straight down.

When you release your mouse button, a popup will appear that includes the option “Bottom Space to Safe Area” – please select that. This creates a new Auto Layout constraint that the bottom of the flag must be at least X points away from the bottom of the view controller,

Project 6: Auto Layout

where X is equal to whatever space there is in there now.

Although this is a valid rule, it will screw up your layout because we now have a complete set of exact vertical rules: the top flag should be 36 points from the top, the second 30 from the first, the third 30 from the second, and the third X away from the bottom. It's 207 for me, but yours might be different.

Because we've told Auto Layout exactly how big all the spaces should be, it will add them up and divide the remaining space among the three flags however it thinks best. That is, the flags must now be stretched vertically in order to fill the space, which is almost certainly what we don't want.

Instead, we're going to tell Auto Layout where there is some flexibility, and that's in the new bottom rule we just created. The bottom flag doesn't need to be precisely 207 points away from the bottom of the safe area – it just needs to be *some* distance away, so that it doesn't touch the edge. If there is more space, great, Auto Layout should use it, but all we care about is the minimum.

Select the third flag to see its list of constraints drawn in blue, then (carefully!) select the bottom constraint we just added. In the utilities view on the right, choose the attributes inspector (Alt+Cmd+4), and you should see Relation set to Equal and Constant set to 207 (or some other value, depending on your layout).

What you need to do is change Equal to be "Greater Than or Equal", then change the Constant value to be 20. This sets the rule "make it at least 20, but you can make it more to fill up space." The layout won't change visually while you're doing this, because the end result is the same. But at least now that Auto Layout knows it has some flexibility beyond just stretching the flags!

Our problem is still not fixed, though: in landscape, an iPhone SE has just 320 points of space to work with, so Auto Layout is going to make our flags fit by squashing one or maybe even two of them. Squashed flags aren't good, and having uneven sizes of flags isn't good either, so we're going to add some more rules.

Select the second button, then Ctrl-drag to the first button. When given the list of options, choose Equal Heights. Now do the same from the third button to the second button. This rule ensures that at all times the three flags have the same height, so Auto Layout can no longer squash one button to make it all fit and instead has to squash all three equally.

That fixes part of the problem, but in some respects it has made things worse. Rather than having one squashed flag, we now have three! But with one more rule, we can stop the flags from being squashed ever. Select the first button, then Ctrl-drag a little bit upwards – but stay within the button! When you release your mouse button, you'll see the option "Aspect Ratio", so please choose it.

The Aspect Ratio constraint solves the squashing once and for all: it means that if Auto Layout is forced to reduce the height of the flag, it will reduce its width by the same proportion, meaning that the flag will always look correct. Add the Aspect Ratio constraint to the other two flags, and run your app again. It should work great in portrait and landscape, all thanks to Auto Layout!

Auto Layout in code: addConstraints with Visual Format Language

Create a new Single View App project in Xcode, naming it Project6b. We're going to create some views by hand, then position them using Auto Layout. Put this into your `viewDidLoad()` method:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    let label1 = UILabel()
    label1.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
    label1.backgroundColor = UIColor.red
    label1.text = "THESE"
    label1.sizeToFit()

    let label2 = UILabel()
    label2.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
    label2.backgroundColor = UIColor.cyan
    label2.text = "ARE"
    label2.sizeToFit()

    let label3 = UILabel()
    label3.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
    label3.backgroundColor = UIColor.yellow
    label3.text = "SOME"
    label3.sizeToFit()

    let label4 = UILabel()
    label4.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
```

Auto Layout in code: addConstraints with Visual Format Language

```
label4.backgroundColor = UIColor.green
label4.text = "AWESOME"
label4.sizeToFit()

let label5 = UILabel()
label5.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
label5.backgroundColor = UIColor.orange
label5.text = "LABELS"
label5.sizeToFit()

view.addSubview(label1)
view.addSubview(label2)
view.addSubview(label3)
view.addSubview(label4)
view.addSubview(label5)

}
```

All that code creates five **UILabel** objects, each with unique text and a unique background color. All five views then get added to the view belonging to our view controller by using **view.addSubview()**.

We also set the property **translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints** to be **false** on each label, because by default iOS generates Auto Layout constraints for you based on a view's size and position. We'll be doing it by hand, so we need to disable this feature.

If you run the app now, you'll see seem some colorful labels at the top, overlapping so it looks like it says "LABELS ME". That's because our labels are placed in their default position (at the top-left of the screen) and are all sized to fit their content thanks to us calling **sizeToFit()** on each of them.

We're going to add some constraints that say each label should start at the left edge of its superview, and end at the right edge. What's more, we're going to do this using a technique called Auto Layout Visual Format Language (VFL), which is kind of like a way of drawing the

Project 6: Auto Layout

layout you want with a series of keyboard symbols.

Before we do that, we need to create a dictionary of the views we want to lay out. The reason this is needed for VFL will become clear shortly, but first here's the dictionary you need to add below the last call to `addSubview()`:

```
let viewsDictionary = ["label1": label1, "label2": label2,
"label3": label3, "label4": label4, "label5": label5]
```

That creates a dictionary with strings for its keys and our labels as its values (the values). So, to get access to `label1`, we can now use `viewsDictionary["label1"]`. This might seem redundant, but wait just a moment longer: it's time for some Visual Format Language!

Add these lines directly below the `viewsDictionary` that was just created:

```
view.addConstraints( NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualF
ormat: "H:[label1]|", options: [], metrics: nil, views:
viewsDictionary))
view.addConstraints( NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualF
ormat: "H:[label2]|", options: [], metrics: nil, views:
viewsDictionary))
view.addConstraints( NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualF
ormat: "H:[label3]|", options: [], metrics: nil, views:
viewsDictionary))
view.addConstraints( NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualF
ormat: "H:[label4]|", options: [], metrics: nil, views:
viewsDictionary))
view.addConstraints( NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualF
ormat: "H:[label5]|", options: [], metrics: nil, views:
viewsDictionary))
```

That's a lot of code, but actually it's just the same thing five times over. As a result, we could easily rewrite those in a loop, like this:

Auto Layout in code: addConstraints with Visual Format Language

```
for label in viewsDictionary.keys {  
  
    view.addConstraints( NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualF  
ormat: "H:[\(\label)]|", options: [], metrics: nil, views:  
viewsDictionary))  
}
```

Note that we're using string interpolation to put the key ("label1", etc) into the VFL.

Let's eliminate the easy stuff, then focus on what remains.

- **view.addConstraints()**: this adds an array of constraints to our view controller's view.
This array is used rather than a single constraint because VFL can generate multiple constraints at a time.
- **NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualFormat:)** is the Auto Layout method that converts VFL into an array of constraints. It accepts lots of parameters, but the important ones are the first and last.
- We pass [] (an empty array) for the options parameter and **nil** for the metrics parameter.
You can use these options to customize the meaning of the VFL, but for now we don't care.

That's the easy stuff. So, let's look at the Visual Format Language itself: "**H:|[label1]|**". As you can see it's a string, and that string describes how we want the layout to look. That VFL gets converted into Auto Layout constraints, then added to the view.

The **H:** parts means that we're defining a horizontal layout; we'll do a vertical layout soon. The pipe symbol, |, means "the edge of the view." We're adding these constraints to the main view inside our view controller, so this effectively means "the edge of the view controller." Finally, we have **[label1]**, which is a visual way of saying "put **label1** here". Imagine the brackets, [and], are the edges of the view.

So, "**H:|[label1]|**" means "horizontally, I want my **label1** to go edge to edge in my view." But there's a hiccup: what is "label1"? Sure, we know what it is because it's the name of our variable, but variable names are just things for humans to read and write – the variable names

Project 6: Auto Layout

aren't actually saved and used when the program runs.

This is where our **viewsDictionary** dictionary comes in: we used strings for the key and **UILabels** for the value, then set "label1" to be our label. This dictionary gets passed in along with the VFL, and gets used by iOS to look up the names from the VFL. So when it sees **[label1]**, it looks in our dictionary for the "label1" key and uses its value to generate the Auto Layout constraints.

That's the entire VFL line explained: each of our labels should stretch edge-to-edge in our view. If you run the program now, that's sort of what you'll see, although it highlights our second problem: we don't have a vertical layout in place, so although all the labels sit edge-to-edge in the view, they all overlap.

We're going to fix this with another set of constraints, but this time it's just one (long) line.

```
view.addConstraints( NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualFormat: "V:[label1]-[label2]-[label3]-[label4]-[label5]", options: [], metrics: nil, views: viewsDictionary))
```

That's identical to the previous five, except for the VFL part. This time we're specifying **V:**, meaning that these constraints are vertical. And we have multiple views inside the VFL, so lots of constraints will be generated. The new thing in the VFL this time is the **-** symbol, which means "space". It's 10 points by default, but you can customize it.

Note that our vertical VFL doesn't have a pipe at the end, so we're not forcing the last label to stretch all the way to the edge of our view. This will leave whitespace after the last label, which is what we want right now.

If you run your program now, you'll see all five labels stretching edge-to-edge horizontally, then spaced neatly vertically. It would have taken quite a lot of Ctrl-dragging in Interface Builder to make this same layout, so I hope you can appreciate how powerful VFL is!

Auto Layout metrics and priorities: constraints(withVisualFormat:)

We have a working layout now, but it's quite basic: the labels aren't very high, and without a rule regarding the bottom of the last label it's possible the views might be pushed off the bottom edge.

To begin to fix this problem, we're going to add a constraint for the bottom edge saying that the bottom of our last label must be at least 10 points away from the bottom of the view controller's view. We're also going to tell Auto Layout that we want each of the five labels to be 88 points high. Replace the previous vertical constraints with this:

```
view.addConstraints( NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualF  
ormat: "V:|[label1(==88)]-[label2(==88)]-[label3(==88)]-  
[label4(==88)]-[label5(==88)]-(>=10)-|", options: [], metrics:  
nil, views: viewsDictionary )
```

The difference here is that we now have numbers inside parentheses: **(==88)** for the labels, and **(>=10)** for the space to the bottom. Note that when specifying the size of a space, you need to use the - before and after the size: a simple space, -, becomes **-(>=10)-**.

We are specifying two kinds of size here: == and >. The first means "exactly equal" and the second "greater than or equal to." So, our labels will be forced to be an exact size, and we ensure that there's some space at the bottom while also making it flexible – it will definitely be at least 10 points, but could be 100 or more depending on the situation.

Actually, wait a minute. I didn't want 88 points for the label size, I meant 80 points. Go ahead and change all the labels to 80 points high.

Whoa there! It looks like you just received an email from your IT director: he thinks 80 points is a silly size for the labels; they need to be 64 points, because all good sizes are a power of 2.

And now it looks like your designer and IT director are having a fight about the right size. A

Project 6: Auto Layout

few punches later, they decide to split the difference and go for a number in the middle: 72. So please go ahead and make the labels all 72 points high.

Bored yet? You ought to be. And yet this is the kind of pixel-pushing it's easy to fall into, particularly if your app is being designed by committee.

Auto Layout has a solution, and it's called *metrics*. All these calls to **constraints(withVisualFormat:)** have been sent **nil** for their metrics parameter, but that's about to change. You see, you can give VFL a set of sizes with names, then use those sizes in the VFL rather than hard-coding numbers. For example, we wanted our label height to be 88, so we could create a metrics dictionary like this:

```
let metrics = ["labelHeight": 88]
```

Then, whenever we had previously written `==88`, we can now just write **labelHeight**. So, change your current vertical constraints to be this:

```
view.addConstraints( NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualF
ormat: "V:[label1(labelHeight)]-[label2(labelHeight)]-
[label3(labelHeight)]-[label4(labelHeight)]-
[label5(labelHeight)]->=10-", options: [], metrics: metrics,
views: viewsDictionary))
```

So when your designer / manager / inner-pedant decides that 88 points is wrong and you want some other number, you can change it in one place to have everything update.

Before we're done, we're going to make one more change that makes the whole user interface much better, because right now it's still imperfect. To be more specific, we're forcing all labels to be a particular height, then adding constraints to the top and bottom. This still works fine in portrait, but in landscape you're unlikely to have enough room to satisfy all the constraints.

With our current configuration, you'll see this message when the app is rotated to landscape: "Unable to simultaneously satisfy constraints." This means your constraints simply don't work given how much screen space there is, and that's where *priority* comes in. You can give any

Auto Layout metrics and priorities: constraints(withVisualFormat:)

layout constraint a priority, and Auto Layout will do its best to make it work.

Constraint priority is a value between 1 and 1000, where 1000 means "this is absolutely required" and anything less is optional. By default, all constraints you have are priority 1000, so Auto Layout will fail to find a solution in our current layout. But if we make the height optional – even as high as priority 999 – it means Auto Layout can find a solution to our layout: shrink the labels to make them fit.

It's important to understand that Auto Layout doesn't just discard rules it can't meet – it still does its best to meet them. So in our case, if we make our 88-point height optional, Auto Layout might make them 78 or some other number. That is, it will still do its best to make them as close to 88 as possible. TL;DR: constraints are evaluated from highest priority down to lowest, but all are taken into account.

So, we're going to make the label height have priority 999 (i.e., very important, but not required). But we're also going to make one other change, which is to tell Auto Layout that we want all the labels to have the same height. This is important, because if all of them have optional heights using **labelHeight**, Auto Layout might solve the layout by shrinking one label and making another 88.

From its point of view it has at least managed to make some of the labels 88, so it's probably quite pleased with itself, but it makes our user interface look uneven. So, we're going to make the first label use **labelHeight** at a priority of 999, then have the other labels adopt the same height as the first label. Here's the new VFL line:

```
"V: | [label1(labelHeight@999)]-[label2(label1)]-
[label3(label1)]-[label4(label1)]-[label5(label1)]->=10- | "
```

It's the **@999** that assigns priority to a given constraint, and using **(label1)** for the sizes of the other labels is what tells Auto Layout to make them the same height.

That's it: your Auto Layout configuration is complete, and the app can now be run safely in portrait and landscape.

Auto Layout anchors

You've seen how to create Auto Layout constraints both in Interface Builder and using Visual Format Language, but there's one more option open to you and it's often the best choice.

Every **UIView** has a set of anchors that define its layouts rules. The most important ones are **widthAnchor**, **heightAnchor**, **topAnchor**, **bottomAnchor**, **leftAnchor**, **rightAnchor**, **leadingAnchor**, **trailingAnchor**, **centerXAnchor**, and **centerYAnchor**.

Most of those should be self-explanatory, but it's worth clarifying the difference between **leftAnchor**, **rightAnchor**, **leadingAnchor**, and **trailingAnchor**. For me, left and leading are the same, and right and trailing are the same too. This is because my devices are set to use the English language, which is written and read left to right. However, for right-to-left languages such as Hebrew and Arabic, leading and trailing flip around so that leading is equal to right, and trailing is equal to left.

In practice, this means using **leadingAnchor** and **trailingAnchor** if you want your user interface to flip around for right to left languages, and **leftAnchor** and **rightAnchor** for things that should look the same no matter what environment.

The best bit about working with anchors is that they can be created relative to other anchors. That is you can say "this label's width anchor is equal to the width of its container," or "this button's top anchor is equal to the bottom anchor of this other button."

To demonstrate anchors, comment out your existing Auto Layout VFL code and replace it with this:

```
for label in [label1, label2, label3, label4, label5] {  
    label.widthAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
        view.widthAnchor).isActive = true  
    label.heightAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant: 88).isActive  
    = true  
}
```

That loops over each of the five labels, setting them to have the same width as our main view, and to have a height of exactly 88 points.

We haven't set top anchors, though, so the layout won't look correct just yet. What we want is for the top anchor for each label to be equal to the bottom anchor of the previous label in the loop. Of course, the first time the loop goes around there *is* no previous label, so we can model that using optionals:

```
var previous: UILabel?
```

The first time the loop goes around that will be nil, but then we'll set it to the current item in the loop so the *next* label can refer to it. If **previous** is not nil, we'll set a **topAnchor** constraint.

Replace your existing Auto Layout anchors with this:

```
var previous: UILabel?

for label in [label1, label2, label3, label4, label5] {
    label.widthAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
        view.widthAnchor).isActive = true
    label.heightAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant: 88).isActive
    = true

    if let previous = previous {
        // we have a previous label - create a height constraint
        label.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
            previous.bottomAnchor, constant: 10).isActive = true
    }

    // set the previous label to be the current one, for the
    // next loop iteration
    previous = label
}
```

Project 6: Auto Layout

}

That third anchor combines a different anchor with a constant value to get spacing between the views – these things are really flexible.

Run the app now and you'll see all the labels space themselves out neatly. I hope you'll agree that anchors make Auto Layout code really simple to read and write!

Anchors also let us control the safe area nicely. The “safe area” is the space that's actually visible inside the insets of the iPhone X and other such devices – with their rounded corners, notch and similar. It's a space that excludes those areas, so labels no longer run underneath the notch or rounded corners.

We can fix that using constraints. In our current code we're saying “if we have a previous label, make the top anchor of this label equal to the bottom anchor of the previous label plus 10.” But if we add an `else` block we can push the first label away from the top of the safe area, so it doesn't sit under the notch, like this:

```
if let previous = previous {
    // we have a previous label - create a height constraint
    label.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo: previous.bottomAnchor,
    constant: 10).isActive = true
} else {
    // this is the first label
    label.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.topAnchor, constant: 0).isActive =
true
}
```

If you run that code now, you should see all five labels start below the notch in iPhone X-style devices.

Wrap up

There are two types of iOS developer in the world: those who use Auto Layout, and people who like wasting time. It has bit of a steep learning curve (and we didn't even use the hard way of adding constraints!), but it's an extremely expressive way of creating great layouts that adapt themselves automatically to whatever device they find themselves running on – now and in the future.

Most people recommend you do as much as you can inside Interface Builder, and with good reason – you can drag lines about until you're happy, you get an instant preview of how it all looks, and it will warn you if there's a problem (and help you fix it.) But, as you've seen, creating constraints in code is remarkably easy thanks to the Visual Format language and anchors, so you might find yourself mixing them all to get the best results.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 6.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try extending this app to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Try replacing the **widthAnchor** of our labels with **leadingAnchor** and **trailingAnchor** constraints, which more explicitly pin the label to the edges of its parent.
2. Once you've completed the first challenge, try using the **safeAreaLayoutGuide** for those constraints. You can see if this is working by rotating to landscape, because the labels won't go under the safe area.
3. Try making the height of your labels equal to 1/5th of the main view, minus 10 for the

Project 6: Auto Layout

spacing. This is a hard one, but I've included hints below!

Hints

It is *vital* to your learning that you try the challenges above yourself, and not just for a handful of minutes before you give up.

Every time you try something wrong, you learn that it's wrong and you'll remember that it's wrong. By the time you find the *correct* solution, you'll remember it much more thoroughly, while also remembering a lot of the wrong turns you took.

This is what I mean by “there is no learning without struggle”: if something comes easily to you, it can go just as easily. But when you have to really mentally fight for something, it will stick much longer.

But if you've already worked hard at the challenges above and are still struggling to implement them, I'm going to write some hints below that should guide you to the correct answer.

If you ignore me and read these hints without having spent at least 30 minutes trying the challenges above, the only person you're cheating is yourself.

Still here? OK. If you're stuck on the last challenge, try looking at Xcode's code completion options for the `constraint()` method. We're using the `equalToConstant` option right now, but there are others – the `equalTo` option lets you specify another height anchor as its first parameter, along with a multiplier and a constant.

When you use both a multiplier and a constant, the multiplier gets factored in first then the constant. So, if you wanted to make one view half the width of the main view plus 50, you might write something like this:

```
yourView.widthAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.widthAnchor, multiplier: 0.5,  
    constant: 50).isActive = true
```

Project 7

Whitehouse Petitions

Make an app to parse Whitehouse petitions using JSON and a tab bar.

Setting up

This project will take a data feed from a website and parse it into useful information for users. As per usual, this is just a way of teaching you some new iOS development techniques, but let's face it – you already have two apps and two games under your belt, so you're starting to build up a pretty good library of work!

This time you'll be learning about **UITabBarController** and a data format called JSON, which is a popular way to send and receive data online. It's not easy to find interesting JSON feeds that are freely available, but the option we'll be going for is the "We the people" Whitehouse petitions in the US, where Americans can submit requests for action, and others can vote on it.

Some are entirely frivolous ("We want the US to build a Death Star"), but it has good, clean JSON that's open for everyone to read, which makes it perfect. Lots to learn, and lots to do, so let's get started: create a new project in Xcode by choosing the Single View App template.

Now name it Project7 and save it somewhere.

Creating the basic UI: UITabBarController

We've already used **UINavigationController** in previous projects to provide a core user interface that lets us control which screen is currently visible. Another fundamental UI component is the tab bar, which you see in apps such as the App Store, Music, and Photos – it lets the user control which screen they want to view by tapping on what interests them.

Our current app has a single empty view controller, but we're going to jazz that up with a table view controller, a navigation controller, and a tab bar controller so you can see how they all work together.

You should know the drill by now, or at least part of it. Start by opening `ViewController.swift` and changing **ViewController** to inherit from **UITableViewController** rather than **UIViewController**. That is, change this line:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {
```

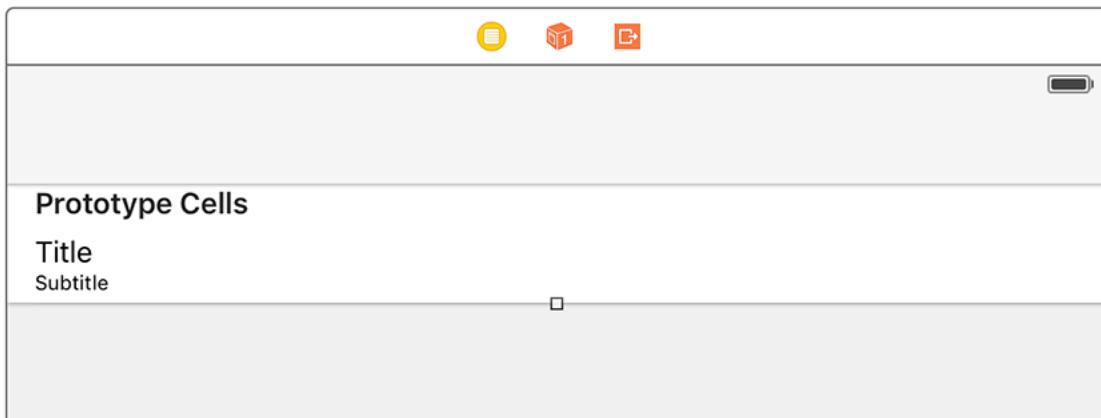
...to this:

```
class ViewController: UITableViewController {
```

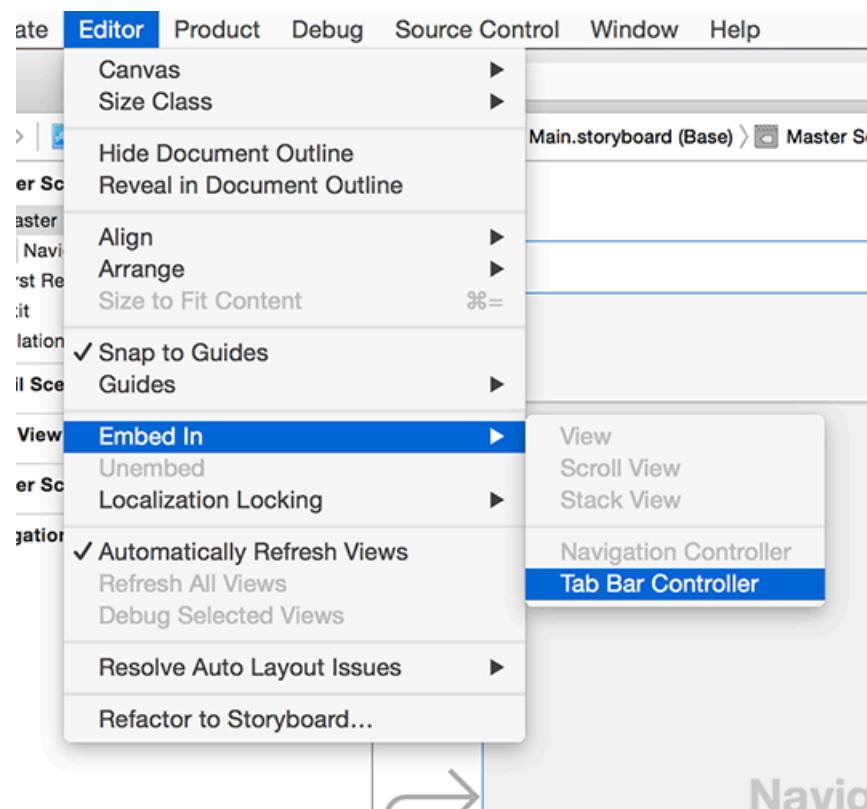
Now open `Main.storyboard`, remove the existing view controller, and drag out a table view controller in its place. Use the identity inspector to change its class to be “`ViewController`”, then make sure you check the “Is Initial View Controller” box.

Select its prototype cell and use the attributes inspector to give it the identifier “`Cell`”. Set its accessory to “`Disclosure Indicator`” while you're there; it's a great UI hint, and it's perfect in this project. In this project, we're also going to change the style of the cell – that's the first item in the attributes inspector. It's “`Custom`” by default, but I'd like you to change it to “`Subtitle`”, so that each row has a main title label and a subtitle label.

Project 7: Whitehouse Petitions



Now for the interesting part: we need to wrap this view controller inside two other things. Go to Editor > Embed In > Navigation Controller, and then straight away go to Editor > Embed In > Tab Bar Controller. The navigation controller adds a gray bar at the top called a navigation bar, and the tab bar controller adds a gray bar at the bottom called a tab bar. Hit Cmd+R now to see them both in action.



Behind the scenes, **UITabBarController** manages an array of view controllers that the user can choose between. You can often do most of the work inside Interface Builder, but not in this project. We're going to use one tab to show recent petitions, and another to show popular petitions, which is the same thing really – all that's changing is the data source.

Doing everything inside the storyboard would mean duplicating our view controllers, which is A Bad Idea, so instead we're just going to design one of them in the storyboard then create a duplicate of it using code.

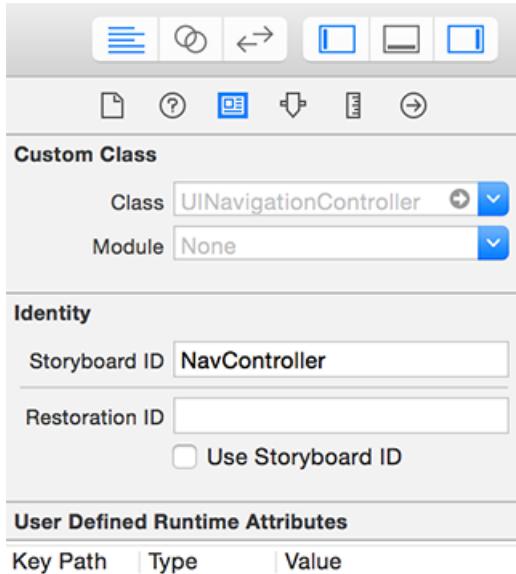
Now that our navigation controller is inside a tab bar controller, it will have acquired a gray strip along its bottom in Interface Builder. If you click that now, it will select a new type of object called a **UITabBarItem**, which is the icon and text used to represent a view controller in the tab bar. In the attributes inspector (Alt+Cmd+4) change System Item from "Custom" to "Most Recent".

One important thing about **UITabBarItem** is that when you set its system item, it assigns both an icon and some text for the title of the tab. If you try to change the text to your own text, the icon will be removed and you need to provide your own. This is because Apple has trained users to associate certain icons with certain information, and they don't want you using those icons incorrectly!

Select the navigation controller itself (just click where it says Navigation Controller in big letters in the center of the view controller), then press Alt+Cmd+3 to select the identity inspector. We haven't been here before, because it's not used that frequently. However, here I want you to type "NavController" in the text box to the right of where it says "Storyboard ID". We'll be needing that soon!

In the picture below you can see how the identity inspector should look when configured for your navigation controller. You'll be using this inspector in later projects to give views a custom class by changing the first of these four text boxes.

Project 7: Whitehouse Petitions



We're done with Interface Builder, so please open the file `ViewController.swift` so we can make the usual changes to get us a working table view.

First, add this property to the **ViewController** class:

```
var petitions = [String]()
```

That will hold our petitions. We won't be using strings in the final project – in fact we'll change that in the next chapter – but it's good enough for now.

Now add this **numberOfRowsInSection** method:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
 numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
    return petitions.count
}
```

We also need to add a `cellForRowAt` method, but this time it's going to be a bit different: we're going to set some dummy `textLabel.text` like before, but we're also going to set `detailTextLabel.text` – that's the subtitle in our cell. It's called “detail text label” rather than “subtitle” because there are other styles available, for example one where the detail text is on the right of the main text.

Add this method now:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Cell", for: indexPath)
    cell.textLabel?.text = "Title goes here"
    cell.detailTextLabel?.text = "Subtitle goes here"
    return cell
}
```

Step one is now complete: we have a basic user interface in place, and are ready to proceed with some real code...

Parsing JSON using the Codable protocol

JSON – short for JavaScript Object Notation – is a way of describing data. It's not the easiest to read yourself, but it's compact and easy to parse for computers, which makes it popular online where bandwidth is at a premium.

Before we do the parsing, here is a tiny slice of the actual JSON you'll be receiving:

```
{
    "metadata": {
        "responseInfo": {
            "status": 200,
            "developerMessage": "OK",
        }
    },
    "results": [
        {
            "title": "Legal immigrants should get freedom before undocumented immigrants – moral, just and fair",
            "body": "I am petitioning President Trump's Administration to take a humane view of the plight of legal immigrants. Specifically, legal immigrants in Employment Based (EB) category. I believe, such immigrants were short changed in the recently announced reforms via Executive Action (EA), which was otherwise long due and a welcome announcement.",
            "issues": [
                {
                    "id": "28",
                    "name": "Human Rights"
                },
                {

```

Parsing JSON using the Codable protocol

```
        "id": "29",
        "name": "Immigration"
    },
],
"signatureThreshold": 100000,
"signatureCount": 267,
"signaturesNeeded": 99733,
},
{
    "title": "National database for police shootings.",
    "body": "There is no reliable national data on how many people are shot by police officers each year. In signing this petition, I am urging the President to bring an end to this absence of visibility by creating a federally controlled, publicly accessible database of officer-involved shootings.",
    "issues": [
        {
            "id": "28",
            "name": "Human Rights"
        }
    ],
    "signatureThreshold": 100000,
    "signatureCount": 17453,
    "signaturesNeeded": 82547,
}
]
```

You'll actually be getting between 2000-3000 lines of that stuff, all containing petitions from US citizens about all sorts of political things. It doesn't really matter (to us) what the petitions are, we just care about the data structure. In particular:

Project 7: Whitehouse Petitions

1. There's a metadata value, which contains a **responseInfo** value, which in turn contains a status value. Status 200 is what internet developers use for "everything is OK."
2. There's a results value, which contains a series of petitions.
3. Each petition contains a title, a body, some issues it relates to, plus some signature information.
4. JSON has strings and integers too. Notice how the strings are all wrapped in quotes, whereas the integers aren't.

Swift has built-in support for working with JSON using a protocol called **Codable**. When you say “my data conforms to **Codable**”, Swift will allow you to convert freely between that data and JSON using only a little code.

Swift’s simple types like **String** and **Int** automatically conform to **Codable**, and arrays and dictionaries also conform to **Codable** if they contain **Codable** objects. That is, **[String]** conforms to **Codable** just fine, because **String** itself conforms to **Codable**.

Here, though, we need something more complex: each petition contains a title, some body text, a signature count, and more. That means we need to define a custom struct called **Petition** that stores one petition from our JSON, which means it will track the title string, body string, and signature count integer.

So, start by pressing Cmd+N and choosing to create a new Swift file called `Petition.swift`.

```
struct Petition {  
    var title: String  
    var body: String  
    var signatureCount: Int  
}
```

That defines a custom struct with three properties. You might remember that one of the advantages of structs in Swift is that it gives us a *memberwise initializer* – a special function that can create new **Petition** instances by passing in values for **title**, **body**, and **signatureCount**.

We'll come onto that in a moment, but first I mentioned the **Codable** protocol. Our **Petition** struct contains two strings and an integer, all of which conforms to **Codable** already, so we can ask Swift to make the whole **Petition** type conform to **Codable** like this:

```
struct Petition: Codable {
    var title: String
    var body: String
    var signatureCount: Int
}
```

With that simple change we're almost ready to load instances of **Petition** from JSON.

I say *almost* ready because there's a slight wrinkle in our plan: if you looked at the JSON example I gave above, you'll have noticed that our array of petitions actually comes inside a dictionary called "results". This means when we try to have Swift parse the JSON we need to load that key first, then *inside* that load the array of petition results.

Swift's **Codable** protocol needs to know exactly where to find its data, which in this case means making a *second* struct. This one will have a single property called **results** that will be an array of our **Petition** struct. This matches exactly how the JSON looks: the main JSON contains the **results** array, and each item in that array is a **Petition**.

So, press Cmd+N again to make a new file, choosing Swift file and naming it `Petitions.swift`. Give it this content:

```
struct Petitions: Codable {
    var results: [Petition]
}
```

I realize this seems like a lot of work, but trust me: it gets much easier!

All we've done is define the kinds of data structures we want to load the JSON into. The next step is to create a property in **ViewController** that will store our petitions array.

Project 7: Whitehouse Petitions

As you'll recall, you declare arrays just by putting the data type in brackets, like this:

```
var petitions = [String]()
```

We want to make an array of our **Petition** object. So, it looks like this:

```
var petitions = [Petition]()
```

Put that in place of the current **petitions** definition at the top of ViewController.swift.

It's now time to parse some JSON, which means to process it and examine its contents. We're going to start by updating the **viewDidLoad()** method for **ViewController** so that it downloads the data from the Whitehouse petitions server, converts it to a Swift **Data** object, then tries to convert it to an array of **Petition** instances.

We haven't used **Data** before. Like **String** and **Int** it's one of Swift's fundamental data types, although it's even more low level – it holds literally any binary data. It might be a string, it might be the contents of a zip file, or literally anything else.

Data and **String** have quite a few things in common. You already saw that **String** can be created using **contentsOf** to load data from disk, and **Data** has exactly the same initializer.

This is perfect for our needs – here's the new **viewDidLoad** method:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    // let urlString = "https://api.whitehouse.gov/v1/
petitions.json?limit=100"
    let urlString = "https://www.hackingwithswift.com/samples/
petitions-1.json"

    if let url = URL(string: urlString) {
        if let data = try? Data(contentsOf: url) {
```

```
// we're OK to parse!
}
}
}
```

Note: Above I've included a URL for the official Whitehouse API feed, but that might go away or change at any point in the future. So, to avoid problems I've taken a copy of that feed and put it on my own site – you can use either the official API or my own copy.

Let's focus on the new stuff:

- **urlString** points either to the Whitehouse.gov server or to my cached copy of the same data, accessing the available petitions.
- We use **if let** to make sure the **URL** is valid, rather than force unwrapping it. Later on you can return to this to add more URLs, so it's good play it safe.
- We create a new **Data** object using its **contentsOf** method. This returns the content from a **URL**, but it might throw an error (i.e., if the internet connection was down) so we need to use **try?**.
- If the **Data** object was created successfully, we reach the “we're OK to parse!” line. This starts with **//**, which begins a comment line in Swift. Comment lines are ignored by the compiler; we write them as notes to ourselves.

This code isn't perfect, in fact far from it. In fact, by downloading data from the internet in **viewDidLoad()** our app will lock up until all the data has been transferred. There are solutions to this, but to avoid complexity they won't be covered until project 9.

For now, we want to focus on our JSON parsing. We already have a **petitions** array that is ready to accept an array of petitions. We want to use Swift's **Codable** system to parse our JSON into that array, and once that's done tell our table view to reload itself.

Are you ready? Because this code is remarkably simple given how much work it's doing:

```
func parse(json: Data) {
```

Project 7: Whitehouse Petitions

```
let decoder = JSONDecoder()

if let jsonPetitions = try? decoder.decode(Petitions.self,
from: json) {
    petitions = jsonPetitions.results
    tableView.reloadData()
}

}
```

Place that method just underneath `viewDidLoad()` method, then replace the existing `// we're OK to parse!` line in `viewDidLoad()` with this:

```
parse(json: data)
```

This new `parse()` method does a few new and interesting things:

1. It creates an instance of **JSONDecoder**, which is dedicated to converting between JSON and **Codable** objects.
2. It then calls the `decode()` method on that decoder, asking it to convert our **json** data into a **Petitions** object. This is a throwing call, so we use `try?` to check whether it worked.
3. If the JSON was converted successfully, assign the **results** array to our **petitions** property then reload the table view.

The one part you haven't seen before is **Petitions.self**, which is Swift's way of referring to the **Petitions** type itself rather than an instance of it. That is, we're not saying "create a new one", but instead specifying it as a parameter to the decoding so **JSONDecoder** knows what to convert the JSON too.

You can run the program now, although it just shows "Title goes here" and "Subtitle goes here" again and again, because our `cellForRowAt` method just inserts dummy data.

We want to modify this so that the cells print out the **title** value of our **Petition** object, but we also want to use the subtitle text label that got added when we changed the cell type from

"Basic" to "Subtitle" in the storyboard. To do that, change the **cellForRowAt** method to this:

```
let petition = petitions[indexPath.row]
cell.textLabel?.text = petition.title
cell.detailTextLabel?.text = petition.body
```

Our custom **Petition** type has properties for **title**, **body** and **signatureCount**, so now we can read them out to configure our cell correctly.

If you run the app now, you'll see things are starting to come together quite nicely – every table row now shows the petition title, and beneath it shows the first few words of the petition's body. The subtitle automatically shows "..." at the end when there isn't enough room for all the text, but it's enough to give the user a flavor of what's going on.

Tip: If you don't see any data, make sure you named all the properties in the **Petition** struct correctly – the **Codable** protocol matches those names against the JSON directly, so if you have a typo in “signatureCount” then it will fail.

Rendering a petition: loadHTMLString

After all the JSON parsing, it's time for something easy: we need to create a detail view controller class so that it can draw the petition content in an attractive way.

The easiest way for rendering complex content from the web is nearly always to use a **WKWebView**, and we're going to use the same technique from project 4 to create a **DetailViewController** that contains a web view.

Go to the File menu and choose New > File, then choose iOS > Source > Cocoa Touch Class. Click Next, name it “DetailViewController”, make it a subclass of “UIViewController”, then click Next and Create.

Replace *all* the **DetailViewController** code with this:

```
import UIKit
import WebKit

class DetailViewController: UIViewController {
    var webView: WKWebView!
    var detailItem: Petition?

    override func loadView() {
        webView = WKWebView()
        view = webView
    }

    override func viewDidLoad() {
        super.viewDidLoad()
    }
}
```

This is almost identical to the code from project 4, but you'll notice I've added a **detailItem** property that will contain our **Petition** instance.

That was the easy bit. The hard bit is that we can't just drop the petition text into the web view, because it will probably look tiny. Instead, we need to wrap it in some HTML, which is a whole other language with its own rules and its own complexities.

Now, this series isn't called "Hacking with HTML," so I don't intend to go into much detail here. However, I will say that the HTML we're going to use tells iOS that the page fits mobile devices, and that we want the font size to be 150% of the standard font size. All that HTML will be combined with the **body** value from our petition, then sent to the web view.

Place this in **viewDidLoad()**, directly beneath the call to **super.viewDidLoad()**:

```
guard let detailItem = detailItem else { return }

let html = """
<html>
<head>
<meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width, initial-
scale=1">
<style> body { font-size: 150%; } </style>
</head>
<body>
\(detailItem.body)
</body>
</html>
"""

webView.loadHTMLString(html, baseURL: nil)
```

That **guard** at the beginning unwraps **detailItem** into itself if it has a value, which makes sure

Project 7: Whitehouse Petitions

we exit the method if for some reason we didn't get any data passed into the detail view controller.

Note: It's very common to unwrap variables using the same name, rather than create slight variations. In this case we could have used **guard let unwrappedItem = detailItem**, but that isn't any better.

I've tried to make the HTML as clear as possible, but if you don't care for HTML don't worry about it. What matters is that there's a Swift string called **html** that contains everything needed to show the page, and that's passed in to the web view's **loadHTMLString()** method so that it gets loaded. This is different to the way we were loading HTML before, because we aren't using a website here, just some custom HTML.

That's it for the detail view controller, it really is that simple. However, we still need to connect it to the table view controller by implementing the **didSelectRowAt** method.

Previously we used the **instantiateViewController()** method to load a view controller from Main.storyboard, but in this project **DetailViewController** isn't in the storyboard – it's just a free-floating class. This makes **didSelectRowAt** easier, because it can load the class directly rather than loading the user interface from a storyboard.

So, add this new method to your **ViewController** class now:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
didSelectRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) {  
    let vc = DetailViewController()  
    vc.detailItem = petitions[indexPath.row]  
    navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated: true)  
}
```

Go ahead and run the project now by pressing Cmd+R or clicking play, then tap on a row to see more detail about each petition. Some petitions don't have detail text, but most do – try a few and see what you can find.

Finishing touches: `didFinishLaunchingWithOptions`

Before this project is finished, we're going to make two changes. First, we're going to add another tab to the **UITabBarController** that will show popular petitions, and second we're going to make our loading code a little more resilient by adding error messages.

As I said previously, we can't really put the second tab into our storyboard because both tabs will host a **ViewController** and doing so would require us to duplicate the view controllers in the storyboard. You can do that if you really want, but please don't – it's a maintenance nightmare!

Instead, we're going to leave our current storyboard configuration alone, then create the second view controller using code. This isn't something you've done before, but it's not hard and we already took the first step, as you'll see.

Open the file `AppDelegate.swift`. This has been in all our projects so far, but it's not one we've had to work with until now. Look for the **didFinishLaunchingWithOptions** method, which should be at the top of the file. This gets called by iOS when the app has finished loading and is ready to be used, and we're going to hijack it to insert a second **ViewController** into our tab bar.

It should already have some default Apple code in there, but we're going to add some more just before the **return true** line:

```
if let tabBarController = window?.rootViewController as?  
UITabBarController {  
    let storyboard = UIStoryboard(name: "Main", bundle: nil)  
    let vc =  
        storyboard.instantiateViewController(withIdentifier:  
        "NavController")  
    vc.tabBarItem = UITabBarItem(tabBarSystemItem: .topRated,  
        tag: 1)
```

Project 7: Whitehouse Petitions

```
tabBarController.viewControllers?.append(vc)  
}
```

Every line of that is new, so let's dig in deeper:

- Our storyboard automatically creates a window in which all our view controllers are shown. This window needs to know what its initial view controller is, and that gets set to its **rootViewController** property. This is all handled by our storyboard.
- In the Single View App template, the root view controller is the **ViewController**, but we embedded ours inside a navigation controller, then embedded *that* inside a tab bar controller. So, for us the root view controller is a **UITabBarController**.
- We need to create a new **ViewController** by hand, which first means getting a reference to our Main.storyboard file. This is done using the **UIStoryboard** class, as shown. You don't need to provide a bundle, because **nil** means "use my current app bundle."
- We create our view controller using the **instantiateViewController()** method, passing in the storyboard ID of the view controller we want. Earlier we set our navigation controller to have the storyboard ID of "NavController", so we pass that in.
- We create a **UITabBarItem** object for the new view controller, giving it the "Top Rated" icon and the tag 1. That tag will be important in a moment.
- We add the new view controller to our tab bar controller's **viewControllers** array, which will cause it to appear in the tab bar.

So, the code creates a duplicate **ViewController** wrapped inside a navigation controller, gives it a new tab bar item to distinguish it from the existing tab, then adds it to the list of visible tabs. This lets us use the same class for both tabs without having to duplicate things in the storyboard.

The reason we gave a tag of 1 to the new **UITabBarItem** is because it's an easy way to identify it. Remember, both tabs contain a **ViewController**, which means the same code is executed. Right now that means both will download the same JSON feed, which makes having two tabs pointless. But if you modify **urlString** in **ViewController.swift**'s **viewDidLoad()** method to this, it will work much better:

Finishing touches: didFinishLaunchingWithOptions

```
let urlString: String

if navigationController?.tabBarItem.tag == 0 {
    // urlString = "https://api.whitehouse.gov/v1/
petitions.json?limit=100"
    urlString = "https://www.hackingwithswift.com/samples/
petitions-1.json"
} else {
    // urlString = "https://api.whitehouse.gov/v1/
petitions.json?signatureCountFloor=10000&limit=100"
    urlString = "https://www.hackingwithswift.com/samples/
petitions-2.json"
}
```

That adjusts the code so that the first instance of **ViewController** loads the original JSON, and the second loads only petitions that have at least 10,000 signatures. Once again I've provided cached copies of the Whitehouse API data in case it changes or goes away in the future – use whichever one you prefer.

The project is almost done, but we're going to make one last change. Our current loading code isn't very resilient: we have a couple of **if** statements checking that things are working correctly, but no **else** statements showing an error message if there's a problem.

This is easily fixed by adding a new **showError()** method that creates a **UIAlertController** showing a general failure message:

```
func showError() {
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Loading error", message:
"There was a problem loading the feed; please check your
connection and try again.", preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
    present(ac, animated: true)
}
```

Project 7: Whitehouse Petitions

You can now adjust the JSON downloading and parsing code to call this error method everywhere a condition fails, like this:

```
if let url = URL(string: urlString) {  
    if let data = try? Data(contentsOf: url) {  
        parse(json: data)  
    } else {  
        showError()  
    }  
} else {  
    showError()  
}
```

Alternatively we could rewrite this to be a little cleaner by inserting **return** after the call to **parse()**. This means that the method would exit if parsing was reached, so we get to the end of the method it means parsing *wasn't* reached and we can show the error. Try this instead:

```
if let url = URL(string: urlString) {  
    if let data = try? Data(contentsOf: url) {  
        parse(json: data)  
        return  
    }  
}  
  
showError()
```

Both approaches are perfectly valid – do whichever you prefer.

Regardless of which you opt for, now that error messages are shown when the app hits problems we're done – good job!

Wrap up

As your Swift skill increases, I hope you're starting to feel the balance of these projects move away from explaining the basics and toward presenting and dissecting code.

In this project you learned how to download JSON using Swift's Data type, then use the Codable protocol to convert that data into Swift objects we defined. Working with JSON is something you're going to be doing time and time again in your Swift career, and you've cracked it in about an hour of work – while also learning about **UITabBarController**, **UIStoryboard**, and more.

Good job!

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 7.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try extending this app to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Add a Credits button to the top-right corner using **UIBarButtonItem**. When this is tapped, show an alert telling users the data comes from the We The People API of the Whitehouse.
2. Let users filter the petitions they see. This involves creating a second array of filtered items that contains only petitions matching a string the user entered. Use a **UIAlertController** with a text field to let them enter that string. This is a tough one, so I've included some hints below if you get stuck.
3. Experiment with the HTML – this isn't a HTML or CSS tutorial, but you can find lots of resources online to give you enough knowledge to tinker with the layout a little.

Hints

It is *vital* to your learning that you try the challenges above yourself, and not just for a handful of minutes before you give up.

Every time you try something wrong, you learn that it's wrong and you'll remember that it's wrong. By the time you find the *correct* solution, you'll remember it much more thoroughly, while also remembering a lot of the wrong turns you took.

This is what I mean by “there is no learning without struggle”: if something comes easily to you, it can go just as easily. But when you have to really mentally fight for something, it will stick much longer.

But if you've already worked hard at the challenges above and are still struggling to implement them, I'm going to write some hints below that should guide you to the correct answer.

If you ignore me and read these hints without having spent at least 30 minutes trying the challenges above, the only person you're cheating is yourself.

Still here? OK. The second challenge here is to let users filter the petitions they see. To solve this you need to do a number of things:

1. Have one property to store all petitions, and one to store filtered petitions. This means the user can filter the petitions several times and you don't have to keep redownloading your JSON.
2. At first your filtered petitions array will be the same as the main petitions array, so just assign one to the other when your data is ready.
3. Your table view should load all its data from the filtered petitions array.
4. You'll need a bar button item to show an alert controller that the user can type into.
5. Once that's done, go through all the items in your petitions array, adding any you want to the filtered petition.

The important part here is the last one: how do you decide whether a petition matches the

Wrap up

user's search? One option is to use **contains()** to check whether the petition title or body text contains the user's search string – try it and see how you get on!

Project 8

7 Swifty Words

Build a word-guessing game and master strings once and for all.

Setting up

This is one of the last games you'll be making with UIKit; almost every game after this one will use Apple's SpriteKit framework for high-performance 2D drawing.

We're going to be making a word game based on the popular indie game 7 Little Words. Users are going to see a list of hints and an array of buttons with different letters on, and need to use those buttons to enter words matching the hints.

Of course I'll also be using this project to teach lots of important concepts, in particular how to use Auto Layout to create user interfaces entirely in code – no storyboard needed. Being able to use storyboards is a great skill, and being able to create user interfaces in code is also a great skill. Best of all, though, is knowing how to do both, so you can pick whichever works best on a case-by-case basis.

I should warn you ahead of time: although creating UI in code isn't hard, it does take a lot of time. As you'll see I encourage you to run your code regularly so you can see the parts come together, because otherwise this can feel endless!

Anyway, enough chat: go ahead and create a new Single View App project in Xcode, name it Project8, then save it somewhere. Now go to the project editor and change its device from Universal to iPad, because we're going to need all the space we can get!

What's that? You don't know where the project editor is? I'm sure I told you to remember where the project editor was! OK, here's how to find it, one last time, quoted from project 6:

Press Cmd+1 to show the project navigator on the left of your Xcode window, select your project (it's the first item in the pane), then to the right of where you just clicked will appear another pane showing "PROJECT" and "TARGETS", along with some more information in the center. The left pane can be hidden by clicking the disclosure button in the top-left of the project editor, but hiding it will only make things harder to find, so please make sure it's visible!

This view is called the project editor, and contains a huge number of options that affect the

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

way your app works. You'll be using this a lot in the future, so remember how to get here! Select Project 6 under TARGETS, then choose the General tab, and scroll down until you see four checkboxes called Device Orientation. You can select only the ones you want to support.

Obviously now that we're in project 8, you should look for Project 8 under "TARGETS", otherwise all that still applies.

Building a UIKit user interface programmatically

Our user interface for this game is going to be fairly complicated, but we can assemble it piece by piece and have Auto Layout do most of the work for us.

The main part of the UI will be two large labels: one containing the clues the user needs to figure out, and one showing how many letters are in the word for each clue. So, it might say “A cow in a tornado” in one label and “9 Letters” in the other – with the answer being “milkshake”. As the player solves each clue, the letter count will be replaced with that answer, so they can see at a glance which ones they have solved.

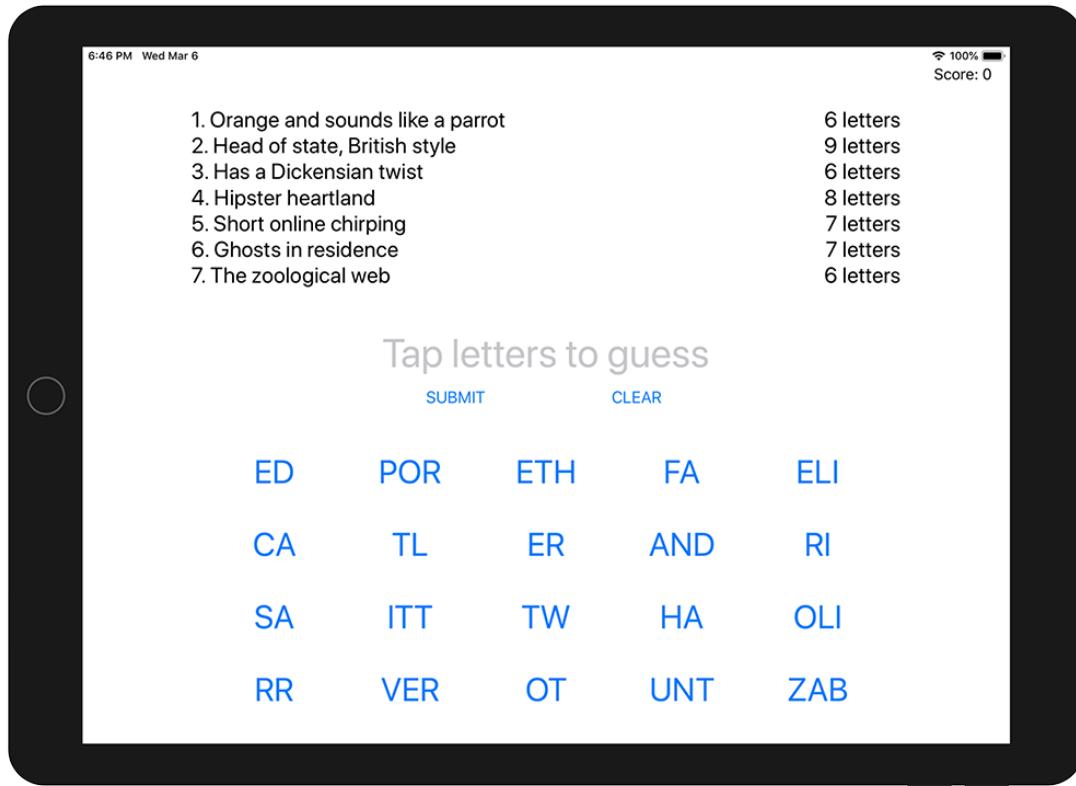
Just above and to the right of those two labels will be one extra label, nice and small, which will show the user’s score.

In the middle of the screen will be a **UITextField** where we’ll store the user’s current answer, plus buttons below to submit the answer or clear it.

Finally, at the bottom we’re going to make 20 (yes, twenty!) buttons, each containing different parts of the clues. So, there will be one with MIL, one with KSH, and one with AKE – the user needs to tap all three to spell MILKSHAKE. To make our layout a little easier, we’re going to place those buttons inside another **UIView** that we can position centered on the screen.

The picture below shows how your finished layout should look if you’ve followed all the instructions. If you’re seeing something slightly different, that’s OK. If you’re seeing something *very* different, you should probably try again!

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words



Our game is designed for iPads because we've got a lot of information we want to cram in. Later on, you're welcome to try creating a second layout specifically for iPhone, and it *is* possible – it just takes a lot more thinking!

The first thing we're going to do is create five properties to store the important parts of our user interface: the clues label, the answers label, the player's current answer (the word they are spelling), their score, and all the buttons showing word pieces.

So, open ViewController.swift and add these five properties to the **ViewController** class:

```
var cluesLabel: UILabel!
var answersLabel: UILabel!
var currentAnswer: UITextField!
var scoreLabel: UILabel!
var letterButtons = [UIButton]()
```

Just like in projects 4 and 7, we're going to write a custom **loadView()** method that creates our user interface in code. This will involve much more work than just creating a **WKWebView**, though – we have lots of UI to create! So, we'll tackle it piece by piece so you can see it coming together as we go.

Let's start nice and easy: we're going to create the main view itself as a big and white empty space. This is just a matter of creating a new instance of **UIView**, giving it a white background color, and assigning that to our view controller's **view** property:

```
override func loadView() {  
    view = UIView()  
    view.backgroundColor = .white  
  
    // more code to come!  
}
```

UIView is the parent class of all of UIKit's view types: labels, buttons, progress views, and more. Previously we assigned a **WKWebView** instance directly as our view, meaning that it automatically took up all the space. Here, though, we're going to be adding lots of child views and positioning them by hand, so we need a big, empty canvas to work with.

Placing three labels at the top

Next, let's create and add the score label. This uses similar code to what you learned in project 6, although now we're going to set the label's **textAlignment** property so the text is right-aligned.

Add this below the previous code, in place of the **// more code to come!** comment:

```
scoreLabel = UILabel()  
scoreLabel.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false  
scoreLabel.textAlignment = .right  
scoreLabel.text = "Score: 0"
```

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

```
view.addSubview(scoreLabel)
```

We need to add some Auto Layout constraints to make that label be positioned neatly on the screen, and we're going to be using *anchors* just like we did in project 6. These let us very clearly and descriptively place views relative to each other, however this time I want to show you one important difference: because we'll be creating lots of constraints at the same time, we'll be activating them all at once rather than setting **isActive = true** multiple times.

This is done using the **NSLayoutConstraint.activate()** method, which accepts an array of constraints. It will put them all together at once, so we'll be adding more constraints to this call over time.

UIKit gives us several guides that we can anchor our views to. One of the most common is the **safeAreaLayoutGuide** of our main view, which is the space available once you subtract any rounded corners or notches. Inside that is the **layoutMarginsGuide**, which adds some extra margin so that views don't run to the left and right edges of the screen.

In this app we're going to be using the **layoutMarginsGuide** so that our views are indented a little on each edge, but we'll also be adding some extra indenting to make the whole thing look better on-screen.

So, add this below the previous code:

```
NSLayoutConstraint.activate([
    scoreLabel.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.layoutMarginsGuide.topAnchor),
    scoreLabel.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.layoutMarginsGuide.trailingAnchor),

    // more constraints to be added here!
])
```

Notice the way I'm pinning the label to **view.layoutMarginsGuide** – that will make the score

label have a little distance from the right edge of the screen.

Tip: Remember that you're setting anchors as an array, so make sure you include a comma after each one.

To avoid confusion, here's what you should have so far:

```
override func loadView() {
    view = UIView()
    view.backgroundColor = .white

    scoreLabel = UILabel()
    scoreLabel.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
    scoreLabel.textAlignment = .right
    scoreLabel.text = "Score: 0"
    view.addSubview(scoreLabel)

    NSLayoutConstraint.activate([
        scoreLabel.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.layoutMarginsGuide.topAnchor),
        scoreLabel.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.layoutMarginsGuide.trailingAnchor, constant: 0),
    ])
}
```

We'll be adding lots more view code *before* the call to **NSLayoutConstraint.activate()**, and lots more constraints code *inside* that array being passed to **NSLayoutConstraint.activate()**.

If you run the app now you should see "Score: 0" nestled in the top-right corner. If you *don't* see that, please check your code otherwise the rest of this project will be very confusing indeed!

Next we're going to add the clues and answers labels. This will involve similar code to the score label, except we're going to set two extra properties: **font** and **numberOfLines**. The **font**

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

property describes what kind of text font is used to render the label, and is provided as a dedicated type that describes a font face and size: `UIFont`. `numberOfLines` is an integer that sets how many lines the text can wrap over, but we’re going to set it to 0 – a magic value that means “as many lines as it takes.”

Add this code below the code to create the label, but *before* the Auto Layout code:

```
cluesLabel = UILabel()
cluesLabel.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
cluesLabel.font = UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 24)
cluesLabel.text = "CLUES"
cluesLabel.numberOfLines = 0
view.addSubview(cluesLabel)

answersLabel = UILabel()
answersLabel.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
answersLabel.font = UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 24)
answersLabel.text = "ANSWERS"
answersLabel.numberOfLines = 0
answersLabel.textAlignment = .right
view.addSubview(answersLabel)
```

Using `UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 24)` will give us a 24-point font in whatever font is currently being used by iOS. This was Helvetica in the early days of iOS, then moved to Helvetica Neue and finally San Francisco. Asking for the system font means we’ll get whatever is the standard today, but our UI will update automatically if Apple makes more changes in the future.

To position those in such a way that they look great on a variety of iPad sizes – from iPad Mini up to the 12.9-inch iPad Pro – we’re going to set some anchors:

- The tops of the clues and answers labels will be pinned to the bottom of the score label.
- The clues label will be pinned to the leading edge of the screen, indented by 100 points so

that it looks neater.

- The clues label will have a width anchor set to 0.6 of the width of the main view, so that it takes up 60% of the screen. We need to subtract 100 from this to account for the indent.
- The answers label will be pinned to the *trailing* edge of the screen, then also indented by 100 points to match the clues label.
- The answers label will have a width anchor of 0.4 of the width of the main view, so that it takes up the remaining 40% of the screen. Again, that needs to have 100 taken away to account for the indent.
- Finally, we're going to make the height of the answers label match the height of the clues label.

I realize that might sound like a lot of work, but this kind of thing is where Auto Layout anchors really shine. Just remember: it takes the multiplier into account first, then the constant.

Add these constraints to the array we're activating – I've added comments just to be sure:

```
// pin the top of the clues label to the bottom of the score
label
cluesLabel.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
scoreLabel.bottomAnchor),

// pin the leading edge of the clues label to the leading edge
// of our layout margins, adding 100 for some space
cluesLabel.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.layoutMarginsGuide.leadingAnchor, constant: 100),

// make the clues label 60% of the width of our layout margins,
// minus 100
cluesLabel.widthAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.layoutMarginsGuide.widthAnchor, multiplier: 0.6, constant:
-100),

// also pin the top of the answers label to the bottom of the
```

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

```
scoreLabel  
answersLabel.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
scoreLabel.bottomAnchor),  
  
// make the answers label stick to the trailing edge of our  
layout margins, minus 100  
answersLabel.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.layoutMarginsGuide.trailingAnchor, constant: -100),  
  
// make the answers label take up 40% of the available space,  
minus 100  
answersLabel.widthAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.layoutMarginsGuide.widthAnchor, multiplier: 0.4, constant:  
-100),  
  
// make the answers label match the height of the clues label  
answersLabel.heightAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
cluesLabel.heightAnchor),
```

If you run the code now you'll see "CLUES" and "ANSWERS" near the top of the screen.

Temporarily – just so you can follow along and see how everything works! – try adding this code after the call to **activateConstraints()**:

```
cluesLabel.backgroundColor = .red  
answersLabel.backgroundColor = .blue
```

That will make our two big labels stand out more clearly, which will be helpful while we're building our UI.

Entering answers

Next we're going to add a **UITextField** that will show the user's answer as they are building it.

You might think this is a good place to use another **UILabel** particularly because we want players to build words by tapping letter buttons rather than typing into a box. However, this lets me introduce you to the **placeholder** property of text fields, which draws gray prompt text that the user can type over – it looks really nice, and gives us space to provide some instructions to users.

As with our labels we're also going to adjust the font and alignment of the text field, but we're also going to disable user interaction so the user can't tap on it – we don't want the iOS keyboard to appear.

Add this code alongside the other views:

```
currentAnswer = UITextField()
currentAnswer.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
currentAnswer.placeholder = "Tap letters to guess"
currentAnswer.textAlignment = .center
currentAnswer.font = UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 44)
currentAnswer.isUserInteractionEnabled = false
view.addSubview(currentAnswer)
```

The only new part is setting **isUserInteractionEnabled** to false, which is what stops the user from activating the text field and typing into it.

As for constraints, we're going to make this text field centered in our view, but only 50% its width – given how many characters it will hold, this is more than enough. We're also going to place it below the clues label, with 20 points of spacing so the two don't touch.

Add this to your constraints array:

```
currentAnswer.centerXAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.centerXAnchor),
currentAnswer.widthAnchor.constraint(equalTo: view.widthAnchor,
multiplier: 0.5),
currentAnswer.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
```

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

```
cluesLabel.bottomAnchor, constant: 20),
```

Run the app again, and you'll see "Tap letters to guess" in gray underneath the red and blue labels – this is coming together slowly!

Below the text field we're going to add two buttons: one for the user to submit their answer (when they've entered all the letters they want), and one to clear their answer so they can try something else.

To create a **UIButton** in code you need to know two things:

1. Buttons have various built-in styles, but the ones you'll most commonly use are **.custom** and **.system**. We want the default button style here, so we'll use **.system**.
2. We need to use **setTitle()** to adjust the title on the button, just like we did with **setImage()** in project 2.

Add this to our view creation code:

```
let submit = UIButton(type: .system)
submit.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
submit.setTitle("SUBMIT", for: .normal)
view.addSubview(submit)

let clear = UIButton(type: .system)
clear.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
clear.setTitle("CLEAR", for: .normal)
view.addSubview(clear)
```

Note: We don't need to store those as properties on the view controller, because we don't need to adjust them later.

In terms of the constraints to add for those buttons, they need three each:

1. One to set their vertical position. For the submit button we'll be using the bottom of the

current answer text field, but for the clear button we'll be setting its Y anchor so that its stays aligned with the Y position of the submit button. This means both buttons will remain aligned even if we move one.

2. We're going to center them both horizontally in our main view. To stop them overlapping, we'll subtract 100 from the submit button's X position, and add 100 to the clear button's X position. "100" isn't any sort of special number – you can experiment with different values and see what looks good to you.
3. We're going to force both buttons to have a height of 44 points. iOS likes to make its buttons really small by default, but at the same time Apple's human interface guidelines recommends buttons be at least 44x44 so they can be tapped easily.

Here are the constraints required to bring those rules to life – please add this to your constraints list:

```
submit.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
currentAnswer.bottomAnchor),  
submit.centerXAnchor.constraint(equalTo: view.centerXAnchor,  
constant: -100),  
submit.heightAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant: 44),  
  
clear.centerXAnchor.constraint(equalTo: view.centerXAnchor,  
constant: 100),  
clear.centerYAnchor.constraint(equalTo: submit.centerYAnchor),  
clear.heightAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant: 44),
```

Buttons... buttons everywhere!

Are you feeling tired yet? It's hard work, isn't it? Don't get me wrong – building user interface programmatically has many advantages, but it is certainly *verbose*.

Fortunately we're near the end now, and all that remains is to add letter buttons at the bottom of the user interface. We need a lot of these – 20, to be precise – and we need to make sure

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

they are positioned neatly on the screen.

With complicated layouts like this one the smart thing to do is wrap things in a container view. In our case this means we're going to create one container view that will house all the buttons, then give *that* view constraints so that it's positioned correctly on the screen.

This is just going to be a plain **UIView** – it does nothing special other than host our buttons. So, add this code below our previous view creation code:

```
let buttonsView = UIView()
buttonsView.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
view.addSubview(buttonsView)
```

As this thing is the last view in our view (excluding the buttons inside it, but they don't play a part in our Auto Layout constraints), we need to give it more constraints so that Auto Layout knows our hierarchy is complete:

1. We're going to give it a width and height of 750x320 so that it precisely contains the buttons inside it.
2. It will be centered horizontally.
3. We'll set its top anchor to be the bottom of the submit button, plus 20 points to add a little spacing.
4. We'll pin it to the bottom of our layout margins, -20 so that it doesn't run quite to the edge.

Add these final constraints to our constraints array:

```
buttonsView.widthAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant: 750),
buttonsView.heightAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant: 320),
buttonsView.centerXAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.centerXAnchor),
buttonsView.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo: submit.bottomAnchor,
constant: 20),
buttonsView.bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
```

```
view.layoutMarginsGuide.bottomAnchor, constant: -20)
```

Just for testing purposes, give that new view a green background color:

```
buttonsView.backgroundColor = .green
```

We haven't added the buttons inside that view just yet, but please run the app now – I think you'll find the result interesting.

What you'll see is that our layout has changed quite dramatically: everything that used to be pinned to the top has now been pulled downwards. This isn't a mistake, or an Auto Layout bug, but is the natural result of all the rules we've laid down:

- Our buttons view should be pinned to the bottom and be exactly 320 points high.
- The submit button should be above the buttons view.
- The current answer text field should be above the submit button.
- The answers label should be above the current answer text field.
- The score label should be above the answers label.
- The score label should be pinned to the top of our view.

In short, we have the buttons view pinned to the bottom and the score label pinned to the top, with all our other views in between.

Before we added the final buttons view, Auto Layout had no special idea of how big any of the views should be, so it used something called the *intrinsic content size* – how big each view needs to be to show its content. This resulted in our views being neatly arranged at the top. But now we have a complete vertical stack, pinned at the top and bottom, so UIKit needs to fill the space in between by stretching one or more of the views.

Every view in all our UIKit layouts has two important properties that tell UIKit how it can squash or stretch them in order to satisfy constraints:

- **Content hugging priority** determines how likely this view is to be made larger than its intrinsic content size. If this priority is high it means Auto Layout prefers not to stretch it; if

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

it's low, it will be more likely to be stretched.

- **Content compression resistance priority** determines how happy we are for this view to be made smaller than its intrinsic content size.

Both of those values have a default: 250 for content hugging, and 750 for content compression resistance. Remember, higher priorities mean Auto Layout works harder to satisfy them, so you can see that views are usually fairly happy to be stretched, but prefer not to be squashed. Because all views have the same priorities for these two values, Auto Layout is forced to pick one to stretch – the score at the top.

Now, all this matters because we're going to adjust the content hugging priority for our clues and answers labels. More specifically, we're going to give them a priority of 1, so that when Auto Layout has to decide which view to stretch they are first in line.

Add these two lines of code after the code that creates **cluesLabel** and **answersLabel**:

```
cluesLabel.setContentHuggingPriority(UILayoutPriority(1),  
for: .vertical)  
answersLabel.setContentHuggingPriority(UILayoutPriority(1),  
for: .vertical)
```

Run the app *now* and you'll see a big difference: the two labels now take up much more space, and the rest of our user interface looks more normal.

Now that our user interface looks as it should, let's create the final piece of our layout: the letter buttons that sit inside **buttonsView**.

We have 20 buttons to create across four rows and five columns, which is the perfect time to use some nested loops: create and configure each button, then position it inside the buttons view.

However, we're going to rely on a lovely feature of Auto Layout to make this whole process much easier: we're *not* going to set **translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints** to false for these buttons, which means we can give them a specific position and size and have UIKit

figure out the constraints for us.

So, this actual button creation isn't as hard as you might think:

1. Set constants to represent the width and height of our buttons for easier reference.
2. Loop through rows 0, 1, 2, and 3.
3. Loop through columns 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4.
4. Create a new button with a nice and large font – we can adjust the font of a button's label using its **titleLabel** property.
5. Calculate the X position of the button as being our column number multiplied by the button width.
6. Calculate the Y position of the button as being our row number multiplied by the button height.
7. Add the button to our **buttonsView** rather than the main view.

As a bonus, we're going to add each button to our **letterButtons** array as we create them, so that we can control them later in the game.

Calculating positions of views by hand isn't something we've done before, because we've been relying on Auto Layout for everything. However, it's no harder than sketching something out on graph paper: we create a rectangular frame that has X and Y coordinates plus width and height, then assign that to the **frame** property of our view. These rectangles have a special type called **CGRect**, because they come from Core Graphics.

As an example, we'll be calculating the X position for a button by multiplying our fixed button width (150) by its column position. So, for column 0 that will give an X coordinate of 150×0 , which is 0, and for column 1 that will give an X coordinate of 150×1 , which is 150 – they will line up neatly.

Add this code after the call to **NSLayoutConstraint.activate()**:

```
// set some values for the width and height of each button
let width = 150
let height = 80
```

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

```
// create 20 buttons as a 4x5 grid
for row in 0..4 {
    for col in 0..5 {
        // create a new button and give it a big font size
        let letterButton = UIButton(type: .system)
        letterButton.titleLabel?.font = UIFont.systemFont(ofSize:
36)
        // give the button some temporary text so we can see it
        // on-screen
        letterButton.setTitle("WWW", for: .normal)

        // calculate the frame of this button using its column
        // and row
        let frame = CGRect(x: col * width, y: row * height,
width: width, height: height)
        letterButton.frame = frame

        // add it to the buttons view
        buttonsView.addSubview(letterButton)

        // and also to our letterButtons array
        letterButtons.append(letterButton)
    }
}
```

That's the last of our code complete, so please remove the temporary background colors we gave to **cluesLabel**, **answersLabel**, and **buttonsView**, then run your code to see how it all looks.

Was it worth it?

While building this UI, it's possible you stopped more than once and thought to yourself "is this really worth it?" It's certainly true that building this user interface in a storyboard would have been easier, but learning to build user interfaces in code is a really important skill.

Loading a level and adding button targets

After our mammoth effort of building the user interface in code, it's time to continue with something much easier: loading a level and showing letter parts on our buttons.

This game asks players to spell seven words out of various letter groups, and each word comes with a clue for them to guess. It's important that the total number of letter groups adds up to 20, as that's how many buttons you have. I created the first level for you, and it looks like this:

```
HA|UNT|ED: Ghosts in residence
LE|PRO|SY: A Biblical skin disease
TW|ITT|ER: Short online chirping
OLI|VER: Has a Dickensian twist
ELI|ZAB|ETH: Head of state, British style
SA|FA|RI: The zoological web
POR|TL|AND: Hipster heartland
```

As you can see, I've used the pipe symbol to split up my letter groups, meaning that one button will have "HA", another "UNT", and another "ED". There's then a colon and a space, followed by a simple clue. This level is in the files for this project you should download from GitHub at <https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>. You should copy level1.txt into your Xcode project as you have done before.

Our first task will be to load the level and configure all the buttons to show a letter group. We're going to need two new arrays to handle this: one to store the buttons that are currently being used to spell an answer, and one for all the possible solutions. We also need two integers: one to hold the player's score, which will start at 0 but obviously change during play, and one to hold the current level.

So, declare these properties just below the views we defined previously:

```
var activatedButtons = [UIButton]()
```

```
var solutions = [String]()

var score = 0
var level = 1
```

We also need to create three methods that will be called from our buttons: one when submit is tapped, one when clear is tapped, and one when any of the letter buttons are tapped. These don't need any code for now, but we *do* need to make sure they are called when our buttons are tapped.

First, add these three empty methods below `viewDidLoad()`:

```
@objc func letterTapped(_ sender: UIButton) {
}

@objc func submitTapped(_ sender: UIButton) {
}

@objc func clearTapped(_ sender: UIButton) {
}
```

All three of those have the `@objc` attribute because they are going to be called by the buttons – by Objective-C code – when they are tapped.

When we used **UIBarButtonItem** previously, we were able to specify the target and selector of that button right in the initializer. This is done a little differently with buttons: they have a dedicated `addTarget()` method that connects the buttons to some code.

So, in `loadView()` add this where we create the submit button:

```
submit.addTarget(self, action: #selector(submitTapped),
for: .touchUpInside)
```

The target, action, and selector parts you know already, but the `.touchUpInside` part is new –

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

that's UIKit's way of saying that the user pressed down on the button and lifted their touch while it was still inside. So, altogether that line means "when the user presses the submit button, call **submitTapped()** on the current view controller."

Now add this where the clear button is created:

```
clear.addTarget(self, action: #selector(clearTapped),  
for: .touchUpInside)
```

That will call the **clearTapped()** method when the button is triggered.

Finally, we want all the letter buttons to call **letterTapped()** when they are tapped – they share the same method, much like our flag buttons in project 2.

So, add this line inside our nested loop, just below the call to **letterButtons.append()**:

```
letterButton.addTarget(self, action: #selector(letterTapped),  
for: .touchUpInside)
```

Of course, adding all those targets won't actually *do* anything, because the three methods they are calling are all empty.

We'll fill them in later, but first let's focus on loading level data into the game. We're going to isolate level loading into a single method, called **loadLevel()**. This needs to do two things:

1. Load and parse our level text file in the format I showed you earlier.
2. Randomly assign letter groups to buttons.

In project 5 you already learned how to create a **String** using **contentsOf** to load files from disk, and we'll be using that to load our level. In that same project you learned how to use **components(separatedBy:)** to split up a string into an array, and we'll use that too.

We'll also need to use Swift's array shuffling code that we've used before. But there are *some* new things to learn, honest!

Loading a level and adding button targets

First, we'll be using the **enumerated()** method to loop over an array. We haven't used this before, but it's helpful because it passes you each object from an array as part of your loop, as well as that object's position in the array.

There's also a new string method to learn, called **replacingOccurrences()**. This lets you specify two parameters, and replaces all instances of the first parameter with the second parameter. We'll be using this to convert "HA|UNT|ED" into HAUNTED so we have a list of all our solutions.

Before I show you the code, watch out for how I use the method's three variables: **clueString** will store all the level's clues, **solutionString** will store how many letters each answer is (in the same position as the clues), and **letterBits** is an array to store all letter groups: HA, UNT, ED, and so on.

Now add the **loadLevel()** method:

```
func loadLevel() {
    var clueString = ""
    var solutionString = ""
    var letterBits = [String]()

    if let levelFileURL = Bundle.main.url(forResource: "level\
(level)", withExtension: "txt") {
        if let levelContents = try? String(contentsOf:
levelFileURL) {
            var lines = levelContents.components(separatedBy:
"\n")
            lines.shuffle()

            for (index, line) in lines.enumerated() {
                let parts = line.components(separatedBy: ":" )
                let answer = parts[0]
                let clue = parts[1]
```

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

```
        clueString += "\(\index + 1). \(clue)\n"

        let solutionWord = answer.replacingOccurrences(of:
" | ", with: "")
            solutionString += "\(solutionWord.count) letters\n"
            solutions.append(solutionWord)

        let bits = answer.components(separatedBy: " | ")
        letterBits += bits
    }
}

}

// Now configure the buttons and labels
}
```

If you read all that and it made sense first time, great! You can skip over the next few paragraphs and jump to the bold text "All done!". If you read it and only some made sense, these next few paragraphs are for you.

First, the method uses **url(forResource:)** and **contentsOf** to find and load the level string from our app bundle. String interpolation is used to combine "level" with our current level number, making "level1.txt". The text is then split into an array by breaking on the **\n** character (that's line break, remember), then shuffled so that the game is a little different each time.

Our loop uses the **enumerated()** method to go through each item in the **lines** array. This is different to how we normally loop through an array, but **enumerated()** is helpful here because it tells us where each item was in the array so we can use that information in our clue string. In the code above, **enumerated()** will place the item into the **line** variable and its position into the **index** variable.

We already split the text up into lines based on finding **\n**, but now we split each line up based

on finding :, because each line has a colon and a space separating its letter groups from its clue. We put the first part of the split line into **answer** and the second part into **clue**, for easier referencing later.

Next comes our new string method call, **replacingOccurrences(of:)**. We're asking it to replace all instances of | with an empty string, so HA|UNT|ED will become HAUNTED. We then use **count** to get the length of our string then use that in combination with string interpolation to add to our solutions string.

Finally, we make yet another call to **components(separatedBy:)** to turn the string "HA|UNT|ED" into an array of three elements, then add all three to our **letterBits** array.

All done!

Time for some more code: our current **loadLevel()** method ends with a comment saying // Now configure the buttons and labels, and we're going to fill that in with the final part of the method. This needs to set the **cluesLabel** and **answersLabel** text, shuffle up our buttons, then assign letter groups to buttons.

Before I show you the actual code, there's a new string method to introduce: **trimmingCharacters(in:)** removes any letters you specify from the start and end of a string. It's most frequently used with the parameter **.whitespacesAndNewlines**, which trims spaces, tabs and line breaks, and we need exactly that here because our clue string and solutions string will both end up with an extra line break.

Put this code where the comment was:

```
cluesLabel.text =
clueString.trimmingCharacters(in: .whitespacesAndNewlines)
answersLabel.text =
solutionString.trimmingCharacters(in: .whitespacesAndNewlines)

letterBits.shuffle()
```

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

```
if letterBits.count == letterButtons.count {  
    for i in 0 ..< letterButtons.count {  
        letterButtons[i].setTitle(letterBits[i], for: .normal)  
    }  
}
```

That loop will count from 0 up to but not including the number of buttons, which is useful because we have as many items in our **letterBits** array as our **letterButtons** array. Looping from 0 to 19 (inclusive) means we can use the **i** variable to set a button to a letter group.

Before you run your program, make sure you add a call to **loadLevel()** in your **viewDidLoad()** method. Once that's done, you should be able to see all the buttons and clues configured correctly. Now all that's left is to let the player, well, *play*.

It's play time: `firstIndex(of:)` and `joined()`

We need to add three more methods to our view controller in order to bring this game to life: one to handle letter buttons being tapped, another to handle the current word being cleared, and a third to handle the current word being submitted. The first two are easiest, so let's get those done so we can get onto the serious stuff.

First, we already used the `addTarget()` method in `viewDidLoad()` to make all our letter buttons call the method `letterTapped()`, but right now it's empty. Please fill it in like this:

```
@objc func letterTapped(_ sender: UIButton) {
    guard let buttonTitle = sender.titleLabel?.text else
    { return }
    currentAnswer.text =
    currentAnswer.text?.appending(buttonTitle)
    activatedButtons.append(sender)
    sender.isHidden = true
}
```

That does four things:

1. It adds a safety check to read the title from the tapped button, or exit if it didn't have one for some reason.
2. Appends that button title to the player's current answer.
3. Appends the button to the `activatedButtons` array
4. Hides the button that was tapped.

The `activatedButtons` array is being used to hold all buttons that the player has tapped before submitting their answer. This is important because we're hiding each button as it is tapped, so if the user taps "Clear" we need to know which buttons are currently in use so we can re-show them. You already created an empty method for `clear` being tapped, so fill it in like this:

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

```
@objc func clearTapped(_ sender: UIButton) {
    currentAnswer.text = ""

    for btn in activatedButtons {
        btn.isHidden = false
    }

    activatedButtons.removeAll()
}
```

As you can see, this method removes the text from the current answer text field, unhides all the activated buttons, then removes all the items from the **activatedButtons** array.

That just leaves one very important method to fill in, and you already created its stub: the **submitTapped()** method for when the player taps the submit button.

This method will use **firstIndex(of:)** to search through the **solutions** array for an item and, if it finds it, tells us its position. Remember, the return value of **firstIndex(of:)** is optional so that in situations where nothing is found you won't get a value back – we need to unwrap its return value carefully.

If the user gets an answer correct, we're going to change the answers label so that rather than saying "7 LETTERS" it says "HAUNTED", so they know which ones they have solved already.

The way we're going to do this is hopefully easy enough to understand: **firstIndex(of:)** will tell us which solution matched their word, then we can use that position to find the matching clue text. All we need to do is split the answer label text up by **\n**, replace the line at the solution position with the solution itself, then re-join the answers label back together.

You've already learned how to use **components(separatedBy:)** to split text into an array, and now it's time to meet its counterpart: **joined(separator:)**. This makes an array into a single string, with each array element separated by the string specified in its parameter.

It's play time: `firstIndex(of:)` and `joined()`

Once that's done, we clear the current answer text field and add one to the score. If the score is evenly divisible by 7, we know they have found all seven words so we're going to show a **UIAlertController** that will prompt the user to go to the next level.

If you remember, Swift has a division remainder operator, `%`, that tells us what number remains when you divide one number evenly by another – that's perfect here.

That's all the parts explained, so here's the complete `submitTapped()` method:

```
@objc func submitTapped(_ sender: UIButton) {
    guard let answerText = currentAnswer.text else { return }

    if let solutionPosition = solutions.firstIndex(of:
answerText) {
        activatedButtons.removeAll()

        var splitAnswers =
answersLabel.text?.components(separatedBy: "\n")
        splitAnswers?[solutionPosition] = answerText
        answersLabel.text = splitAnswers?.joined(separator: "\n")

        currentAnswer.text = ""
        score += 1

        if score % 7 == 0 {
            let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Well done!",
message: "Are you ready for the next level?",
preferredStyle: .alert)
            ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Let's go!",
style: .default, handler: levelUp))
            present(ac, animated: true)
        }
    }
}
```

Project 8: 7 Swifty Words

}

We haven't written a **levelUp()** method yet, but it's not so hard. It needs to:

1. Add 1 to **level**.
2. Remove all items from the **solutions** array.
3. Call **loadLevel()** so that a new level file is loaded and shown.
4. Make sure all our letter buttons are visible.

Add this **levelUp()** method now:

```
func levelUp(action: UIAlertAction) {  
    level += 1  
    solutions.removeAll(keepingCapacity: true)  
  
    loadLevel()  
  
    for btn in letterButtons {  
        btn.isHidden = false  
    }  
}
```

As you can see, that code clears out the existing **solutions** array before refilling it inside **loadLevel()**. Then of course you'd need to create level2.txt, level3.txt and so on.

To get you started, I've made an example level2.txt for you inside my example files for this project – try adding that to the project and see what you think. Any further levels are for you to do – just make sure there's a total of 20 letter groups each time!

Property observers: didSet

There's one last thing to cover before this project is done, and it's both small and easy: property observers. You learned about these when we looked at the fundamentals of Swift, but now it's time to put them into action.

Right now we have a property called **score** that is set to 0 when the game is created and increments by one whenever an answer is found. But we don't do anything with that score, so our score label is never updated.

One solution to this problem is to use something like **scoreLabel.text = "Score: \(score)"** whenever the score value is changed, and that's perfectly fine to begin with. But what happens if you're changing the score from several places? You need to keep all the code synchronized, which is unpleasant.

Swift's solution is property observers, which let you execute code whenever a property has changed. To make them work, we use either **didSet** to execute code when a property has just been set, or **willSet** to execute code before a property has been set.

In our case, we want to add a property observer to our **score** property so that we update the score label whenever the score value was changed. So, change your **score** property to this:

```
var score = 0 {
    didSet {
        scoreLabel.text = "Score: \(score)"
    }
}
```

Using this method, any time **score** is changed by anyone, our score label will be updated. That's it, the project is done!

Wrap up

Yes, it took quite a lot of user interface code to get this project going, but I hope it has shown you that you can make some great games using just the UIKit tools you already know.

Building user interfaces programmatically is obviously much less visual than using storyboards, but the flip side is that everything is under your control – there are no connections happening behind the scenes.

Of course, at the same time as making another game, you've made several steps forward in your iOS development journey, this time learning about **addTarget()**, **enumerated()**, **joined()**, **replacingOccurrences()**, and more.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 8.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try extending this app to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Use the techniques you learned in project 2 to draw a thin gray line around the buttons view, to make it stand out from the rest of the UI.
2. If the user enters an incorrect guess, show an alert telling them they are wrong. You'll need to extend the **submitTapped()** method so that if **firstIndex(of:)** failed to find the guess you show the alert.
3. Try making the game also deduct points if the player makes an incorrect guess. Think about how you can move to the next level – we can't use a simple division remainder on the player's **score** any more, because they might have lost some points.

Wrap up

Project 9

Grand Central Dispatch

Learn how to run complex tasks in the background with GCD.

Setting up

In this technique project we're going to return to project 7 to solve a critical problem using one of the most important Apple frameworks available: Grand Central Dispatch, or GCD. I already mentioned the problem to you, but here's a recap from project 7:

By downloading data from the internet in `viewDidLoad()` our app will lock up until all the data has been transferred. There are solutions to this, but to avoid complexity they won't be covered until project 9.

We're going to solve this problem by using GCD, which will allow us to fetch the data without locking up the user interface. But be warned: even though GCD might seem easy at first, it opens up a new raft of problems, so be careful!

If you want to keep your previous work for reference, take a copy of project 7 now and call it project 9. Otherwise, just modify it in place.

Why is locking the UI bad?

The answer is two-fold. First, we used **Data**'s **contentsOf** to download data from the internet, which is what's known as a *blocking* call. That is, it blocks execution of any further code in the method until it has connected to the server and fully downloaded all the data.

Second, behind the scenes your app actually executes multiple sets of instructions at the same time, which allows it to take advantage of having multiple CPU cores. Each CPU can be doing something independently of the others, which hugely boosts your performance. These code execution processes are called *threads*, and come with a number of important provisos:

1. Threads execute the code you give them, they don't just randomly execute a few lines from **viewDidLoad()** each. This means by default your own code executes on only one CPU, because you haven't created threads for other CPUs to work on.
2. All user interface work must occur on the main thread, which is the initial thread your program is created on. If you try to execute code on a different thread, it might work, it might fail to work, it might cause unexpected results, or it might just crash.
3. You don't get to control when threads execute, or in what order. You create them and give them to the system to run, and the system handles executing them as best it can.
4. Because you don't control the execution order, you need to be extra vigilant in your code to ensure only one thread modifies your data at one time.

Points 1 and 2 explain why our call is bad: if all user interface code must run on the main thread, and we just blocked the main thread by using **Data**'s **contentsOf**, it causes the entire program to freeze – the user can touch the screen all they want, but nothing will happen. When the data finally downloads (or just fails), the program will unfreeze. This is a terrible experience, particularly when you consider that iPhones are frequently on poor-quality data connections.

Broadly speaking, if you're accessing any remote resource, you should be doing it on a *background thread* – i.e., any thread that is not the main thread. If you're executing any slow code, you should be doing it on a background thread. If you're executing any code that can be run in parallel – e.g. adding a filter to 100 photos – you should be doing it on multiple

Why is locking the UI bad?

background threads.

The power of GCD is that it takes away a lot of the hassle of creating and working with multiple threads, known as *multithreading*. You don't have to worry about creating and destroying threads, and you don't have to worry about ensuring you have created the optimal number of threads for the current device. GCD automatically creates threads for you, and executes your code on them in the most efficient way it can.

To fix our project, you need to learn three new GCD functions, but the most important one is called **async()** – it means "run the following code asynchronously," i.e. don't block (stop what I'm doing right now) while it's executing. Yes, that seems simple, but there's a sting in the tail: you need to use closures. Remember those? They are your best friend. No, really.

GCD 101: `async()`

We're going to use `async()` twice: once to push some code to a background thread, then once more to push code back to the main thread. This allows us to do any heavy lifting away from the user interface where we don't block things, but then update the user interface safely on the main thread – which is the only place it can be safely updated.

How you call `async()` informs the system where you want the code to run. GCD works with a system of queues, which are much like a real-world queue: they are First In, First Out (FIFO) blocks of code. What this means is that your GCD calls don't create threads to run in, they just get assigned to one of the existing threads for GCD to manage.

GCD creates for you a number of queues, and places tasks in those queues depending on how important you say they are. All are FIFO, meaning that each block of code will be taken off the queue in the order they were put in, but more than one code block can be executed at the same time so the finish order isn't guaranteed.

“How important” some code is depends on something called “quality of service”, or QoS, which decides what level of service this code should be given. Obviously at the top of this is the main queue, which runs on your main thread, and should be used to schedule any work that must update the user interface immediately even when that means blocking your program from doing anything else. But there are four background queues that you can use, each of which has their own QoS level set:

1. User Interactive: this is the highest priority background thread, and should be used when you want a background thread to do work that is important to keep your user interface working. This priority will ask the system to dedicate nearly all available CPU time to you to get the job done as quickly as possible.
2. User Initiated: this should be used to execute tasks requested by the user that they are now waiting for in order to continue using your app. It's not as important as user interactive work – i.e., if the user taps on buttons to do other stuff, that should be executed first – but it is important because you're keeping the user waiting.
3. The Utility queue: this should be used for long-running tasks that the user is aware of, but

not necessarily desperate for now. If the user has requested something and can happily leave it running while they do something else with your app, you should use Utility.

4. The Background queue: this is for long-running tasks that the user isn't actively aware of, or at least doesn't care about its progress or when it completes.

Those QoS queues affect the way the system prioritizes your work: User Interactive and User Initiated tasks will be executed as quickly as possible regardless of their effect on battery life, Utility tasks will be executed with a view to keeping power efficiency as high as possible without sacrificing too much performance, whereas Background tasks will be executed with power efficiency as its priority.

GCD automatically balances work so that higher priority queues are given more time than lower priority ones, even if that means temporarily delaying a background task because a user interactive task just came in.

There's also one more option, which is the default queue. This is prioritized between user-initiated and utility, and is a good general-purpose choice while you're learning.

Enough talking, time for some action: we're going to use `async()` to make all our loading code run in the background queue with default quality of service. It's actually only two lines of code different:

```
DispatchQueue.global().async { [weak self] in
```

...before the code you want to run in the background, then a closing brace at the end. If you wanted to specify the user-initiated quality of service rather than use the default queue – which is a good choice for this scenario – you would write this instead:

```
DispatchQueue.global(qos: .userInitiated).async { [weak self] in
```

The `async()` method takes one parameter, which is a closure to execute asynchronously. We're using trailing closure syntax, which removes an unneeded set of parentheses.

Project 9: Grand Central Dispatch

Because `async()` uses closures, we start with `[weak self] in` to make sure there aren't any accident strong reference cycles, but otherwise our loading code is the same as before. To help you place it correctly, here's how the loading code should look:

```
DispatchQueue.global(qos: .userInitiated).async { [weak self]  
in  
    if let url = URL(string: urlString) {  
        if let data = try? Data(contentsOf: url) {  
            self?.parse(json: data)  
            return  
        }  
    }  
}  
  
showError()
```

Note that because our code is now inside a closure, we need to prefix our method calls with `self?`. otherwise Swift complains.

If you want to try the other QoS queues, you could also use `.userInteractive`, `.utility` or `.background`.

Back to the main thread: `DispatchQueue.main`

With this change, our code is both better and worse. It's better because it no longer blocks the main thread while the JSON downloads from Whitehouse.gov. It's worse because we're pushing work to the background thread, *and any further code called in that work will also be on the background thread.*

This change also introduced some confusion: the `showError()` call will get called regardless of what the loading does. Yes, there's still a call to `return` in the code, but it now effectively does nothing – it's returning from the closure that was being executed asynchronously, not from the whole method.

The combination of these problems means that regardless of whether the download succeeds or fails, `showError()` will be called. And if the download succeeds, the JSON will be parsed on the background thread and the table view's `reloadData()` will be called on the background thread – and the error will be shown regardless.

Let's fix those problems, starting with the user interface background work. It's OK to parse the JSON on a background thread, but *it's never OK to do user interface work there.*

That's so important it bears repeating twice: **it's never OK to do user interface work on the background thread.**

If you're on a background thread and want to execute code on the main thread, you need to call `async()` again. This time, however, you do it on **DispatchQueue.main**, which is the main thread, rather than one of the global quality of service queues.

We *could* modify our code to have `async()` before every call to `showError()` and `parse()`, but that's both ugly and inefficient. Instead, it's better to place the `async()` call inside `showError()`, wrapping up the whole `UIAlertController` code, and also inside `parse()`, but only where the table view is being reloaded. The actual JSON parsing can happily stay on the background thread.

Project 9: Grand Central Dispatch

So, inside the **parse()** method find this code:

```
tableView.reloadData()
```

...and replace it with this new code, bearing in mind again the need for **[weak self] in** and **self?.** to keep away any risk of strong reference cycles:

```
DispatchQueue.main.async { [weak self] in
    self?.tableView.reloadData()
}
```

To stop **showError()** being called regardless of the result of our fetch call, we need to move it inside the call to **DispatchQueue.global()** in **viewDidLoad()**, like this:

```
DispatchQueue.global(qos: .userInitiated).async { [weak self in
    if let url = URL(string: urlString) {
        if let data = try? Data(contentsOf: url) {
            self?.parse(json: data)
            return
        }
    }
}

self?.showError()
}
```

Remember, we need to add **self?.** to the **showError()** call because it's inside a closure now.

But this has created a second problem: **showError()** creates and shows a **UIAlertController** – we now have user interface work happening on a background thread, which is always a bad idea.

So, we need to modify **showError()** to push that work back to the main thread, like this:

```
func showError() {
```

Back to the main thread: DispatchQueue.main

```
DispatchQueue.main.async { [weak self] in
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Loading error",
message: "There was a problem loading the feed; please check
your connection and try again.", preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
    self?.present(ac, animated: true)
}
```

The code is almost identical, it's just a matter of wrapping it up neatly to avoid any strong reference cycles. This code is easy enough to read and say for sure that there aren't any reference cycles, but there's no harm using **weak self** anyway!

At this point, this code is in a better place: we do all the slow work off the main thread, then push work back to the main thread when we want to do user interface work. This background/foreground bounce is common, and you'll see it again in later projects.

Easy GCD using `performSelector(inBackground:)`

There's another way of using GCD, and it's worth covering because it's a great deal easier in some specific circumstances. It's called `performSelector()`, and it has two interesting variants: `performSelector(inBackground:)` and `performSelector(onMainThread:)`.

Both of them work the same way: you pass it the name of a method to run, and `inBackground` will run it on a background thread, and `onMainThread` will run it on a foreground thread. You don't have to care about how it's organized; GCD takes care of the whole thing for you. If you intend to run a whole method on either a background thread or the main thread, these two are easiest.

For project 7, we can use this method to clear up the confusion with our `showError()` method. For example, we could refactor the fetching code into a `fetchJSON()` method that can then run in the background like this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    performSelector(inBackground: #selector(fetchJSON), with:
nil)
}

@objc func fetchJSON() {
    let urlString: String

    if navigationController?.tabBarItem.tag == 0 {
        urlString = "https://api.whitehouse.gov/v1/
petitions.json?limit=100"
    } else {
        urlString = "https://api.whitehouse.gov/v1/

```

Easy GCD using performSelector(inBackground:)

```
petitions.json?signatureCountFloor=10000&limit=100"
}

if let url = URL(string: urlString) {
    if let data = try? Data(contentsOf: url) {
        parse(json: data)
        return
    }
}

performSelector(onMainThread: #selector(showError), with:
nil, waitUntilDone: false)
}

func parse(json: Data) {
    let decoder = JSONDecoder()

    if let jsonPetitions = try? decoder.decode(Petitions.self,
from: json) {
        petitions = jsonPetitions.results
        tableView.performSelector(onMainThread:
#selector(UITableView.reloadData), with: nil, waitUntilDone:
false)
    }
}

@objc func showError() {
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Loading error", message:
"There was a problem loading the feed; please check your
connection and try again.", preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
    present(ac, animated: true)
}
```

Project 9: Grand Central Dispatch

}

As you can see, it makes your code easier because you don't need to worry about closure capturing, so we'll come back to this again in the future. Note: because **performSelector()** uses **#selector**, we need to mark both **fetchJSON()** and **showError()** with the **@objc** attribute.

Because the code is now much simpler, we can add an **else** block to our JSON decoding, like this:

```
if let jsonPetitions = try? decoder.decode(Petitions.self,  
from: json) {  
    petitions = jsonPetitions.results  
    tableView.performSelector(onMainThread:  
#selector(UITableView.reloadData), with: nil, waitUntilDone:  
false)  
} else {  
    performSelector(onMainThread: #selector(showError), with:  
nil, waitUntilDone: false)  
}
```

This refactored code also makes the **return** call inside **fetchJSON()** work as intended: the **showError()** method is never called when things go well, because the whole method is exited. What you choose depends on your project's needs, but I think it's much easier to understand the program flow using this final approach.

Wrap up

Although I've tried to simplify things as much as possible, GCD still isn't easy. That said, it's much easier than the alternatives: GCD automatically handles thread creation and management, automatically balances based on available system resources, and automatically factors in Quality of Service to ensure your code runs as efficiently as possible. The alternative is doing all that yourself!

There's a lot more we could cover (not least how to create your own queues!) but really you have more than enough to be going on with, and certainly more than enough to complete the rest of this series. We'll be using GCD again, so it might help to keep this reference close to hand!

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 9.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Modify project 1 so that loading the list of NSSL images from our bundle happens in the background. Make sure you call **reloadData()** on the table view once loading has finished!
2. Modify project 8 so that loading and parsing a level takes place in the background. Once you're done, make sure you update the UI on the main thread!
3. Modify project 7 so that your filtering code takes place in the background. This filtering code was added in one of the challenges for the project, so hopefully you didn't skip it!

Project 10

Names to Faces

Get started with UICollectionView and the photo library.

Setting up

This is a fun, simple and useful project that will let you create an app to help store names of people you've met. If you're a frequent traveller, or perhaps just bad at putting names to faces, this project will be perfect for you.

And yes, you'll be learning lots along the way: this time you'll meet **UICollectionViewController**, **UIImagePickerController**, **Data**, and **UUID**. Plus you'll get to do more with your old pals **CALayer**, **UIAlertController**, and closures. But above all, you're going to learn how to make a new data type from scratch for the first time.

Create a new Single View App project in Xcode, call it Project10, then save it somewhere. This should be second nature to you by now – you're becoming a veteran!

Designing UICollectionView cells

We've used **UITableViewController** a few times so far, but this time we're going to use **UICollectionViewController** instead. The procedure is quite similar, and starts by opening ViewController.swift and making it inherit from **UICollectionViewController** instead.

So, find this line:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {
```

And change it to this:

```
class ViewController: UICollectionViewController {
```

Now open Main.storyboard in Interface Builder and delete the existing view controller. In its place, drag out a Collection View Controller (*not* a regular collection view!), then mark it as the initial view controller and embed it inside a navigation controller. Make sure you also use the identity inspector to change its class to "ViewController" so that it points to our class in code.

Use the document outline to select the collection view inside the collection view controller, then go to the size inspector and set Cell Size to have the width 140 and height 180. Now set the section insets for top, bottom, left and right to all be 10.

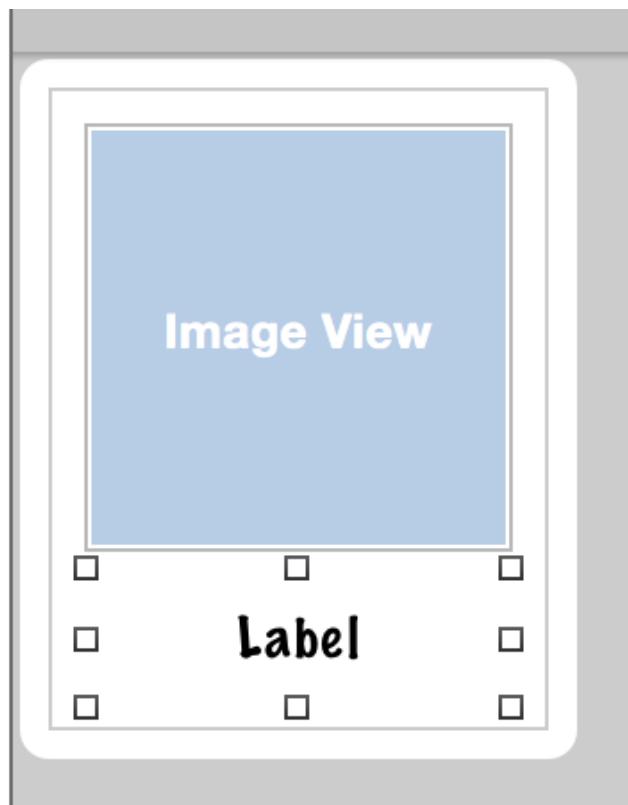
Collection views are extremely similar to table views, with the exception that they display as grids rather than as simple rows. But while the display is different, the underlying method calls are so similar that you could probably dive right in yourself if you wanted! (Don't worry, though: I'll walk you through it.)

Our collection view already has one prototype cell, which is the empty square you'll see in the top-left corner. This works the same as with table views – you'll remember we changed the initial cell in project 7 so that we could add subtitles.

Select that collection view cell now, then go to the attributes inspector: change its Background

from "Default" (transparent) to white and give it the identifier "Person" so that we can reference it in code. Now place a **UIImageView** in there, with X:10, Y:10, width 120 and height 120. We'll be using this to show pictures of people's faces.

Place a **UILabel** in there too, with X:10, Y:134, width 120 and height 40. In the attributes inspector, change the label's font by clicking the T button and choosing "Custom" for font, "Marker Felt" for family, and "Thin" for style. Give it the font size 16, which is 1 smaller than the default, then set its alignment to be centered and its number of lines property to be 2.



So far this has been fairly usual storyboard work, but now we're going to do something we've never done before: create a custom class for our cell. This is needed because our collection view cell has two views that we created – the image view and the label – and we need a way to manipulate this in code. The shortcut way would be to give them unique tags and give them variables when the app runs, but we're going to do it The Proper Way this time so you can learn.

Project 10: Names to Faces

Go to the File menu and choose New > File, then select iOS > Source > Cocoa Touch Class and click Next. You'll be asked to fill in two text fields: where it says "Subclass of" you should enter "UICollectionViewCell", and where it says "Class" enter "PersonCell". Click Next then Create, and Xcode will create a new class called **PersonCell** that inherits from **UICollectionViewCell**.

This new class needs to be able to represent the collection view layout we just defined in Interface Builder, so it just needs two outlets. Give the class these two properties:

```
@IBOutlet var imageView: UIImageView!  
@IBOutlet var name: UILabel!
```

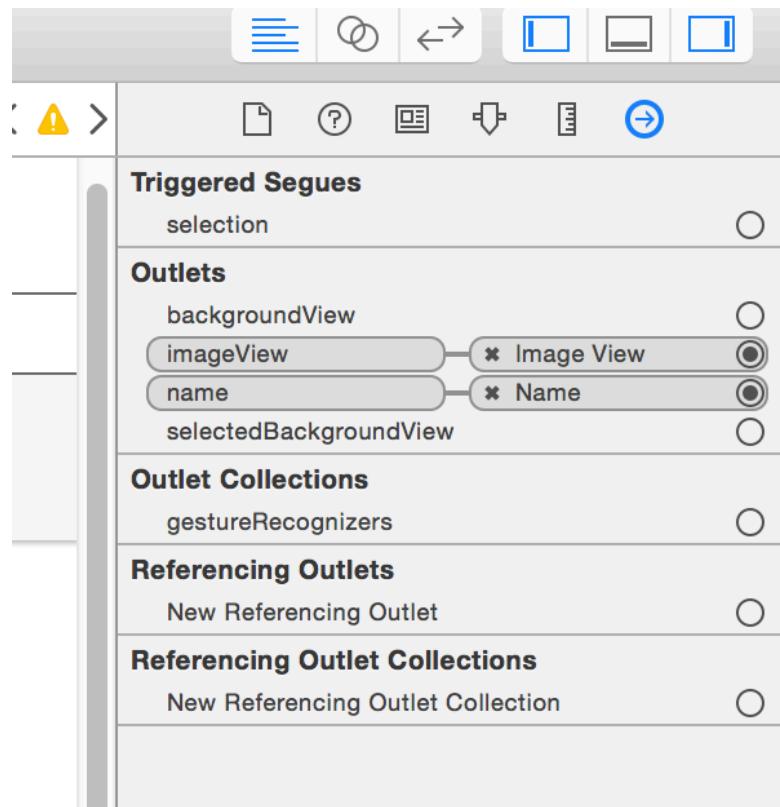
Now go back to Interface Builder and select the collection view cell in the document outline. Select the identity inspector (Cmd+Alt+3) and you'll see next to Class the word "UICollectionViewCell" in gray text. That's telling us that the cell is its default class type.

We want to use our custom class here, so enter "PersonCell" and hit return. You'll see that "PersonCell" now appears in the document outline.

Now that Interface Builder knows that the cell is actually a **PersonCell**, we can connect its outlets. Go to the connections inspector (it's the last one, so Alt+Cmd+6) with the cell selected and you'll see **imageView** and **name** in there, both with empty circles to their right. That empty circle has exactly the same meaning as when you saw it with outlets in code: there is no connection between the storyboard and code for this outlet.

To make a connection from the connections inspector, just click on the empty circle next to **imageView** and drag a line over the view you want to connect. In our case, that means dragging over the image view in our custom cell. Now connect **name** to the label, and you're done with the storyboard.

Designing UICollectionView cells



UICollectionView data sources

We've now modified the user interface so that it considers **ViewController** to be a collection view controller, but we haven't implemented any of the data source methods to make that work. This works just like table views, so we get questions like "how many items are there?" and "what's in item number 1?" that we need to provide sensible answers for.

To begin with, let's put together the most basic implementation that allows our app to work. Normally this would be straightforward, but here we have a small complication: when we call **dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:for:)** we'll be sent back a regular **UICollectionViewCell** rather than our custom **PersonCell** type.

We can fix that we'll add a conditional typecast, but that adds a *second* problem: what do we do if our typecast fails? That is, what if we expected to get a **PersonCell** but actually got back a regular **UICollectionViewCell** instead? If this happens it means something is fundamentally broken in our app – we screwed up in the storyboard, probably. As a result, we need to get out immediately; there's no point trying to make our app limp onwards when something is really broken.

So, we're going to be using a new function called **fatalError()**. When called this will unconditionally make your app crash – it will die immediately, and print out any message you provide to it. That might sound awful, but:

1. You should only call this when things really are bad and you don't want to continue – it's really only a sense check to make sure everything is as we expect.
2. Swift knows that **fatalError()** always causes a crash, so we can it to escape from a method that has a return value *without sending anything back*. This makes it really convenient to use in places like our current scenario.

It's best if you see **fatalError()** in some real code, so add these two methods now:

```
override func collectionView(_ collectionView:  
UICollectionView, numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
```

```

    return 10
}

override func collectionView(_ collectionView:
    UICollectionView, cellForItemAt indexPath: IndexPath) ->
    UICollectionViewCell {
    guard let cell =
        collectionView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:
            "Person", for: indexPath) as? PersonCell else {
        // we failed to get a PersonCell – bail out!
        fatalError("Unable to dequeue PersonCell.")
    }

    // if we're still here it means we got a PersonCell, so we
    can return it
    return cell
}

```

We haven't looked at any of this code before, so I want to pull it apart in detail before continuing:

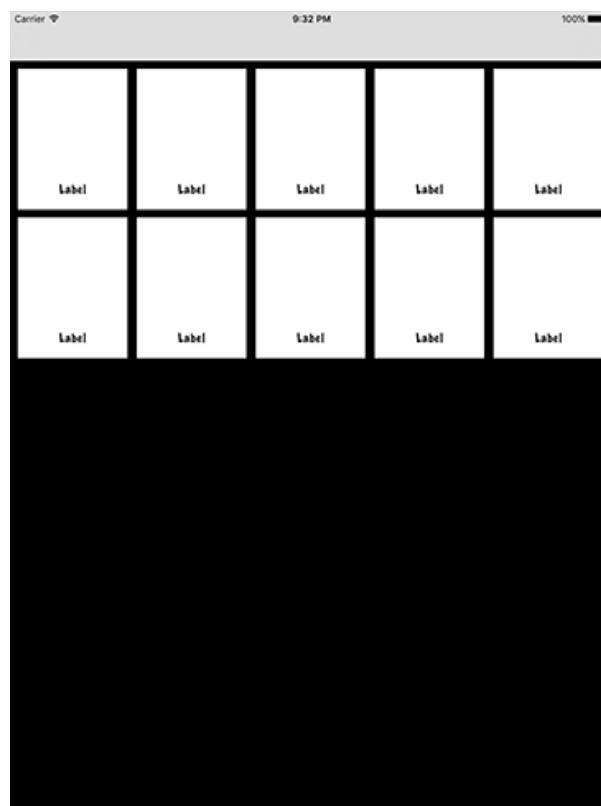
- **collectionView(_:numberOfItemsInSection:)** This must return an integer, and tells the collection view how many items you want to show in its grid. I've returned 10 from this method, but soon we'll switch to using an array.
- **collectionView(_:cellForItemAt:)** This must return an object of type **UICollectionViewCell**. We already designed a prototype in Interface Builder, and configured the **PersonCell** class for it, so we need to create and return one of these.
- **dequeueReusableCell(withReuseIdentifier:for:)** This creates a collection view cell using the reuse identified we specified, in this case "Person" because that was what we typed into Interface Builder earlier. But just like table views, this method will automatically try to reuse collection view cells, so as soon as a cell scrolls out of view it can be recycled so that we don't have to keep creating new ones.

Project 10: Names to Faces

Note that we need to typecast our collection view cell as a **PersonCell** because we'll soon want to access its **imageView** and **name** outlets.

These two new methods both come from collection views, but I think you'll find them both remarkably similar to the table view methods we've been using so far – you can go back and open project 1 again to see just how similar!

Press Cmd+R to run your project now, and you'll see the beginning of things start to come together: the prototype cell you designed in Interface Builder will appear 10 times, and you can scroll up and down to view them all. As you'll see, you can fit two cells across the screen, which is what makes the collection view different to the table view. Plus, if you rotate to landscape you'll see it automatically (and beautifully) animates the movement of cells so they take up the full width.



Importing photos with UIImagePickerController

There are lots of collection view events to handle when the user interacts with a cell, but we'll come back to that later. For now, let's look at how to import pictures using **UIImagePickerController**. This new class is designed to let users select an image from their camera to import into an app. When you first create a **UIImagePickerController**, iOS will automatically ask the user whether the app can access their photos.

First, we need to create a button that lets users add people to the app. This is as simple as putting the following into the **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
navigationItem.leftBarButtonItem =
UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target: self,
action: #selector(addNewPerson))
```

The **addNewPerson()** method is where we need to use the **UIImagePickerController**, but it's so easy to do I'm just going to show you the code:

```
@objc func addNewPerson() {
    let picker = UIImagePickerController()
    picker.allowsEditing = true
    picker.delegate = self
    present(picker, animated: true)
}
```

There are three interesting things in there:

1. We set the **allowsEditing** property to be true, which allows the user to crop the picture they select.
2. When you set **self** as the delegate, you'll need to conform not only to the **UIImagePickerControllerDelegate** protocol, but also the

Project 10: Names to Faces

UINavigationControllerDelegate protocol.

3. The whole method is being called from Objective-C code using **#selector**, so we need to use the **@objc** attribute. This is the last time I'll be repeating this, but hopefully you're mentally always expecting **#selector** to be paired with **@objc**.

In ViewController.swift, modify this line:

```
class ViewController: UICollectionViewController {
```

To this:

```
class ViewController: UICollectionViewController,  
UIImagePickerControllerDelegate, UINavigationControllerDelegate  
{
```

That tells Swift you promise your class supports all the functionality required by the two protocols **UIImagePickerControllerDelegate** and **UINavigationControllerDelegate**. The first of those protocols is useful, telling us when the user either selected a picture or cancelled the picker. The second, **UINavigationControllerDelegate**, really is quite pointless here, so don't worry about it beyond just modifying your class declaration to include the protocol.

When you conform to the **UIImagePickerControllerDelegate** protocol, you don't need to add any methods because both are optional. But they aren't really – they are marked optional for whatever reason, but your code isn't much good unless you implement at least one of them!

The delegate method we care about is **imagePickerController(_didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo:)**, which returns when the user selected an image and it's being returned to you. This method needs to do several things:

- Extract the image from the dictionary that is passed as a parameter.
- Generate a unique filename for it.
- Convert it to a JPEG, then write that JPEG to disk.
- Dismiss the view controller.

To make all this work you're going to need to learn a few new things.

First, it's very common for Apple to send you a dictionary of several pieces of information as a method parameter. This can be hard to work with sometimes because you need to know the names of the keys in the dictionary in order to be able to pick out the values, but you'll get the hang of it over time.

This dictionary parameter will contain one of two keys: **.editedImage** (the image that was edited) or **.originalImage**, but in our case it should only ever be the former unless you change the **allowsEditing** property.

The problem is, we don't know if this value exists as a **UIImage**, so we can't just extract it. Instead, we need to use an optional method of typecasting, **as?**, along with **if let**. Using this method, we can be sure we always get the right thing out.

Second, we need to generate a unique filename for every image we import. This is so that we can copy it to our app's space on the disk without overwriting anything, and if the user ever deletes the picture from their photo library we still have our copy. We're going to use a new type for this, called **UUID**, which generates a Universally Unique Identifier and is perfect for a random filename.

Third, once we have the image, we need to write it to disk. You're going to need to learn two new pieces of code: **UIImage** has a **jpegData()** to convert it to a **Data** object in JPEG image format, and there's a method on **Data** called **write(to:)** that, well, writes its data to disk. We used **Data** earlier, but as a reminder it's a relatively simple data type that can hold any type of binary type – image data, zip file data, movie data, and so on.

Writing information to disk is easy enough, but finding where to put it is tricky. All apps that are installed have a directory called Documents where you can save private information for the app, and it's also automatically synchronized with iCloud. The problem is, it's not obvious how to find that directory, so I have a method I use called **getDocumentsDirectory()** that does exactly that – you don't need to understand how it works, but you do need to copy it into your

Project 10: Names to Faces

code.

With all that in mind, here are the new methods:

```
func imagePickerController(_ picker: UIImagePickerController,
didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo info:
[UIImagePickerController.InfoKey : Any]) {
    guard let image = info[.editedImage] as? UIImage else
{ return }

    let imageName = UUID().uuidString
    let imagePath =
getDocumentsDirectory().appendingPathComponent(imageName)

    if let jpegData = image.jpegData(compressionQuality: 0.8) {
        try? jpegData.write(to: imagePath)
    }

    dismiss(animated: true)
}

func getDocumentsDirectory() -> URL {
    let paths =
FileManager.default.urls(for: .documentDirectory,
in: .userDomainMask)
    return paths[0]
}
```

Again, it doesn't matter how `getDocumentsDirectory()` works, but if you're curious: the first parameter of `FileManager.default.urls` asks for the documents directory, and its second parameter adds that we want the path to be relative to the user's home directory. This returns an array that nearly always contains only one thing: the user's documents directory. So, we pull out the first element and return it.

Now onto the code that matters: as you can see I've used **guard** to pull out and typecast the image from the image picker, because if that fails we want to exit the method immediately. We then create an **UUID** object, and use its **uuidString** property to extract the unique identifier as a string data type.

The code then creates a new constant, **imagePath**, which takes the **URL** result of **getDocumentsDirectory()** and calls a new method on it: **AppendingPathComponent()**. This is used when working with file paths, and adds one string (**imageName** in our case) to a path, including whatever path separator is used on the platform.

Now that we have a **UIImage** containing an image and a path where we want to save it, we need to convert the **UIImage** to a **Data** object so it can be saved. To do that, we use the **jpegData()** method, which takes one parameter: a quality value between 0 and 1, where 1 is “maximum quality”.

Once we have a **Data** object containing our JPEG data, we just need to unwrap it safely then write it to the file name we made earlier. That's done using the **write(to:)** method, which takes a filename as its parameter.

So: users can pick an image, and we'll save it to disk. But this still doesn't do anything – you won't see the picture in the app, because we aren't doing anything with it beyond writing it to disk. To fix that, we need to create a custom class to hold custom data...

Custom subclasses of NSObject

You already created your first custom class when you created the collection view cell. But this time we're going to do something very simple: we're going to create a class to hold some data for our app. So far you've seen how we can create arrays of strings by using **[String]**, but what if we want to hold an array of *people*?

Well, the solution is to create a custom class. Create a new file and choose Cocoa Touch Class. Click Next and name the class "Person", type "NSObject" for "Subclass of", then click Next and Create to create the file.

NSObject is what's called a *universal base class* for all Cocoa Touch classes. That means all UIKit classes ultimately come from **NSObject**, including all of UIKit. You don't have to inherit from **NSObject** in Swift, but you did in Objective-C and in fact there are some behaviors you can only have if you do inherit from it. More on that in project 12, but for now just make sure you inherit from **NSObject**.

We're going to add two properties to our class: a name and a photo for every person. So, add this inside the **Person** definition:

```
var name: String  
var image: String
```

When you do that, you'll see errors: "Class 'Person' has no initializers." Swift is telling us that we aren't satisfying one of its core rules: objects of type **String** can't be empty. Remember, **String!** and **String?** can both be **nil**, but plain old **String** can't – it must have a value. Without an initializer, it means the object will be created and these two variables won't have values, so you're breaking the rules.

To fix this problem, we need to create an **init()** method that accepts two parameters, one for the name and one for the image. We'll then save that to the object so that both variables have a value, and Swift is happy.

```
init(name: String, image: String) {
```

```

    self.name = name
    self.image = image
}

```

Our custom class is done; it's just a simple data store for now. If you're the curious type, you might wonder why I used a class here rather than a struct. This question is even more pressing once you know that structs have an automatic initializer method made for them that looks exactly like ours. Well, the answer is: you'll have to wait and see. All will become clear in project 12!

With that custom class done, we can start to make our project much more useful: every time a picture is imported, we can create a **Person** object for it and add it to an array to be shown in the collection view.

So, go back to ViewController.swift, and add this declaration for a new array:

```
var people = [Person]()
```

Every time we add a new person, we need to create a new **Person** object with their details. This is as easy as modifying our initial image picker success method so that it creates a **Person** object, adds it to our **people** array, then reloads the collection view. Put this code before the call to **dismiss()**:

```

let person = Person(name: "Unknown", image: imageName)
people.append(person)
collectionView.reloadData()

```

That stores the image name in the **Person** object and gives them a default name of "Unknown", before reloading the collection view.

Can you spot the problem? If not, that's OK, but you should be able to spot it if you run the program.

The problem is that although we've added the new person to our array and reloaded the

Project 10: Names to Faces

collection view, we aren't actually using the **people** array with the collection view – we just return 10 for the number of items and create an empty collection view cell for each one! Let's fix that...

Connecting up the people

We need to make three final changes to this project in order to finish: show the correct number of items, show the correct information inside each cell, then make it so that when users tap a picture they can set a person's name.

Those methods are all increasingly difficult, so we'll start with the first one. Right now, your collection view's **numberOfItemsInSection** method just has **return 10** in there, so you'll see 10 items regardless of how many people are in your array. This is easily fixed:

```
override func collectionView(_ collectionView:  
UICollectionView, numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {  
    return people.count  
}
```

Next, we need to update the collection view's **cellForItemAt** method so that it configures each **PersonCell** cell to have the correct name and image of the person in that position in the array. This takes a few steps:

- Pull out the person from the **people** array at the correct position.
- Set the **name** label to the person's name.
- Create a **UIImage** from the person's image filename, adding it to the value from **getDocumentsDirectory()** so that we have a full path for the image.

We're also going to use this opportunity to give the image views a border and slightly rounded corners, then give the whole cell matching rounded corners, to make it all look a bit more interesting. This is all done using **CALayer**, so that means we need to convert the **UIColor** to a **CGColor**. Anyway, here's the new code:

```
override func collectionView(_ collectionView:  
UICollectionView, cellForItemAt indexPath: IndexPath) ->  
UICollectionViewCell {  
    guard let cell =
```

Project 10: Names to Faces

```
collectionView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:  
    "Person", for: indexPath) as? PersonCell else {  
    fatalError("Unable to dequeue PersonCell.")  
}  
  
let person = people[indexPath.item]  
  
cell.name.text = person.name  
  
let path =  
getDocumentsDirectory().appendingPathComponent(person.image)  
cell.imageView.image = UIImage(contentsOfFile: path.path)  
  
cell.imageView.layer.borderColor = UIColor(white: 0, alpha:  
0.3).cgColor  
cell.imageView.layer.borderWidth = 2  
cell.imageView.layer.cornerRadius = 3  
cell.layer.cornerRadius = 7  
  
return cell  
}
```

There are three new things in there.

First, notice how I've used **indexPath.item** rather than **indexPath.row**, because collection views don't really think in terms of rows.

Second, that code sets the **cornerRadius** property, which rounds the corners of a **CALayer** – or in our case the **UIImageView** being drawn by the **CALayer**.

Third, I snuck in a new **UIColor** initializer: **UIColor(white:alpha:)**. This is useful when you only want grayscale colors.

With that done, the app works: you can run it with Cmd+R, import photos, and admire the way they all appear correctly in the app. But don't get your hopes up, because we're not done yet – you still can't assign names to people!

For this last part of the project, we're going to recap how to add text fields to a **UIAlertController**, just like you did in project 5. All of the code is old, but I'm going to go over it again to make sure you fully understand.

First, the delegate method we're going to implement is the collection view's **didSelectItemAt** method, which is triggered when the user taps a cell. This method needs to pull out the **Person** object at the array index that was tapped, then show a **UIAlertController** asking users to rename the person.

Adding a text field to an alert controller is done with the **addTextField()** method. We'll also need to add two actions: one to cancel the alert, and one to save the change. To save the changes, we need to add a closure that pulls out the text field value and assigns it to the person's **name** property, then we'll also need to reload the collection view to reflect the change.

That's it! The only thing that's new, and it's hardly new at all, is the setting of the **name** property. Put this new method into your class:

```
override func collectionView(_ collectionView:  
UICollectionView, didSelectItemAt indexPath: IndexPath) {  
    let person = people[indexPath.item]  
  
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Rename person", message:  
nil, preferredStyle: .alert)  
    ac.addTextField()  
  
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Cancel", style: .cancel))  
  
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))  
{ [weak self, weak ac] _ in
```

Project 10: Names to Faces

```
        guard let newName = ac?.textFields?[0].text else
{ return }
    person.name = newName

    self?.collectionView.reloadData()
}

present(ac, animated: true)
}
```

Finally, the project is complete: you can import photos of people, then tap on them to rename. Well done!

Wrap up

UICollectionView and **UITableView** are the most common ways of showing lots of information in iOS, and you now know how to use both. You should be able to go back to project 1 and recognize a lot of very similar code, and that's by intention – Apple has made it easy to learn both view types by learning either one.

You've also learned another batch of iOS development, this time **UIImagePickerController**, **UUID**, custom classes and more. You might not realize it yet, but you have enough knowledge now to make a huge range of apps!

Before we finish, you may have spotted one problem with this app: if you quit the app and relaunch, it hasn't remembered the people you added. Worse, the JPEGs are still stored on the disk, so your app takes up more and more room without having anything to show for it!

This is quite intentional, and something we'll return to fix in project 12. Before then, let's take a look at another game...

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 10.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Add a second **UIAlertController** that gets shown when the user taps a picture, asking them whether they want to rename the person or delete them.
2. Try using **picker.sourceType = .camera** when creating your image picker, which will tell

Project 10: Names to Faces

it to create a new image by taking a photo. This is only available on devices (*not on the simulator*) so you might want to check the return value of

UIImagePickerController.isSourceTypeAvailable() before trying to use it!

3. Modify project 1 so that it uses a collection view controller rather than a table view controller. I recommend you keep a copy of your original table view controller code so you can refer back to it later on.

Project 11

Pachinko

Dive into SpriteKit to try your hand at fast 2D games.

Setting up

This project is going to feel like a bit of a reset for you, because we're going to go back to basics. This isn't because I like repeating myself, but instead because you're going to learn a wholly new technology called SpriteKit.

So far, everything you've made has been based on UIKit, Apple's user interface toolkit for iOS. We've made several games with it, and it really is very powerful, but even UIKit has its limits – and 2D games aren't its strong suit.

A much better solution is called SpriteKit, and it's Apple's fast and easy toolkit designed specifically for 2D games. It includes sprites, fonts, physics, particle effects and more, and it's built into every iOS device. What's not to like?

So, this is going to be a long tutorial because you're going to learn an awful lot. To help keep you sane, I've tried to make the project as iterative as possible. That means we'll make a small change and discuss the results, then make another small change and discuss the results, until the project is finished.

And what are we building? Well, we're going to produce a game similar to pachinko, although a lot of people know it by the name "Peggle." To get started, create a new project in Xcode and choose Game. Name it Project11, set its Game Technology to be SpriteKit, then make sure all the checkboxes are deselected before saving it somewhere.

Before we start, please configure your project so that it runs only for iPads in landscape mode.

Warning: When working with SpriteKit projects, I strongly recommend you use a real device for testing your projects because the iPad simulator is extraordinarily slow for games. If you don't have a device, please choose the lowest-spec iPad simulator available to you instead, but be prepared for dreadful performance that is not at all indicative of a real device.

Falling boxes: SKSpriteNode, UITouch, SKPhysicsBody

The first thing you should do is run your game and see what a default SpriteKit template game looks like. You should see a large gray window saying "Hello, World!", and when you tap two spinning boxes should appear. In the bottom right is a node count (how many things are on screen right now) and a frame rate. You're aiming for 60 frames per second all the time, if possible.

From the project navigator please find and open GameScene.swift, and replace its entire contents with this:

```
import SpriteKit

class GameScene: SKScene {
    override func didMove(to view: SKView) {
    }

    override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    }
}
```

That removes almost all the code, because it's just not needed.

SpriteKit's equivalent of Interface Builder is called the Scene Editor, and it's where that big "Hello World" label is. Select GameScene.sks to open the scene editor now, then click on the "Hello World" label and delete it.

While you're in the scene editor, there's one more change I'd like to make, and it will help simplify our positioning slightly. With the scene selected, look in the attributes inspector (note: its icon is different here!) for Anchor Point. This determines what coordinates SpriteKit uses to

Project 11: Pachinko

position children and it's X:0.5 Y:0.5 by default.

This is *different* to UIKit: it means “position me based on my center”, whereas UIKit positions things based on their top-left corner. This is usually fine, but when working with the main scene it's easiest to set this value to X:0 Y:0. So, please make that change now – anchor point should 0 for both X and Y.

Note: SpriteKit considers Y:0 to be the bottom of the screen whereas UIKit considers it to be the top – hurray for uniformity!

I'd also like you to change the size of the scene, which is just above the anchor point. This is probably 750x1334 by default; please change it to 1024x768 to match iPad landscape size.

Tip: The 9.7-inch iPad is 1024 points wide and 768 high, but the 10.5-inch and 12.9-inch are both larger. Helpfully, SpriteKit takes care of this for us: we just asked for a 1024x768 canvas and it will give us one regardless of what device our game runs on – nice!

The last change I'd like you to make is to select Actions.sks and tap your backspace button to delete it – select “Move to Trash” when Xcode asks you what you want to do.

All these changes have effectively cleaned the project, resetting it back to a vanilla state that we can build on.

With the template stuff deleted, I'd like you to import the assets for the project. If you haven't already downloaded the code for this project, please do so now. You should copy the entire Content folder from the example project into your own, making sure the "Copy items if needed" box is checked.

Let's kick off this project by ditching the plain background and replacing it with a picture. If you want to place an image in your game, the class to use is called **SKSpriteNode**, and it can load any picture from your app bundle just like **UIImage**.

To place a background image, we need to load the file called background.jpg, then position it in the center of the screen. Remember, unlike UIKit SpriteKit positions things based on their center – i.e., the point 0,0 refers to the horizontal and vertical center of a node. And also unlike

UIKit, SpriteKit's Y axis starts at the bottom edge, so a higher Y number places a node higher on the screen. So, to place the background image in the center of a landscape iPad, we need to place it at the position X:512, Y:384.

We're going to do two more things, both of which are only needed for this background. First, we're going to give it the blend mode `.replace`. Blend modes determine how a node is drawn, and SpriteKit gives you many options. The `.replace` option means "just draw it, ignoring any alpha values," which makes it fast for things without gaps such as our background. We're also going to give the background a **zPosition** of -1, which in our game means "draw this behind everything else."

To add any node to the current screen, you use the **addChild()** method. As you might expect, SpriteKit doesn't use **UIViewController** like our UIKit apps have done. Yes, there is a view controller in your project, but it's there to host your SpriteKit game. The equivalent of screens in SpriteKit are called *scenes*.

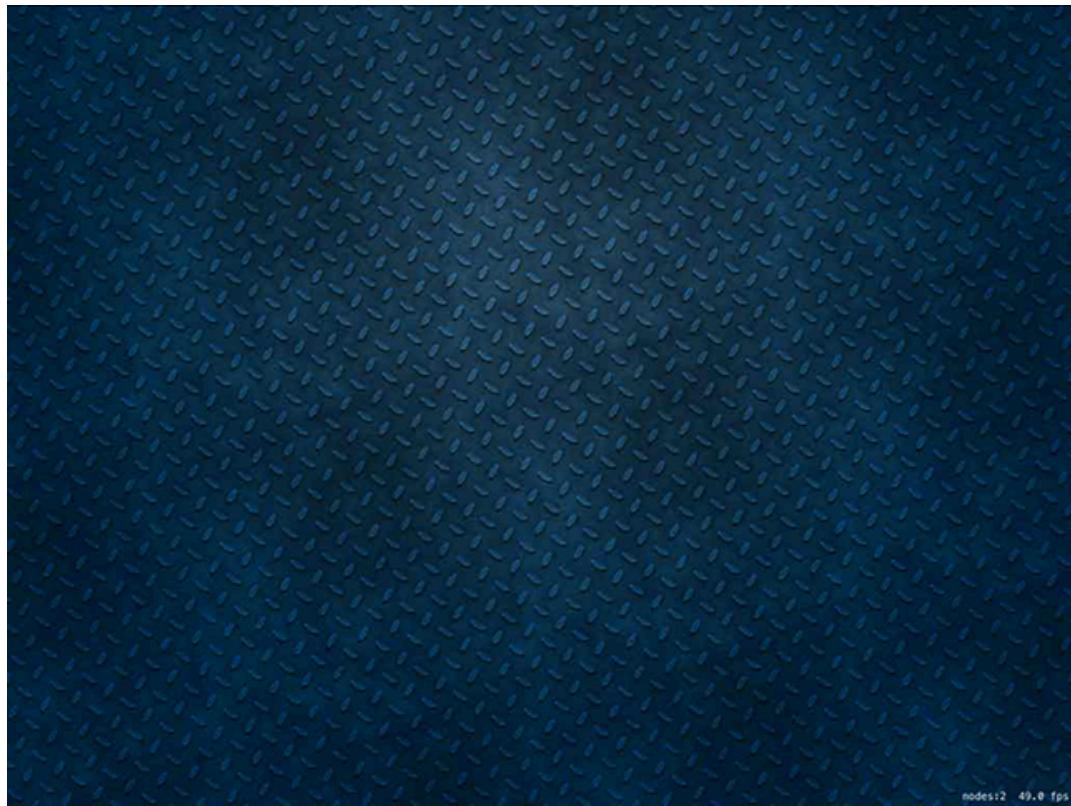
When you add a node to your scene, it becomes part of the node tree. Using **addChild()** you can add nodes to other nodes to make a more complicated tree, but in this game we're going to keep it simple.

Add this code to the **didMove(to:)** method, which is sort of the equivalent of SpriteKit's **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
let background = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "background.jpg")
background.position = CGPoint(x: 512, y: 384)
background.blendMode = .replace
background.zPosition = -1
addChild(background)
```

If you run the app now you'll see a dark blue image for the background rather than plain gray – hardly a massive improvement, but this is just the beginning.

Project 11: Pachinko



Let's do something a bit more interesting, so add this to the **touchesBegan()** method:

```
if let touch = touches.first {  
    let location = touch.location(in: self)  
    let box = SKSpriteNode(color: UIColor.red, size:  
CGSize(width: 64, height: 64))  
    box.position = location  
    addChild(box)  
}
```

We haven't used **touchesBegan()** before, so the first two lines needs to be explained. This method gets called (in UIKit and SpriteKit) whenever someone starts touching their device. It's possible they started touching with multiple fingers at the same time, so we get passed a new data type called **Set**. This is just like an array, except each object can appear only once.

We want to know where the screen was touched, so we use a conditional typecast plus **if let** to

Falling boxes: SKSpriteNode, UITouch, SKPhysicsBody

pull out any of the screen touches from the **touches** set, then use its **location(in:)** method to find out where the screen was touched in relation to **self** - i.e., the game scene. **UITouch** is a UIKit class that is also used in SpriteKit, and provides information about a touch such as its position and when it happened.

The third line is also new, but it's still **SKSpriteNode**. We're just writing some example code for now, so this line generates a node filled with a color (red) at a size (64x64). The **CGSize** struct is new, but also simple: it just holds a width and a height in a single structure.

The code sets the new box's position to be where the tap happened, then adds it to the scene. No more talk: press Cmd+R to make sure this all works, then tap around the screen to make boxes appear.

OK, I admit: that's still quite boring. Let's make it even more interesting – are you ready to see quite how powerful SpriteKit is? Just before setting the position of our new box, add this line:

```
box.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(rectangleOf: CGSize(width: 64,  
height: 64))
```

And just before the end of **didMove(to:)**, add this:

```
physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(edgeLoopFrom: frame)
```

The first line of code adds a physics body to the box that is a rectangle of the same size as the box. The second line of code adds a physics body to the whole scene that is a line on each edge, effectively acting like a container for the scene.

If you run the scene now, I hope you can't help but be impressed: you can tap on the screen to create boxes, but now they'll fall to the ground and bounce off. They'll also stack up as you tap more often, and fall over realistically if your aim isn't spot on.

This is the power of SpriteKit: it's so fast and easy to make games that there really is nothing holding you back. But we're just getting warmed up!

Bouncing balls: circleOfRadius

You're not going to get rich out of red rectangles, so let's use balls instead. Take the box code out (everything after `let location =` in `touchesBegan()`) and replace it with this instead:

```
let ball = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "ballRed")
ball.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:
    ball.size.width / 2.0)
ball.physicsBody?.restitution = 0.4
ball.position = location
addChild(ball)
```

There are two new things there. First, we're using the `circleOfRadius` initializer for `SKPhysicsBody` to add circular physics to this ball, because using rectangles would look strange. Second, we're giving the ball's physics body a restitution (bounciness) level of 0.4, where values are from 0 to 1.

Note: the physics body of a node is optional, because it might not exist. We know it exists because we just created it, so it's not uncommon to see `physicsBody!` to force unwrap the optional.

When you run the game now, you'll be able to tap on the screen to drop bouncy balls. It's fractionally more interesting, but let's face it: this is still a dreadful game.

To make it more exciting we're going to add something for the balls to bounce off. In the Content folder I provided you with is a picture called "bouncer.png", so we're going to place that in the game now.

Just before the end of the `didMove(to:)` method, add this:

```
let bouncer = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "bouncer")
bouncer.position = CGPoint(x: 512, y: 0)
bouncer.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:
    bouncer.size.width / 2.0)
```

```
bouncer.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
addChild(bouncer)
```

There's a new data type in there called **CGPoint**, but, like **CGSize**, it's very simple: it just holds X/Y co-ordinates. Remember, SpriteKit's positions start from the center of nodes, so X: 512 Y:0 means "centered horizontally on the bottom edge of the scene."

Also new is the **isDynamic** property of a physics body. When this is true, the object will be moved by the physics simulator based on gravity and collisions. When it's false (as we're setting it) the object will still collide with other things, but it won't ever be moved as a result.

Using this code, the bouncer node will be placed on the screen and your balls can collide with it – but it won't move. Give it a try now.

Adding a bouncer took five lines of code, but our game needs more than one bouncer. In fact, I want five of them, evenly distributed across the screen. Now, you *could* just copy and paste the code five times then change the positions, but I hope you realize there's a better way: creating a method that does all the work, then calling that method each time we want a bouncer.

The method code itself is nearly identical to what you just wrote, with the only change being that we need to position the box at the **CGPoint** specified as a parameter:

```
func makeBouncer(at position: CGPoint) {
    let bouncer = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "bouncer")
    bouncer.position = position
    bouncer.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:
        bouncer.size.width / 2.0)
    bouncer.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
    addChild(bouncer)
}
```

With that method in place, you can place a bouncer in one line of code: just call **makeBouncer(at:)** with a position, and it will be placed and given a non-dynamic physics

Project 11: Pachinko

body automatically.

You might have noticed that the parameter to **makeBouncer(at:)** has two names: **at** and **position**. This isn't required, but it makes your code more readable: the first name is the one you use when *calling* the method, and the second name is the one you use *inside* the method. That is, you write **makeBouncer(at:)** to call it, but inside the method the parameter is named **position** rather than **at**. This is identical to **cellForRowAtIndexPath** in table views.

To show this off, delete the bouncer code from **didMove(to:)**, and replace it with this:

```
makeBouncer(at: CGPoint(x: 0, y: 0))
makeBouncer(at: CGPoint(x: 256, y: 0))
makeBouncer(at: CGPoint(x: 512, y: 0))
makeBouncer(at: CGPoint(x: 768, y: 0))
makeBouncer(at: CGPoint(x: 1024, y: 0))
```

If you run the game now you'll see five bouncers evenly spread across the screen, and the balls you drop bounce off any of them. It's still not a game, but we're getting there. Now to add something between the bouncers...

Spinning slots: SKAction

The purpose of the game will be to drop your balls in such a way that they land in good slots and not bad ones. We have bouncers in place, but we need to fill the gaps between them with something so the player knows where to aim.

We'll be filling the gaps with two types of target slots: good ones (colored green) and bad ones (colored red). As with bouncers, we'll need to place a few of these, which means we need to make a method. This needs to load the slot base graphic, position it where we said, then add it to the scene, like this:

```
func makeSlot(at position: CGPoint, isGood: Bool) {
    var slotBase: SKSpriteNode

    if isGood {
        slotBase = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "slotBaseGood")
    } else {
        slotBase = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "slotBaseBad")
    }

    slotBase.position = position
    addChild(slotBase)
}
```

Unlike **makeBouncer(at:)**, this method has a second parameter – whether the slot is good or not – and that affects which image gets loaded. But first, we need to call the new method, so add these lines just before the calls to **makeBouncer(at:)** in **didMove(to:)**:

```
makeSlot(at: CGPoint(x: 128, y: 0), isGood: true)
makeSlot(at: CGPoint(x: 384, y: 0), isGood: false)
makeSlot(at: CGPoint(x: 640, y: 0), isGood: true)
makeSlot(at: CGPoint(x: 896, y: 0), isGood: false)
```

Project 11: Pachinko

The X positions are exactly between the bouncers, so if you run the game now you'll see bouncer / slot / bouncer / slot and so on.

One of the obvious-but-nice things about using methods to create the bouncers and slots is that if we want to change the way slots look we only need to change it in one place. For example, we can make the slot colors look more obvious by adding a glow image behind them:

```
func makeSlot(at position: CGPoint, isGood: Bool) {
    var slotBase: SKSpriteNode
    var slotGlow: SKSpriteNode

    if isGood {
        slotBase = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "slotBaseGood")
        slotGlow = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "slotGlowGood")
    } else {
        slotBase = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "slotBaseBad")
        slotGlow = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "slotGlowBad")
    }

    slotBase.position = position
    slotGlow.position = position

    addChild(slotBase)
    addChild(slotGlow)
}
```

That basically doubles every line of code, changing "Base" to "Glow", but the end result is quite pleasing and it's clear now which slots are good and which are bad.

We could even make the slots spin slowly by using a new class called **SKAction**. SpriteKit actions are ridiculously powerful and we're going to do some great things with them in later projects, but for now we just want the glow to rotate very gently.

Before we look at the code to make this happen, you need to learn a few things up front:

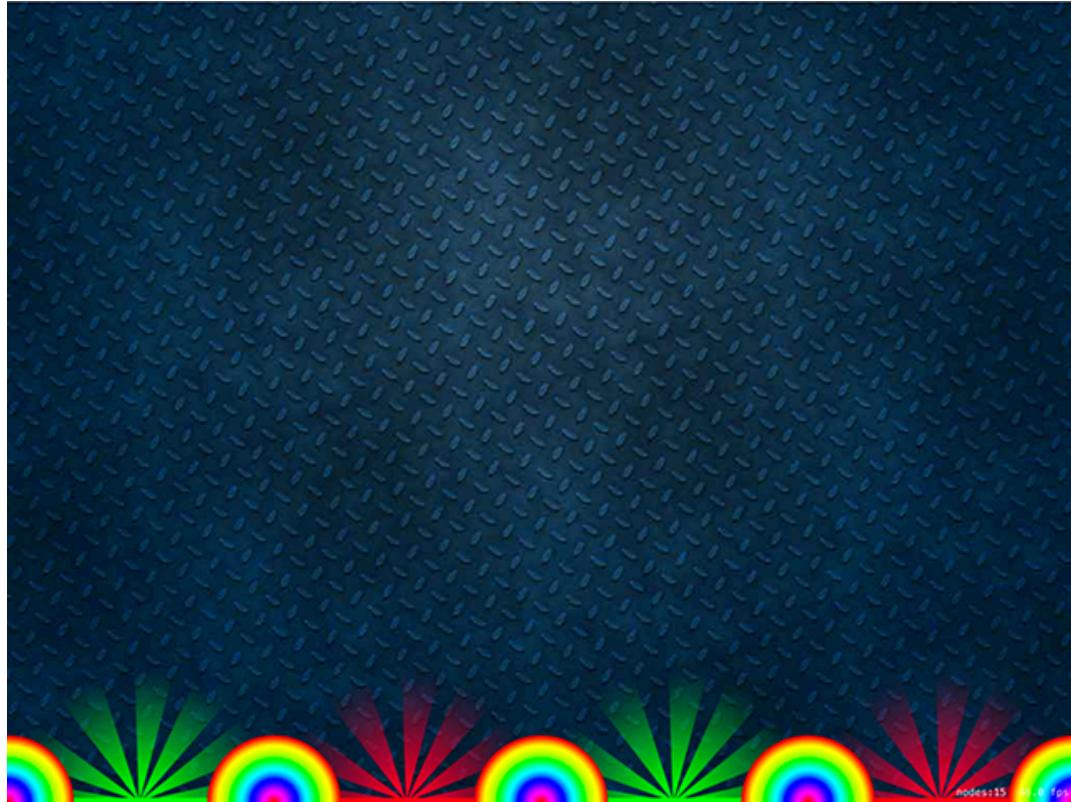
- Angles are specified in radians, not degrees. This is true in UIKit too. 360 degrees is equal to the value of $2 \times \pi$ – that is, the mathematical value π . Therefore π radians is equal to 180 degrees.
- Rather than have you try to memorize it, there is a built-in value of π called **CGFloat.pi**.
- Yes **CGFloat** is yet another way of representing decimal numbers, just like **Double** and **Float**. Behind the scenes, **CGFloat** can be either a **Double** or a **Float** depending on the device your code runs on. Swift also has **Double.pi** and **Float.pi** for when you need it at different precisions.
- When you create an action it will execute once. If you want it to run forever, you create another action to wrap the first using the **repeatForever()** method, then run that.

Our new code will rotate the node by 180 degrees (available as the constant **CGFloat.pi** or just **.pi**) over 10 seconds, repeating forever. Put this code just before the end of the **makeSlot(at:)** method:

```
let spin = SKAction.rotate(byAngle: .pi, duration: 10)
let spinForever = SKAction.repeatForever(spin)
slotGlow.run(spinForever)
```

If you run the game now, you'll see that the glow spins around very gently. It's a simple effect, but it makes a big difference.

Project 11: Pachinko



Collision detection: SKPhysicsContactDelegate

Just by adding a physics body to the balls and bouncers we already have some collision detection because the objects bounce off each other. But it's not being detected by *us*, which means we can't do anything about it.

In this game, we want the player to win or lose depending on how many green or red slots they hit, so we need to make a few changes:

1. Add rectangle physics to our slots.
2. Name the slots so we know which is which, then name the balls too.
3. Make our scene the contact delegate of the physics world – this means, "tell us when contact occurs between two bodies."
4. Create a method that handles contacts and does something appropriate.

The first step is easy enough: add these two lines just before you call **addChild()** for **slotBase**:

```
slotBase.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(rectangleOf:  
slotBase.size)  
slotBase.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
```

The slot base needs to be non-dynamic because we don't want it to move out of the way when a player ball hits.

The second step is also easy, but bears some explanation. As with UIKit, it's easy enough to store a variable pointing at specific nodes in your scene for when you want to make something happen, and there are lots of times when that's the right solution.

But for general use, Apple recommends assigning names to your nodes, then checking the name to see what node it is. We need to have three names in our code: good slots, bad slots and balls. This is really easy to do – just modify your **makeSlot(at:)** method so the **SKSpriteNode**

Project 11: Pachinko

creation looks like this:

```
if isGood {  
    slotBase = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "slotBaseGood")  
    slotGlow = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "slotGlowGood")  
    slotBase.name = "good"  
} else {  
    slotBase = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "slotBaseBad")  
    slotGlow = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "slotGlowBad")  
    slotBase.name = "bad"  
}
```

Then add this to the code where you create the balls:

```
ball.name = "ball"
```

We don't need to name the bouncers, because we don't actually care when their collisions happen.

Now comes the tricky part, which is setting up our scene to be the contact delegate of the physics world. The initial change is easy: we just need to conform to the **SKPhysicsContactDelegate** protocol then assign the physics world's **contactDelegate** property to be our scene. But by default, you still won't get notified when things collide.

What we need to do is change the **contactTestBitMask** property of our physics objects, which sets the contact notifications we want to receive. This needs to introduce a whole new concept – bitmasks – and really it doesn't matter at this point, so we're going to take a shortcut for now, then return to it in a later project.

Let's set up all the contact delegates and bitmasks now. First, make your class conform to the **SKPhysicsContactDelegate** protocol by modifying its definition to this:

```
class GameScene: SKScene, SKPhysicsContactDelegate {
```

Then assign the current scene to be the physics world's contact delegate by putting this line of code in **didMove(to:)**, just below where we set the scene's physics body:

```
physicsWorld.contactDelegate = self
```

Now for our shortcut: we're going to tell all the ball nodes to set their **contactTestBitMask** property to be equal to their **collisionBitMask**. Two bitmasks, with confusingly similar names but quite different jobs.

The **collisionBitMask** bitmask means "which nodes should I bump into?" By default, it's set to everything, which is why our ball are already hitting each other and the bouncers. The **contactTestBitMask** bitmask means "which collisions do you want to know about?" and by default it's set to nothing. So by setting **contactTestBitMask** to the value of **collisionBitMask** we're saying, "tell me about every collision."

This isn't particularly efficient in complicated games, but it will make no difference at all in this current project. And, like I said, we'll return to this in a later project to explain more. Until then, add this line just before you set each ball's **restitution** property:

```
ball.physicsBody!.contactTestBitMask =
ball.physicsBody!.collisionBitMask
```

That's the only change required for us to detect collisions, so now it's time to write the code that does the hard work.

But first, a little explanation: when contact between two physics bodies occurs, we don't know what order it will come in. That is, did the ball hit the slot, did the slot hit the ball, or did *both* happen? I know this sounds like pointless philosophy, but it's important because we need to know which one is the ball!

Before looking at the actual contact method, I want to look at two other methods first, because this is our ultimate goal. The first one, **collisionBetween()** will be called when a ball collides with something else. The second one, **destroy()** is going to be called when we're finished with the ball and want to get rid of it.

Project 11: Pachinko

Put these new methods into to your code:

```
func collisionBetween(ball: SKNode, object: SKNode) {  
    if object.name == "good" {  
        destroy(ball: ball)  
    } else if object.name == "bad" {  
        destroy(ball: ball)  
    }  
}  
  
func destroy(ball: SKNode) {  
    ball.removeFromParent()  
}
```

The **removeFromParent()** method removes a node from your node tree. Or, in plain English, it removes the node from your game.

You might look at that and think it's utterly redundant, because no matter what happens it's effectively the same as writing this:

```
func collisionBetween(ball: SKNode, object: SKNode) {  
    ball.removeFromParent()  
}
```

But trust me on this: we're going to make these methods do more shortly, so get it right now and it will save refactoring later.

With those two in place, our contact checking method almost writes itself. We'll get told which two bodies collided, and the contact method needs to determine which one is the ball so that it can call **collisionBetween()** with the correct parameters. This is as simple as checking the names of both properties to see which is the ball, so here's the new method to do contact checking:

Collision detection: SKPhysicsContactDelegate

```
func didBegin(_ contact: SKPhysicsContact) {
    if contact.bodyA.node?.name == "ball" {
        collisionBetween(ball: contact.bodyA.node!, object:
contact.bodyB.node!)
    } else if contact.bodyB.node?.name == "ball" {
        collisionBetween(ball: contact.bodyB.node!, object:
contact.bodyA.node!)
    }
}
```

If you're particularly observant, you may have noticed that we don't have a special case in there for when both bodies are balls – i.e., if one ball collides with another. This is because our **collisionBetween()** method will ignore that particular case, because it triggers code only if the other node is named "good" or "bad".

Run the game now and you'll start to see things coming together: you can drop balls on the bouncers and they will bounce, but if they touch one of the good or bad slots the balls will be destroyed. It works, but it's boring. Players want to score points so they feel like they achieved something, even if that "something" is just nudging up a number on a CPU.

Before I move on, I want to return to my philosophical question from earlier: “did the ball hit the slot, did the slot hit the ball, or did *both* happen?” That last case won’t happen all the time, but it will happen *sometimes*, and it’s important to take it into account.

If SpriteKit reports a collision twice – i.e. “ball hit slot *and* slot hit ball” – then we have a problem. Look at this line of code:

```
collisionBetween(ball: contact.bodyA.node!, object:
contact.bodyB.node!)
```

And now this line of code:

```
ball.removeFromParent()
```

Project 11: Pachinko

The first time that code runs, we force unwrap both nodes and remove the ball – so far so good. The *second* time that code runs (for the other half of the same collision), our problem strikes: we try to force unwrap something we already removed, and our game will crash.

To solve this, we’re going to rewrite the `didBegin()` method to be clearer and safer: we’ll use `guard` to ensure both `bodyA` and `bodyB` have nodes attached. If either of them don’t then this is a ghost collision and we can bail out immediately.

```
func didBegin(_ contact: SKPhysicsContact) {
    guard let nodeA = contact.bodyA.node else { return }
    guard let nodeB = contact.bodyB.node else { return }

    if nodeA.name == "ball" {
        collisionBetween(ball: nodeA, object: nodeB)
    } else if nodeB.name == "ball" {
        collisionBetween(ball: nodeB, object: nodeA)
    }
}
```

It takes a little more explanation and a little more code, but the result is safer – and that’s always worth striving for!

Scores on the board: SKLabelNode

To make a score show on the screen we need to do two things: create a score integer that tracks the value itself, then create a new node type, **SKLabelNode**, that displays the value to players.

The **SKLabelNode** class is somewhat similar to **UILabel** in that it has a **text** property, a font, a position, an alignment, and so on. Plus we can use Swift's string interpolation to set the text of the label easily, and we're even going to use the property observers you learned about in project 8 to make the label update itself when the score value changes.

Declare these properties at the top of your class:

```
var scoreLabel: SKLabelNode!  
  
var score = 0 {  
    didSet {  
        scoreLabel.text = "Score: \(score)"  
    }  
}
```

We're going to use the Chalkduster font, then align the label to the right and position it on the top-right edge of the scene. Put this code into your **didMove(to:)** method, just before the end:

```
scoreLabel = SKLabelNode(fontNamed: "Chalkduster")  
scoreLabel.text = "Score: 0"  
scoreLabel.horizontalAlignmentMode = .right  
scoreLabel.position = CGPoint(x: 980, y: 700)  
addChild(scoreLabel)
```

That places the label into the scene, and the property observer automatically updates the label as the **score** value changes. But it's not complete yet because we don't ever modify the player's

Project 11: Pachinko

score. Fortunately, we already have places in the **collisionBetween()** method where we can do exactly that, so modify the method to this:

```
func collisionBetween(ball: SKNode, object: SKNode) {
    if object.name == "good" {
        destroy(ball: ball)
        score += 1
    } else if object.name == "bad" {
        destroy(ball: ball)
        score -= 1
    }
}
```

The `+=` and `-=` operators add or subtract one to the variable depending on whether a good or bad slot was struck. When we change the variable, the property observer will spot the change and update the label.

We have a score, so that means players have the achievement they were craving, right? Well, no. Clearly all it takes to get a number even higher than Gangnam Style's YouTube views is to sit and tap at the top of the screen directly above a green slot.

Let's add some actual challenge: we're going to let you place obstacles between the top of the scene and the slots at the bottom, so that players have to position their balls exactly correctly to bounce off things in the right ways.

To make this work, we're going to add two more properties. The first one will hold a label that says either "Edit" or "Done", and one to hold a boolean that tracks whether we're in editing mode or not. Add these two alongside the score properties from earlier:

```
var editLabel: SKLabelNode!

var editingMode: Bool = false {
    didSet {
        if editingMode {
```

Scores on the board: SKLabelNode

```
        editLabel.text = "Done"  
    } else {  
        editLabel.text = "Edit"  
    }  
}  
}  
}
```

Then add this to **didMove(to:)** to create the edit label in the top-left corner of the scene:

```
editLabel = SKLabelNode(fontNamed: "Chalkduster")  
editLabel.text = "Edit"  
editLabel.position = CGPoint(x: 80, y: 700)  
addChild(editLabel)
```

That's pretty much identical to creating the score label, so nothing to see here. We're using a property observer again to automatically change the editing label's text when edit mode is changed.

But what *is* new is detecting whether the user tapped the edit/done button or is trying to create a ball. To make this work, we're going to ask SpriteKit to give us a list of all the nodes at the point that was tapped, and check whether it contains our edit label. If it does, we'll flip the value of our **editingMode** boolean; if it doesn't, we want to execute the previous ball-creation code.

We're going to insert this change just after **let location =** and before **let ball =**, i.e. right here:

```
let location = touch.location(in: self)  
// new code to go here!  
let ball = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "ballRed")
```

Change that to be:

```
let location = touch.location(in: self)
```

Project 11: Pachinko

```
let objects = nodes(at: location)

if objects.contains(editLabel) {
    editingMode.toggle()
} else {
    let ball = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "ballRed")
    // rest of ball code
}
```

Did you notice I slipped in a small but important new method there? **editingMode.toggle()** changes **editingMode** to true if it's currently false, and to false if it was true. We could have written **editingMode = !editingMode** there and it would do the same thing, but **toggle()** is both shorter and clearer.

Obviously the **// rest of ball code** comment is where the rest of the ball-creating code goes, but note that you need to add the new closing brace after you've created the ball, to close the **else** block.

This uses the **!** operator that you met in project 5 to mean "set **editingMode** to be the opposite of whatever it is right now." That change will be picked up by the property observer, and the label will be updated to reflect the change.

Now that we have a boolean telling us whether we're in editing mode or not, we're going to extend **touchesBegan()** even further so that if we're in editing mode we add blocks to the screen of random sizes, and if we're not it drops a ball.

To get the structure right, this is what you want to have:

```
if objects.contains(editLabel) {
    editingMode.toggle()
} else {
    if editingMode {
        // create a box
    } else {
```

Scores on the board: SKLabelNode

```
// create a ball  
}  
}  
}
```

The **// create a ball** comment is where your current ball creation code goes. The **// create a box** comment is what we're going to write in just a moment.

First, we're going to use a new property on nodes called **zRotation**. When creating the background image, we gave it a Z position, which adjusts its depth on the screen, front to back. If you imagine sticking a skewer through the Z position – i.e., going directly into your screen – and through a node, then you can imagine Z rotation: it rotates a node on the screen as if it had been skewered straight through the screen.

To create randomness we're going to be using both **Int.random(in:)** for integer values and **CGFloat.random(in:)** for **CGFloat** values, with the latter being used to create random red, green, and blue values for a **UIColor**. So, replace the **// create a box** comment with this:

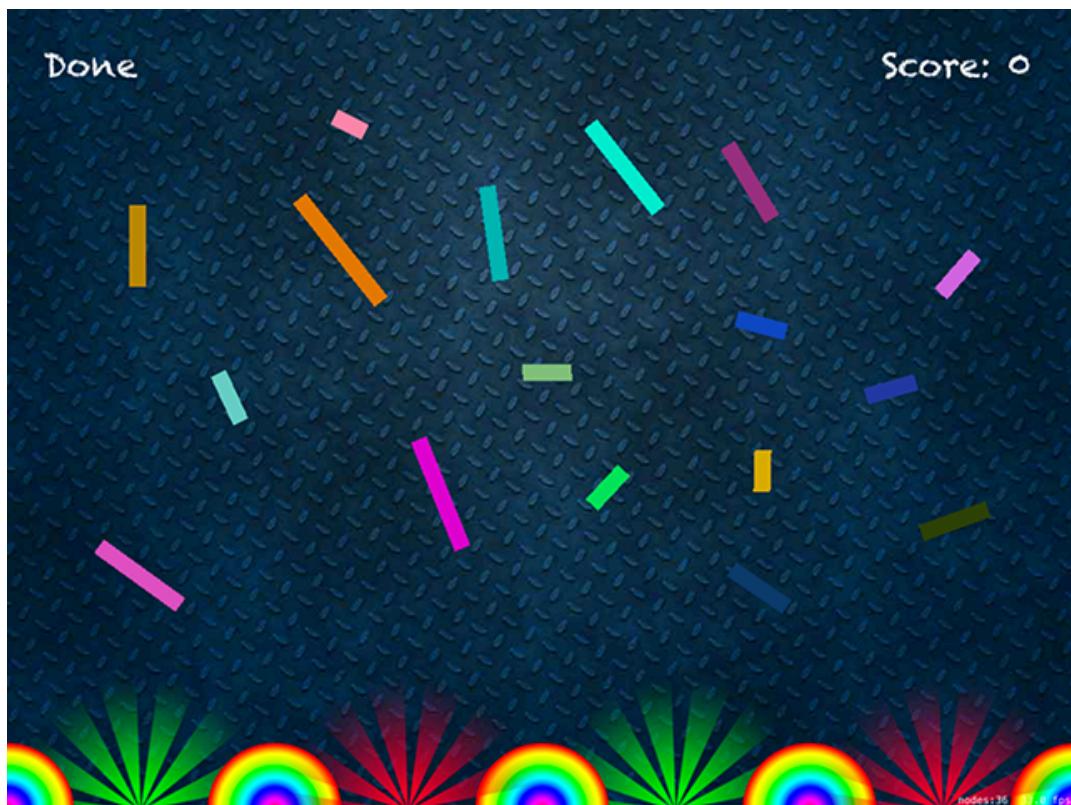
```
let size = CGSize(width: Int.random(in: 16...128), height: 16)  
let box = SKSpriteNode(color: UIColor(red: CGFloat.random(in:  
0...1), green: CGFloat.random(in: 0...1), blue:  
CGFloat.random(in: 0...1), alpha: 1), size: size)  
box.zRotation = CGFloat.random(in: 0...3)  
box.position = location  
  
box.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(rectangleOf: box.size)  
box.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false  
  
addChild(box)
```

So, we create a size with a height of 16 and a width between 16 and 128, then create an **SKSpriteNode** with the random size we made along with a random color, then give the new box a random rotation and place it at the location that was tapped on the screen. For a physics body, it's just a rectangle, but we need to make it non-dynamic so the boxes don't move when

Project 11: Pachinko

hit.

At this point, we almost have a game: you can tap Edit, place as many blocks as you want, then tap Done and try to score by dropping balls. It's not perfect because we don't force the Y position of new balls to be the top of the screen, but that's something you can fix yourself – how else would you learn, right?



Special effects: SKEmitterNode

Our current `destroy()` method does nothing much, it just removes the ball from the game. But I made it a method for a reason, and that's so that we can add some special effects now, in one place, so that however a ball gets destroyed the same special effects are used.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, it's remarkably easy to create special effects with SpriteKit. In fact, it has a built-in particle editor to help you create effects like fire, snow, rain and smoke almost entirely through a graphical editor. I already created an example particle effect for you (which you can customize soon, don't worry!) so let's take a look at the code first.

Modify your `destroy()` method to this:

```
func destroy(ball: SKNode) {
    if let fireParticles = SKEmitterNode(fileNamed:
"FireParticles") {
        fireParticles.position = ball.position
        addChild(fireParticles)
    }

    ball.removeFromParent()
}
```

The `SEmitterNode` class is new and powerful: it's designed to create high-performance particle effects in SpriteKit games, and all you need to do is provide it with the filename of the particles you designed and it will do the rest. Once we have an `SEmitterNode` object to work with, we position it where the ball was then use `addChild()` to add it to the scene.

If you run the app now, you'll see the balls explode in a fireball when they touch a slot – a pretty darn amazing effect given how little code was written!

But the real fun is yet to come, because the code for this project is now all done and you get to play with the particle editor. In Xcode, look in the Content folder you dragged in and select the FireParticles.sks file to load the particle editor.

Project 11: Pachinko

The particle editor is split in two: the center area shows how the current particle effect looks, and the right pane shows one of three inspectors. Of those three inspectors, only the third is useful because that's where you'll see all the options you can use to change the way your particles look.

At the time of writing, Xcode's particle editor is a little buggy, so I suggest you change the Maximum value to 0 before beginning otherwise you might see nothing at all.

Confused by all the options? Here's what they do:

- Particle Texture: what image to use for your particles.
- Particles Birthrate: how fast to create new particles.
- Particles Maximum: the maximum number of particles this emitter should create before finishing.
- Lifetime Start: the basic value for how many seconds each particle should live for.
- Lifetime Range: how much, plus or minus, to vary lifetime.
- Position Range X/Y: how much to vary the creation position of particles from the emitter node's position.
- Angle Start: which angle you want to fire particles, in degrees, where 0 is to the right and 90 is straight up.
- Angle Range: how many degrees to randomly vary particle angle.
- Speed Start: how fast each particle should move in its direction.
- Speed Range: how much to randomly vary particle speed.
- Acceleration X/Y: how much to affect particle speed over time. This can be used to simulate gravity or wind.
- Alpha Start: how transparent particles are when created.
- Alpha Range: how much to randomly vary particle transparency.
- Alpha Speed: how much to change particle transparency over time. A negative value means "fade out."
- Scale Start / Range / Speed: how big particles should be when created, how much to vary it, and how much it should change over time. A negative value means "shrink slowly."
- Rotation Start / Range / Speed: what Z rotation particles should have, how much to vary it,

and how much they should spin over time.

- Color Blend Factor / Range / Speed: how much to color each particle, how much to vary it, and how much it should change over time.

Note: Once you've finished editing your particles, make sure you put a maximum value back on them otherwise they'll never go away!

It's worth adding that you can create particles from one of Xcode's built-in particle template. Add a new file, but this time choose "Resource" under the iOS heading, then choose "SpriteKit Particle File" to see the list of options.

Wrap up

This project is done, and it's been a long one, but I hope you look at the results and think it was all worth it. Plus, you've once again learned a lot: SpriteKit, physics, blend modes, radians and **CGFloat**.

You've got the firm foundations of a real game here, but there's lots more you can do to make it even better.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 11.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. The pictures we're using in have other ball pictures rather than just "ballRed". Try writing code to use a random ball color each time they tap the screen.
2. Right now, users can tap anywhere to have a ball created there, which makes the game too easy. Try to force the Y value of new balls so they are near the top of the screen.
3. Give players a limit of five balls, then remove obstacle boxes when they are hit. Can they clear all the pins with just five balls? You could make it so that landing on a green slot gets them an extra ball.

Project 12

User Defaults

Learn how to save user settings and data for later use.

Setting up

This is our fourth technique project, and we're going to go back to project 10 and fix its glaring bug: all the names and faces you add to the app don't get saved, which makes the app rather pointless!

We're going to fix this using a new class called **User Defaults** and a new protocol **NSCoding** – it's similar in intent to the **Codable** protocol we used when working with JSON, but the former is available only to Swift developers whereas the latter is also available to Objective-C developers.

Along the way you'll also use the classes **NSKeyedArchiver** and **NSKeyedUnarchiver** (for use with **NSCoding**), and **JSONEncoder** and **JSONDecoder** (for use with **Codable**), all of which are there to convert custom objects into data that can be written to disk.

Putting all that together, we're going to update project 10 so that it saves its **people** array whenever anything is changed, then loads when the app runs.

We're going to be modifying project 10 twice over, once for each method of solving the problem, so I suggest you take a copy of the project 10 folder twice – call the copies project12a and project12b.

Reading and writing basics: UserDefaults

You can use **UserDefaults** to store any basic data type for as long as the app is installed. You can write basic types such as **Bool**, **Float**, **Double**, **Int**, **String**, or **URL**, but you can also write more complex types such as arrays, dictionaries and **Date** – and even **Data** values.

When you write data to **UserDefaults**, it automatically gets loaded when your app runs so that you can read it back again. This makes using it really easy, but you need to know that it's a bad idea to store lots of data in there because it will slow loading of your app. If you think your saved data would take up more than say 100KB, **UserDefaults** is almost certainly the wrong choice.

Before we get into modifying project 10, we're going to do a little bit of test coding first to try out what **UserDefaults** lets us do. You might find it useful to create a fresh Single View App project just so you can test out the code.

To get started with **UserDefaults**, you create a new instance of the class like this:

```
let defaults = UserDefaults.standard
```

Once that's done, it's easy to set a variety of values – you just need to give each one a unique key so you can reference it later. These values nearly always have no meaning outside of what you use them for, so just make sure the key names are memorable.

Here are some examples:

```
let defaults = UserDefaults.standard
defaults.set(25, forKey: "Age")
defaults.set(true, forKey: "UseTouchID")
defaults.set(CGFloat.pi, forKey: "Pi")
```

You can also use the **set()** to store strings, arrays, dictionaries and dates. Now, here's a

Project 12: UserDefaults

curiosity that's worth explaining briefly: in Swift, strings, arrays and dictionaries are all structs, not objects. But **UserDefault**s was written for **NSString** and friends – all of which are 100% interchangeable with Swift their equivalents – which is why this code works.

Using **set()** for these advanced types is just the same as using the other data types:

```
defaults.set("Paul Hudson", forKey: "Name")
defaults.set(Date(), forKey: "LastRun")
```

Even if you're trying to save complex types such as arrays and dictionaries, **UserDefault**s laps it up:

```
let array = ["Hello", "World"]
defaults.set(array, forKey: "SavedArray")

let dict = ["Name": "Paul", "Country": "UK"]
defaults.set(dict, forKey: "SavedDict")
```

That's enough about writing for now; let's take a look at reading.

When you're reading values from **UserDefault**s you need to check the return type carefully to ensure you know what you're getting. Here's what you need to know:

- **integer(forKey:)** returns an integer if the key existed, or 0 if not.
- **bool(forKey:)** returns a boolean if the key existed, or false if not.
- **float(forKey:)** returns a float if the key existed, or 0.0 if not.
- **double(forKey:)** returns a double if the key existed, or 0.0 if not.
- **object(forKey:)** returns **Any?** so you need to conditionally typecast it to your data type.

Knowing the return values are important, because if you use **bool(forKey:)** and get back "false", does that mean the key didn't exist, or did it perhaps exist and you just set it to be false?

It's **object(forKey:)** that will cause you the most bother, because you get an optional object

back. You're faced with two options, one of which isn't smart so you realistically have only one option!

Your options:

- Use **as!** to force typecast your object to the data type it should be.
- Use **as?** to optionally typecast your object to the type it should be.

If you use **as!** and **object(forKey:)** returned **nil**, you'll get a crash, so I really don't recommend it unless you're absolutely sure. But equally, using **as?** is annoying because you then have to unwrap the optional or create a default value.

There is a solution here, and it has the catchy name of *the nil coalescing operator*, and it looks like this: **??**. This does two things at once: if the object on the left is optional and exists, it gets unwrapped into a non-optional value; if it does not exist, it uses the value on the right instead.

This means we can use **object(forKey:)** and **as?** to get an optional object, then use **??** to either unwrap the object or set a default value, all in one line.

For example, let's say we want to read the array we saved earlier with the key name **SavedArray**. Here's how to do that with the **nil** coalescing operator:

```
let array = defaults.object(forKey: "SavedArray") as?
[String] ?? [String]()
```

So, if **SavedArray** exists and is a string array, it will be placed into the **array** constant. If it doesn't exist (or if it does exist and isn't a string array), then **array** gets set to be a new string array.

This technique also works for dictionaries, but obviously you need to typecast it correctly. To read the dictionary we saved earlier, we'd use this:

```
let dict = defaults.object(forKey: "SavedDict") as? [String:
String] ?? [String: String]()
```

Project 12: UserDefaults

Fixing Project 10: NSCoding

You've just learned all the core basics of working with **UserDefaults**, but we're just getting started. You see, above and beyond integers, dates, strings, arrays and so on, you can also save any kind of data inside **UserDefaults** as long as you follow some rules.

What happens is simple: you use the **archivedData()** method of **NSKeyedArchiver**, which turns an object graph into a **Data** object, then write that to **UserDefaults** as if it were any other object. If you were wondering, “object graph” means “your object, plus any objects it refers to, plus any objects those objects refer to, and so on.”

The rules are very simple:

1. All your data types must be one of the following: boolean, integer, float, double, string, array, dictionary, **Date**, or a class that fits rule 2.
2. If your data type is a class, it must conform to the **NSCoding** protocol, which is used for archiving object graphs.
3. If your data type is an array or dictionary, all the keys and values must match rule 1 or rule 2.

Many of Apple's own classes support **NSCoding**, including but not limited to: **UIColor**, **UIImage**, **UIView**, **UILabel**, **UIImageView**, **UITableView**, **SKSpriteNode** and many more. But your own classes do not, at least not by default. If we want to save the **people** array to **UserDefaults** we'll need to conform to the **NSCoding** protocol.

The first step is to modify your **Person** class to this:

```
class Person: NSObject, NSCoding {
```

When we were working on this code in project 10, there were two outstanding questions:

- Why do we need a class here when a struct will do just as well? (And in fact better, because structs come with a default initializer!)
- Why do we need to inherit from **NSObject**?

Project 12: UserDefaults

It's time for the answers to become clear. You see, working with **NSCoding** requires you to use objects, or, in the case of strings, arrays and dictionaries, structs that are interchangeable with objects. If we made the **Person** class into a struct, we couldn't use it with **NSCoding**.

The reason we inherit from **NSObject** is again because it's required to use **NSCoding** – although cunningly Swift won't mention that to you, your app will just crash.

Once you conform to the **NSCoding** protocol, you'll get compiler errors because the protocol requires you to implement two methods: a new initializer and **encode()**.

We need to write some more code to fix the problems, and although the code is very similar to what you've already seen in **User Defaults**, it has two new things you need to know about.

First, you'll be using a new class called **NSCoder**. This is responsible for both encoding (writing) and decoding (reading) your data so that it can be used with **User Defaults**.

Second, the new initializer must be declared with the **required** keyword. This means "if anyone tries to subclass this class, they are required to implement this method." An alternative to using **required** is to declare that your class can never be subclassed, known as a *final class*, in which case you don't need **required** because subclassing isn't possible. We'll be using **required** here.

Add these two methods to the **Person** class:

```
required init(coder aDecoder: NSCoder) {
    name = aDecoder.decodeObject(forKey: "name") as? String ?? ""
    image = aDecoder.decodeObject(forKey: "image") as? String ?? ""
}

func encode(with aCoder: NSCoder) {
    aCoder.encode(name, forKey: "name")
}
```

```
aCoder.encode(image, forKey: "image")
}
```

The initializer is used when loading objects of this class, and **encode()** is used when saving. The code is very similar to using **UserDefaults**, but here we're adding **as?** typecasting and nil coalescing just in case we get invalid data back.

With those changes, the **Person** class now conforms to **NSCoding**, so we can go back to **ViewController.swift** and add code to load and save the **people** array.

Let's start with writing, because once you understand that the reading code will make much more sense. As I said earlier, you can write **Data** objects to **UserDefaults**, but we don't currently have a **Data** object – we just have an array.

Fortunately, the **archivedData()** method of **NSKeyedArchiver** turns an object graph into a **Data** object using those **NSCoding** methods we just added to our class. Because we make changes to the array by adding people or by renaming them, let's create a single **save()** method we can use anywhere that's needed:

```
func save() {
    if let savedData = try?
        NSKeyedArchiver.archivedData(withRootObject: people,
        requiringSecureCoding: false) {
        let defaults = UserDefaults.standard
        defaults.set(savedData, forKey: "people")
    }
}
```

So: line 1 is what converts our array into a **Data** object, then lines 2 and 3 save that data object to **UserDefaults**. You now just need to call that **save()** method when we change a person's name or when we import a new picture.

You need to modify our collection view's **didSelectItemAt** method so that you call **self.save()**

Project 12: UserDefaults

just after calling `self.collectionView.reloadData()`. Remember, the `self` is required because we're inside a closure. You then need to modify the image picker's `didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo` method so that it calls `save()` just before the end of the method.

And that's it – we only change the data in two places, and both now have a call to `save()`.

Finally, we need to load the array back from disk when the app runs, so add this code to `viewDidLoad()`:

```
let defaults = UserDefaults.standard

if let savedPeople = defaults.object(forKey: "people") as? Data {
    if let decodedPeople = try?
        NSKeyedUnarchiver.unarchiveTopLevelObjectWithData(savedPeople)
    as? [Person] {
        people = decodedPeople
    }
}
```

This code is effectively the `save()` method in reverse: we use the `object(forKey:)` method to pull out an optional `Data`, using `if let` and `as?` to unwrap it. We then give that to the `unarchiveTopLevelObjectWithData()` method of `NSKeyedUnarchiver` to convert it back to an object graph – i.e., our array of `Person` objects.

Fixing Project 10: Codable

NSCoding is a great way to read and write data when using **User Defaults**, and is the most common option when you must write Swift code that lives alongside Objective-C code.

However, if you're *only* writing Swift, the **Codable** protocol is much easier. We already used it to load petition JSON back in project 7, but now we'll be loading *and* saving JSON.

There are three primary differences between the two solutions:

1. The **Codable** system works on both classes and structs. We made **Person** a class because **NSCoding** only works with classes, but if you didn't care about Objective-C compatibility you could make it a struct and use **Codable** instead.
2. When we implemented **NSCoding** in the previous chapter we had to write **encode()** and **init()** calls ourself. With **Codable** this isn't needed unless you need more precise control - it does the work for you.
3. When you encode data using **Codable** you can save to the same format that **NSCoding** uses if you want, but a much more pleasant option is JSON – **Codable** reads and writes JSON natively.

All three of those combined means that you can define a struct to hold data, and have Swift create instances of that struct directly from JSON with no extra work from you.

Anyway, to demonstrate more of **Codable** in action I'd like you to close project12a and open project12b – this should be identical to project 10, because it doesn't contain any of the **NSCoding** changes.

First, let's modify the **Person** class so that it conforms to **Codable**:

```
class Person: NSObject, Codable {
```

...and that's it. Yes, just adding **Codable** to the class definition is enough to tell Swift we want to read and write this thing. So, now we can go back to ViewController.swift and add code to load and save the **people** array.

Project 12: UserDefaults

As with **NSCoding** we're going to create a single **save()** method we can use anywhere that's needed. This time it's going to use the **JSONEncoder** class to convert our **people** array into a **Data** object, which can then be saved to **UserDefault**s. This conversion might fail, so we're going to use **if let** and **try?** so that we save data only when the JSON conversion was successful.

Add this method to **ViewController.swift** now:

```
func save() {
    let jsonEncoder = JSONEncoder()
    if let savedData = try? jsonEncoder.encode(people) {
        let defaults = UserDefaults.standard
        defaults.set(savedData, forKey: "people")
    } else {
        print("Failed to save people.")
    }
}
```

Just like with the **NSCoding** example you need to modify our collection view's **didSelectItemAt** method so that you call **self?.save()** just after calling **self.collectionView.reloadData()**. Again, remember that adding **self** is required because we're inside a closure. You then need to modify the image picker's **didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo** method so that it calls **save()** just before the end of the method.

Finally, we need to load the array back from disk when the app runs, so add this code to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
let defaults = UserDefaults.standard

if let savedPeople = defaults.object(forKey: "people") as? Data {
    let jsonDecoder = JSONDecoder()
```

```
do {
    people = try jsonDecoder.decode([Person].self, from:
savedPeople)
} catch {
    print("Failed to load people")
}
}
```

This code is effectively the **save()** method in reverse: we use the **object(forKey:)** method to pull out an optional **Data**, using **if let** and **as?** to unwrap it. We then give that to an instance of **JSONDecoder** to convert it back to an object graph – i.e., our array of **Person** objects.

Once again, note the interesting syntax for **decode()** method: its first parameter is **[Person].self**, which is Swift’s way of saying “attempt to create an array of **Person** objects.” This is why we don’t need a typecast when assigning to **people** – that method will automatically return **[People]**, or if the conversion fails then the **catch** block will be executed instead.

Wrap up

You *will* use **UserDefaults** in your projects. That isn't some sort of command, just a statement of inevitability. If you want to save any user settings, or if you want to save program settings, it's just the best place for it. And I hope you'll agree it is (continuing a trend!) easy to use and flexible, particularly when your own classes conform to **Codable**.

As you saw, the **NSCoding** protocol is also available. Yes, it takes extra work to use, and can be quite annoying when your data types have lots of properties you need to save, but it does have the added benefit of Objective-C compatibility if you have a mixed codebase.

One proviso you ought to be aware of: please don't consider **UserDefaults** to be safe, because it isn't. If you have user information that is private, you should consider writing to the keychain instead – something we'll look at in project 28.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 12.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Modify project 1 so that it remembers how many times each storm image was shown – you don't need to show it anywhere, but you're welcome to try modifying your original copy of project 1 to show the view count as a subtitle below each image name in the table view.
2. Modify project 2 so that it saves the player's highest score, and shows a special message if their new score beat the previous high score.
3. Modify project 5 so that it saves the current word and all the player's entries to

Wrap up

UserDefaults, then loads them back when the app launches.

Project 13

Instafilter

Make a photo manipulation program using Core Image filters and a UISlider.

Setting up

In project 10 you learned how to use **UIImagePickerController** to select and import a picture from your user's photo library. In this project, we're going to add the reverse: writing images back to the photo library. But because you're here to learn as much as possible, I'm also going to introduce you to another UIKit component, **UISlider**, and also a little bit of Core Image, which is Apple's high-speed image manipulation toolkit.

The project we're going to make will let users choose a picture from their photos, then manipulate it with a series of Core Image filters. Once they are happy, they can save the processed image back to their photo library.

To get started, create a new Single View App project in Xcode and name it Project13.

Designing the interface

Select your Main.storyboard file to open Interface Builder, then embed the view controller inside a navigation controller.

Bring up the object library, then search for "UIView" and drag a view into your controller – this is a regular view, not a view controller or a storyboard reference. If Interface Builder is already using the iPhone 8 sizing, give the new view a width of 375 and height of 470, with X: 0 and Y:64. If you're not sure, look for the words "View as: iPhone 8" at the bottom of Interface Builder – if you see something else, click it and select iPhone 8 and Portrait.

All being well, using 375x470 and X:0 Y:64 should place the view just below the navigation controller, occupying most of the screen. In the attributes inspector, give the view the background color "Dark Gray Color".

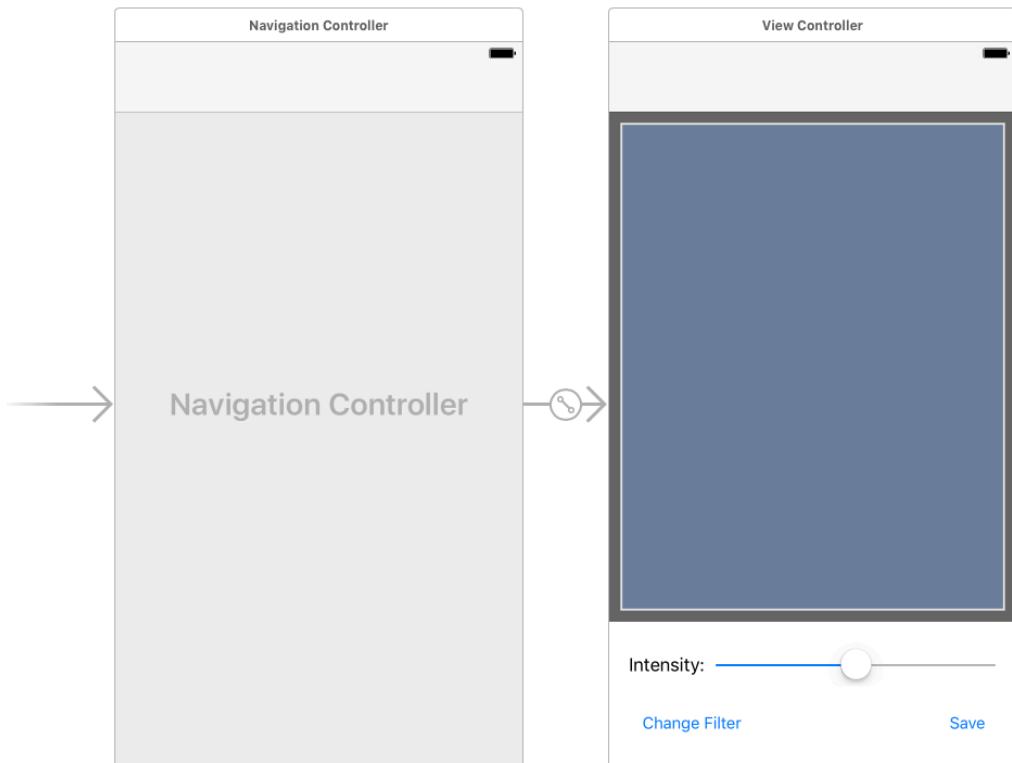
Create an image view, and place it inside the view you just created. I'd like you to indent it by 10 points on every side – i.e., width 355, height 450, X:10, Y:10. Change the image's view mode from "Scale to fill" to "Aspect Fit". Don't place any more views inside the gray view – everything else should be placed directly on the main (white) view.

That's the top part of the UI complete. For the bottom part, start by creating a label with width 72, height 21, X:16, Y:562. Give it the text "Intensity" and make it right-aligned. Now drop a slider next to it, giving it width 262, X:96, Y:558. You can't adjust the height for sliders, so leave it at the default.

Finally, place two buttons. The first button should be 120 wide and 44 high, with X:16, Y:605. Give it the title "Change Filter". The second button should be 60 wide by 44 high, with X:300, Y:605. Give it the title "Save".

In the picture below you can see how your finished layout should look.

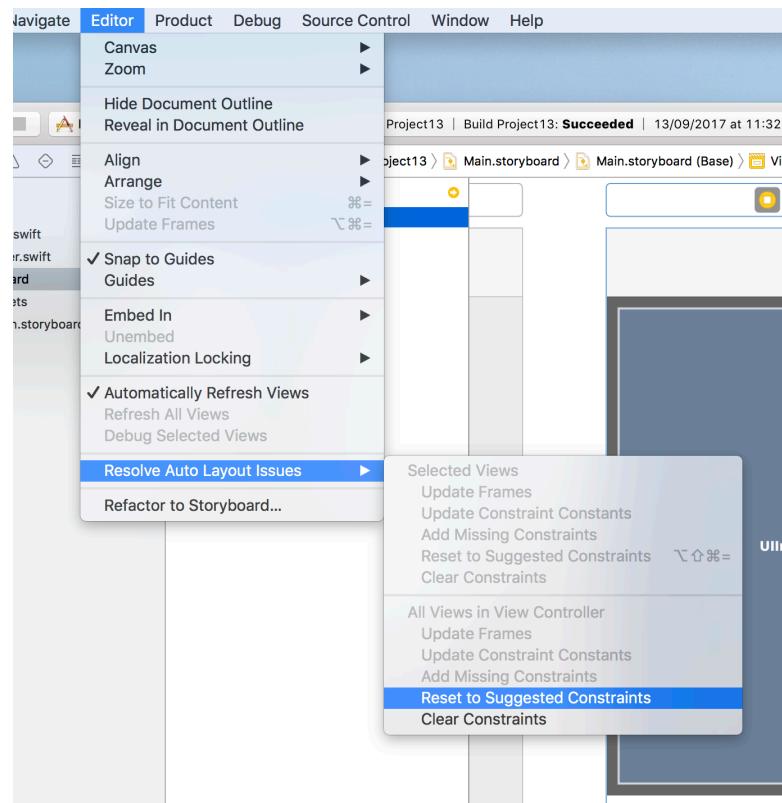
Designing the interface



So that's the basic layout complete, but of course we need to add Auto Layout constraints because we need it all to resize smoothly on various devices. But, you know, I'm feeling lazy – how about we make Auto Layout do the work for us this time?

Select the view controller by clicking on "View Controller" in the document outline, then go to the Editor menu and choose Resolve Auto Layout Issues > Reset To Suggested Constraints.

Project 13: Instafilter



That's it! Your Auto Layout is done: Xcode just added the ideal constraints everywhere so that your interface resizes perfectly. Don't believe me? Try giving the image view a red background color (temporarily!), then launching it in any device and rotating the screen. You should see everything (including the red box) be positioned and resized correctly.

Make sure you switch the image view back to having a clear background color.

That was remarkably easy, and is another example of Apple doing a lot of hard work for you. Using Xcode to make your Auto Layout rules can be a real help, but it won't be right all the time. After all, it just takes its best guess as to your intentions. It will also frequently add more constraints than strictly necessary for the job, so use it with care.

Before we leave Interface Builder, I'd like you to add an outlet for the image view and the slider, called respectively **imageView** and **intensity**. Please also create actions from the two buttons, calling methods **changeFilter()** and **save()**. You can leave these methods with no code inside them for now.

Designing the interface

Finally, we want the user interface to update when the slider is dragged, so please create an action from the slider. It should give you the "Value Changed" event rather than Touch Up Inside, and that's what we want. Call the action's method **intensityChanged()**.

That's it for the storyboard, so bring up ViewController.swift and let's start coding...

Importing a picture

We already have two outlets at the top of our class: one for the image view and one for the slider. We need another property, in which we will store a **UIImage** containing the image that the user selected. So, add this beneath the two outlets:

```
var currentImage: UIImage!
```

Our first task will be to import a photo from the user's photo library. This is almost identical to project 10, so I'm going to explain only the important bits. If you missed project 10, you should have paid heed to my warning not to skip projects!

First we need to add a button to the navigation bar that will allow users to import a photo from their library. Put these two lines into your **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
title = "YACIFP"  
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =  
UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target: self,  
action: #selector(importPicture))
```

Alright, so the first one isn't needed – it just sets the title to be YACIFP, short for "Yet Another Core Image Filters Program." (Spoiler: the App Store is full of them!) If you're feeling a bit less cynical than me, try "Instafilter" for a title instead. But what matters is the second line, because it starts the import process.

Here's the **importPicture()** method – it's almost identical to the import method from project 10, so again no explaining required:

```
@objc func importPicture() {  
    let picker = UIImagePickerController()  
    picker.allowsEditing = true  
    picker.delegate = self  
    present(picker, animated: true)  
}
```

You should remember that the first time you use a **UIImagePickerController** iOS will ask the user for permission to read their photo library, which means we need to add a text string describing our intent. So, open Info.plist, select any item, click +, then choose the key name “Privacy - Photo Library Additions Usage Description”. Give it the value “We need to import photos” then press return.

Once you assign our view controller to be the image picker's delegate, you'll get warnings that we don't conform to the correct protocols. Fix that by changing the view controller's class definition to this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController,  
UIImagePickerControllerDelegate, UINavigationControllerDelegate  
{
```

Again, this is identical to project 10.

As before, we need to implement a method for when the user selected a picture using the image picker. This code is almost verbatim from project 10, so it should all be old news to you:

```
func imagePickerController(_ picker: UIImagePickerController,  
didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo info:  
[UIImagePickerController.InfoKey : Any]) {  
    guard let image = info[.editedImage] as? UIImage else  
    { return }  
  
    dismiss(animated: true)  
  
    currentImage = image  
}
```

There is one slight change in there, and it's where we set our **currentImage** image to be the one selected in the image picker. This is required so that we can have a copy of what was

Project 13: Instafilter

originally imported. Whenever the user changes filter, we need to put that original image back into the filter.

This has all been old code, so nothing too taxing. But now it's time for Core Image!

Applying filters: CIContext, CIFilter

You're probably getting tired of hearing me saying this, but Core Image is yet another super-fast and super-powerful framework from Apple. It does only one thing, which is to apply filters to images that manipulate them in various ways.

One downside to Core Image is it's not very *guessable*, so you need to know what you're doing otherwise you'll waste a lot of time. It's also not able to rely on large parts of Swift's type safety, so you need to be careful when using it because the compiler won't help you as much as you're used to.

To get started, import CoreImage by adding this line near the top of ViewController.swift:

```
import CoreImage
```

We need to add two more properties to our class, so put these underneath the **currentImage** property:

```
var context: CIContext!
var currentFilter: CIFilter!
```

The first is a Core Image context, which is the Core Image component that handles rendering. We create it here and use it throughout our app, because creating a context is computationally expensive so we don't want to keep doing it.

The second is a Core Image filter, and will store whatever filter the user has activated. This filter will be given various input settings before we ask it to output a result for us to show in the image view.

We want to create both of these in **viewDidLoad()**, so put this just before the end of the method:

Project 13: Instafilter

```
context = CIContext()
currentFilter = CIFilter(name: "CISepiaTone")
```

That creates a default Core Image context, then creates an example filter that will apply a sepia tone effect to images. It's just for now; we'll let users change it soon enough.

To begin with, we're going to let users drag the slider up and down to add varying amounts of sepia effect to the image they select.

To do that, we need to set our **currentImage** property as the input image for the **currentFilter** Core Image filter. We're then going to call a method (as yet unwritten) called **applyProcessing()**, which will do the actual Core Image manipulation.

So, add this to the end of the **didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo** method:

```
let beginImage = CIImage(image: currentImage)
currentFilter.setValue(beginImage, forKey: kCIInputImageKey)

applyProcessing()
```

You'll get an error for **applyProcessing()** because we haven't written it yet, but we'll get there soon.

The **CIImage** data type is, for the sake of this project, just the Core Image equivalent of **UIImage**. Behind the scenes it's a bit more complicated than that, but really it doesn't matter.

As you can see, we can create a **CIImage** from a **UIImage**, and we send the result into the current Core Image Filter using the **kCIInputImageKey**. There are lots of Core Image key constants like this; at least this one is somewhat self-explanatory!

We also need to call the (still unwritten!) **applyProcessing()** method when the slider is dragged around, so modify the **intensityChanged()** method to this:

```
@IBAction func intensityChanged(_ sender: Any) {
```

```
    applyProcessing()
}
```

With these changes, `applyProcessing()` is called as soon as the image is first imported, then whenever the slider is moved. Now it's time to write the initial version of the `applyProcessing()` method, so put this just before the end of your class:

```
func applyProcessing() {
    guard let image = currentFilter.outputImage else { return }
    currentFilter.setValue(intensity.value, forKey:
        kCIInputIntensityKey)

    if let cgimg = context.createCGImage(image, from:
        image.extent) {
        let processedImage = UIImage(cgImage: cgimg)
        imageView.image = processedImage
    }
}
```

That's only five lines, none of which are terribly taxing.

The first line safely reads the output image from our current filter. This should always exist, but there's no harm being safe.

The second line uses the value of our `intensity` slider to set the `kCIInputIntensityKey` value of our current Core Image filter. For sepia toning a value of 0 means "no effect" and 1 means "fully sepia."

The third line is where the hard work happens: it creates a new data type called `CGImage` from the output image of the current filter. We need to specify which part of the image we want to render, but using `image.extent` means "all of it." Until this method is called, no actual processing is done, so this is the one that does the real work. This returns an optional `CGImage` so we need to check and unwrap with `if let`.

Project 13: Instafilter

The fourth line creates a new **UIImage** from the **CGImage**, and line five assigns that **UIImage** to our image view. Yes, I know that **UIImage**, **CGImage** and **CIIImage** all sound the same, but they are different under the hood and we have no choice but to use them here.

You can now press Cmd+R to run the project as-is, then import a picture and make it sepia toned. It might be a little slow in the simulator, but I can promise you it runs brilliantly on devices - Core Image is extraordinarily fast.

Adding a sepia effect isn't very interesting, and I want to help you explore some of the other options presented by Core Image. So, we're going to make the "Change Filter" button work: it will show a **UIAlertController** with a selection of filters, and when the user selects one it will update the image.

First, here's the new **changeFilter()** method:

```
@IBAction func changeFilter(_ sender: Any) {
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Choose filter", message:
nil, preferredStyle: .actionSheet)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "CIBumpDistortion",
style: .default, handler: setFilter))
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "CIGaussianBlur",
style: .default, handler: setFilter))
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "CIPixellate",
style: .default, handler: setFilter))
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "CISepiaTone",
style: .default, handler: setFilter))
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "CITwirlDistortion",
style: .default, handler: setFilter))
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "CIUnsharpMask",
style: .default, handler: setFilter))
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "CIVignette",
style: .default, handler: setFilter))
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Cancel", style: .cancel))
```

```
    present(ac, animated: true)
}
```

That's seven different Core Image filters plus one cancel button, but no new code. When tapped, each of the filter buttons will call the `setFilter()` method, which we need to make. This method should update our `currentFilter` property with the filter that was chosen, set the `kCIInputImageKey` key again (because we just changed the filter), then call `applyProcessing()`.

Each `UIAlertAction` has its title set to a different Core Image filter, and because our `setFilter()` method must accept as its only parameter the action that was tapped, we can use the action's title to create our new Core Image filter. Here's the `setFilter()` method:

```
func setFilter(action: UIAlertAction) {
    // make sure we have a valid image before continuing!
    guard currentImage != nil else { return }

    // safely read the alert action's title
    guard let actionTitle = action.title else { return }

    currentFilter = CIFilter(name: actionTitle)

    let beginImage = CIImage(image: currentImage)
    currentFilter.setValue(beginImage, forKey: kCIInputImageKey)

    applyProcessing()
}
```

But don't run the project yet! Our current code has a problem, and it's this line:

```
currentFilter.setValue(intensity.value, forKey:
kCIInputIntensityKey)
```

Project 13: Instafilter

That sets the intensity of the current filter. But the problem is that not all filters have an intensity setting. If you try this using the **CIBumpDistortion** filter, the app will crash because it doesn't know what to do with a setting for the key **kCIIInputIntensityKey**.

All the filters and the keys they use are described fully in Apple's documentation, but for this project we're going to take a shortcut. There are four input keys we're going to manipulate across seven different filters. Sometimes the keys mean different things, and sometimes the keys don't exist, so we're going to apply only the keys that do exist with some cunning code.

Each filter has an **inputKeys** property that returns an array of all the keys it can support. We're going to use this array in conjunction with the **contains()** method to see if each of our input keys exist, and, if it does, use it. Not all of them expect a value between 0 and 1, so I sometimes multiply the slider's value to make the effect more pronounced.

Change your **applyProcessing()** method to be this:

```
func applyProcessing() {
    let inputKeys = currentFilter.inputKeys

    if inputKeys.contains(kCIIInputIntensityKey)
    { currentFilter.setValue(intensity.value, forKey:
        kCIIInputIntensityKey) }

    if inputKeys.contains(kCIIInputRadiusKey)
    { currentFilter.setValue(intensity.value * 200, forKey:
        kCIIInputRadiusKey) }

    if inputKeys.contains(kCIIInputScaleKey)
    { currentFilter.setValue(intensity.value * 10, forKey:
        kCIIInputScaleKey) }

    if inputKeys.contains(kCIIInputCenterKey)
    { currentFilter.setValue(CIVector(x: currentImage.size.width /
        2, y: currentImage.size.height / 2), forKey:
        kCIIInputCenterKey) }
```

```
if let cgimg =  
context.createCGImage(currentFilter.outputImage!, from:  
currentFilter.outputImage!.extent) {  
    let processedImage = UIImage(cgImage: cgimg)  
    self.imageView.image = processedImage  
}  
}
```

Using this method, we check each of our four keys to see whether the current filter supports it, and, if so, we set the value. The first three all use the value from our **intensity** slider in some way, which will produce some interesting results. If you wanted to improve this app later, you could perhaps add three sliders.

If you run your app now, you should be able to choose from various filters then watch them distort your image in weird and wonderful ways. Note that some of them – such as the Gaussian blur – will run very slowly in the simulator, but quickly on devices. If we wanted to do more complex processing (not least chaining filters together!) you can add configuration options to the **CIContext** to make it run even faster; another time, perhaps.

Saving to the iOS photo library

I know it's fun to play around with Core Image filters (and you've only seen some of them!), but we have a project to finish so I want to introduce you to a new function:

UIImageWriteToSavedPhotosAlbum(). This method does exactly what its name says: give it a **UIImage** and it will write the image to the photo album.

This method takes four parameters: the image to write, who to tell when writing has finished, what method to call, and any context. The context is just like the context value you can use with KVO, as seen in project 4, and again we're not going to use it here. The first two parameters are quite simple: we know what image we want to save (the processed one in the image view), and we also know that we want **self** (the current view controller) to be notified when writing has finished.

The third parameter can be provided in two ways: vague and clean, or specific and ugly. It needs to be a selector that lists the method in our view controller that will be called, and it's specified using **#selector**. The method it will call will look like this:

```
func image(_ image: UIImage, didFinishSavingWithError error: Error?, contextInfo: UnsafeRawPointer) { }
```

Previously we've had very simple selectors, like **#selector(shareTapped)**. And we can use that approach here – Swift allows us to be really vague about the selector we intend to call, and this works just fine:

```
#selector(image)
```

Yes, that approach is nice and easy to read, but it's also very vague: it doesn't say what is actually going to happen. The alternative is to be very specific about the method we want called, so you can write this:

```
#selector(image(_:didFinishSavingWithError:contextInfo:))
```

This second option is longer, but provides much more information both to Xcode and to other people reading your code, so it's generally preferred. To be honest, this particular callback is a bit of a wart in iOS, but the fact that it stands out so much is testament to the fact that there are so few warts around!

Putting it all together, here's the finished `save()` method:

```
@IBAction func save(_ sender: Any) {
    guard let image = imageView.image else { return }

    UIImageWriteToSavedPhotosAlbum(image, self,
#selector(image(_:didFinishSavingWithError:contextInfo:)), nil)
}
```

From here on it's easy, because we just need to write the `didFinishSavingWithError` method. This must show one of two messages depending on whether we get an error sent to us. The error might be, for example, that the user denied us permission to write to the photo album. This will be sent as an `Error?` object, so if it's `nil` we know there was no error.

This parameter is important because if an error has occurred (i.e., the `error` parameter is not `nil`) then we need to unwrap the `Error` object and use its `localizedDescription` property – this will tell users what the error message was in their own language.

```
@objc func image(_ image: UIImage, didFinishSavingWithError
error: Error?, contextInfo: UnsafeRawPointer) {
    if let error = error {
        // we got back an error!
        let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Save error", message:
error.localizedDescription, preferredStyle: .alert)
        ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
        present(ac, animated: true)
    } else {
```

Project 13: Instafilter

```
        let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Saved!", message:  
"Your altered image has been saved to your photos.",  
preferredStyle: .alert)  
        ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))  
        present(ac, animated: true)  
    }  
}
```

And that's it: your app now imports pictures, manipulates them with a Core Image filter and a **UISlider**, then saves the result back to the photo library. Easy!

Wrap up

This has been the briefest possible introduction to Core Image, yet we still managed to make something useful, using **UISlider** for the first time and even writing images to the photo album.

Unless you really do intend to make Yet Another Core Image Filters Program (best of luck!) your use of Core Image will mostly be about manipulating a picture in a very specific way, using a filter you have hand-crafted to look great.

If you want to try other filters, search on Google for "Core Image Filter Reference" and have a read – it will list the input keys for each of them so that you can get really fine-grained control over the filters.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 13.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Try making the Save button show an error if there was no image in the image view.
2. Make the Change Filter button change its title to show the name of the currently selected filter.
3. Experiment with having more than one slider, to control each of the input keys you care about. For example, you might have one for radius and one for intensity.

Project 14

Whack-a-Penguin

Build a game using SKCropNode and a sprinkling of Grand Central Dispatch.

Setting up

It's time for another game, and we'll be using more of SpriteKit to build a whack-a-mole game, except with penguins because Whack-a-Penguin isn't trademarked. You're going to learn about **SKCropNode**, **SKTexture** and some more types of **SKAction**, and we'll also use more GCD to execute closures after a delay.

Create a new SpriteKit game project in Xcode, named Project14 and targeting landscape iPads, then delete most of the example code just like you did in project 11 – you want the same clean project, with no “Hello World” template content.

If you don't remember all the steps, here's the abridged version:

- Delete Actions.sks.
- Open GameScene.sks and delete the “Hello World” label.
- Change the scene's anchor point to X:0 Y:0, its width to 1024 and its height to 768.

Finally, remove almost everything in GameScene.swift so that it looks like this:

```
import SpriteKit

class GameScene: SKScene {
    override func didMove(to view: SKView) {
    }

    override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    }
}
```

I won't be repeating those instructions again from now on.

Now download the files for this project from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>) and copy the assets from the Content folder into your Xcode project.

Project 14: Whack-a-Penguin

All set? Open up GameScene.swift and get whacking!

Reminder: When working with SpriteKit projects I strongly recommend you use a device if possible. If you don't have a physical iPad to hand, use the lowest-spec iPad simulator rather than something like the 12.9-inch iPad Pro – you'll get much slightly frame rates, making it much more suitable for testing.

Getting up and running: SKCropNode

We already went over the basics of SpriteKit in project 11, so this time we're going to move a little faster – add these two properties to your **GameScene** class:

```
var gameScore: SKLabelNode!
var score = 0 {
    didSet {
        gameScore.text = "Score: \(score)"
    }
}
```

Blah blah property observers blah – this is old stuff to a Swift veteran like you, so I don't need to explain what that does.

Now modify your **didMove(to:)** method so it reads this:

```
override func didMove(to view: SKView) {
    let background = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "whackBackground")
    background.position = CGPoint(x: 512, y: 384)
    background.blendMode = .replace
    background.zPosition = -1
    addChild(background)

    gameScore = SKLabelNode(fontNamed: "Chalkduster")
    gameScore.text = "Score: 0"
    gameScore.position = CGPoint(x: 8, y: 8)
    gameScore.horizontalAlignmentMode = .left
    gameScore.fontSize = 48
    addChild(gameScore)
}
```

Project 14: Whack-a-Penguin

If you run the "game" now you'll see a grassy background with a tree on one side, plus the score label at the bottom left. We're going to be doing much more with that in a moment, but first we need to fix one small but important bug: our game will look wrong on certain devices.

We set our game scene to have the size 1024x768, which will be sized correctly for most iPads. However, the 11-inch iPad Pro is a little bit special: it has an aspect ratio that's ever so slightly different from the other iPads, and the default behavior of our Xcode template is to stretch the game so the edges get cut off.

Very often that solution is perfectly fine – the difference is only very slight, after all – but in this case we can ask SpriteKit to gently stretch our scene so that it fits the device dimensions no matter what aspect ratio.

To do that, open GameViewController.swift and find this line of code:

```
scene.scaleMode = .aspectFill
```

Now modify it to this:

```
scene.scaleMode = .fill
```

If you run the game again you'll see it looks identical on iPad, iPad Air, and iPad Pro 12.9-inch, but it is ever so slightly stretched on the 11-inch iPad Pro – imperceptible, really, but it avoids our score lying off the screen.

Now that the small layout bug is fixed, the next job is to fill our game scene with holes, with a penguin in each hole. We want each hole to do as much work itself as possible, so rather than clutter our game scene with code we're going to create a subclass of **SKNode** that will encapsulate all hole related functionality.

Add a new file, choosing iOS > Source > Cocoa Touch Class, make it a subclass of **SKNode** and name it "WhackSlot". You've already met **SKSpriteNode**, **SKLabelNode** and **SKEmitterNode**, and they all come from **SKNode**. This base class doesn't draw images like

sprites or hold text like labels; it just sits in our scene at a position, holding other nodes as children.

Note: If you were wondering why we're not calling the class **WhackHole** it's because a slot is more than just a hole. It will contain a hole, yes, but it will also contain the penguin image and more.

When you create the subclass you will immediately get a compile error, because Swift claims not to know what **SKNode** is. This is easily fixed by adding the line **import SpriteKit** at the top of your file, just above the **import UIKit**.

To begin with, all we want the **WhackSlot** class to do is add a hole at its current position, so add this method to your new class:

```
func configure(at position: CGPoint) {
    self.position = position

    let sprite = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "whackHole")
    addChild(sprite)
}
```

You might wonder why we aren't using an initializer for this purpose, but the truth is that if you created a custom initializer you get roped into creating others because of Swift's **required init** rules. If you don't create any custom initializers (and don't have any non-optional properties) Swift will just use the parent class's **init()** methods.

We want to create four rows of slots, with five slots in the top row, then four in the second, then five, then four. This creates quite a pleasing shape, but as we're creating lots of slots we're going to need three things:

1. An array in which we can store all our slots for referencing later.
2. A **createSlot(at:)** method that handles slot creation.
3. Four loops, one for each row.

Project 14: Whack-a-Penguin

The first item is easy enough – just add this property above the existing **gameScore** definition in GameScene.swift:

```
var slots = [WhackSlot]()
```

As for number two, that's not hard either – we need to create a method that accepts a position, then creates a **WhackSlot** object, calls its **configure(at:)** method, then adds the slot both to the scene and to our array:

```
func createSlot(at position: CGPoint) {
    let slot = WhackSlot()
    slot.configure(at: position)
    addChild(slot)
    slots.append(slot)
}
```

The only moderately hard part of this task is the four loops that call **createSlot(at:)** because you need to figure out what positions to use for the slots. Fortunately for you, I already did the design work, so I can tell you exactly where the slots should go! Put this just before the end of **didMove(to:)**:

```
for i in 0 ..< 5 { createSlot(at: CGPoint(x: 100 + (i * 170),
y: 410)) }
for i in 0 ..< 4 { createSlot(at: CGPoint(x: 180 + (i * 170),
y: 320)) }
for i in 0 ..< 5 { createSlot(at: CGPoint(x: 100 + (i * 170),
y: 230)) }
for i in 0 ..< 4 { createSlot(at: CGPoint(x: 180 + (i * 170),
y: 140)) }
```

Remember that higher Y values in SpriteKit place nodes towards the top of the scene, so those lines create the uppermost slots first then work downwards.

In case you've forgotten, `..i` is the half-open range operator, meaning that the first loop will count 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 then stop. The `i` is useful because we use that to calculate the X position of each slot.

So far this has all been stuff you've done before, so I tried to get through it as fast as I could. But it's now time to try something new: **SKCropNode**. This is a special kind of **SKNode** subclass that uses an image as a cropping mask: anything in the colored part will be visible, anything in the transparent part will be invisible.

By default, nodes don't crop, they just form part of a node tree. The reason we need the crop node is to hide our penguins: we need to give the impression that they are inside the holes, sliding out for the player to whack, and the easiest way to do that is just to have a crop mask shaped like the hole that makes the penguin invisible when it moves outside the mask.

The easiest way to demonstrate the need for **SKCropNode** is to give it a **nil** mask – this will effectively stop the crop node from doing anything, thus allowing you to see the trick behind our game.

In `WhackSlot.swift`, add a property to your class in which we'll store the penguin picture node:

```
var charNode: SKSpriteNode!
```

Now add this just before the end of the **configure(at:)** method:

```
let cropNode = SKCropNode()
cropNode.position = CGPoint(x: 0, y: 15)
cropNode.zPosition = 1
cropNode.maskNode = nil

charNode = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "penguinGood")
charNode.position = CGPoint(x: 0, y: -90)
charNode.name = "character"
cropNode.addChild(charNode)
```

Project 14: Whack-a-Penguin

```
addChild(cropNode)
```

Some parts of that are old and some are new, but all bear explaining.

First, we create a new **SKCropNode** and position it slightly higher than the slot itself. The number 15 isn't random – it's the exact number of points required to make the crop node line up perfectly with the hole graphics. We also give the crop node a **zPosition** value of 1, putting it to the front of other nodes, which stops it from appearing behind the hole.

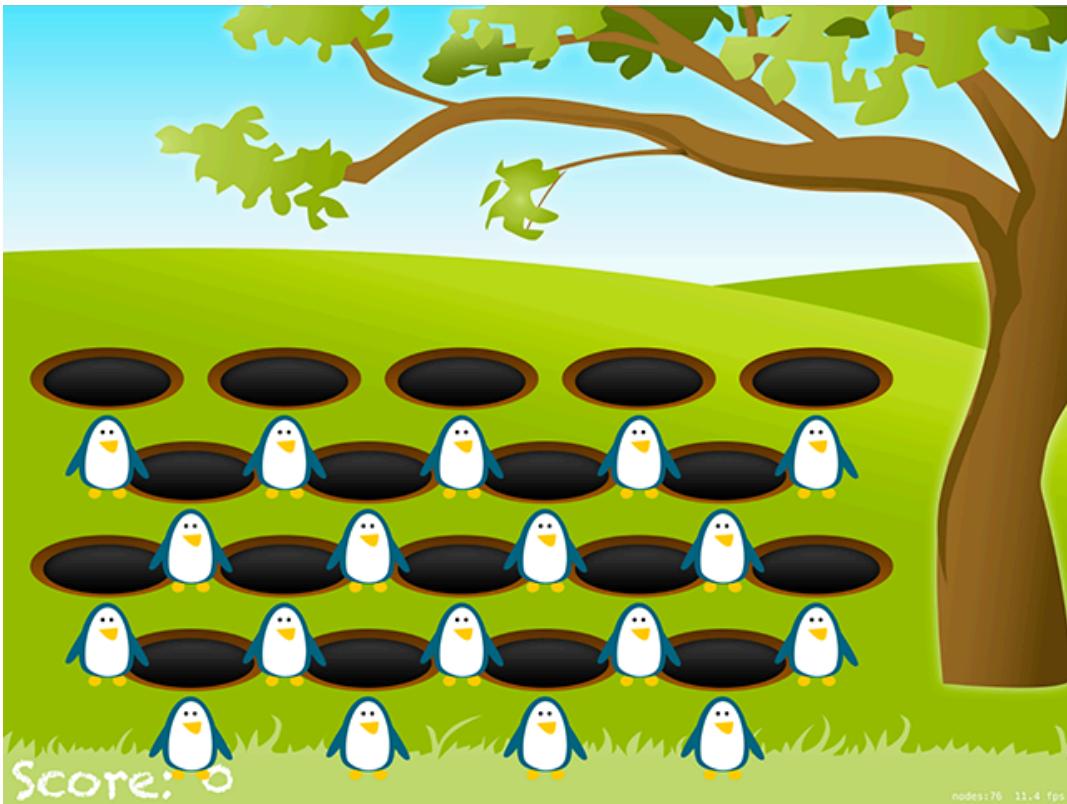
We then do something that, right now, means nothing: we set the **maskNode** property of the crop node to be **nil**, which is the default value. It's there because we'll be changing it in just a moment.

We then create the character node, giving it the "good penguin" graphic, which is a blue color – the bad penguins are red, presumably because they are bubbling over with hellfire or something. This is placed at -90, which is way below the hole as if the penguin were properly hiding. And by "properly" you should read "bizarrely" because penguins aren't exactly known for hiding in holes in the countryside!

I hope you noticed the important thing, which is that the character node is added to the crop node, and the crop node was added to the slot. This is because the crop node only crops nodes that are inside it, so we need to have a clear hierarchy: the slot has the hole and crop node as children, and the crop node has the character node as a child.

If you run the game now you'll see that every hole now has a penguin directly beneath it. This is where the penguin is hiding, "in the hole", or at least would be if we gave the crop node a mask graphic. Now is probably a good time to select the whackMask.png graphic in the project navigator – it's a red square with a curved bottom to match the rim of the hole.

Getting up and running: SKCropNode



Remember, with crop nodes everything with a color is visible, and everything transparent is invisible, so the whackMask.png will show all parts of the character that are above the hole. Change the **maskNode = nil** line to load the actual mask instead:

```
cropNode.maskNode = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "whackMask")
```

If you run the game now, you'll see the penguins are invisible. They are still there, of course, but now can't be seen.

Penguin, show thyself: SKAction moveBy(x:y:duration:)

We want the slots to manage showing and hiding penguins themselves as needed, which means we need to give them some properties and methods of their own.

The two things a slot needs to know are "am I currently visible to be whacked by the player?" and "have I already been hit?" The former avoids players tapping on slots that are supposed to be invisible; the latter so that players can't whack a penguin more than once.

To track this data, put these two properties at the top of your **WhackSlot** class:

```
var isVisible = false  
var isHit = false
```

Showing a penguin for the player to tap on will be handled by a new method called **show()**. This will make the character slide upwards so it becomes visible, then set **isVisible** to be true and **isHit** to be false. The movement is going to be created by a new **SKAction**, called **moveBy(x:y:duration:)**.

This method will also decide whether the penguin is good or bad – i.e., whether the player should hit it or not. This will be done using Swift's **Int.random()** method: one-third of the time the penguin will be good; the rest of the time it will be bad.

To make it clear to the player which is which, we have two different pictures: `penguinGood` and `penguinEvil`. We can change the image inside our penguin sprite by changing its **texture** property. This takes a new class called **SKTexture**, which is to **SKSpriteNode** sort of what **UIImage** is to **UIImageView** – it holds image data, but isn't responsible for showing it.

Changing the character node's texture like this is helpful because it means we don't need to keep adding and removing nodes. Instead, we can just change the texture to match what kind of penguin this is, then change the node name to match so we can do tap detection later on.

Penguin, show thyself: SKAction moveBy(x:y:duration:)

However, all the above should only happen if the slot isn't already visible, because it could cause havoc. So, the very first thing the method needs to do is check whether **isVisible** is true, and if so exit.

Enough talk; here's the **show()** method:

```
func show(hideTime: Double) {
    if isVisible { return }

    charNode.run(SKAction.moveBy(x: 0, y: 80, duration: 0.05))
    isVisible = true
    isHit = false

    if Int.random(in: 0...2) == 0 {
        charNode.texture = SKTexture(imageNamed: "penguinGood")
        charNode.name = "charFriend"
    } else {
        charNode.texture = SKTexture(imageNamed: "penguinEvil")
        charNode.name = "charEnemy"
    }
}
```

You may have noticed that I made the method accept a parameter called **hideTime**. This is for later, to avoid having to rewrite too much code.

The **show()** method is going to be triggered by the view controller on a recurring basis, managed by a property we're going to create called **popupTime**. This will start at 0.85 (create a new enemy a bit faster than once a second), but every time we create an enemy we'll also decrease **popupTime** so that the game gets harder over time.

First, the easy bit: add this property to GameScene.swift:

```
var popupTime = 0.85
```

Project 14: Whack-a-Penguin

To jump start the process, we need to call **createEnemy()** once when the game starts, then have **createEnemy()** call itself thereafter. Clearly we don't want to start creating enemies as soon as the game starts, because the player needs a few moments to orient themselves so they have a chance.

So, in **didMove(to:)** we're going to call the (as yet unwritten) **createEnemy()** method after a delay. This requires some new Grand Central Dispatch (GCD) code: **asyncAfter()** is used to schedule a closure to execute after the time has been reached.

Here's how the code looks to run a closure after a delay:

```
DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() + 1) { [weak  
self] in  
    self?.doStuff()  
}
```

The deadline parameter to **asyncAfter()** means “1 second after now,” giving us the 1-second delay.

Now, onto the **createEnemy()** method. This will do several things:

- Decrease **popupTime** each time it's called. I'm going to multiply it by 0.991 rather than subtracting a fixed amount, otherwise the game gets far too fast.
- Shuffle the list of available slots using the **shuffle()** method we've used previously.
- Make the first slot show itself, passing in the current value of **popupTime** for the method to use later.
- Generate four random numbers to see if more slots should be shown. Potentially up to five slots could be shown at once.
- Call itself again after a random delay. The delay will be between **popupTime** halved and **popupTime** doubled. For example, if **popupTime** was 2, the random number would be between 1 and 4.

There are only two new things in there. First, I'll be using the *= operator to multiply and

Penguin, show thyself: SKAction moveBy(x:y:duration:)

assign at the same time, in the same way that `+=` meant "add and assign" in project 2. Second, I'll be using the **RandomDouble()** function to generate a random **Double** value, which is what **asyncAfter()** uses for its delay.

Here's the method to create enemies:

```
func createEnemy() {
    popupTime *= 0.991

    slots.shuffle()
    slots[0].show(hideTime: popupTime)

    if Int.random(in: 0...12) > 4 { slots[1].show(hideTime:
        popupTime) }
    if Int.random(in: 0...12) > 8 { slots[2].show(hideTime:
        popupTime) }
    if Int.random(in: 0...12) > 10 { slots[3].show(hideTime:
        popupTime) }
    if Int.random(in: 0...12) > 11 { slots[4].show(hideTime:
        popupTime) }

    let minDelay = popupTime / 2.0
    let maxDelay = popupTime * 2
    let delay = Double.random(in: minDelay...maxDelay)

    DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() + delay)
    { [weak self] in
        self?.createEnemy()
    }
}
```

Because **createEnemy()** calls itself, all we have to do is call it once in **didMove(to:)** after a brief delay. Put this just before the end of the method:

Project 14: Whack-a-Penguin

```
DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() + 1) { [weak  
self] in  
    self?.createEnemy()  
}
```

From then on, we don't have to worry about it because `createEnemy()` will call itself.

Before we're done, we need to upgrade the **WhackSlot** class to include a `hide()` method. If you run the code now, you'll see that the penguins appear nice and randomly, but they never actually go away. We're already passing a `hideTime` parameter to the `show()` method, and we're going to use that so the slots hide themselves after they have been visible for a time.

We could of course just make the slots hide after a fixed time, but that's no fun. By using `popupTime` as the input for hiding delay, we know the penguins will hide themselves more quickly over time.

First, add this method to the **WhackSlot** class:

```
func hide() {  
    if !isVisible { return }  
  
    charNode.run(SKAction.moveBy(x: 0, y: -80, duration: 0.05))  
    isVisible = false  
}
```

That just undoes the results of `show()`: the penguin moves back down the screen into its hole, then its `isVisible` property is set to false.

We want to trigger this method automatically after a period of time, and, through extensive testing (that is, sitting around playing) I have determined the optimal hide time to be 3.5x `popupTime`.

So, put this code at end of `show()`:

Penguin, show thyself: SKAction moveBy(x:y:duration:)

```
DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() + (hideTime *  
3.5)) { [weak self] in  
    self?.hide()  
}
```

Go ahead and run the app, because it's really starting to come together: the penguins show randomly, sometimes by themselves and sometimes in groups, then hide after a period of being visible. But you can't hit them, which means this game is more Watch-a-Penguin than Whack-a-Penguin. Let's fix that!

Whack to win: SKAction sequences

To bring this project to a close, we still need to do two major components: letting the player tap on a penguin to score, then letting the game end after a while. Right now it never ends, so with **popupTime** getting lower and lower it means the game will become impossible after a few minutes.

We're going to add a **hit()** method to the **WhackSlot** class that will handle hiding the penguin. This needs to wait for a moment (so the player still sees what they tapped), move the penguin back down again, then set the penguin to be invisible again.

We're going to use an **SKAction** for each of those three things, which means you need to learn some new uses of the class:

- **SKAction.wait(forDuration:)** creates an action that waits for a period of time, measured in seconds.
- **SKAction.run(block:)** will run any code we want, provided as a closure. "Block" is Objective-C's name for a Swift closure.
- **SKAction.sequence()** takes an array of actions, and executes them in order. Each action won't start executing until the previous one finished.

We need to use **SKAction.run(block:)** in order to set the penguin's **isVisible** property to be false rather than doing it directly, because we want it to fit into the sequence. Using this technique, it will only be changed when that part of the sequence is reached.

Put this method into the **WhackSlot** class:

```
func hit() {  
    isHit = true  
  
    let delay = SKAction.wait(forDuration: 0.25)  
    let hide = SKAction.moveBy(x: 0, y: -80, duration: 0.5)  
}
```

```

let notVisible = SKAction.run { [unowned self] in
    self.isVisible = false
}
charNode.run(SKAction.sequence([delay, hide, notVisible]))
}

```

With that new method in place, we can call it from the **touchesBegan()** method in GameScene.swift. This method needs to figure out what was tapped using the same **nodes(at:)** method you saw in project 11: find any touch, find out where it was tapped, then get a node array of all nodes at that point in the scene.

We then need to loop through the list of all nodes that are at that point, and see if they have the name "charFriend" or "charEnemy" and take the appropriate action. Rather than dump all the code on you at once, here's the basic outline of **touchesBegan()** to start with:

```

override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    guard let touch = touches.first else { return }
    let location = touch.location(in: self)
    let tappedNodes = nodes(at: location)

    for node in tappedNodes {
        if node.name == "charFriend" {
            // they shouldn't have whacked this penguin
        } else if node.name == "charEnemy" {
            // they should have whacked this one
        }
    }
}

```

Nothing complicated there – this is all stuff you know already.

What *is* new is what comes in place of those two comments. The first comment marks the code block that will be executed if the player taps a friendly penguin, which is obviously against the

Project 14: Whack-a-Penguin

point of the game.

When this happens, we need to call the **hit()** method to make the penguin hide itself, subtract 5 from the current score, then run an action that plays a "bad hit" sound. All of that should only happen if the slot was visible and not hit.

The code for this block is going to do something interesting that you haven't seen before, and it looks like this:

```
let whackSlot = node.parent?.parent as? WhackSlot
```

It gets the parent of the parent of the node, and typecasts it as a **WhackSlot**. This line is needed because the player has tapped the penguin sprite node, not the slot – we need to get the parent of the penguin, which is the crop node it sits inside, then get the parent of the crop node, which is the **WhackSlot** object, which is what this code does.

You're also going to meet a new piece of code: SKAction's **playSoundFileNamed()** method, which plays a sound and optionally waits for the sound to finish playing before continuing – useful if you're using an action sequence.

We haven't used sound files in iOS yet, but there isn't really a whole lot to say. The three main sound file formats you'll use are MP3, M4A and CAF, with the latter being a renamed AIFF file. AIFF is a pretty terrible file format when it comes to file size, but it's much faster to load and use than MP3s and M4As, so you'll use them often.

Put this code where the `// they shouldn't have whacked this penguin` comment was:

```
guard let whackSlot = node.parent?.parent as? WhackSlot else
{ continue }
if !whackSlot.isVisible { continue }
if whackSlot.isHit { continue }

whackSlot.hit()
score -= 5
```

```
run(SKAction.playSoundFileNamed("whackBad.caf",
waitForCompletion:false))
```

When the player taps a bad penguin, the code is similar. The differences are that we want to add 1 to the score (so that it takes five correct taps to offset one bad one), and run a different sound. But we're also going to set the **xScale** and **yScale** properties of our character node so the penguin visibly shrinks in the scene, as if they had been hit.

Put this code where the **// they should have whacked this one** comment was:

```
guard let whackSlot = node.parent?.parent as? WhackSlot else
{ continue }
if !whackSlot.isVisible { continue }
if whackSlot.isHit { continue }

whackSlot.charNode.xScale = 0.85
whackSlot.charNode.yScale = 0.85

whackSlot.hit()
score += 1

run(SKAction.playSoundFileNamed("whack.caf",
waitForCompletion:false))
```

Since we're now potentially modifying the **xScale** and **yScale** properties of our character node, we need to reset them to 1 inside the **show()** method of the slot. Put this just before the **run()** call inside **show()**:

```
charNode.xScale = 1
charNode.yScale = 1
```

Now, looking at our **touchesBegan()** method in GameScene.swift, you should see we can

Project 14: Whack-a-Penguin

actually move the code around a little to remove duplication. Specifically, checking `isVisible` and `isHit` doesn't need to be done twice, and neither does calling `whackSlot.hit()` – a better idea is to move those lines outside of their conditions, like this:

```
for node in tappedNodes {
    guard let whackSlot = node.parent?.parent as? WhackSlot else
    { continue }
    if !whackSlot.isVisible { continue }
    if whackSlot.isHit { continue }
    whackSlot.hit()

    if node.name == "charFriend" {
        // they shouldn't have whacked this penguin
        score -= 5

        run(SKAction.playSoundFileNamed("whackBad.caf",
waitForCompletion: false))
    } else if node.name == "charEnemy" {
        // they should have whacked this one
        whackSlot.charNode.setScale(0.85)
        whackSlot.charNode.setScale(0.85)
        score += 1

        run(SKAction.playSoundFileNamed("whack.caf",
waitForCompletion: false))
    }
}
```

This game is almost done. Thanks to the property observer we put in early on the game is now perfectly playable, at least until `popupTime` gets so low that the game is effectively unplayable.

To fix this final problem and bring the project to a close, we're going to limit the game to

creating just 30 rounds of enemies. Each round is one call to **createEnemy()**, which means it might create up to five enemies at a time.

First, add this property to the top of your game scene:

```
var numRounds = 0
```

Every time **createEnemy()** is called, we're going to add 1 to the **numRounds** property. When it is greater than or equal to 30, we're going to end the game: hide all the slots, show a "Game over" sprite, then exit the method. Put this code just before the **popupTime** assignment in **createEnemy()**:

```
numRounds += 1

if numRounds >= 30 {
    for slot in slots {
        slot.hide()
    }

    let gameOver = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "gameOver")
    gameOver.position = CGPoint(x: 512, y: 384)
    gameOver.zPosition = 1
    addChild(gameOver)

    return
}
```

That uses a positive **zPosition** so that the game over graphic is placed over other items in our game.

The game is now complete! Go ahead and play it for real and see how you do. If you're using the iOS simulator, bear in mind that it's much hard to move a mouse pointer than it is to use your fingers on a real iPad, so don't adjust the difficulty unless you're testing on a real device!

Wrap up

You have another game under your belt, and I hope your brain is already starting to bubble up ideas for things you can do to improve it. Plus, you learned more skills, not least **SKCropNode**, **SKTexture**, GCD's **asyncAfter()**, plus lots of new **SKAction** types, so it's all time well spent.

Try experimenting with the difficulty and see what you come up with – is it easier or harder if the penguin show/hide animation happens at random speeds?

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 14.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Record your own voice saying "Game over!" and have it play when the game ends.
2. When showing "Game Over" add an **SKLabelNode** showing their final score.
3. Use **SKEmitterNode** to create a smoke-like effect when penguins are hit, and a separate mud-like effect when they go into or come out of a hole.

Project 15

Animation

Bring your interfaces to life with animation, and meet switch/case at the same time.

Setting up

It's time to introduce one of the most important techniques in iOS development: animation. Sadly, many people don't consider animation important at all, which makes for some thoroughly awful user interface design.

Animation – making things move, scale, and so on – of your views is not only about making things pretty, although that's certainly a large part. Its main purpose is to give users a sense of what's changing and why, and it helps them make sense of a state change in your program.

When we use a navigation controller to show a new view controller, we don't just want it to appear. Instead, we want it to slide in, making it clear that the old screen hasn't gone away, it's just to the left of where we were.

You're almost certainly tired of hearing me say this, but iOS has a ridiculously powerful animation toolkit that's also easy to use. I know, I'm a broken record, right?

Well, don't just take my word for it – let's try out some animation together so you can see exactly how it works. So, create a new Single View App project in Xcode, naming it Project15.

Please download the files for this project from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>) and copy its Content folder into your Xcode project. Finally, set it to work on landscape iPads only. Animation of course works on all devices and in all orientations, but it's easier to work with a fixed size for now.

Preparing for action

Open Interface Builder with Main.storyboard and place a button on there with the title "Tap" – position it in the middle of the screen, near the bottom. Don't worry that we're positioning things using an iPhone XR-sized screen – Auto Layout will automatically make it look great on iPads.

We want our button to always stay near the bottom of the view controller, so Ctrl-drag from the button to the view directly below it and choose "Bottom Space to Safe Area." Now Ctrl-drag the same way again and choose "Center Horizontally in Safe Area."

That's it for Auto Layout, so please switch to the assistant view so we can add an action and an outlet. Ctrl-drag from the button to your code to create an action for the button called **tapped()**.

Every time the user taps the "Tap" button, we're going to execute a different animation. This will be accomplished by cycling through a counter, and moving an image view. To make all that work, you need to add two more properties to the class:

```
var imageView: UIImageView!
var currentAnimation = 0
```

There isn't an image view in the storyboard – we're going to create it ourselves in **viewDidLoad()** using an initializer that takes a **UIImage** and makes the image view the correct size for the image.

Add this code to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
imageView = UIImageView(image: UIImage(named: "penguin"))
imageView.center = CGPoint(x: 512, y: 384)
view.addSubview(imageView)
```

That places the penguin in the middle of an iPad-sized landscape screen, ready for us to animate.

Project 15: Animation

There's one more thing we're going to do before we start looking at the animations, and that's to put a little bit of code into the **tapped()** method so that we cycle through animations each time the button is tapped. Put this in there:

```
currentAnimation += 1

if currentAnimation > 7 {
    currentAnimation = 0
}
```

That will add 1 to the value of **currentAnimation** until it reaches 7, at which point it will set it back to 0.

Switch, case, animate: animate(withDuration:)

The **currentAnimation** property can have a value between 0 and 7, each one triggering a different animation. We're going to create a big **switch/case** block inside **tapped()**, but we're going to start small and work our way up – the **default** case will handle any values we don't explicitly catch.

This switch/case statement is going to go inside a new method of the **UIView** class called **animate(withDuration:)**, which is a kind of method you haven't seen before because it actually accepts two closures. The parameters we'll be using are how to long animate for, how long to pause before the animation starts, any options you want to provide, what animations to execute, and finally a closure that will execute when the animation finishes.

Update your **tapped()** method to this:

```
@IBAction func tapped(_ sender: UIButton) {
    sender.isHidden = true

    UIView.animate(withDuration: 1, delay: 0, options: [],
        animations: {
            switch self.currentAnimation {
                case 0:
                    break

                default:
                    break
            }
        }) { finished in
            sender.isHidden = false
    }
}
```

Project 15: Animation

```
currentAnimation += 1

if currentAnimation > 7 {
    currentAnimation = 0
}

}
```

Note: Because we want to show and hide the “Tap” button, we need to make the **sender** parameter to that method be a **UIButton** rather than **Any**.

All that code won't do anything yet, which is remarkable given that it's quite a lot! However, it has put us in a position where we can start dabbling with animations. But first, here's a breakdown of the code:

- When the method begins, we hide the **sender** button so that our animations don't collide; it gets unhidden in the completion closure of the animation.
- We call **animate(withDuration:)** with a duration of 1 second, no delay, and no interesting options.
- For the **animations** closure we *don't* need to use **[weak self]** because there's no risk of strong reference cycles here – the closures passed to **animate(withDuration:)** method will be used once then thrown away.
- We switch using the value of **self.currentAnimation**. We need to use **self** to make the closure capture clear, remember. This **switch/case** does nothing yet, because both possible cases just call **break**.
- We use trailing closure syntax to provide our completion closure. This will be called when the animation completes, and its **finished** value will be true if the animations completed fully.
- As I said, the completion closure unhides the **sender** button so it can be tapped again.
- After the **animate(withDuration:)** call, we have the old code to modify and wrap **currentAnimation**.

If you run the app now and tap the button, you'll notice it doesn't actually hide and show as you

Switch, case, animate: animate(withDuration:)

might expect. This is because UIKit detects that no animation has taken place, so it calls the completion closure straight away.

Transform: CGAffineTransform

Our code now has the perfect structure in place to let us dabble with animations freely, so it's time to learn about **CGAffineTransform**. This is a structure that represents a specific kind of transform that we can apply to any **UIView** object or subclass.

Unless you're into mathematics, affine transforms can seem like a black art. But Apple does provide some great helper functions to make it easier: there are functions to scale up a view, functions to rotate, functions to move, and functions to reset back to default.

All of these functions return a **CGAffineTransform** value that you can put into a view's **transform** property to apply it. As we'll be doing this inside an animation block, the transform will automatically be animated. This illustrates one of the many powerful things of Core Animation: you tell it what you want to happen, and it calculates all the intermediary states automatically.

Let's start with something simple: when we're at **currentAnimation** value 0, we want to make the view 2x its default size. Change the switch/case code to this:

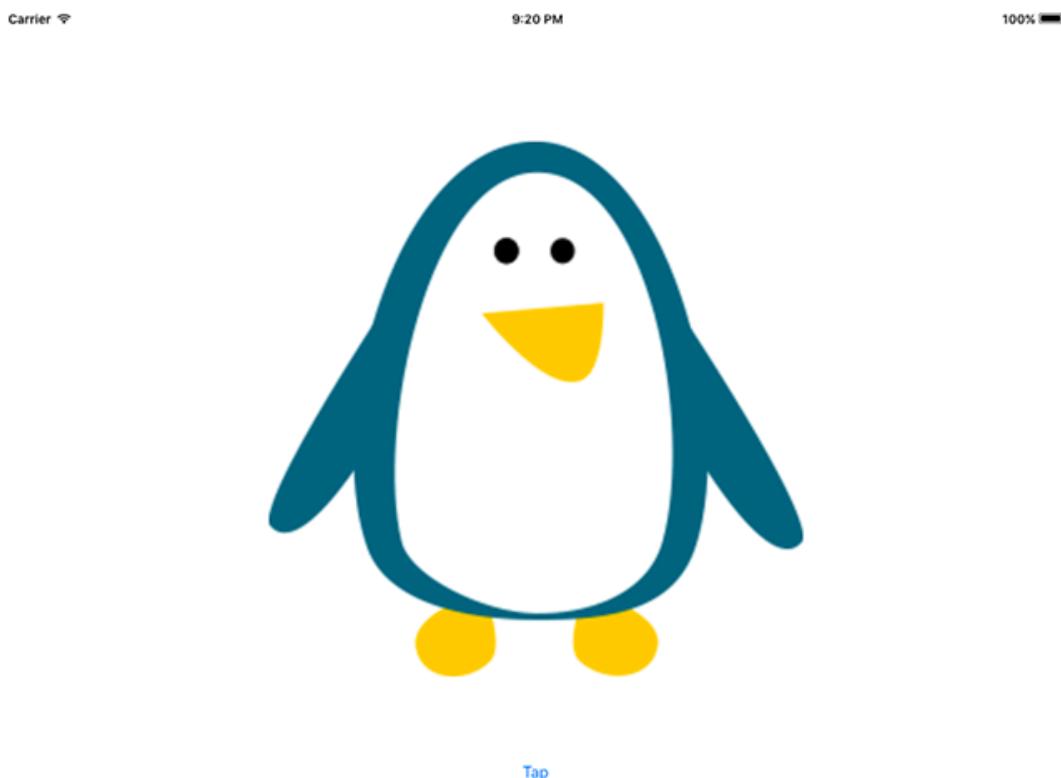
```
switch self.currentAnimation {
    case 0:
        self.imageView.transform = CGAffineTransform(scaleX: 2, y:
2)

    default:
        break
}
```

That uses an initializer for **CGAffineTransform** that takes an X and Y scale value as its two parameters. A value of 1 means "the default size," so **2, 2** will make the view twice its normal width and height. By default, UIKit animations have an "ease in, ease out" curve, which means the movement starts slow, accelerates, then slows down again before reaching the end.

Transform: CGAffineTransform

Run the app now and tap the button to watch the penguin animate from 1x to 2x its size over one second, all by setting the transform inside an animation. You can keep tapping the button as many times more as you want, but nothing else will happen at this time. If you apply a 2x scale transform to a view that already has a 2x scale transform, nothing happens.



The next case is going to be 1, and we're going to use a special existing transform called **CGAffineTransform.identity**, or just **.identity**. This effectively clears our view of any pre-defined transform, resetting any changes that have been applied by modifying its **transform** property.

Add this to the switch/case statement after the existing case:

```
case 1:  
    self.imageView.transform = .identity
```

For the sake of clarity, your code should now read:

Project 15: Animation

```
switch self.currentAnimation {
    case 0:
        self.imageView.transform = CGAffineTransform(scaleX: 2, y: 2)

    case 1:
        self.imageView.transform = .identity

    default:
        break
}
```

With the second case in there, tapping the button repeatedly will first scale the penguin up, then scale it back down (resetting to defaults), then do nothing for lots of taps, then repeat the scale up/scale down. This is because our **currentAnimation** value is told to wrap (return to 0) when it's greater than 7, so the **default** case executes quite a few times.

Let's continue adding more cases: one to move the image view, then another to reset it back to the identity transform:

```
case 2:
    self.imageView.transform = CGAffineTransform(translationX: -256, y: -256)

case 3:
    self.imageView.transform = .identity
```

That uses another new initializer for **CGAffineTransform** that takes X and Y values for its parameters. These values are *deltas*, or differences from the current value, meaning that the above code subtracts 256 from both the current X and Y position.

Tapping the button now will scale up then down, then move and return back to the center, all smoothly animated by Core Animation.

We can also use **CGAffineTransform** to rotate views, using its **rotationAngle** initializer. This accepts one parameter, which is the amount in radians you want to rotate. There are three catches to using this function:

1. You need to provide the value in radians specified as a **CGFloat**. This usually isn't a problem – if you type 1.0 in there, Swift is smart enough to make that a **CGFloat** automatically. If you want to use a value like pi, use **CGFloat.pi**.
2. Core Animation will always take the shortest route to make the rotation work. So, if your object is straight and you rotate to 90 degrees (radians: half of pi), it will rotate clockwise. If your object is straight and you rotate to 270 degrees (radians: pi + half of pi) it will rotate counter-clockwise because it's the smallest possible animation.
3. A consequence of the second catch is that if you try to rotate 360 degrees (radians: pi times 2), Core Animation will calculate the shortest rotation to be "just don't move, because we're already there." The same goes for values over 360, for example if you try to rotate 540 degrees (one and a half full rotations), you'll end up with just a 180-degree rotation.

With all that in mind, here's are two more cases that show off rotation:

```
case 4:
    self.imageView.transform = CGAffineTransform(rotationAngle:
CGFloat.pi)
case 5:
    self.imageView.transform = .identity
```

As well as animating transforms, Core Animation can animate many of the properties of your views. For example, it can animate the background color of the image view, or the level of transparency. You can even change multiple things at once if you want something more complicated to happen.

As an example, to make our view almost fade out then fade back in again while also changing its background color, we're going to modify its transparency by setting its **alpha** value, where 0 is invisible and 1 is fully visible, and also set its **backgroundColor** property – first to green,

Project 15: Animation

then to clear.

Add these two new cases:

```
case 6:  
    self.imageView.alpha = 0.1  
    self.imageView.backgroundColor = UIColor.green  
  
case 7:  
    self.imageView.alpha = 1  
    self.imageView.backgroundColor = UIColor.clear
```

That completes all possible cases, 0 to 7. But Core Animation isn't finished just yet. In fact, we've only scratched its surface in these tests, and there's much more it can do.

To give you the briefest glimpse of its power, replace this line of code:

```
UIView.animate(withDuration: 1, delay: 0, options: [],
```

...with this:

```
UIView.animate(withDuration: 1, delay: 0,  
usingSpringWithDamping: 0.5, initialSpringVelocity: 5, options:  
[],
```

This changes the **animate(withDuration:)** so that it uses spring animations rather than the default, ease-in-ease-out animation. I'm not even going to tell you what this does because I'm sure you're going to be impressed – press Cmd+R to run the app and tap the button for yourself. We're done!

Wrap up

Core Animation is an extraordinary toolkit, and UIKit wraps it in a simple and flexible set of methods. And because it's so simple to use, you really have no excuse for not using it.

In this project you learned about the **animate(withDuration:)** method of **UIView**, spring animations, as well as alpha values and **CGAffineTransform**.

Remember, animation isn't just there to make our apps look pretty – it also helps guide the users eyes. So, if you're moving something around conceptually (e.g., moving an email to a folder, showing a palette of paint brushes, rolling a dice, etc) then move it around *visually* too. Your users will thank you for it!

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 15.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Go back to project 8 and make the letter group buttons fade out when they are tapped. We were using the **isHidden** property, but you'll need to switch to **alpha** because **isHidden** is either true or false, it has no animatable values between.
2. Go back to project 13 and make the image view fade in when a new picture is chosen. To make this work, set the **alpha** to 0 first.
3. Go back to project 2 and make the flags scale down with a little bounce when pressed.

Project 16

Capital Cities

Teach users about geography while you learn about MKMapView and annotations.

Setting up

It's time for another app project, and this time you're going to learn about MapKit: Apple's mapping framework that lets us drop pins, plan routes, and zoom around the world with just a few swipes.

Working with MapKit requires you to learn quite a few new classes, so I've tried to construct a project simple enough that we can focus on the mapping element. In this project you'll make an app that shows the locations of capital cities around the world, and when one of them is tapped you can bring up more information.

Create a new Single View App project in Xcode, naming it Project16. Now go to Interface Builder for your view controller, and embed it inside a navigation controller. Search for "map" in the object library, drop a map view into your view controller so that it occupies the full view, then use Resolve Auto Layout Issues > Add Missing Constraints so that it stays next to each edge.

Now, run your program and you should see a basic map working nicely.

Up and running with MapKit

The default map view works great out of the box – you can pan around, zoom in and out, and so on. If you were wondering, you need to hold down Option to trigger a virtual "pinch" gesture – just click and drag as if you were moving one finger, and the other "finger" will move in the opposite direction.

Using the assistant editor, please create an outlet for your map view called **mapView**. You should also set your view controller to be the delegate of the map view by Ctrl-dragging from the map view to the orange and white view controller button just above the layout area. You will also need to add **import MapKit** to ViewController.swift so it understands what **MKMapView** is.

Note: If you don't set the map's delegate, the rest of this project won't work too well.

With that done, we're going to add some annotations to our map. Annotations are objects that contain a title, a subtitle and a position. The first two are both strings, the third is a new data type called **CLLocationCoordinate2D**, which is a structure that holds a latitude and longitude for where the annotation should be placed.

Map annotations are described not as a class, but as a protocol. This is something you haven't seen before, because so far protocols have all been about methods. But if we want to conform to the **MKAnnotation** protocol, which is the one we need to adopt in order to create map annotations, it states that we *must* have a coordinate in our annotation. That makes sense, because there's no point in having an annotation on a map if we don't know where it is. The title and subtitle are optional, but we'll provide them anyway.

Create a new file and choose iOS > Source > Cocoa Touch Class. Make it a subclass of **NSObject** and name it "Capital". With map annotations, you can't use structs, and you must inherit from **NSObject** because it needs to be interactive with Apple's Objective-C code.

Change the contents of Capital.swift to this:

```
import MapKit
```

```

import UIKit

class Capital: NSObject, MKAnnotation {
    var title: String?
    var coordinate: CLLocationCoordinate2D
    var info: String

    init(title: String, coordinate: CLLocationCoordinate2D,
         info: String) {
        self.title = title
        self.coordinate = coordinate
        self.info = info
    }
}

```

There are our three properties, along with a basic initializer that just copies in the data it's given. Again, we need to use **self.** here because the parameters being passed in are the same name as our properties. I've added **import MapKit** to the file because that's where **MKAnnotation** and **CLLocationCoordinate2D** are defined.

With this custom subclass, we can create capital cities by passing in their name, coordinate and information – I'll be using the **info** property to hold one priceless (read: off-the-cuff, I sucked at geography) informational nugget about each city. You're welcome to do better!

Put these lines into the **viewDidLoad()** method of ViewController.swift:

```

let london = Capital(title: "London", coordinate:
    CLLocationCoordinate2D(latitude: 51.507222, longitude:
    -0.1275), info: "Home to the 2012 Summer Olympics.")
let oslo = Capital(title: "Oslo", coordinate:
    CLLocationCoordinate2D(latitude: 59.95, longitude: 10.75),
    info: "Founded over a thousand years ago.")
let paris = Capital(title: "Paris", coordinate:

```

Project 16: Capital Cities

```
CLLocationCoordinate2D(latitude: 48.8567, longitude: 2.3508),  
info: "Often called the City of Light.")  
let rome = Capital(title: "Rome", coordinate:  
CLLocationCoordinate2D(latitude: 41.9, longitude: 12.5), info:  
"Has a whole country inside it.")  
let washington = Capital(title: "Washington DC", coordinate:  
CLLocationCoordinate2D(latitude: 38.895111, longitude:  
-77.036667), info: "Named after George himself.")
```

These **Capital** objects conform to the **MKAnnotation** protocol, which means we can send it to map view for display using the **addAnnotation()** method. Put this just before the end of **viewDidLoad()**:

```
mapView.addAnnotation(london)  
mapView.addAnnotation(oslo)  
mapView.addAnnotation(paris)  
mapView.addAnnotation(rome)  
mapView.addAnnotation(washington)
```

Alternatively, you can add multiple annotations at once using the **addAnnotations()** method. Using this, you would replace those five lines with this:

```
mapView.addAnnotations([london, oslo, paris, rome, washington])
```

That creates an array out of the annotations and sends it in one lump to the map view.

If you run your program now, you'll see pins on the map for each city, and you can tap any of them to see the city name. But where's the **info** property? To show more information, we need to customize the view used to show the annotations.

Up and running with MapKit



Annotations and accessory views: **MKPinAnnotationView**

Every time the map needs to show an annotation, it calls a **viewFor** method on its delegate. We don't implement that method right now, so the default red pin is used with nothing special – although as you've seen it's smart enough to pull out the title for us.

Customizing an annotation view is a little bit like customizing a table view cell or collection view cell, because iOS automatically reuses annotation views to make best use of memory. If there isn't one available to reuse, we need to create one from scratch using the **MKPinAnnotationView** class.

Our custom annotation view is going to look a lot like the default view, with the exception that we're going to add a button that users can tap for more information. So, they tap the pin to see the city name, then tap its button to see more information. In our case, it's those fascinating facts I spent literally tens of seconds writing.

There are a couple of things you need to be careful of here. First, **viewFor** will be called for your annotations, but also Apple's. For example, if you enable tracking of the user's location then that's shown as an annotation and you don't want to try using it as a capital city. If an annotation is not one of yours, just return **nil** from the method to have Apple's default used instead.

Second, adding a button to the view isn't done using the **addTarget()** method you already saw in project 8. Instead, you just add the button and the map view will send a message to its delegate (us!) when it's tapped.

Here's a breakdown of what the method will do:

1. If the annotation isn't from a capital city, it must return **nil** so iOS uses a default view.
2. Define a reuse identifier. This is a string that will be used to ensure we reuse annotation views as much as possible.
3. Try to dequeue an annotation view from the map view's pool of unused views.

Annotations and accessory views: MKPinAnnotationView

4. If it isn't able to find a reusable view, create a new one using **MKPinAnnotationView** and sets its **canShowCallout** property to true. This triggers the popup with the city name.
5. Create a new **UIButton** using the built-in **.detailDisclosure** type. This is a small blue "i" symbol with a circle around it.
6. If it can reuse a view, update that view to use a different annotation.

We already used Interface Builder to make our view controller the delegate for the map view, but if you want code completion to work you should also update your code to declare that the class conforms. So, in ViewController.swift, find this line:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {
```

And change it to this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController, MKMapViewDelegate {
```

Put this method into your view controller, watching out for my numbered comments:

```
func mapView(_ mapView: MKMapView, viewFor annotation:  
MKAnnotation) -> MKAnnotationView? {  
    // 1  
    guard annotation is Capital else { return nil }  
  
    // 2  
    let identifier = "Capital"  
  
    // 3  
    var annotationView =  
mapView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:  
identifier)  
  
    if annotationView == nil {  
        //4
```

Project 16: Capital Cities

```
annotationView = MKPinAnnotationView(annotation:  
annotation, reuseIdentifier: identifier)  
annotationView?.canShowCallout = true  
  
// 5  
let btn = UIButton(type: .detailDisclosure)  
annotationView?.rightCalloutAccessoryView = btn  
} else {  
// 6  
annotationView?.annotation = annotation  
}  
  
return annotationView  
}
```

You can press Cmd+R to run your app, and now if you tap on any pin you'll see a city's name as well as a button you can tap to show more information. Like I said, you don't need to use **addTarget()** to add an action to the button, because you'll automatically be told by the map view using a **calloutAccessoryControlTapped** method.

When this method is called, you'll be told what map view sent it (we only have one, so that's easy enough), what annotation view the button came from (this is useful), as well as the button that was tapped.

The annotation view contains a property called **annotation**, which will contain our **Capital** object. So, we can pull that out, typecast it as a **Capital**, then show its title and information in any way we want. The easiest for now is just to use a **UIAlertController**, so that's what we'll do.

Add this code to your view controller, just beneath the previous method:

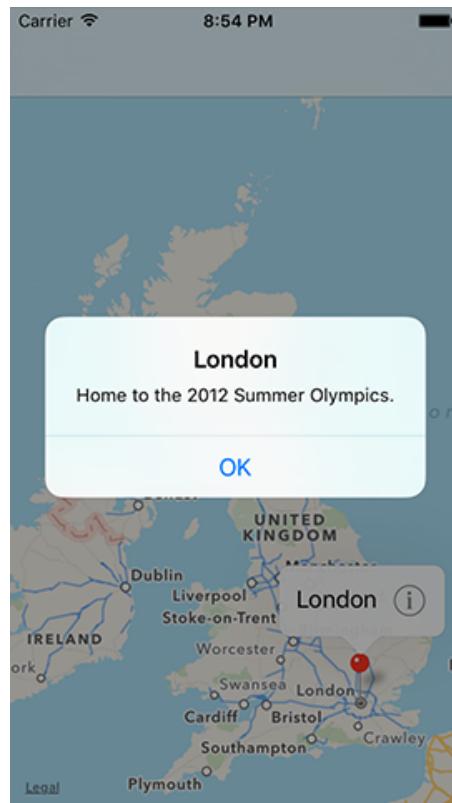
```
func mapView(_ mapView: MKMapView, annotationView view:  
MKAnnotationView, calloutAccessoryControlTapped control:
```

Annotations and accessory views: MKPinAnnotationView

```
UIControl) {
    guard let capital = view.annotation as? Capital else
    { return }
    let placeName = capital.title
    let placeInfo = capital.info

    let ac = UIAlertController(title: placeName, message:
placeInfo, preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
    present(ac, animated: true)
}
```

With that, the project is done. We have pins in place, city names being showed when the pins are tapped, and more information popping up when requested. Perfect!



Wrap up

I tried to keep this project as simple as possible so that you can focus on the map component, because there was a lot to learn: **MKMapView**, **MKAnnotation**, **MKPinAnnotationView**, **CLLocationCoordinate2D** and so on, and all must be used before you get a finished product.

Again, we've only scratched the surface of what maps can do in iOS, but that just gives you more room to extend the app yourself!

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 16.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Try typecasting the return value from **dequeueReusableAnnotationView()** so that it's an **MKPinAnnotationView**. Once that's done, change the **pinTintColor** property to your favorite **UIColor**.
2. Add a **UIAlertController** that lets users specify how they want to view the map. There's a **mapType** property that draws the maps in different ways. For example, **.satellite** gives a satellite view of the terrain.
3. Modify the callout button so that pressing it shows a new view controller with a web view, taking users to the Wikipedia entry for that city.

Project 17

Space Race

Dodge space debris while you learn about per-pixel collision detection.

Setting up

In this game project we'll seek to answer the question, "how fast can you make a fun game in SpriteKit?" Spoiler warning: the answer is very fast. And that's even when you ignore learning about **Timer**, advancing particle systems, linear and angular damping, and per-pixel collision detection.

The game we're going to produce is a very simple survival game: our player will have to pilot a spaceship safely through a field of space junk. The longer they stay alive the higher their score will be, but they need to keep moving otherwise certain death awaits!

Remarkably, we're going to make this project in just over 100 lines of code. To begin, create a new SpriteKit project in Xcode named Project17. Configure it to work only on landscape iPads, then download the files for this project and copy the Content folder into your project.

Now for the most important – and most boring - part: please clean Xcode's template project so that it's back to showing a large empty screen. Don't forget to change the anchor point and size of the scene!

All done? Start the clock – let's see how long it takes to make this game!

Space: the final frontier

To begin with we're going to place a handful of things that are required to make our game work: a star field (not a static background picture this time), the player image, plus a score label. Those three things will use an **SKEmitterNode**, an **SKSpriteNode** and an **SKLabelNode** respectively, so let's declare them as properties now:

```
var starfield: SKEmitterNode!
var player: SKSpriteNode!

var scoreLabel: SKLabelNode!
var score = 0 {
    didSet {
        scoreLabel.text = "Score: \(score)"
    }
}
```

As per usual, we're using a property observer to update the score label as needed.

In order to get those properties set up with meaningful values, we're going to put a lot of code into **didMove(to:)** so that everything is created and positioned up front.

I'm not going to bore you by going through every line of code – three quarters of it you should know by heart at this point! – but I do want to point out a few interesting things.

First, the star field particle emitter is positioned at X:1024 Y:384, which is the right edge of the screen and half way up. If you created particles like this normally it would look strange, because most of the screen wouldn't start with particles and they would just stream in from the right. But by using the **advanceSimulationTime()** method of the emitter we're going to ask SpriteKit to simulate 10 seconds passing in the emitter, thus updating all the particles as if they were created 10 seconds ago. This will have the effect of filling our screen with star particles.

Second, because the spaceship is an irregular shape and the objects in space are also irregular, we're going to use per-pixel collision detection. This means collisions happen not based on

Project 17: Space Race

rectangles and circles but based on actual pixels from one object touching actual pixels in another.

Now, SpriteKit does a really great job of optimizing this so that it looks like it's using actual pixels when in fact it just uses a very close approximation, but you should still only use it when it's needed. If something can be created as a rectangle or a circle you should do so because it's much faster.

Third, we're going to set the contact test bit mask for our player to be 1. This will match the category bit mask we will set for space debris later on, and it means that we'll be notified when the player collides with debris.

Fourth, I'm going to set the gravity of our physics world to be empty, because this is space and there isn't any gravity. Well, that's not strictly true because there is a small amount of gravity everywhere in space, but certainly nothing we can simulate effectively in this game!

Here's the new **didMove(to:)** method:

```
override func didMove(to view: SKView) {
    backgroundColor = .black

    starfield = SKEmitterNode(fileName: "starfield")!
    starfield.position = CGPoint(x: 1024, y: 384)
    starfield.advanceSimulationTime(10)
    addChild(starfield)
    starfield.zPosition = -1

    player = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "player")
    player.position = CGPoint(x: 100, y: 384)
    player.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(texture: player.texture!, size: player.size)
    player.physicsBody?.contactTestBitMask = 1
    addChild(player)
```

```
scoreLabel = SKLabelNode(fontNamed: "Chalkduster")
scoreLabel.position = CGPoint(x: 16, y: 16)
scoreLabel.horizontalAlignmentMode = .left
addChild(scoreLabel)

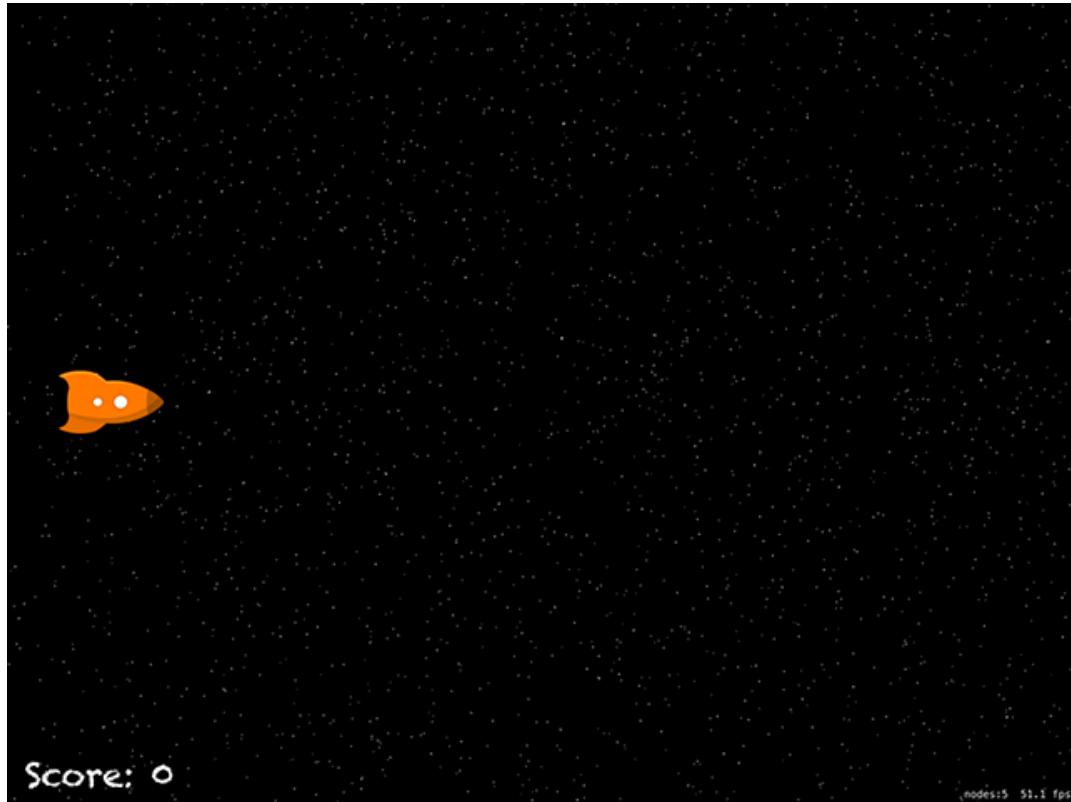
score = 0

physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx: 0, dy: 0)
physicsWorld.contactDelegate = self
}
```

Did you see how easy it is to make per-pixel collision detection work? You just need to create the **SKPhysicsBody** by passing in a texture and size, and for us we just want to use the player's current texture and size. That's it!

The last line of code in that method sets our current game scene to be the contact delegate of the physics world, so you'll need to conform to the **SKPhysicsContactDelegate** protocol.

Project 17: Space Race



Bring on the enemies: Timer, linearDamping, angularDamping

The point of our game is for the spaceship to survive while random "space debris" gets thrown at it. I've included three items of various shapes in this example, but you can add more easily enough. As long as the player stays alive their score ticks upwards, so clearly it's going to take some quick movement to get the highest score.

To add enemies and time to the game, we need to declare three new properties:

```
let possibleEnemies = [ "ball" , "hammer" , "tv" ]  
var isGameOver = false  
var gameTimer: Timer?
```

The **possibleEnemies** array contains the names of the three images that can be used as space debris in the game: a ball, a hammer and a TV. The **isGameOver** is a simple boolean that will be set to true when we should stop increasing the player's score.

The third property is a new type, called **Timer**. This is responsible for running code after a period of time has passed, either once or repeatedly.

When you create an **Timer** you specify five parameters: how many seconds you want the delay to be, what object should be told when the timer fires, what method should be called on that object when the timer fires, any context you want to provide, and whether the time should repeat.

We need to create a new enemy on a regular basis, so the first thing to do is create a scheduled timer. I'm going to give it a timer interval of 0.35 seconds, so it will create about three enemies a second. Put this code into **didMove(to:)**:

```
gameTimer = Timer.scheduledTimer(timeInterval: 0.35 , target:  
self , selector: #selector(createEnemy) , userInfo: nil , repeats:  
true )
```

Project 17: Space Race

Tip: The `scheduledTimer()` timer not only creates a timer, but also starts it immediately.

Creating an enemy needs to use techniques that you've mostly seen already: it will shuffle the `possibleEnemies` array, create a sprite node using the first item in that array, position it off the right edge and with a random vertical position, then add it to the scene.

That part is old. The new part is the way we're going to create the physics body of the debris: we're going to use per-pixel collision again, tell it to collide with the player, make it move to the left at a fast speed, and give it some angular velocity. But we're also going to set to 0 its `linearDamping` and `angularDamping` properties, which means its movement and rotation will never slow down over time. Perfect for a frictionless space environment!

Add this `createEnemy()` method:

```
@objc func createEnemy() {
    guard let enemy = possibleEnemies.randomElement() else
    { return }

    let sprite = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: enemy)
    sprite.position = CGPoint(x: 1200, y: Int.random(in:
50...736))
    addChild(sprite)

    sprite.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(texture: sprite.texture!, size: sprite.size)
    sprite.physicsBody?.categoryBitMask = 1
    sprite.physicsBody?.velocity = CGVector(dx: -500, dy: 0)
    sprite.physicsBody?.angularVelocity = 5
    sprite.physicsBody?.linearDamping = 0
    sprite.physicsBody?.angularDamping = 0
}
```

Bring on the enemies: Timer, linearDamping, angularDamping

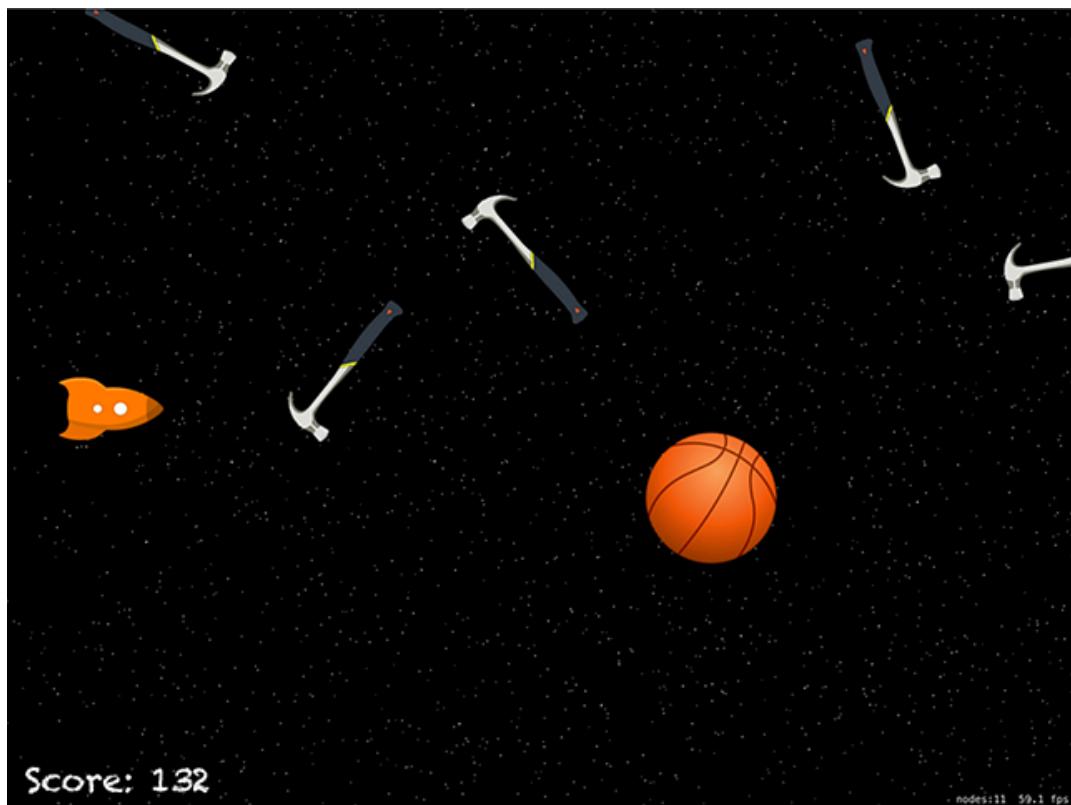
Now that lots of debris will appear, we need to make sure we remove their nodes once they are invisible. In this game, that means removing nodes from the scene once they are effectively useless because they have passed the player. This will be done using a check in the **update()** method: if any node is beyond X position -300, we'll consider it dead.

The **update()** method is also a good place to make our score increment all the time. All we need to do is check whether **isGameOver** is still false, and add one to the score if so. Here's the code for the **update()** method:

```
override func update(_ currentTime: TimeInterval) {
    for node in children {
        if node.position.x < -300 {
            node.removeFromParent()
        }
    }

    if !isGameOver {
        score += 1
    }
}
```

Project 17: Space Race



Making contact: didBegin()

Check your clock, because remarkably we're just two methods away from finishing this game!

Predictably, the two methods are critically important: one to move the player around the screen, and one to handle collisions between the player and the space debris.

Handling player movement is as simple as implementing the **touchesMoved()** method. We will, like always, need to use the **location(in:)** method to figure out where on the screen the user touched. But this time we're going to clamp the player's Y position, which in plain English means that we're going to stop them going above or below a certain point, keeping them firmly in the game area.

I'll be clamping the player's position so they can't overlap the score label, and I'll apply the same restriction on top so that the player has a symmetrical channel to fly through. This is a cinch to do, so here's the **touchesMoved()** method:

```
override func touchesMoved(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    guard let touch = touches.first else { return }
    var location = touch.location(in: self)

    if location.y < 100 {
        location.y = 100
    } else if location.y > 668 {
        location.y = 668
    }

    player.position = location
}
```

Our last task is to end the game when the player hits any piece of space debris. This is all code you know already: we're going to create a particle emitter, position it where the player is (or was!), and add the explosion to the scene while removing the player. In this game we're also

Project 17: Space Race

going to set **isGameOver** to be true so that the **update()** method stops adding to their score. Here's all the code:

```
func didBegin(_ contact: SKPhysicsContact) {
    let explosion = SKEmitterNode(fileNamed: "explosion")!
    explosion.position = player.position
    addChild(explosion)

    player.removeFromParent()

    isGameOver = true
}
```

Wrap up

That's it! We just made a game in 20 minutes or so, which shows you just how fast SpriteKit is. I even showed you how per-pixel collision detection works (it's so easy!), how to advance particle systems so they start life with some history behind them, how to run code repeatedly using **Timer**, and how to adjust linear and angular damping so that objects don't slow down over time.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 17.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Stop the player from cheating by lifting their finger and tapping elsewhere – try implementing **touchesEnded()** to make it work.
2. Make the timer start at one second, but then after 20 enemies have been made subtract 0.1 seconds from it so it's triggered every 0.9 seconds. After making 20 more, subtract another 0.1, and so on. Note: you should call **invalidate()** on **gameTimer** before giving it a new value, otherwise you end up with multiple timers.
3. Stop creating space debris after the player has died.

Project 18

Debugging

Everyone hits problems sooner or later, so learning to find and fix them is an important skill.

Setting up

Debugging is the act of removing mistakes from your apps, so in some respects programming is the act of putting bugs *into* your apps. What's more, there's a famous quote that should strike terror into your heart: "Debugging is twice as hard as writing the code in the first place. Therefore, if you write the code as cleverly as possible, you are, by definition, not smart enough to debug it."

Of course, the truth is that we're not able to write code "as cleverly as possible" – we all just muddle through and do our best. Debugging, then, is inevitable: even the best of us writes software with mistakes in, and it's a hugely important skill to be able to find and fix those mistakes as efficiently as possible.

In this project we'll be looking at several different debugging techniques, all of which are useful. I've arranged them easy to hard, so you can get started immediately and work your way forward as your skills improve.

Remember: there is no learning without struggle. Every time you make a mistake coding, you'll be forced to debug it, and in doing so your coding skills will improve as will your debugging skills. So: don't be annoyed when you screw up – it benefits you in the long term!

To follow along, please create a new Single View App project named Project18.

Basic Swift debugging using `print()`

We're going to start with the absolute easiest debugging technique, which is the `print()` function. This prints a message into the Xcode debug console that can say anything you want, because users won't see it in the UI. The "scattershot" approach to bug fixing is to litter your code with calls to `print()` then follow the messages to see what's going on.

You'll meet lots of people telling you how bad this is, but the truth is it's the debugging method everyone starts with – it's easy, it's natural, and it often gives you enough information to solve your problem. Use it with Swift's string interpolation to see the contents of your variables when your app is running.

We've used `print()` several times already, always in its most basic form:

```
print("I'm inside the viewDidLoad() method!")
```

By adding calls like that to your various methods, you can see exactly how your program flowed.

However, `print()` is actually a bit more complicated behind the scenes. For example, you can actually pass it lots of values at the same time, and it will print them all:

```
print(1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
```

That makes `print()` a variadic function, which you learned about previously. Here, though, it's worth adding that `print()`'s variadic nature becomes much more useful when you use its optional extra parameters: `separator` and `terminator`.

The first of these, `separator`, lets you provide a string that should be placed between every item in the `print()` call. Try running this code:

```
print(1, 2, 3, 4, 5, separator: "-")
```

That should print “1-2-3-4-5”, because the **separator** parameter is used to split up each item passed into **print()**.

The second optional parameter, **terminator**, is what should be placed after the final item. It’s `\n` by default, which you should remember means “line break”. If you don’t want **print()** to insert a line break after every call, just write this:

```
print("Some message", terminator: "")
```

Notice how you don’t need to specify **separator** if you don’t want to.

Debugging with assert()

One level up from `print()` are assertions, which are debug-only checks that will force your app to crash if a specific condition isn't true.

On the surface, that sounds terrible: why would you want your app to crash? There are two reasons. First, sometimes making your app crash is the Least Bad Option: if something has gone catastrophically wrong – if some fundamentally important file is not where it should be – then it may be the case that continuing your app will cause irreparable harm to user data, in which case crashing, while a bad result, is better than losing data.

Second, these assertion crashes only happen while you're debugging. When you build a release version of your app – i.e., when you ship your app to the App Store – Xcode automatically disables your assertions so they won't reach your users. This means you can set up an extremely strict environment while you're developing, ensuring that all values are present and correct, without causing problems for real users.

Here's a very basic example:

```
assert(1 == 1, "Maths failure!")
assert(1 == 2, "Maths failure!")
```

As you can see `assert()` takes two parameters: something to check, and a message to print out of the check fails. If the check evaluates to false, your app will be forced to crash because you know it's not in a safe state, and you'll see the error message in the debug console. You can – and should! – add these assertions liberally to your code, because they help guarantee that your code's state is what you think it is.

The advantage to assertions is that their check code is never executed in a live app, so your users are never aware of their presence. This is different from `print()`, which would remain in your code if you shipped it, albeit mostly invisible. In fact, because calls to `assert()` are ignored in release builds of your app, you can do complex checks:

```
assert(myReallySlowMethod() == true, "The slow method returned
```

```
    false, which is a bad thing!" )
```

That **myReallySlowMethod()** call will execute only while you're running test builds – that code will be removed entirely when you build for the App Store.

So: assertions are like running your code in strict mode. If your app works great with assertions on – things that literally make your app crash if things are wrong – then it will work even better in release mode.

Debugging with breakpoints

It's time to start using that Project18 project you made, because we're about to look at breakpoints. These are easy to use initially, but have a lot of hidden complexity if you want to get more advanced.

Let's start small, with a simple loop that prints numbers from 1 to 100. Add this to `viewDidLoad()`:

```
for i in 1 ... 100 {  
    print("Got number \(i)")  
}
```

If we wanted to see exactly what our program state was at the time we call the `print()` function, look to the left of where you've been typing and you'll see the line number markers. Click on the line number where `print()` is, and a blue marker will appear to signal that a breakpoint has been placed. This means that execution of your code will stop when that line is reached, and you have the opportunity to inspect your app's internal state to see what values everything has.

If you click on a breakpoint again, the blue arrow will become faint to show that the breakpoint exists but is disabled. This is useful when you want to keep your place, but don't want execution to stop right now. You can click again to make it active, or right-click and choose Delete Breakpoint to remove it entirely.

No line numbers? If your Xcode isn't showing line numbers by default, I suggest you turn them on. Go to the Xcode menu and choose Preferences, then choose the Text Editing tab and make sure "Line numbers" is checked.

With that breakpoint in place, Xcode will pause execution when it's reached and show you the values of all your variables. Try running it now, and you should see your app paused, with a light green marker on the line of code that is about to be executed. At the bottom of the Xcode window you should see Xcode telling you that `i` currently has a value of 1. That's because it

paused as soon as this line is reached, which is the very first iteration of our loop.

From here, you can carry on execution by pressing F6, but you may need to use Fn+F6 because the function keys are often mapped to actions on Macs. This shortcut is called Step Over and will tell Xcode to advance code execution by one line. You can walk through the loop in its entirety by pressing F6 again and again, but there's another command called Continue (Ctrl+Cmd+Y) that means "continue executing my program until you hit another breakpoint."

When your program is paused, you'll see something useful on the left of Xcode's window: a *back trace* that shows you all the threads in your program and what they are executing. So if you find a bug somewhere in method **d()**, this back trace will show you that **d()** was called by **c()**, which was called by **b()**, which in turn was called by **a()** – it effectively shows you the events leading up to your problem, which is invaluable when trying to spot bugs.

Xcode also gives you an interactive LLDB debugger window, where you can type commands to query values and run methods. If it's visible, you'll see "(lldb)" in the bottom of your Xcode window. If you don't see that, go to View > Debug Area > Activate Console, at which point focus will move to the LLDB window. Try typing **p i** to ask Xcode to print the value of the **i** variable.

While your app is paused, here's one more neat trick that few people know about: that light green arrow that shows your current execution position can be *moved*. Just click and drag it somewhere else to have execution pick up from there – although Xcode will warn you that it might have unexpected results, so tread carefully!

Breakpoints can do two more clever things, but for some reason both of them aren't used nearly enough. The first is that you can make breakpoints conditional, meaning that they will pause execution of your program only if the condition is matched. Right now, our breakpoint will stop execution every time our loop goes around, but what if we wanted it to stop only every 10 times?

Right-click on the breakpoint (the blue arrow marker) and choose Edit Breakpoint. In the

Project 18: Debugging

popup that appears, set the condition value to be **i % 10 == 0** – this uses modulo, as seen in project 8. With that in place, execution will now pause only when **i** is 10, 20, 30 and so on, up to 100. You can use conditional breakpoints to execute debugger commands automatically – the "Automatically continue" checkbox is perfect for making your program continue uninterrupted while breakpoints silently trigger actions.

The second clever thing that breakpoints can do is be automatically triggered when an exception is thrown. Exceptions are errors that aren't handled, and will cause your code to crash. With breakpoints, you can say "pause execution as soon as an exception is thrown," so that you can examine your program state and see what the problem is.

To make this happen, press Cmd+8 to choose the breakpoint navigator – it's on the left of your screen, where the project navigator normally sits. Now click the + button in the bottom-left corner and choose "Exception Breakpoint." That's it! The next time your code hits a fatal problem, the exception breakpoint will trigger and you can take action.

View debugging

The last debugging technique I want to look at is view debugging, Xcode comes with a marvelous feature called Capture View Hierarchy, and when it's used you see your current view layout inside Xcode with thin gray lines around all the views.

First, launch a project with some interesting UI. Project 13, for example, has enough in there to be interesting. Now run the program as normal, then in Xcode go to the Debug menu and choose View Debugging > Capture View Hierarchy. After a few seconds of thinking, Xcode will show you a screenshot of your app's UI.

Here's the clever part: if you click and drag inside the hierarchy display, you'll see you're actually viewing a 3D representation of your view, which means you can look behind the layers to see what else is there. The hierarchy automatically puts some depth between each of its views, so they appear to pop off the canvas as you rotate them.

This debug mode is perfect for times when you know you've placed your view but for some reason can't see it – often you'll find the view is behind something else by accident.

Wrap up

Debugging is a unique and essential skill that's similar but different to regular coding. As you've just seen, there are lots of options to choose from, and you will – I promise! – use all of them at some point. Yes, even `print()`.

There's more to learn about debugging, such as the Step Into and Step Out commands, but realistically you need to start with what you have before you venture any further. I would much rather you mastered three of the debugging tools available to you rather than having a weak grasp of all of them.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 18.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Temporarily try adding an exception breakpoint to project 1, then changing the call to `instantiateViewController()` so that it uses the storyboard identifier “Bad” – this will fail, but your exception breakpoint should catch it.
2. In project 1, add a call to `assert()` in the `viewDidLoad()` method of `DetailViewController.swift`, checking that `selectedImage` always has a value.
3. Go back to project 5, and try adding a conditional breakpoint to the start of the `submit()` method that pauses only if the user submits a word with six or more letters.

Project 19

JavaScript Injection

Extend Safari with a cool feature for JavaScript developers.

Setting up

In this project you're going to create a Safari extension, which lets us embed a version of our app directly inside Safari's action menu, then manipulate Safari data in interesting ways.

What do I mean by "interesting ways"? Well, our little Safari extension is going to read in the URL and page title that the user was visiting, then show them a large text area they can type JavaScript into. When the extension is dismissed, we'll execute that JavaScript in Safari.

This is the first of two projects that are *hard*. This is not because I want to torture you, but because this isn't one of Apple's better APIs – in fact, I'd say it's downright ugly in places. In this project, the actual amount of code you're going to be writing is quite small. However, it's dense, and there's a lot to take in, so it might feel like slow going.

At the very least, the project will still be useful and you'll learn a lot too – not least about Safari extensions and a new class called **NotificationCenter**.

Let's get started: create a new Single View App project in Xcode, naming it Project19.

Making a shell app

Safari extensions are launched from within the Safari action menu, but they ship inside a parent app. That is, you can't ship an extension by itself – it needs have an app alongside it. Frequently the app does very little, but it must at least be present.

There are two common ways to use the app side of the extension: to show help information, or to show basic settings for the user to adjust. We're going to go with the first option, although to skip writing lots of help text we'll just be using "Hello, world!"

Open your app's Main.storyboard file, drop a **UILabel** into the view controller, then give it the text "Hello, world!". Using the document outline, Ctrl-drag from the label to the view just above it, and select "Center Horizontally in Safe Area" and "Center Vertically in Safe Area."

When you add those two constraints, you'll probably see some orange boxes around your label – one is wholly orange, and one has a dashed line. These orange markers mean your views don't match your constraints: the solid orange lines mean "this is where you view is," and the dashed orange lines mean "this is where your view will be when your code runs."

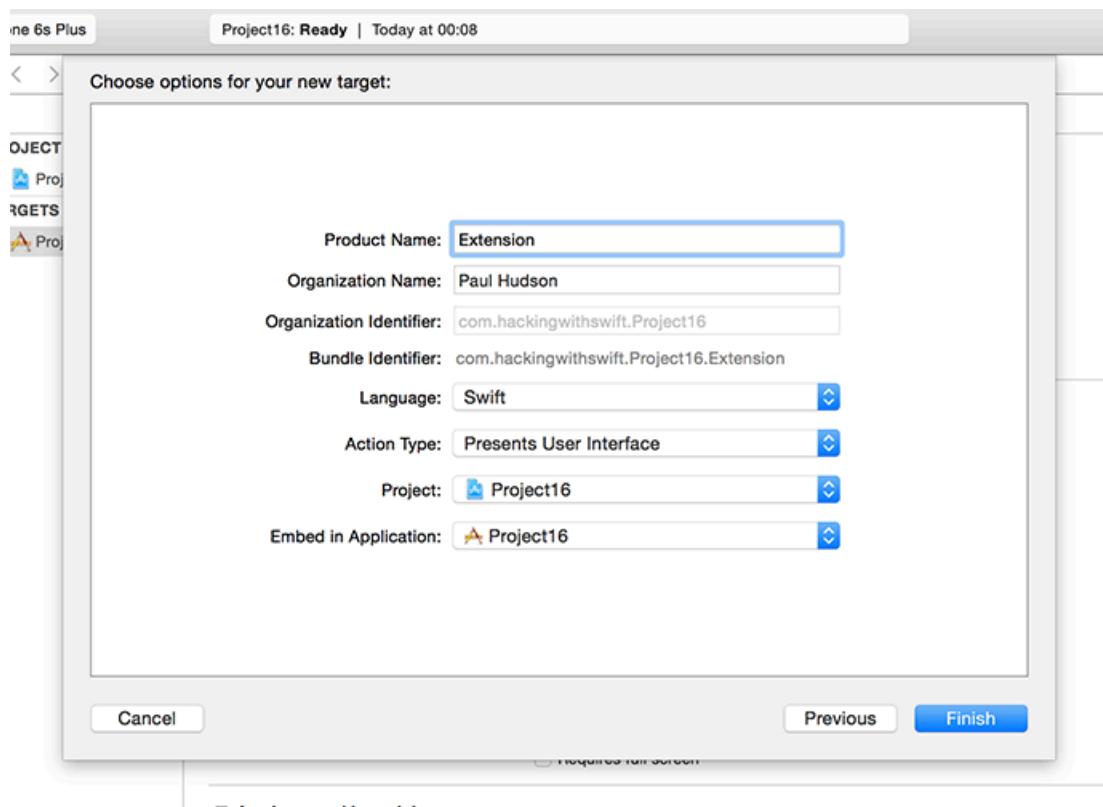
The reason for the difference is because labels have a default size of whatever fits their current text. We placed the label by hand, and in my case I made it too small, so Xcode is telling me when the code runs the label will be smaller. You can fix this warning by going to the Editor menu and choosing Resolve Auto Layout Issues > Update Frames, which will make the label the size Auto Layout thinks it ought to be.

That's the entire app complete. We're not going to add any more to it here because it's really not the point; we're going to focus on the extension from here on.

Adding an extension: NSExtensionItem

Extensions are miniature apps in their own right, and as such need their own space in your code. That doesn't mean you can't share code and resources between your extensions and your app, just that it's not automatic.

To get started with a fresh extension, go to the File menu and choose New > Target. When you're asked to choose a template, select iOS > Application Extension > Action Extension, then click Next. For the name just call it Extension, make sure Action Type is set to "Presents User Interface", then click Finish.



When you create an extension inside an app, Xcode will ask you whether you want to activate its scheme. Check the "Do not show this message again" box then click Activate. With this change, when you run your code, you'll actually launch the extension – it's perfect for our

needs right now.

Once your extension has been created, it will appear in the project navigation in its own yellow folder. You should see Project19 at the top, but look below and you'll see Extension. Open up the disclosure arrow and you'll see Xcode has given you two files: ActionViewController.swift and MainInterface.storyboard.

If you look inside ActionViewController.swift you'll see a fair amount of code, and I have some bad news for you: the code is complicated, the code is pretty much all new, and most of it is required. It's complicated because it needs to be: your extension doesn't talk to Safari and Safari doesn't talk to your extension, because it opens up security risks. Instead, iOS acts as an intermediary between Safari and the extension, passing data safely between the two.

To help make the code in **viewDidLoad()** a little easier to understand, I want you to delete it. Go on – zap it all, leaving **viewDidLoad()** doing nothing more than calling **super.viewDidLoad()**. We're going to replace it with code that is somewhat similar, but I've removed the complicated parts to try to make it easier. You'll probably want to return to Apple's template code in your own apps!

Change your **viewDidLoad()** method to this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    if let inputItem = extensionContext?.inputItems.first as?
        NSExtensionItem {
        if let itemProvider = inputItem.attachments?.first {
            itemProvider.loadItem(forTypeIdentifier:
                kUTTypePropertyList as String) { [weak self] (dict, error) in
                // do stuff!
            }
        }
    }
}
```

Project 19: JavaScript Injection

}

Let's walk through that line by line:

- When our extension is created, its **extensionContext** lets us control how it interacts with the parent app. In the case of **inputItems** this will be an array of data the parent app is sending to our extension to use. We only care about this first item in this project, and even then it might not exist, so we conditionally typecast using **if let** and **as?**.
- Our input item contains an array of attachments, which are given to us wrapped up as an **NSItemProvider**. Our code pulls out the first attachment from the first input item.
- The next line uses **loadItem(forTypeIdentifier:)** to ask the item provider to actually provide us with its item, but you'll notice it uses a closure so this code executes asynchronously. That is, the method will carry on executing while the item provider is busy loading and sending us its data.
- Inside our closure we first need the usual **[weak self]** to avoid strong reference cycles, but we also need to accept two parameters: the dictionary that was given to us by the item provider, and any error that occurred.
- With the item successfully pulled out, we can get to the interesting stuff: working with the data. We have **// do stuff!** right now, but it'll be more interesting later, I promise.

This code takes a number of shortcuts that Apple's own code doesn't, which is why it's significantly shorter. Once you've gotten to grips with this basic extension, I do recommend you go back and look at Apple's template code to see how it loops through all the items and providers to find the first image it can.

Despite all that work, you can't see the results just yet – we need to do some configuration work first, because Apple's default action extension is configured for images, not for web page content.

What do you want to get?

Inside the Extension group in the project navigator is a file called Info.plist. You have one for your app too, and in fact all apps have one. This plist (that's short for property list, remember) contains metadata about apps and extensions: what language is it, what version number is it, and so on.

For extensions, this plist also describes what data you are willing to accept and how it should be processed. Look for the key marked NSExtension and open its disclosure indicator: you should see NSExtensionAttributes, NSExtensionMainStoryboard and NSExtensionPointIdentifier. It's that first one we care about, because it modifies the way our extension behaves.

Open up the disclosure arrow for NSExtensionAttributes and you should see NSExtensionActivationRule, then String, then TRUEPREDICATE. Change String to be Dictionary, then open *its* disclosure arrow and click the small + button to the left of "Dictionary", and when it asks you for a key name change "New item" to be "NSExtensionActivationSupportsWebPageWithMaxCount". You can leave the new item as a string (it doesn't really matter), but change its value to be 1 – that's the empty space just to the right of String.

Adding this value to the dictionary means that we only want to receive web pages – we aren't interested in images or other data types.

Now select the NSExtensionAttributes line itself, and click the + button that appears next to the word Dictionary. Replace "New item" with "NSExtensionJavaScriptPreprocessingFile", then give it the value "Action". This tells iOS that when our extension is called, we need to run the JavaScript preprocessing file called Action.js, which will be in our app bundle. Make sure you type "Action" and not "Action.js", because iOS will append the ".js" itself.

In the picture below you can see how your extension's property list should look. Make sure you enter the key names precisely, because there is no room for error.

Project 19: JavaScript Injection

Bundle OS type code	String	XPC!
Bundle versions string, short	String	1.0
Bundle creator OS Type code	String	????
Bundle version	String	1
▼ NSExtension	Dictionary	(3 items)
▼ NSExtensionAttributes	Dictionary	(2 items)
NSExtensionJavaScriptPreprocessingFile	String	Action
▼ NSExtensionActivationRule	Dictionary	(1 item)
NSExtensionActivationSupportsWebPageWithMaxCount	String	1
NSExtensionMainStoryboard	String	MainInterface
NSExtensionPointIdentifier	String	com.apple.ui-services

I say "will be" rather than "is" because we haven't actually created this file yet. Right-click on your extension's Info.plist file and choose New File. When you're asked what template you want, choose iOS > Other > Empty, then name it Action.js, and put this text into it:

```
var Action = function() {};  
  
Action.prototype = {  
  
  run: function(parameters) {  
  
    },  
  
  finalize: function(parameters) {  
  
    }  
  
};  
  
var ExtensionPreprocessingJS = new Action
```

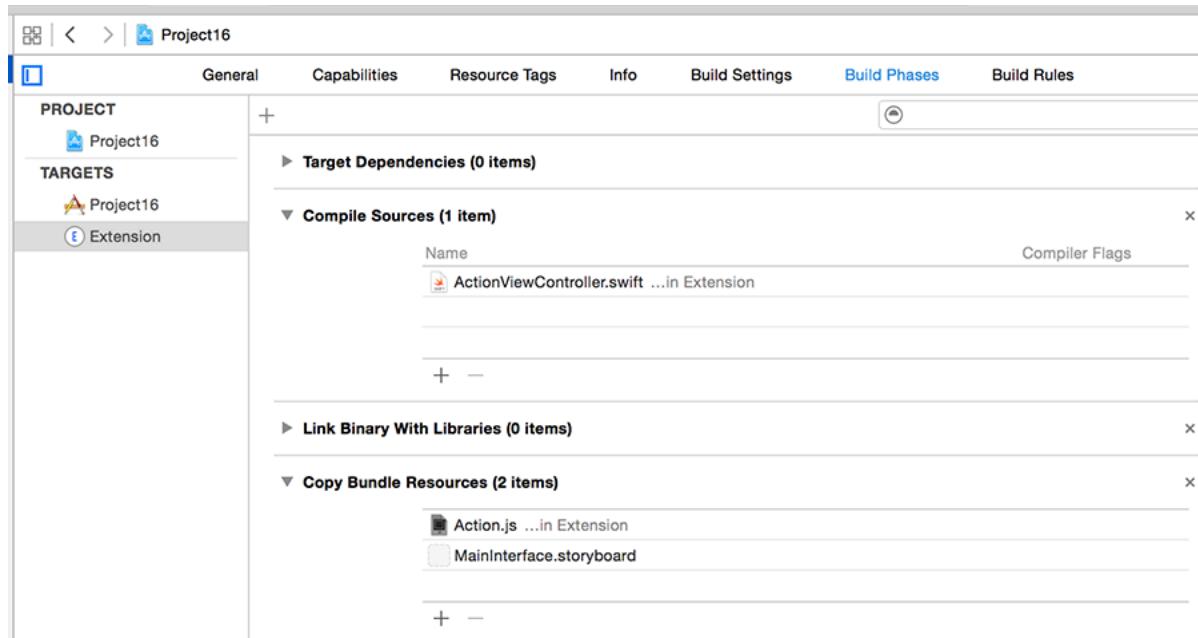
This is a book about Swift, not a book about JavaScript, so I'm afraid I don't intend to explain what that code does except for two things:

- There are two functions: **run()** and **finalize()**. The first is called before your extension is run, and the other is called after.

What do you want to get?

- Apple expects the code to be exactly like this, so you shouldn't change it other than to fill in the `run()` and `finalize()` functions.

Even now, after all this hacking around, your extension *still* isn't ready to run, and I can only apologize – I told you it was complicated!



Having problems? One reader reported that Xcode had tried to compile Action.js rather than copy it into the project, which will cause problems when you try to run the extension.

If you're worried that this might have happened to you, it's easy enough to check: choose your project from the Project Navigator, then choose your extension from the list of targets – it's just called Extension if you followed my instructions so far. Now choose the Build Phases tab and open up Compile Sources and Copy Bundle Resources.

If things have worked correctly you should see Action.js under Copy Bundle Resources and *not* Compile Sources. If this isn't the case, you can just drag it to move.

Establishing communication

To begin with, all we're going to do is send some data from Safari to our extension to make sure everything is set up correctly – after all, it's been quite a bit of hassle so far with nothing to show for it!

First, we're going to modify Action.js to send two pieces of data to our extension: the URL the user was visiting, and the title of the page. Go to Action.js and modify the `run()` function to this:

```
run: function(parameters) {
    parameters.completionFunction({ "URL": document.URL, "title": document.title });
},
```

JavaScript is quite a murky language, so you might be staring at that blankly. If I were to put it in plain English, what it means is "tell iOS the JavaScript has finished preprocessing, and give this data dictionary to the extension." The data that is being sent has the keys "URL" and "title", with the values being the page URL and page title.

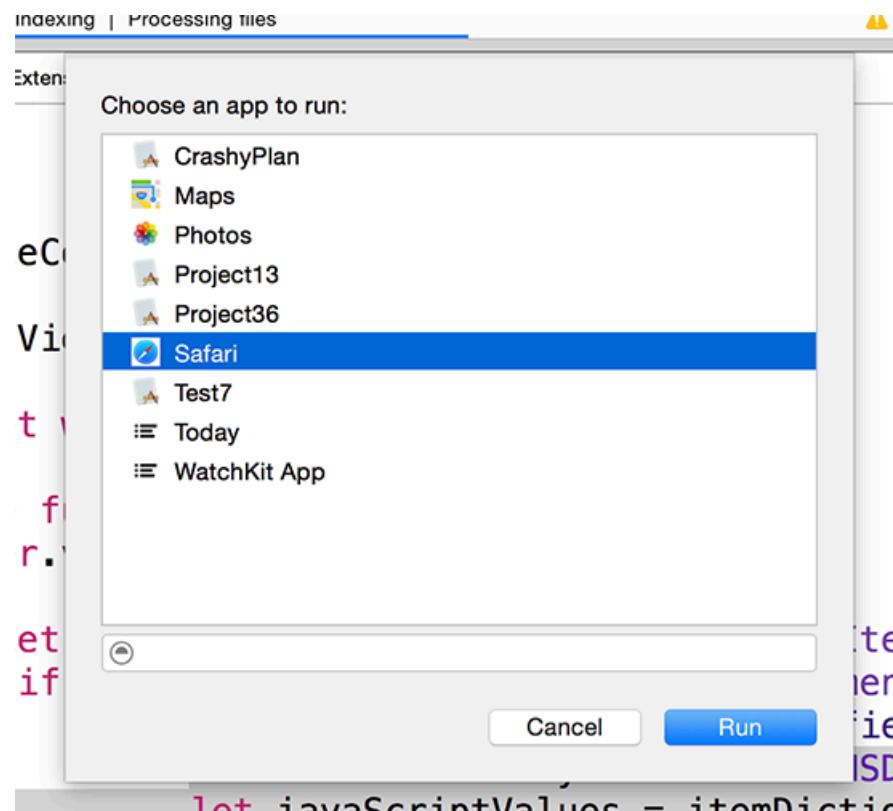
As with the previous JavaScript, don't worry about the nitty-gritty. There are many volumes of books on learning JavaScript and I don't intend to repeat them here.

Now that data is being sent from JavaScript, data will be received in Swift. In ActionViewController.swift, replace the `// do stuff!` comment with this:

```
guard let itemDictionary = dict as? NSDictionary else
{ return }
guard let javaScriptValues =
itemDictionary[NSExtensionJavaScriptPreprocessingResultsKey]
as? NSDictionary else { return }
print(javaScriptValues)
```

Before I explain what that code does, please run the code. I'm saying this because if you're like

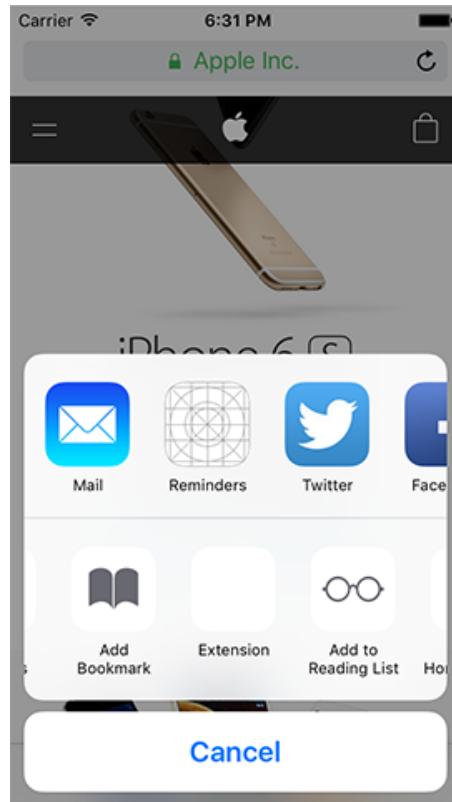
me then you're probably desperate to see anything working at this point, so let's at least make sure things are working. When you press Run, wait for the list of host applications to finish loading, then select Safari and click Run.



When Safari loads, go to any web page, then tap the action toolbar button on the bottom – it's the box with an arrow coming out. You'll see two rows of icons: swipe to the right on the bottom row. If your extension isn't listed, click More and enable it there. Don't be surprised if you see strange messages being printed out in the Xcode debug console while you're doing this, because Apple sometimes likes to spout unhelpful warnings in their own code.

In the picture below you can see where your extension's icon should appear inside Safari's action menu. If you don't see it there, tap More.

Project 19: JavaScript Injection



When your app runs, you should see messages in the console at the bottom of your Xcode window. If the console isn't visible, use Shift+Cmd+C to activate it, and you should see something like this:

```
{  
    URL = "https://www.apple.com/retail/code/";  
    title = "Apple Retail Store - Hour of Code Workshop";  
}
```

If you're seeing that, well done – your extension is working! If not, you screwed up somewhere, so check my steps again.

Let's take a look at the code. As a reminder, here it is again:

```
guard let itemDictionary = dict as? NSDictionary else  
{ return }
```

```
guard let javaScriptValues =  
itemDictionary[NSEExtensionJavaScriptPreprocessingResultsKey]  
as? NSDictionary else { return }  
print(javaScriptValues)
```

NSDictionary is a new data type, and it's not really one you have much cause to use in Swift that often because it's a bit of a holdover from older iOS code. Put simply, **NSDictionary** works like a Swift dictionary, except you don't need to declare or even *know* what data types it holds. One of the nasty things about **NSDictionary** is that you don't need to declare or even know what data types it holds.

Yes, it's both an advantage and a disadvantage in one, which is why modern Swift dictionaries are preferred. When working with extensions, however, it's definitely an advantage because we just don't care what's in there – we just want to pull out our data.

When you use **loadItem(forTypeIdentifier:)**, your closure will be called with the data that was received from the extension along with any error that occurred. Apple could provide other data too, so what we get is a dictionary of data that contains all the information Apple wants us to have, and we put that into **itemDictionary**.

Right now, there's nothing in that dictionary other than the data we sent from JavaScript, and that's stored in a special key called **NSEExtensionJavaScriptPreprocessingResultsKey**. So, we pull that value out from the dictionary, and put it into a value called **javaScriptValues**.

We sent a dictionary of data from JavaScript, so we typecast **javaScriptValues** as an **NSDictionary** again so that we can pull out values using keys, but for now we just send the whole lot to the **print()** function, which dumps the dictionary contents to Xcode's debug console.

So, we've successfully proved that Safari is sending data to our extension; it's time to do something interesting with it!

Editing multiline text with UITextView

Our extension is going to let users type in JavaScript, so before we get onto more coding we're going to add a basic user interface. Open MainInterface.storyboard, then delete its UIImageView and navigation bar. Once that's done, embed the view controller in a navigation controller.

Note: When you delete the image view, it's possible Xcode might leave its connection intact. This will cause you problems later, so I suggest you double check the image view is really dead: right-click on the yellow view controller circle above your view, and if you see an outlet called "imageView" click the X next to it to clear the connection.

We're going to use a new UIKit component called **UITextView**. You already met **UITextField** in project 5, and it's useful for letting users enter text into a single-line text box. But if you want multiple lines of text you need **UITextView**, so search for "textview" in the object library and drag one into your view so that it takes up all the space. Delete the template "Lorem ipsum" text that is in there.

Go to the Editor menu and use Resolve Layout Issues > Reset To Suggested Constraints to add automatic Auto Layout constraints. Now use the assistant editor to create an outlet named **script** for the text view in ActionViewController.swift, and while you're there you can delete the **UIImageView** outlet that Xcode made for you.

This text view is going to contain code rather than writing, so we don't want any of Apple's "helpful" text correction systems in place. To turn them off, select the text view then go to the attributes inspector – you want to set Capitalization to None, then Correction, Smart Dashes, Smart Insert, Smart Quotes, and Spell Checking all to No.

That's everything for Interface Builder, so switch back to the standard editor, open ActionViewController.swift and add these two properties to your class:

```
var pageTitle = ""
```

```
var pageURL = ""
```

We're going to store these two because they are being transmitted by Safari. We'll use the page title to show useful text in the navigation bar, and the URL is there for you to use yourself if you make improvements.

You already saw that we're receiving the data dictionary from Safari, because we used the **print()** function to output its values. Replace the **print()** call with this:

```
self?.pageTitle = javaScriptValues["title"] as? String ?? ""
self?.pageURL = javaScriptValues["URL"] as? String ?? ""

DispatchQueue.main.async {
    self?.title = self?.pageTitle
}
```

That sets our two properties from the **javaScriptValues** dictionary, typecasting them as **String**. It then uses **async()** to set the view controller's **title** property on the main queue. This is needed because the closure being executed as a result of **loadItem(forTypeIdentifier:)** could be called on any thread, and we don't want to change the UI unless we're on the main thread.

You might have noticed that I haven't written **[weak self] in** for the **async()** call, and that's because it's not needed. The closure will capture the variables it needs, which includes **self**, but we're already inside a closure that has declared **self** to be weak, so this new closure will use that.

We can immediately make our app useful by modifying the **done()** method. It's been there all along, but I've been ignoring it because there's so much other prep to do just to get out of first gear, but it's now time to turn our eyes towards it and add some functionality.

The **done()** method was originally called as an action from the storyboard, but we deleted the navigation bar Apple put in because it's terrible. Instead, let's create a **UIBarButtonItem** in code, and make that call **done()** instead. Put this in **viewDidLoad()**:

Project 19: JavaScript Injection

```
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .done, target: self,
action: #selector(done))
```

Right now, **done()** just has one line of code, which is this:

```
self.extensionContext!.completeRequest(returningItems:
self.extensionContext!.inputItems, completionHandler: nil)
```

Calling **completeRequest(returningItems:)** on our extension context will cause the extension to be closed, returning back to the parent app. However, it will pass back to the parent app any items that we specify, which in the current code is the same items that were sent in.

In a Safari extension like ours, the data we return here will be passed in to the **finalize()** function in the Action.js JavaScript file, so we're going to modify the **done()** method so that it passes back the text the user entered into our text view.

To make this work, we need to:

- Create a new **NSEExtensionItem** object that will host our items.
- Create a dictionary containing the key "customJavaScript" and the value of our script.
- Put that dictionary into *another* dictionary with the key **NSEExtensionJavaScriptFinalizeArgumentKey**.
- Wrap the big dictionary inside an **NSItemProvider** object with the type identifier **kUTTypePropertyList**.
- Place that **NSItemProvider** into our **NSEExtensionItem** as its attachments.
- Call **completeRequest(returningItems:)**, returning our **NSEExtensionItem**.

I realize that seems like far more effort than it ought to be, but it's really just the reverse of what we are doing inside **viewDidLoad()**.

With all that in mind, rewrite your **done()** method to this:

```
@IBAction func done() {
```

```

let item = NSExtensionItem()
let argument: NSDictionary = ["customJavaScript": 
script.text]
let webDictionary: NSDictionary =
[NSExtensionJavaScriptFinalizeArgumentKey: argument]
let customJavaScript = NSItemProvider(item: webDictionary,
typeIdentifier: kUTTypePropertyList as String)
item.attachments = [customJavaScript]

extensionContext?.completeRequest(returningItems: [item])
}

```

That's all the code required to send data back to Safari, at which point it will appear inside the **finalize()** function in Action.js. From there we can do what we like with it, but in this project the JavaScript we need to write is remarkably simple: we pull the "customJavaScript" value out of the **parameters** array, then pass it to the JavaScript **eval()** function, which executes any code it finds.

Open Action.js, and change the **finalize()** function to this:

```

finalize: function(parameters) {
  var customJavaScript = parameters["customJavaScript"];
  eval(customJavaScript);
}

```

That's it! Our user has written their code in our extension, tapped Done, and it gets executed in Safari using **eval()**. If you want to give it a try, enter the code **alert(document.title);** into the extension. When you tap Done, you'll return to Safari and see the page title in a message box.

Fixing the keyboard: **NotificationCenter**

Before we're done, there's a bug in our extension, and it's a bad one – or at least it's bad once you spot it. You see, when you tap to edit a text view, the iOS keyboard automatically appears so that user can start typing. But if you try typing lots, you'll notice that you can actually type underneath the keyboard because the text view hasn't adjusted its size because the keyboard appeared.

If you don't see a keyboard when you tap to edit, it probably means you have the Connect Hardware Keyboard setting turned on. Press Shift+Cmd+K to disable the hardware keyboard and use the on-screen one.

Having our view adjust to the presence of a keyboard is tricky, because there are a number of situations you need to cope with. For example, various keyboards are different heights, the user can rotate their device at will, they can connect a hardware keyboard when they need to, and there's even the QuickType bar that can be shown or hidden on demand.

In all the years I've done iOS development, I've seen at least a dozen ways of coping with keyboards, and few of them are easy. Even Apple's example solution requires fiddling around with constraints, which isn't ideal. I've tried to put together a solution that copes with all possibilities and also requires as little code as possible. If you manage to find something even simpler, do let me know!

We can ask to be told when the keyboard state changes by using a new class called **NotificationCenter**. Behind the scenes, iOS is constantly sending out notifications when things happen – keyboard changing, application moving to the background, as well as any custom events that applications post. We can add ourselves as an observer for certain notifications and a method we name will be called when the notification occurs, and will even be passed any useful information.

When working with the keyboard, the notifications we care about are

keyboardWillHideNotification and **keyboardWillChangeFrameNotification**. The first will be sent when the keyboard has finished hiding, and the second will be shown when any keyboard state change happens – including showing and hiding, but also orientation, QuickType and more.

It might sound like we don't need **keyboardWillHideNotification** if we have **keyboardWillChangeFrameNotification**, but in my testing just using **keyboardWillChangeFrameNotification** isn't enough to catch a hardware keyboard being connected. Now, that's an extremely rare case, but we might as well be sure!

To register ourselves as an observer for a notification, we get a reference to the default notification center. We then use the **addObserver()** method, which takes four parameters: the object that should receive notifications (it's **self**), the method that should be called, the notification we want to receive, and the object we want to watch. We're going to pass **nil** to the last parameter, meaning "we don't care who sends the notification."

So, add this code to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
let notificationCenter = NotificationCenter.default
notificationCenter.addObserver(self, selector:
#selector(adjustForKeyboard), name:
UIResponder.keyboardWillHideNotification, object: nil)
notificationCenter.addObserver(self, selector:
#selector(adjustForKeyboard), name:
UIResponder.keyboardWillChangeFrameNotification object: nil)
```

The **adjustForKeyboard()** method is complicated, but that's because it has quite a bit of work to do. First, it will receive a parameter that is of type **Notification**. This will include the name of the notification as well as a **Dictionary** containing notification-specific information called **userInfo**.

When working with keyboards, the dictionary will contain a key called **UIResponder.keyboardFrameEndUserInfoKey** telling us the frame of the keyboard after it

Project 19: JavaScript Injection

has finished animating. This will be of type **NSValue**, which in turn is of type **CGRect**. The **CGRect** struct holds both a **CGPoint** and a **CGSize**, so it can be used to describe a rectangle.

One of the quirks of Objective-C was that arrays and dictionaries couldn't contain structures like **CGRect**, so Apple had a special class called **NSValue** that acted as a wrapper around structures so they could be put into dictionaries and arrays. That's what's happening here: we're getting an **NSValue** object, but we know it contains a **CGRect** inside so we use its **cgRectValue** property to read that value.

Once we finally pull out the correct frame of the keyboard, we need to convert the rectangle to our view's co-ordinates. This is because rotation isn't factored into the frame, so if the user is in landscape we'll have the width and height flipped – using the **convert()** method will fix that.

The next thing we need to do in the **adjustForKeyboard()** method is to adjust the **contentInset** and **scrollIndicatorInsets** of our text view. These two essentially indent the edges of our text view so that it appears to occupy less space even though its constraints are still edge to edge in the view.

Finally, we're going to make the text view scroll so that the text entry cursor is visible. If the text view has shrunk this will now be off screen, so scrolling to find it again keeps the user experience intact.

It's not a lot of code, but it *is* complicated – par for the course on this project, it seems. Anyway, here's the method:

```
@objc func adjustForKeyboard(notification: Notification) {
    guard let keyboardValue = notification.userInfo?[UIResponder.keyboardFrameEndUserInfoKey] as? NSValue else
    { return }

    let keyboardScreenEndFrame = keyboardValue.cgRectValue
    let keyboardViewEndFrame =
view.convert(keyboardScreenEndFrame, from: view.window)
```

```
if notification.name ==  
UIResponder.keyboardWillHideNotification {  
    script.contentInset = .zero  
} else {  
    script.contentInset = UIEdgeInsets(top: 0, left: 0,  
bottom: keyboardViewEndFrame.height -  
view.safeAreaInsets.bottom, right: 0)  
}  
  
script.scrollIndicatorInsets = script.contentInset  
  
let selectedRange = script.selectedRange  
script.scrollRangeToVisible(selectedRange)  
}
```

As you can see, setting the inset of a text view is done using the **UIEdgeInsets** struct, which needs insets for all four edges. I'm using the text view's content inset for its **scrollIndicatorInsets** to save time.

Note there's a check in there for **UIKeyboardWillHide**, and that's the workaround for hardware keyboards being connected by explicitly setting the insets to be zero.

Wrap up

I'll tell you what: *I'm* feeling tired and I didn't even have to learn anything to write this project – I can't imagine how tired you are! But please don't be too disheartened: this project builds the bridge between JavaScript and Swift, and now that bridge is built you can add your own Swift functionality on top.

Some of the code isn't pleasant to work with, and certainly I wish iOS would just figure out text view insets automatically for keyboards, but you're through it now so your project is done. Even though this was a hard project, I did cut quite a few corners to make the code as easy as possible, so again I want to encourage you to try creating another extension and see how Apple's example code is different from mine.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 19.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Add a bar button item that lets users select from a handful of prewritten example scripts, shown using a **UIAlertController** – at the very least your list should include the example we used in this project.
2. You're already receiving the URL of the site the user is on, so use **User Defaults** to save the user's JavaScript for each site. You should convert the URL to a **URL** object in order to use its **host** property.
3. For something bigger, let users name their scripts, then select one to load using a

Wrap up

UITableView.

Project 20

Fireworks Night

Learn about timers and color blends while making things go bang!

Setting up

In this game project we're going to let users create fireworks displays using their fingers. They'll need to touch fireworks of the same color, then shake their device to make them explode. Shaking an iPad isn't the most pleasant user experience, but I had to find *some* way of teaching you about shake gestures!

On the topic of what you'll learn, you're going to use sprite color blending, you're going to try the **follow()** SpriteKit action, you'll learn to detect shake gestures, and you'll also get more practice with **Timer**.

Create a new SpriteKit project in Xcode, name it project 20, and adjust its project setting so that it runs on landscape iPads. Now download the files for this project from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>) and drag the Content folder into your Xcode project.

You should, like always with SpriteKit, go through the cleaning process to make Apple's template usable. Particularly important is cleaning up GameScene.sks: make sure its anchor point is X:0 Y:0 and its size is 1024x768.

As always, please use a real iPad device for this project, or if you must use the simulator then choose the lowest-spec iPad on the list.

Ready... aim... fire: Timer and follow()

To get the game up and running quickly, we're going to work on the three methods required to launch some fireworks: **didMove(to:)** will create a timer that launches fireworks every six seconds, **createFirework()** will create precisely one firework at a specific position and **launchFireworks()** will call **createFirework()** to create firework spreads.

First, the easy stuff: we need to add some properties to our class:

- The **gameTimer** property will be a **Timer**. We'll use this to call the **launchFireworks()** method every six seconds.
- The **fireworks** property will be an array of **SKNode** objects. Fireworks, like the slots in project 14, will be a container node with other nodes inside them. This avoids accidental taps triggered by tapping on the fuse of a firework.
- The **leftEdge**, **bottomEdge**, and **rightEdge** properties are used to define where we launch fireworks from. Each of them will be just off screen to one side.
- The **score** property will track the player's score. I'm going to give you a **didSet** property observer but leave it blank for you to fill in later – you should know how to show a score label by now!

Add these properties now:

```
var gameTimer: Timer?  
var fireworks = [SKNode]()  
  
let leftEdge = -22  
let bottomEdge = -22  
let rightEdge = 1024 + 22  
  
var score = 0 {  
    didSet {
```

Ready... aim... fire: Timer and follow()

```
// your code here  
}  
}  
}
```

To get the whole thing moving, we need to put in a background picture (the same way we've put in all the background pictures so far) and start up our **Timer** object. In our case, we're going to have it call **launchFireworks()** every six seconds, with repeating enabled. So, replace your current **didMove(to:)** with this:

```
override func didMove(to view: SKView) {  
    let background = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "background")  
    background.position = CGPoint(x: 512, y: 384)  
    background.blendMode = .replace  
    background.zPosition = -1  
    addChild(background)  
  
    gameTimer = Timer.scheduledTimer(timeInterval: 6, target:  
        self, selector: #selector(launchFireworks), userInfo: nil,  
        repeats: true)  
}
```

Project 20: Fireworks Night



That timer will carry on repeating until we tell it to stop, which in this project we won't – that'll be your job! Each time the timer fires, it will call **launchFireworks()**, which itself will call **createFirework()**. Initially we're going to write four types of firework "spreads" (different ways of launching fireworks) but this is something you could easily add more to later.

First, let's take a look at the **createFirework()** method. This needs to accept three parameters: the X movement speed of the firework, plus X and Y positions for creation. Inside the method there's a lot going on. It needs to:

1. Create an **SKNode** that will act as the firework container, and place it at the position that was specified.
2. Create a rocket sprite node, give it the name "firework" so we know that it's the important thing, adjust its **colorBlendFactor** property so that we can color it, then add it to the container node.
3. Give the firework sprite node one of three random colors: cyan, green or red. I've chosen cyan because pure blue isn't particularly visible on a starry sky background picture.

Ready... aim... fire: Timer and follow()

4. Create a **UIBezierPath** that will represent the movement of the firework.
5. Tell the container node to follow that path, turning itself as needed.
6. Create particles behind the rocket to make it look like the fireworks are lit.
7. Add the firework to our **fireworks** array and also to the scene.

Here's that, just in Swift:

```
func createFirework(xMovement: CGFloat, x: Int, y: Int) {  
    // 1  
    let node = SKNode()  
    node.position = CGPoint(x: x, y: y)  
  
    // 2  
    let firework = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "rocket")  
    firework.colorBlendFactor = 1  
    firework.name = "firework"  
    node.addChild(firework)  
  
    // 3  
    switch Int.random(in: 0...2) {  
        case 0:  
            firework.color = .cyan  
  
        case 1:  
            firework.color = .green  
  
        case 2:  
            firework.color = .red  
  
        default:  
            break  
    }  
}
```

Project 20: Fireworks Night

```
// 4
let path = UIBezierPath()
path.move(to: .zero)
path.addLine(to: CGPoint(x: xMovement, y: 1000))

// 5
let move = SKAction.follow(path.cgPath, asOffset: true,
orientToPath: true, speed: 200)
node.run(move)

// 6
if let emitter = SKEmitterNode(fileName: "fuse") {
    emitter.position = CGPoint(x: 0, y: -22)
    node.addChild(emitter)
}

// 7
fireworks.append(node)
addChild(node)
}
```

The coloring process is done using two new properties: **color** and **colorBlendFactor**. These two show off a simple but useful feature of SpriteKit, which is its ability to recolor your sprites dynamically with absolutely no performance cost. So, our rocket image is actually white, but by giving it **.red** with **colorBlendFactor** set to 1 (use the new color exclusively) it will appear red.

Step five is done using a new **SKAction** you haven't seen before: **follow()**. This takes a **CGPath** as its first parameter (we'll pull this from the **UIBezierPath**) and makes the node move along that path. It doesn't have to be a straight line like we're using, any bezier path is fine.

The **follow()** method takes three other parameters, all of which are useful. The first decides whether the path coordinates are absolute or are relative to the node's current position. If you specify **asOffset** as true, it means any coordinates in your path are adjusted to take into account the node's position.

The third parameter to **follow()** is **orientToPath** and makes a complicated task into an easy one. When it's set to true, the node will automatically rotate itself as it moves on the path so that it's always facing down the path. Perfect for fireworks, and indeed most things! Finally, you can specify a speed to adjust how fast it moves along the path.

Now comes the **launchFireworks()** method, which will launch fireworks five at a time in four different shapes. As a result this method is quite long because it needs to call **createFirework()** 20 times, but really it's not difficult at all.

The method will generate a random number between 0 and 3 inclusive. If it's zero, we launch the fireworks straight up; if it's one, we fire them in a fan from the center outwards; if it's two we fire them from the left edge to the right; if it's three we fire them from the right edge to the left.

Regardless of the direction of travel, the **createFirework()** call is much the same: how much should the firework move horizontally, and what should its starting X/Y coordinates be. Put this method into your project, then we'll look at it again:

```
@objc func launchFireworks() {
    let movementAmount: CGFloat = 1800

    switch Int.random(in: 0...3) {
    case 0:
        // fire five, straight up
        createFirework(xMovement: 0, x: 512, y: bottomEdge)
        createFirework(xMovement: 0, x: 512 - 200, y: bottomEdge)
        createFirework(xMovement: 0, x: 512 - 100, y: bottomEdge)
        createFirework(xMovement: 0, x: 512 + 100, y: bottomEdge)
```

Project 20: Fireworks Night

```
        createFirework(xMovement: 0, x: 512 + 200, y: bottomEdge)

    case 1:
        // fire five, in a fan
        createFirework(xMovement: 0, x: 512, y: bottomEdge)
        createFirework(xMovement: -200, x: 512 - 200, y:
bottomEdge)
        createFirework(xMovement: -100, x: 512 - 100, y:
bottomEdge)
        createFirework(xMovement: 100, x: 512 + 100, y:
bottomEdge)
        createFirework(xMovement: 200, x: 512 + 200, y:
bottomEdge)

    case 2:
        // fire five, from the left to the right
        createFirework(xMovement: movementAmount, x: leftEdge, y:
bottomEdge + 400)
        createFirework(xMovement: movementAmount, x: leftEdge, y:
bottomEdge + 300)
        createFirework(xMovement: movementAmount, x: leftEdge, y:
bottomEdge + 200)
        createFirework(xMovement: movementAmount, x: leftEdge, y:
bottomEdge + 100)
        createFirework(xMovement: movementAmount, x: leftEdge, y:
bottomEdge)

    case 3:
        // fire five, from the right to the left
        createFirework(xMovement: -movementAmount, x: rightEdge,
y: bottomEdge + 400)
        createFirework(xMovement: -movementAmount, x: rightEdge,
```

Ready... aim... fire: Timer and follow()

```
y: bottomEdge + 300)
    createFirework(xMovement: -movementAmount, x: rightEdge,
y: bottomEdge + 200)
    createFirework(xMovement: -movementAmount, x: rightEdge,
y: bottomEdge + 100)
    createFirework(xMovement: -movementAmount, x: rightEdge,
y: bottomEdge)

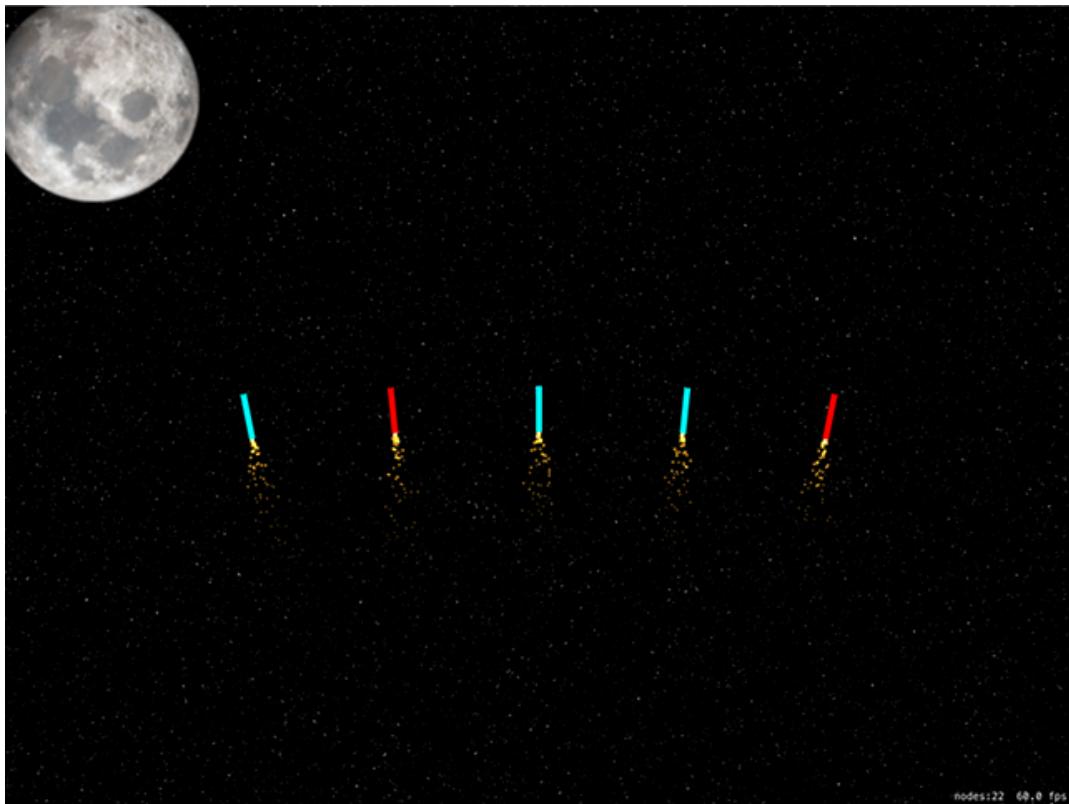
default:
break
}
```

You'll notice I made **movementAmount** into a constant. This is because I was testing various values to find one that worked best, so having it in a constant made it easy to adjust with trial and error.

As you can see in the code, each firework is fired from different positions so that you get a nice spread on the screen. For example, firing a fan creates one firework on the far left and moving to the left, one in the center left and moving to the left, one in the center moving straight up, and so on.

With that code, you're now able to run the game and see how it works – after a few seconds the first fireworks will start, then they'll continue launches as the timer continues to fire.

Project 20: Fireworks Night



Swipe to select

Now that you can see fireworks shooting across your screen, it's time to reveal the difficulty element. You see, every game needs some challenge, and in our case the challenge is to destroy fireworks in groups of the same color. We're going to make it so that players can select only one color of firework at a time, so if they choose two red then touch a green, the two red will become deselected.

So, the challenge will be to select and detonate fireworks based on their color, and as you'll see shortly we're going to heavily bias scores so that players receive many more points for larger groups.

What we're going to code now is the touch handling method, **checkTouches()**. We're going to call this from **touchesBegan()** and **touchesMoved()** so that users can either tap to select fireworks or just swipe across the screen.

The method needs to start by figuring out where in the scene the player touches, and what nodes are at that point. It will then loop through all nodes under the point to find any with the name "firework". When it finds one, it will set its name to be "selected" rather than "firework" and change its **colorBlendFactor** value to 0. That will disable the color blending entirely, making the firework white.

To make this code a little cleaner I want to introduce you to a new piece of Swift syntax that is a bit confusing at first because it uses three keywords back to back: **for case let**.

You see, when we ask for all the nodes under the user's finger we'll get back an array of **SKNode**, and that's not good enough – we can't set the color blend factor of an **SKNode**, because it might not have a texture. Instead, what we want to do is go over only the *sprite* nodes in the returned array – we want to run the body of our loop only for sprite nodes, not for the other items.

This is where **for case let** comes in: it lets us attempt some work (typecasting to **SKSpriteNode** in this case), and run the loop body only for items that were successfully typecast.

Project 20: Fireworks Night

So, rather than writing this:

```
for node in nodesAtPoint {
```

We write this:

```
for case let node as SKSpriteNode in nodesAtPoint {
```

The **let node** part creates a new constant called **node**, the **case...as SKSpriteNode** part means “if we can typecast this item as a sprite node, and of course the **for** loop is the loop itself.

Here's the **checkTouches()** method with that functionality in there:

```
func checkTouches(_ touches: Set<UITouch>) {
    guard let touch = touches.first else { return }

    let location = touch.location(in: self)
    let nodesAtPoint = nodes(at: location)

    for case let node as SKSpriteNode in nodesAtPoint {
        guard node.name == "firework" else { continue }
        node.name = "selected"
        node.colorBlendFactor = 0
    }
}
```

Apart from the **for case let** you've seen most of that previously, but that's because I missed out the logic to handle ensuring that players select only one color at a time. The above code will let them select all the fireworks, regardless of color.

So, we need to insert a second loop just before the **node.name = "selected"** line. When you place one loop inside another it's called an inner loop, and you need to be careful: if you have one loop that executes 100 times it's OK, and if you have another loop that executes 200 times

that's OK too, but if you put one inside the other you now have 20,000 iterations of your loop and that's almost certainly *not* OK. Here, though, we'll have maybe two or three items in our outer loop and a maximum of 10 or so in the inner, so we're quite safe.

Remember, this inner loop needs to ensure that the player can select only one firework color at a time. So if they select red then another red, both are selected. But if they then select a green, we need to deselect the first two because they are red.

So, the loop will go through every firework in our **fireworks** array, then find the firework image inside it. Remember, that array holds the container node, and each container node holds the firework image and its spark emitter. If the firework was selected *and* is a different color to the firework that was just tapped, then we'll put its name back to "firework" and put its **colorBlendFactor** back to 1 so it resumes its old color.

So, put this code just before the **node.name = "selected"** line:

```
for parent in fireworks {
    guard let firework = parent.children.first as? SKSpriteNode
    else { continue }

    if firework.name == "selected" && firework.color != node.color {
        firework.name = "firework"
        firework.colorBlendFactor = 1
    }
}
```

That's the entire method, so all we need to do is make sure it's called. To make that happen, we need to modify the existing **touchesBegan()** method and add one for **touchesMoved()** too. All they will do is send the touch information on to **checkTouches()**, like this:

```
override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
```

Project 20: Fireworks Night

```
super.touchesBegan(touches, with: event)
checkTouches(touches)
}

override func touchesMoved(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event:
UIEvent?) {
    super.touchesMoved(touches, with: event)
    checkTouches(touches)
}
```

There's one more thing we need to code before moving on, and that's some additions to the **update()** method. This is because we need to handle the fireworks that the player *doesn't* destroy, and our solution is simple enough: if they get past 900 points up vertically, we consider them dead and remove them from the **fireworks** array and from the scene.

There is one curious quirk here, and it's down to how you remove items from an array. When removing items, we're going to loop through the array backwards rather than forwards. The reason for is that array items move down when you remove an item, so if you have 1, 2, 3, 4 and remove 3 then 4 moves down to become 3. If you're counting forwards, this is a problem because you just checked three and want to move on, but there's now a new 3 and possibly no longer a 4! If you're counting backwards, you just move on to 2.

Note: I chose 900 rather than 800 to mean "off screen vertically" because it's nice to give players a little extra time when making important actions. It's possible that the top firework is at 890 and the bottom one still on screen and being manipulated, so at least this way the player has the best possible window in which to make all their selections.

Here's the new **update()** method:

```
override func update(_ currentTime: TimeInterval) {
    for (index, firework) in fireworks.enumerated().reversed() {
        if firework.position.y > 900 {
            // this uses a position high above so that rockets can
```

Swipe to select

```
explode off screen
    fireworks.remove(at: index)
    firework.removeFromParent()
}
}
}
```

Making things go bang: SKEmitterNode

This is easily the best bit of the game, mostly because it involves even more particle systems. There are three things we need to create: a method to explode a single firework, a method to explode all the fireworks (which will call the single firework explosion method), and some code to detect and respond the device being shaken.

First, the code to explode a single firework. Put this somewhere in your game scene:

```
func explode(firework: SKNode) {
    if let emitter = SKEmitterNode(fileName: "explode") {
        emitter.position = firework.position
        addChild(emitter)
    }

    firework.removeFromParent()
}
```

You should be able to read that once and know exactly what it does: it creates an explosion where the firework was, then removes the firework from the game scene.

The **explodeFireworks()** method is next, and is only fractionally more complicated. It will be triggered when the user wants to set off their selected fireworks, so it needs to loop through the **fireworks** array (backwards again!), pick out any selected ones, then call **explode()** on it.

As I said earlier, the player's score needs to go up by more when they select more fireworks, so about half of the **explodeFireworks()** method is taken up with figuring out what score to give the player.

There's one small piece of extra complexity: remember, the **fireworks** array stores the firework container node, so we need to read the firework image out of its **children** array.

Making things go bang: SKEmitterNode

Enough talk – here's the code:

```
func explodeFireworks() {
    var numExploded = 0

    for (index, fireworkContainer) in
fireworks.enumerated().reversed() {
        guard let firework = fireworkContainer.children.first as?
SKSpriteNode else { continue }

        if firework.name == "selected" {
            // destroy this firework!
            explode(firework: fireworkContainer)
            fireworks.remove(at: index)
            numExploded += 1
        }
    }

    switch numExploded {
    case 0:
        // nothing – rubbish!
        break
    case 1:
        score += 200
    case 2:
        score += 500
    case 3:
        score += 1500
    case 4:
        score += 2500
    default:
        score += 4000
    }
}
```

Project 20: Fireworks Night

}

As you can see, exploding five fireworks is worth 20x more points than exploding just one, hence the incentive to select groups by color!

There's one last thing to do before this game is complete, and that's to detect the device being shaken. This is easy enough to do because iOS will automatically call a method called **motionBegan()** on our game when the device is shaken. Well, it's a little more complicated than *that* – what actually happens is that the method gets called in GameViewController.swift, which is the **UIViewController** that hosts our SpriteKit game scene.

The default view controller doesn't know that it has a SpriteKit view, and certainly doesn't know what scene is showing, so we need to do a little typecasting. Once we have a reference to our actual game scene, we can call **explodeFireworks()**. Put this method just after the **prefersStatusBarHidden** property in GameViewController.swift:

```
override func motionBegan(_ motion: UIEvent.EventSubtype, with event: UIEvent?) {
    guard let skView = view as? SKView else { return }
    guard let gameScene = skView.scene as? GameScene else { return }
    gameScene.explodeFireworks()
}
```

That's it, your game is done. Obviously you can't shake your laptop to make the iOS Simulator respond, but you can use the keyboard shortcut Ctrl+Cmd+Z to get the same result. If you're testing on your iPad, make sure you give it a good shake in order to trigger the explosions!

Wrap up

This wasn't a *complicated* project, although it did involve quite a bit of code because of the various ways fireworks are launched. However, it's a good example of where particle systems can really bring a game to life – we only have two different types here, but they still do wonders as simple special effects.

Plus of course you have yet more Swift coding experience under your belt, now complete with **follow()**, **UIBezierPath**, **for case let**, color blending, and, yes, even the shake gesture – although I wouldn't be surprised if you switch to having a button on the screen to make explosions easier!

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 20.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. For an easy challenge try adding a score label that updates as the player's score changes.
2. Make the game end after a certain number of launches. You will need to use the **invalidate()** method of **Timer** to stop it from repeating.
3. Use the **waitForDuration** and **removeFromParent** actions in a sequence to make sure explosion particle emitters are removed from the game scene when they are finished.

Project 21

Local Notifications

Send reminders, prompts and alerts even when your app isn't running.

Setting up

This is going to be the easiest technique project in the entire series, and I expect you're extremely relieved to hear that because it can be hard going always having to learn new things!

What you're going to learn about are local notifications, which let you send reminders to your user's lock screen to show them information when your app isn't running. If you set a reminder in your calendar, making it pop up on your lock screen at the right time is a local notification.

These aren't the same as push notifications, and in fact they are quite a different beast from a development perspective. I would love to cover push notifications here, but they require a dedicated server (or service, if you outsource) to send from and that's outside the remit of this course. Much later on – project 33 to be precise – we look at CloudKit, which can send push notifications when data is changed, but I wouldn't recommend skipping ahead.

To get started, create a new Single View App project in Xcode, and name it Project21.

Scheduling notifications: UNUserNotificationCenter and UNNotificationRequest

We only need two buttons to control the entire user interface for this project, and the easiest way to do that is using navigation bar buttons. So, open Main.storyboard in Interface Builder and embed the view controller inside a navigation controller – and that's it for the interface.

Open ViewController.swift and add these two method stubs:

```
@objc func registerLocal() {  
  
}  
  
@objc func scheduleLocal() {  
  
}
```

Now add this code to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
navigationItem.leftBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:  
    "Register", style: .plain, target: self, action:  
    #selector(registerLocal))  
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:  
    "Schedule", style: .plain, target: self, action:  
    #selector(scheduleLocal))
```

OK, time to explain how this project needs to work. First, you can't post messages to the user's lock screen unless you have their permission. This is a sensible restriction – it would, after all, be awfully annoying if any app could bother you when it pleased.

So, in order to send local notifications in our app, we first need to request permission, and

Scheduling notifications: UNUserNotificationCenter and UNNotificationRequest

that's what we'll put in the **registerLocal()** method. You register your settings based on what you actually need, and that's done with a method called **requestAuthorization()** on **UNUserNotificationCenter**. For this example we're going to request an alert (a message to show), along with a badge (for our icon) and a sound (because users just *love* those.)

You also need to provide a closure that will be executed when the user has granted or denied your permissions request. This will be given two parameters: a boolean that will be true if permission was granted, and an **Error?** containing a message if something went wrong.

All this functionality is contained in the UserNotifications framework, so before continuing add this **import** line now:

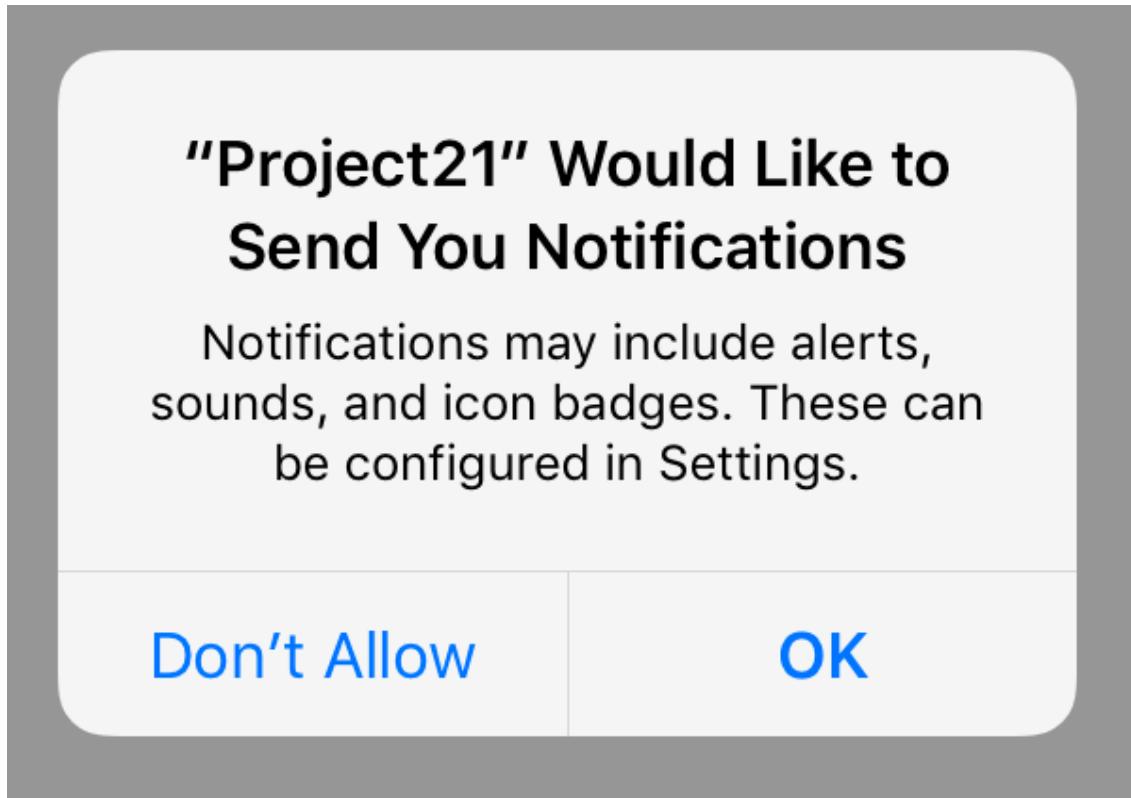
```
import UserNotifications
```

OK, let's go – change your **registerLocal()** method to be this:

```
@objc func registerLocal() {
    let center = UNUserNotificationCenter.current()

    center.requestAuthorization(options:
        [.alert, .badge, .sound]) { (granted, error) in
        if granted {
            print("Yay!")
        } else {
            print("D'oh")
        }
    }
}
```

Helpful tip: if you want to test allowing or denying permission, just reset the simulator and run the app again to get a clean slate. Choose the Hardware menu then “Erase all Content and Settings” to make this happen.



Once we have user permission, it's time to fill in the `scheduleLocal()` method. This will configure all the data needed to schedule a notification, which is three things: content (what to show), a trigger (when to show it), and a request (the combination of content and trigger.)

Before I dive into the code, there are a few extra things I want to discuss.

First, the reason a notification request is split into two smaller components is because they are interchangeable. For example, the trigger – when to show the notification – can be a calendar trigger that shows the notification at an exact time, it can be an interval trigger that shows the notification after a certain time interval has lapsed, or it can be a geofence that shows the notification based on the user's location.

I'll be demonstrating both calendar and interval triggers here, but to do calendar triggers requires learning another new data type called **DateComponents**. We're going to start with a calendar notification, which is where you specify a day, a month, an hour, a minute, or any combination of those to produce specific times. For example, if you specify hour 8 and minute

Scheduling notifications: UNUserNotificationCenter and UNNotificationRequest

30, and *don't* specify a day, it means either “8:30 tomorrow” or “8:30 every day” depending on whether you ask for the notification to be repeated.

So, we could create a repeating alarm at 10:30am every morning like this:

```
var dateComponents = DateComponents()
dateComponents.hour = 10
dateComponents.minute = 30
let trigger = UNCalendarNotificationTrigger(dateMatching:
dateComponents, repeats: true)
```

When it comes to *what* to show, we need to use the class **UNMutableNotificationContent**. This has lots of properties that customize the way the alert looks and works – we'll be using these:

- The **title** property is used for the main title of the alert. This should be a couple of words at most.
- The **body** property should contain your main text.
- If you want to specify a sound you can create a custom **UNNotificationSound** object and attach it to the **sound** property, or just use **UNNotificationSound.default**.
- To attach custom data to the notification, e.g. an internal ID, use the **userInfo** dictionary property.
- You can also attach custom actions by specifying the **categoryIdentifier** property.

Putting those all together, we could create some notification content like this:

```
let content = UNMutableNotificationContent()
content.title = "Title goes here"
content.body = "Main text goes here"
content.categoryIdentifier = "customIdentifier"
content.userInfo = [ "customData": "fizzbuzz" ]
content.sound = UNNotificationSound.default
```

Project 21: Local Notifications

The combination of content and trigger is enough to be combined into a request, but here notifications get clever: as well as content and a trigger, each notification also has a unique identifier. This is just a string you create, but it *does* need to be unique because it lets you update or remove notifications programmatically.

Apple's example for this is an app that displays live sports scores to the user. When something interesting happens, what the user really wants is for the existing notification to be updated with new information, rather than have multiple notifications from the same app over time.

For technique project we don't care what name is used for each notification, but we do want it to be unique. So, we'll be using the **UUID** class to generate unique identifiers – we've used this before, so hopefully you're familiar.

OK, enough talk – time for some code. Change the **scheduleLocal()** method to this:

```
@objc func scheduleLocal() {
    let center = UNUserNotificationCenter.current()

    let content = UNMutableNotificationContent()
    content.title = "Late wake up call"
    content.body = "The early bird catches the worm, but the
second mouse gets the cheese."
    content.categoryIdentifier = "alarm"
    content.userInfo = [ "customData": "fizzbuzz" ]
    content.sound = UNNotificationSound.default

    var dateComponents = DateComponents()
    dateComponents.hour = 10
    dateComponents.minute = 30
    let trigger = UNCalendarNotificationTrigger(dateMatching:
dateComponents, repeats: true)

    let request = UNNotificationRequest(identifier:
```

Scheduling notifications: UNUserNotificationCenter and UNNotificationRequest

```
UUID().uuidString, content: content, trigger: trigger)
center.add(request)
}
```

If you want to test out your notifications, there are two more things that will help.

First, you can cancel pending notifications – i.e., notifications you have scheduled that have yet to be delivered because their trigger hasn't been met – using the **center.removeAllPendingNotificationRequests()** method, like this:

```
center.removeAllPendingNotificationRequests()
```

Second, chances are you'll find the interval trigger far easier to test with than the calendar trigger, because you can set it to a low number like 5 seconds to have your notification trigger almost immediately.

To do that, replace the existing trigger with this code:

```
let trigger = UNTimeIntervalNotificationTrigger(timeInterval:
5, repeats: false)
```

With that small change you should be able to click Schedule in the simulator, then press Cmd+L to lock the device and have it show an alert just a few seconds later.

Acting on responses

There's a lot more you can do with notifications, but chances are the thing you *most* want to do is act on the user's response – to show one or more options alongside your alert, then respond to the user's choice.

We already set the **categoryIdentifier** property for our notification, which is a text string that identifies a type of alert. We can now use that same text string to create buttons for the user to choose from, and iOS will show them when any notifications of that type are shown.

This is done using two new classes: **UNNotificationAction** creates an individual button for the user to tap, and **UNNotificationCategory** groups multiple buttons together under a single identifier.

For this technique project we're going to create one button, "Show me more...", that will cause the app to launch when tapped. We're also going to set the **delegate** property of the user notification center to be **self**, meaning that any alert-based messages that get sent will be routed to our view controller to be handled.

Creating a **UNNotificationAction** requires three parameters:

1. An identifier, which is a unique text string that gets sent to you when the button is tapped.
2. A title, which is what user's see in the interface.
3. Options, which describe any special options that relate to the action. You can choose from **.authenticationRequired**, **.destructive**, and **.foreground**.

Once you have as many actions as you want, you group them together into a single **UNNotificationCategory** and give it the same identifier you used with a notification.

That's it! Add this method to **ViewController** now:

```
func registerCategories() {  
    let center = UNUserNotificationCenter.current()  
    center.delegate = self
```

```

    let show = UNNotificationAction(identifier: "show", title:
    "Tell me more...", options: .foreground)
    let category = UNNotificationCategory(identifier: "alarm",
actions: [show], intentIdentifiers: []))

    center.setNotificationCategories([category])
}

```

You might have noticed the empty **intentIdentifiers** parameter in the category initializer - this is used to connect your notifications to intents, if you have created any.

You'll get an error because you assigned **self** to be the delegate of the user notification center. To fix it, make the **ViewController** class conform to **UNUserNotificationCenterDelegate** like this:

```

class ViewController: UIViewController,
UNUserNotificationCenterDelegate {

```

You can call **registerCategories()** wherever you want, but in this project the safest place is probably right at the beginning of the **scheduleLocal()** method.

Now that we have registered the “alarm” category with a single button, the last thing to do is implement the **didReceive** method for the notification center. This is triggered on our view controller because we’re the center’s delegate, so it’s down to us to decide how to handle the notification.

We attached some customer data to the **userInfo** property of the notification content, and this is where it gets handed back – it’s your chance to link the notification to whatever app content it relates to.

When the user acts on a notification you can read its **actionIdentifier** property to see what they did. We have a single button with the “show” identifier, but there’s also

Project 21: Local Notifications

UNNotificationDefaultActionIdentifier that gets sent when the user swiped on the notification to unlock their device and launch the app.

So: we can pull out our user info then decide what to do based on what the user chose. The method also accepts a completion handler closure that you should call once you've finished doing whatever you need to do. This might be much later on, so it's marked with the **@escaping** keyword.

Here's the code – add this method to **ViewController** now:

```
func userNotificationCenter(_ center: UNUserNotificationCenter,
didReceive response: UNNotificationResponse,
withCompletionHandler completionHandler: @escaping () -> Void)
{
    // pull out the buried userInfo dictionary
    let userInfo =
        response.notification.request.content.userInfo

    if let customData = userInfo["customData"] as? String {
        print("Custom data received: \(customData)")

        switch response.actionIdentifier {
            case UNNotificationDefaultActionIdentifier:
                // the user swiped to unlock
                print("Default identifier")

            case "show":
                // the user tapped our "show more info..." button
                print("Show more information...")

            default:
                break
        }
    }
}
```

Acting on responses

```
}

// you must call the completion handler when you're done
completionHandler()
}
```

Our project now creates notifications, attaches them to categories so you can create action buttons, then responds to whichever button was tapped by the user – we’re done!

Wrap up

That was easy, right? And yet it's such a great feature to have, because now your app can talk to users even when it isn't running. You want to show a step count for how far they've walked? Use a notification. You want to trigger an alert because it's their turn to play in a game? Use a notification. You want to send them marketing messages to make them buy more stuff? Actually, just don't do that, you bad person.

We've only scratched the surface of what notifications can do, but if you'd like to explore more advanced topics – such as attaching pictures or letting the user type responses rather than tapping buttons – see my book **Advanced iOS: Volume One**.

We'll be coming back to notifications again in project 33, where CloudKit is used to create and deliver remote notifications when server data has changed.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 21.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Update the code in **didReceive** so that it shows different instances of **UIAlertController** depending on which action identifier was passed in.
2. For a harder challenge, add a second **UNNotificationAction** to the **alarm** category of project 21. Give it the title "Remind me later", and make it call **scheduleLocal()** so that the same alert is shown in 24 hours. (For the purpose of these challenges, a time interval notification with 86400 seconds is good enough – that's roughly how many seconds there

are in a day, excluding summer time changes and leap seconds.)

3. And for an even harder challenge, update project 2 so that it reminds players to come back and play every day. This means scheduling a week of notifications ahead of time, each of which launch the app. When the app is finally launched, make sure you call **removeAllPendingNotificationRequests()** to clear any un-shown alerts, then make new alerts for future days.

Project 22

Detect-a-Beacon

Learn to find and range iBeacons using our first project for a physical device.

Setting up

Apple introduced iBeacon technology with iOS 7, and it helped make the Internet of Things hypefest even more stratospheric. In this project you're going to learn to detect and range beacons, which in turn means learning how to ask your user for their location. With this, you'll have all the tools required to make your own location-aware apps – just scatter a few beacons around your house!

If you don't have any iBeacons at home, that's OK because most people don't. Instead, I recommend you install the app "Locate Beacon" on your iPad or iPhone, because that comes with an iBeacon transmitter built in, making it perfect for testing. You also need an iOS device that's compatible with iBeacons, which means iPhone 5 or later, 3rd generation iPad or later, iPad Mini or later, or 5th generation iPod Touch or later. I'm afraid the iOS Simulator won't work, but you can at least follow along with the code. Please ensure you have Bluetooth enabled on your device.

If you've never pushed an app to a real device before, you need to make sure you select the device from the list of destinations. You can do this by clicking where it says "Project22" to the right of the play and stop buttons, or by going to the Product menu and choosing Destination then selecting your device. If it comes up with "ineligible" it means your device is running an older version of iOS than your project is designed for, so you may need to go to your project settings (where you configure orientation) and change Deployment Target to match.

Create a new Single View App project in Xcode then name it Project22. Let's go!

Requesting location: Core Location

It should come as no surprise that Apple considers a user's location to be private, and that means we need to ask for permission to use it. How you ask for permission depends on what you're trying to do: would you like the user's location only when your app is running, or would you like a user's location even when your app isn't running?

You might think that you'd only ever want location access when your app is running. After all, what's the point in asking for information when your app isn't around to use it?

There are times you'll want both. For example, if you're creating a map app that shows users how to get from their current location to your nearest store, you'll only need their location when the app is being used. But if you're creating an app that needs to be woken up when the user reaches a location, then you'll need access even when the app isn't running – iOS monitors the user's location on your behalf and automatically starts your app as needed.

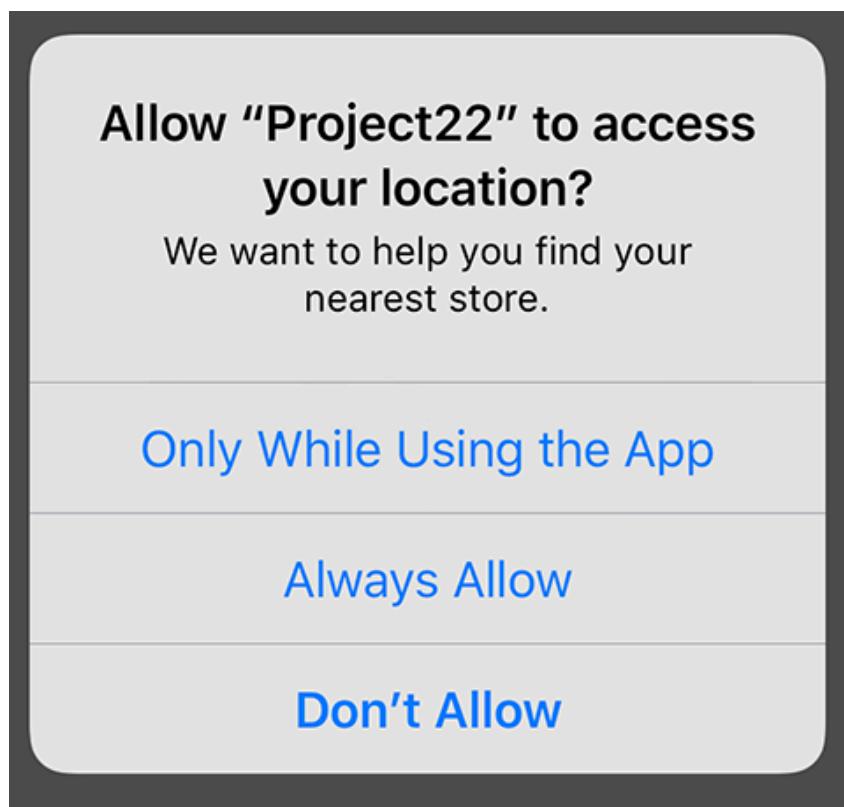
Using location when the app isn't running is of course highly sensitive information, so Apple flags it up in three ways:

1. If you request Always access, users will still get the chance to choose When In Use.
2. If they choose Always, iOS will automatically ask them again after a few days to confirm they still want to grant Always access.
3. When your app is using location data in the background the iOS UI will update to reflect that – users will know it's happening.
4. Users can, at any point, go into the settings app and change from Always down to When In Use.

In this app we're going to request Always access so that our app can detect beacons in the background. Requesting location access requires a change to your apps Info.plist file, which is the property list file we first met way back in project 3. We need to add to that file the reason why we want the user's location – a string that will be shown in the iOS UI when the user is

being asked to accept or decline our request.

Because of the rules above, we need to add two keys: “Privacy - Location Always and When In Use Usage Description” and “Privacy - Location When In Use Usage Description”. So, please add them both now, make sure their types are set to String, then in the value fields enter some text to explain to users *why* you want their location. For example, "We want to help you find your nearest store." When your user is prompted to grant location access, this text will be shown alongside Apple's own descriptive message.



That's enough knowledge to get this app jump started, so open up Main.storyboard and place a label in there. Give it the custom font System Thin size 40, then give the text "UNKNOWN". For constraints, please center it horizontally and vertically. Now create an outlet for it using the assistant editor, and name the outlet **distanceReading**.

That label will show one of four messages depending on how close we are to our test beacon, which of course might be an iPad acting as a beacon if you don't own actual hardware.

Project 22: Detect-a-Beacon

Because iBeacons use very low energy levels, their range is limited and also easily interrupted; even something as simple as turning your back to the beacon weakens its signal dramatically. Based on the beacon's distance to us, we'll show either "UNKNOWN", "FAR", "NEAR" or "RIGHT HERE".

Apple restricts your ranging to these values because of the signal's low energy nature, but it's more than enough for most uses.



To complete our current step, let's make sure we have location configured correctly. This bit will work fine on the simulator, because although the simulator isn't capable of detecting iBeacons it can simulate general location information well enough.

Open ViewController.swift and add this import alongside UIKit:

```
import CoreLocation
```

Now add this property to your class:

```
var locationManager: CLLocationManager?
```

This is the Core Location class that lets us configure how we want to be notified about location, and will also deliver location updates to us.

That doesn't actually create a location manager, or even prompt the user for location permission! To do that, we first need to create the object (easy), then set ourselves as its delegate (easy, but we need to conform to the protocol), then finally we need to request authorization. We'll start by conforming to the protocol, so change your class definition to this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController,  
CLLocationManagerDelegate {
```

Now modify your `viewDidLoad()` method to this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {  
    super.viewDidLoad()  
  
    locationManager = CLLocationManager()  
    locationManager?.delegate = self  
    locationManager?.requestAlwaysAuthorization()  
  
    view.backgroundColor = .gray  
}
```

Creating the object and setting the delegate are easy enough, but the `requestAlwaysAuthorization()` call is new. This is where the actual action happens: if you have already been granted location permission then things will Just Work; if you haven't, iOS will request it now.

Note: if you used the "when in use" key, you should call `requestWhenInUseAuthorization()` instead. If you did not set the correct plist key earlier, your request for location access will be ignored.

Project 22: Detect-a-Beacon

I slipped one other thing in there: I set the view's background color to be gray. As well as changing the label's text, we'll be using color to tell users how distant the beacon is.

Requesting location authorization is a non-blocking call, which means your code will carry on executing while the user reads your location message and decides whether to grant you access to their location.

When the user has finally made their mind, you'll get told their result because we set ourselves as the delegate for our **CLLocationManager** object. The method that will be called is this one:

```
func locationManager(_ manager: CLLocationManager,  
didChangeAuthorization status: CLAuthorizationStatus) {  
    if status == .authorizedAlways {  
        if CLLocationManager.isMonitoringAvailable(for:  
CLBeaconRegion.self) {  
            if CLLocationManager.isRangingAvailable() {  
                // do stuff  
            }  
        }  
    }  
}
```

Put that into your view controller class somewhere, then run your app. It's important to test it before continuing, because if you've made a mistake somewhere it's hard to know unless you stop and check. The most common error is misconfiguring the plist with location privacy settings, so if you don't see a message requesting location access then check there first.

The **didChangeAuthorization** method we just added doesn't do anything because it just has a comment saying **// do stuff**. We'll fill that in with great stuff shortly, but for now look at the conditional statements wrapped around it: did we get authorized by the user? If so, is our device able to monitor iBeacons? If so, is ranging available? (Ranging is the ability to tell roughly how far something else is away from our device.)

Hunting the beacon: **CLBeaconRegion**

If everything is working, you should have received a large iOS confirmation prompt asking whether you want to grant the app access to your location. This message is really blunt, so users hopefully take a few moments to read it before continuing.

But that prompt is not the only way iOS helps users guard their privacy. If you went for "when in use", you'll still get location information while your app is in the background if you enable the background capability, and iOS will notify users that this is happening by making the device status bar blue and saying "YourAppName is using your location." If you went for "always", iOS will wait a few days then ask the user if they still want to grant permission, just to be fully sure.

Assuming everything went well, let's take a look at how we actually range beacons. First, we use a new class called **CLBeaconRegion**, which is used to identify a beacon uniquely. Second, we give that to our **CLLocationManager** object by calling its **startMonitoring(for:)** and **startRangingBeacons(in:)** methods. Once that's done, we sit and wait. As soon as iOS has anything tell us, it will do so.

iBeacons are identified using three pieces of information: a universally unique identifier (UUID), plus a major number and a minor number. The first number is a long hexadecimal string that you can create by running the **uuidgen** in your Mac's terminal. It should identify you or your store chain uniquely.

The major number is used to subdivide within the UUID. So, if you have 10,000 stores in your supermarket chain, you would use the same UUID for them all but give each one a different major number. That major number must be between 1 and 65535, which is enough to identify every McDonalds and Starbucks outlet combined!

The minor number can (if you wish) be used to subdivide within the major number. For example, if your flagship London store has 12 floors each of which has 10 departments, you

Project 22: Detect-a-Beacon

would assign each of them a different minor number.

The combination of all three identify the user's precise location:

- **UUID:** You're in a Acme Hardware Supplies store.
- **Major:** You're in the Glasgow branch.
- **Minor:** You're in the shoe department on the third floor.

If you don't need that level of detail you can skip minor or even major – it's down to you.

It's time to put this into code, so we're going to create a new method called **startScanning()** that contains the following:

```
func startScanning() {  
    let uuid = UUID(uuidString: "5A4BCFCE-174E-4BAC-  
A814-092E77F6B7E5")!  
    let beaconRegion = CLBeaconRegion(proximityUUID: uuid,  
major: 123, minor: 456, identifier: "MyBeacon")  
  
    locationManager?.startMonitoring(for: beaconRegion)  
    locationManager?.startRangingBeacons(in: beaconRegion)  
}
```

You met **UUID** in project 10, but here we're converting a string into a UUID rather than generating a UUID and converting it to a string. The UUID I'm using there is one of the ones that comes built into the Locate Beacon app – look under "Apple AirLocate 5A4BCFCE" and find it there. Note that I'm scanning for specific major and minor numbers, so please enter those into your Locate Beacon app.

The **identifier** field is just a string you can set to help identify this beacon in a human-readable way. That, plus the UUID, major and minor fields, goes into the **CLBeaconRegion** class, which is used to identify and work with iBeacons. It then gets sent to our location manager, asking it to monitor for the existence of the region and also to start measuring the distance

between us and the beacon.

Find the `// do stuff` comment inside the `didChangeAuthorization` method you wrote a few minutes ago, and change it to this:

```
startScanning()
```

That method should now be much clearer: we only start scanning for beacons when we have permission and if the device is able to do so.

If you run the app now (on a real device, remember!) you'll see that it literally looks identical, as if we needn't have bothered writing any iBeacon code. But behind the scenes, detection and ranging *is* happening, we're just not doing anything with it!

This app is going to change the label text and view background color to reflect proximity to the beacon we're scanning for. This will be done in a single method, called `update(distance:)`, which will use a switch/case block and animations in order to make the transition look smooth. Let's write that method first:

```
func update(distance: CLProximity) {
    UIView.animate(withDuration: 1) {
        switch distance {
            case .unknown:
                self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.gray
                self.distanceReading.text = "UNKNOWN"

            case .far:
                self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.blue
                self.distanceReading.text = "FAR"

            case .near:
                self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.orange
                self.distanceReading.text = "NEAR"
        }
    }
}
```

Project 22: Detect-a-Beacon

```
        case .immediate:  
            self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.red  
            self.distanceReading.text = "RIGHT HERE"  
        }  
    }  
}
```

Most of that is just choosing the right color and text, but you'll notice the method accepts a **CLProximity** as its parameter.

Now, in theory this can only be one of our four distance values, which is why we have a **default** case in there. However, Swift should show you a warning because Apple has marked **CLProximity** as an enum that might change in the future – they might add more fine-grained values, for example.

This is only a *warning* rather than an *error* because you can build ship your code without covering future cases if you want to. However, if you do that you risk running into problems in the future: if Apple added an extra **.farFarAway** case in there, what would your code do?

There are two solutions here: we can add a special case called **@unknown default**, which is specifically there to catch future values. This allows you to cover all the other cases explicitly, then provide one extra case to handle as-yet-unknown cases in the future:

```
@unknown default:  
    self.view.backgroundColor = .black  
    self.distanceReading.text = "WHOA!"
```

In this app, though, it's easier to treat unknown future cases as a regular unknown case, so instead I would recommend you write this:

```
func update(distance: CLProximity) {  
    UIView.animate(withDuration: 0.8) {  
        switch distance {
```

```

    case .far:
        self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.blue
        self.distanceReading.text = "FAR"

    case .near:
        self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.orange
        self.distanceReading.text = "NEAR"

    case .immediate:
        self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.red
        self.distanceReading.text = "RIGHT HERE"

    default:
        self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.gray
        self.distanceReading.text = "UNKNOWN"
    }
}
}
}

```

With that method written, all that remains before our project is complete is to catch the ranging method from **CLLocationManager**. We'll be given the array of beacons it found for a given region, which allows for cases where there are multiple beacons transmitting the same UUID.

If we receive any beacons from this method, we'll pull out the first one and use its **proximity** property to call our **update(distance:)** method and redraw the user interface. If there aren't any beacons, we'll just use **.unknown**, which will switch the text back to "UNKNOWN" and make the background color gray.

Here's the code:

```

func locationManager(_ manager: CLLocationManager,
didRangeBeacons beacons: [CLBeacon], in region: CLBeaconRegion)
{

```

Project 22: Detect-a-Beacon

```
if let beacon = beacons.first {  
    update(distance: beacon.proximity)  
} else {  
    update(distance: .unknown)  
}  
}
```

With that, your code is done. Run it on a device, make sure Locate Beacon is up and transmitting, and enjoy your location-aware app!

Wrap up

Working with iBeacon locations is different from working with maps. The technology is often called *micro-location* because it can tell the difference between a few centimeters and a meter or more. Plus it works inside, which is somewhere GPS continues to be poor, and understandably.

What I like about iBeacons is their subtlety: hardware beacons are almost invisibly small, yet provide the ability for apps to respond to a user's precise location – you can now make apps for museums, galleries, stores, schools, warehouses, and more, and it took less than 30 minutes.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 22.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Write code that shows a **UIAlertController** when your beacon is first detected. Make sure you set a Boolean to say the alert has been shown, so it doesn't keep appearing.
2. Go through two or three other iBeacons in the Detect Beacon app and add their UUIDs to your app, then register all of them with iOS. Now add a second label to the app that shows new text depending on which beacon was located.
3. Add a circle to your view, then use animation to scale it up and down depending on the distance from the beacon – try 0.001 for unknown, 0.25 for far, 0.5 for near, and 1.0 for immediate. You can make the circle by adding an image, or by creating a view that's 256

Project 22: Detect-a-Beacon

wide by 256 high then setting its **layer.cornerRadius** to 128 so that it's round.

Project 23

Swifty Ninja

Learn to draw shapes in SpriteKit while making a fun and tense slicing game.

Setting up

I don't want to put you off, but this is by far the longest project in the series. It's not the most *complicated*, but it's long, coming in just short of 500 lines in total. That said, I hope it'll be worth it, because the end result is great: we're going to make a Fruit Ninja-style game, where slicing penguins is good and slicing bombs is bad. I think I must unconsciously have something against penguins...

Anyway, in this project you're going to meet **SKShapeNode** and **AVAudioPlayer**, you're going to create **SKAction** groups, you're going to create shapes with **UIBezierPath**, and more. So, it's the usual recipe: make something cool, and learn at the same time.

This project is hard because you need to write a lot of code before you can start to see results, which I personally find frustrating. I much prefer it when I can write a few lines, see the result, write a few lines more, see the result again, and so on. That isn't possible here, so I suggest you make some coffee before you begin.

Still here? OK!

Create a new SpriteKit project in Xcode, name it Project23, then do the usual cleaning job to create a completely empty SpriteKit project: remove all the code from **didMove(to:)** and **touchesBegan()**, change the anchor point and size of GameScene.sks, and so on.

You should also download the files for this project from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>), then copy its Content folder into your Xcode project.

Please force the app to run only on landscape iPads before continuing.

Reminder: Don't forget to use a real device for this project, or, if you must, the lowest-spec iPad in the simulator.

Basics quick start: SKShapeNode

The only way we can get through this project with our sanity intact is by whizzing through the things you know already so I can spend more time focusing on the new bits. So, be prepared for abrupt changes of pace: fast, slow, fast, slow, as appropriate.

Open up GameScene.swift and put this into **didMove(to:)**:

```
let background = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "sliceBackground")
background.position = CGPoint(x: 512, y: 384)
background.blendMode = .replace
background.zPosition = -1
addChild(background)

physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx: 0, dy: -6)
physicsWorld.speed = 0.85

createScore()
createLives()
createSlices()
```

The last three are all methods we'll create in a moment, but first there are two new lines in there. The default gravity of our physics world is -0.98, which is roughly equivalent to Earth's gravity. I'm using a slightly lower value so that items stay up in the air a bit longer.

I'm also telling the physics world to adjust its speed downwards, which causes all movement to happen at a slightly slower rate.

The first two new methods are easy and require little explanation, but you will need to add some properties to the **GameScene** class to support them:

```
var gameScore: SKLabelNode!
var score = 0 {
    didSet {
```

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

```
        gameScore.text = "Score: \(score)"  
    }  
}  
  
var livesImages = [SKSpriteNode]()  
var lives = 3
```

That's all old news for you – if nothing else, this should show how far you've come! Now here are the two new methods:

```
func createScore() {  
    gameScore = SKLabelNode(fontNamed: "Chalkduster")  
    gameScore.horizontalAlignmentMode = .left  
    gameScore.fontSize = 48  
    addChild(gameScore)  
  
    gameScore.position = CGPoint(x: 8, y: 8)  
    score = 0  
}  
  
func createLives() {  
    for i in 0 ..< 3 {  
        let spriteNode = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "sliceLife")  
        spriteNode.position = CGPoint(x: CGFloat(834 + (i * 70)),  
y: 720)  
        addChild(spriteNode)  
  
        livesImages.append(spriteNode)  
    }  
}
```

You'll notice I'm adding the lives images to the **livesImages** array, which is done so that we

can cross off lives when the player loses.



That leaves the `createSlices()` method, and this bit *is* new. In this game, swiping around the screen will lead a glowing trail of slice marks that fade away when you let go or keep on moving. To make this work, we're going to do three things:

1. Track all player moves on the screen, recording an array of all their swipe points.
2. Draw two slice shapes, one in white and one in yellow to make it look like there's a hot glow.
3. Use the **zPosition** property to make sure the slices go above everything else in the game.

Drawing a shape in SpriteKit is easy thanks to a special node type called **SKShapeNode**. This lets you define any kind of shape you can draw, along with line width, stroke color and more, and it will render it to the screen. We're going to draw two lines – one for a yellow glow, and one for a white glow in the middle of the yellow glow – so we're going to need two **SKShapeNode** properties:

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

```
var activeSliceBG: SKShapeNode!
var activeSliceFG: SKShapeNode!
```

And here's the code for the `createSlices()` method:

```
func createSlices() {
    activeSliceBG = SKShapeNode()
    activeSliceBG.zPosition = 2

    activeSliceFG = SKShapeNode()
    activeSliceFG.zPosition = 3

    activeSliceBG.strokeColor = UIColor(red: 1, green: 0.9,
blue: 0, alpha: 1)
    activeSliceBG.lineWidth = 9

    activeSliceFG.strokeColor = UIColor.white
    activeSliceFG.lineWidth = 5

    addChild(activeSliceBG)
    addChild(activeSliceFG)
}
```

Note that the background slice has a thicker line width than the foreground, and has a higher Z position than the background slice. I'm using Z positions 2 and 3 for the slice shapes, because I'll be using Z position 1 for bombs and Z position 0 for everything else – this ensures the slice shapes are on top, then bombs, then everything else.

Shaping up for action: CGPath and UIBezierPath

Like I already explained, we're going to keep an array of the user's swipe points so that we can draw a shape resembling their slicing. To make this work, we're going to need four new methods, two of which you've met already. They are: **touchesBegan()**, **touchesMoved()**, **touchesEnded()** and **redrawActiveSlice()**. You already know how **touchesBegan()** and **touchesMoved()** works, and the other "touches" methods all work the same way.

First things first: add this new property to your class so that we can store swipe points:

```
var activeSlicePoints = [CGPoint]()
```

We're going to tackle the two easiest methods first: **touchesMoved()** and **touchesEnded()**. All the **touchesMoved()** method needs to do is figure out where in the scene the user touched, add that location to the slice points array, then redraw the slice shape, so that's easy enough:

```
override func touchesMoved(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    guard let touch = touches.first else { return }
    let location = touch.location(in: self)
    activeSlicePoints.append(location)
    redrawActiveSlice()
}
```

When the user finishes touching the screen, **touchesEnded()** will be called. I'm going to make this method fade out the slice shapes over a quarter of a second. We *could* remove them immediately but that looks ugly, and leaving them sitting there for no reason would rather destroy the effect. So, fading it is – add this **touchesEnded()** method:

```
override func touchesEnded(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
```

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

```
    activeSliceBG.run(SKAction.fadeOut(withDuration: 0.25))
    activeSliceFG.run(SKAction.fadeOut(withDuration: 0.25))
}
```

You haven't used the **fadeOut(withDuration:)** action before, but I think it's pretty obvious what it does!

So far this is all easy stuff, but we're going to look at an interesting method now:

touchesBegan(). One we've read out the touch from the **UITouch** set, this needs to do several things:

1. Remove all existing points in the **activeSlicePoints** array, because we're starting fresh.
2. Get the touch location and add it to the **activeSlicePoints** array.
3. Call the (as yet unwritten) **redrawActiveSlice()** method to clear the slice shapes.
4. Remove any actions that are currently attached to the slice shapes. This will be important if they are in the middle of a **fadeOut(withDuration:)** action.
5. Set both slice shapes to have an alpha value of 1 so they are fully visible.

We can convert that to code with ease – in fact, I've put numbered comments in the code below so you can match them up to the points above:

```
override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    guard let touch = touches.first else { return }

    // 1
    activeSlicePoints.removeAll(keepingCapacity: true)

    // 2
    let location = touch.location(in: self)
    activeSlicePoints.append(location)

    // 3
```

```

redrawActiveSlice()

// 4
activeSliceBG.removeAllActions()
activeSliceFG.removeAllActions()

// 5
activeSliceBG.alpha = 1
activeSliceFG.alpha = 1
}

```

So, there's some challenge there but not a whole lot. Where it gets interesting is the **redrawActiveSlice()** method, because this is going to use a **UIBezierPath** that will be used to connect our swipe points together into a single line.

As with the previous method, let's take a look at what **redrawActiveSlice()** needs to do:

1. If we have fewer than two points in our array, we don't have enough data to draw a line so it needs to clear the shapes and exit the method.
2. If we have more than 12 slice points in our array, we need to remove the oldest ones until we have at most 12 – this stops the swipe shapes from becoming too long.
3. It needs to start its line at the position of the first swipe point, then go through each of the others drawing lines to each point.
4. Finally, it needs to update the slice shape paths so they get drawn using their designs – i.e., line width and color.

To make this work, you're going to need to know that an **SKShapeNode** object has a property called **path** which describes the shape we want to draw. When it's **nil**, there's nothing to draw; when it's set to a valid path, that gets drawn with the **SKShapeNode**'s settings. **SKShapeNode** expects you to use a data type called **CGPath**, but we can easily create that from a **UIBezierPath**.

Drawing a complex path using **UIBezierPath** is a cinch: we'll use its **move(to:)** method to

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

position the start of our lines, then loop through our **activeSlicePoints** array and call the path's **addLine(to:)** method for each point.

To stop the array storing more than 12 slice points, we're going new method called **removeFirst()**, which lets us remove a certain number of items from the start of an array. In this case we know we want at most 12, so we can subtract 12 from our current count to see how many excess we have, and pass that to **removeFirst()**.

I'm going to insert numbered comments into the code again to help you match up the goals with the code more easily:

```
func redrawActiveSlice() {
    // 1
    if activeSlicePoints.count < 2 {
        activeSliceBG.path = nil
        activeSliceFG.path = nil
        return
    }

    // 2
    if activeSlicePoints.count > 12 {
        activeSlicePoints.removeFirst(activeSlicePoints.count -
    12)
    }

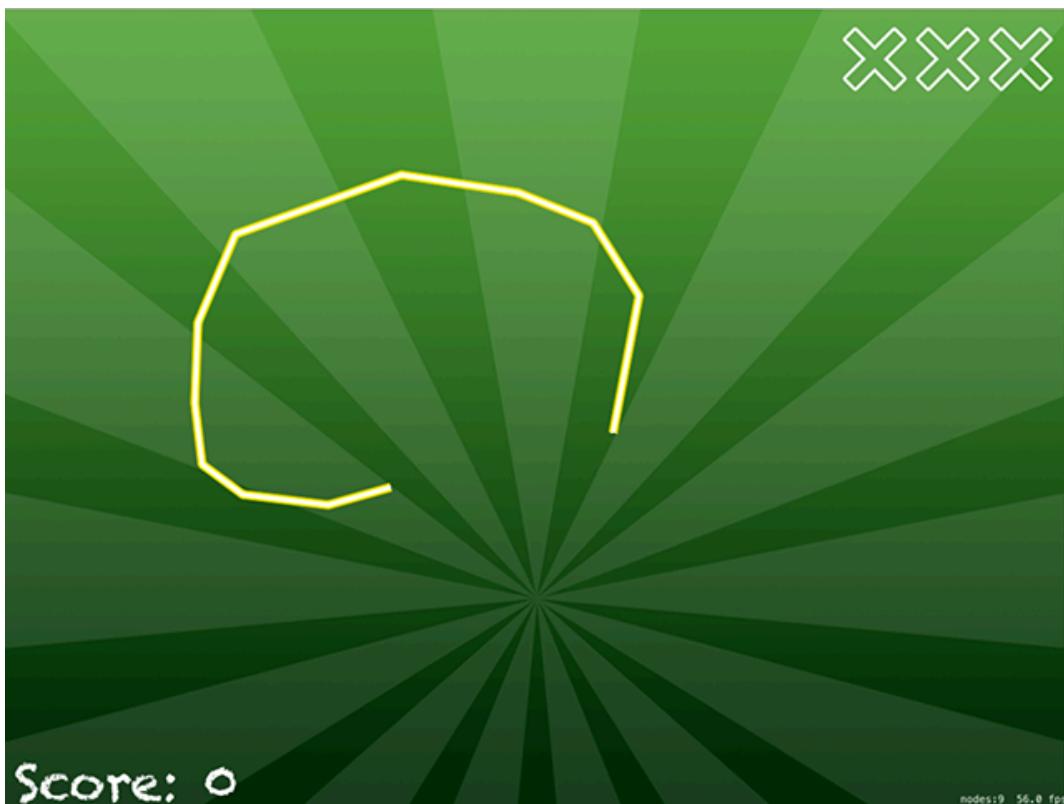
    // 3
    let path = UIBezierPath()
    path.move(to: activeSlicePoints[0])

    for i in 1 ..< activeSlicePoints.count {
        path.addLine(to: activeSlicePoints[i])
    }
}
```

Shaping up for action: CGPath and UIBezierPath

```
// 4  
activeSliceBG.path = path.cgPath  
activeSliceFG.path = path.cgPath  
}
```

At this point, we have something you can run: press Cmd+R to run the game, then tap and swipe around on the screen to see the slice effect – I think you'll agree that **SKShapeNode** is pretty powerful!



Before we're done with the slice effect, we're going to add one more thing: a "swoosh" sound that plays as you swipe around. You've already seen the **playSoundFileNamed()** method of **SKAction**, but we're going to use it a little differently here.

You see, if we just played a swoosh every time the player moved, there would be 100 sounds playing at any given time – one for every small movement they made. Instead, we want only one swoosh to play at once, so we're going to set to true a property called

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

isSwooshSoundActive, make the **waitForCompletion** of our **SKAction** true, then use a completion closure for **runAction()** so that **isSwooshSoundActive** is set to false.

So, when the player first swipes we set **isSwooshSoundActive** to be true, and only when the swoosh sound has finished playing do we set it back to false again. This will allow us to ensure only one swoosh sound is playing at a time.

First, give your class this new property:

```
var isSwooshSoundActive = false
```

Now we need to check whether that's false when **touchesMoved()** is called, and, if it is false, call a new method called **playSwooshSound()**. Add this to code just before the end of **touchesMoved()**:

```
if !isSwooshSoundActive {  
    playSwooshSound()  
}
```

I've provided you with three different swoosh sounds, all of which are effectively the same just at varying pitches. The **playSwooshSound()** method needs to set **isSwooshSoundActive** to be true (so that no other swoosh sounds are played until we're ready), play one of the three sounds, then when the sound has finished set **isSwooshSoundActive** to be false again so that another swoosh sound can play.

By playing our sound with **waitForCompletion** set to true, SpriteKit automatically ensures the completion closure given to **runAction()** isn't called until the sound has finished, so this solution is perfect.

```
func playSwooshSound() {  
    isSwooshSoundActive = true  
  
    let randomNumber = Int.random(in: 1...3)  
    let soundName = "swoosh\(randomNumber).caf"
```

Shaping up for action: CGPath and UIBezierPath

```
let swooshSound = SKAction.playSoundFileNamed(soundName,  
waitForCompletion: true)  
  
run(swooshSound) { [weak self] in  
    self?.isSwooshSoundActive = false  
}  
}
```

If you try running the game now you should hear only one swipe sound at a time.

Enemy or bomb: AVAudioPlayer

In this section we're going to look at just one method, which should tell you immediately that this is a *complicated* method. This method is called `createEnemy()`, and is responsible for launching either a penguin or a bomb into the air for the player to swipe. That's it – that's all it does. And yet it's going to take quite a lot of code because it takes quite a lot of functionality in order to make the game complete:

1. Should this enemy be a penguin or a bomb?
2. Where should be it created on the screen?
3. What direction should it be moving in?

It should be obvious that 3) relies on 2) – if you create something on the left edge of the screen, having it move to the left would make the game impossible for players!

An additional complexity is that in the early stages of the game we sometimes want to force a bomb, and sometimes force a penguin, in order to build a smooth learning curve. For example, it wouldn't be fair to make the very first enemy a bomb, because the player would swipe it and lose immediately.

We're going to specify what kind of enemy we want using an enum. You've used enums already (not least in project 2), but you've never created one before. To make `createEnemy()` work, we need to declare a new enum that tracks what kind of enemy should be created: should we force a bomb always, should we force a bomb never, or use the default randomization?

Add this *above* your class definition in GameScene.swift:

```
enum ForceBomb {  
    case never, always, random  
}
```

You can now use those values in your code, for example like this:

```
if forceBomb == .never {
```

```

    enemyType = 1
} else if forceBomb == .always {
    enemyType = 0
}

```

OK, it's time to start looking at the **createEnemy()** method. I say "start" because we're going to look at it in three passes: the code required to create bombs, the code to position enemies and set up their physics, and the code required to do everything else. Your code probably won't run until all three parts are in place, so don't worry!

We're going to need to track enemies that are currently active in the scene, so please add this array as a property of your class:

```
var activeEnemies = [SKSpriteNode]()
```

And now let's look at the core of the **createEnemy()** method. It needs to:

1. Accept a parameter of whether we want to force a bomb, not force a bomb, or just be random.
2. Decide whether to create a bomb or a penguin (based on the parameter input) then create the correct thing.
3. Add the new enemy to the scene, and also to our **activeEnemies** array.

That's it. Not too much, I hope. To decide whether to create a bomb or a player, I'll choose a random number from 0 to 6, and consider 0 to mean "bomb". Here's the code:

```

func createEnemy(forceBomb: ForceBomb = .random) {
    let enemy: SKSpriteNode

    var enemyType = Int.random(in: 0...6)

    if forceBomb == .never {
        enemyType = 1
    }
}
```

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

```
    } else if forceBomb == .always {
        enemyType = 0
    }

    if enemyType == 0 {
        // bomb code goes here
    } else {
        enemy = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "penguin")
        run(SKAction.playSoundFileNamed("launch.caf",
            waitForCompletion: false))
        enemy.name = "enemy"
    }

    // position code goes here

    addChild(enemy)
    activeEnemies.append(enemy)
}
```

Note: Xcode will show you a compiler error for now, but don't worry – we're going to fix it.

There's nothing complicated in there, but I *have* taken out two fairly meaty chunks of code. That **// position code goes here** comment masks a lot of missing functionality that really makes the game come alive, so we're going to fill that in now.

I'm going to use numbered comments again so you can see exactly how this code matches up with what it should do. So, here is what that missing position code needs to do:

1. Give the enemy a random position off the bottom edge of the screen.
2. Create a random angular velocity, which is how fast something should spin.
3. Create a random X velocity (how far to move horizontally) that takes into account the enemy's position.
4. Create a random Y velocity just to make things fly at different speeds.

5. Give all enemies a circular physics body where the **collisionBitMask** is set to 0 so they don't collide.

The only thing that might catch you out in the actual code is my use of magic numbers, which is what programmers call seemingly random (but actually important) numbers appearing in code. Ideally you don't want these, because it's better to make them constants with names, but then how would I be able to give you any homework?

Turning those five points into code is easy enough – just replace the **// position code goes here** with this:

```
// 1
let randomPosition = CGPoint(x: Int.random(in: 64...960), y:
-128)
enemy.position = randomPosition

// 2
let randomAngularVelocity = CGFloat.random(in: -3...3 )
let randomXVelocity: Int

// 3
if randomPosition.x < 256 {
    randomXVelocity = Int.random(in: 8...15)
} else if randomPosition.x < 512 {
    randomXVelocity = Int.random(in: 3...5)
} else if randomPosition.x < 768 {
    randomXVelocity = -Int.random(in: 3...5)
} else {
    randomXVelocity = -Int.random(in: 8...15)
}

// 4
let randomYVelocity = Int.random(in: 24...32)
```

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

```
// 5  
enemy.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius: 64)  
enemy.physicsBody?.velocity = CGVector(dx: randomXVelocity *  
40, dy: randomYVelocity * 40)  
enemy.physicsBody?.angularVelocity = randomAngularVelocity  
enemy.physicsBody?.collisionBitMask = 0
```

The last missing part of the `createEnemy()` method is about creating bombs, and I've left it separate because it requires some thinking. A "bomb" node in our game is actually going to be made up of three parts: the bomb image, a bomb fuse particle emitter, and a container that puts the two together so we can move and spin them around together.

The reason we need to keep the bomb image and bomb fuse separate is because tapping on a bomb is a fatal move that causes the player to lose all their lives immediately. If the fuse particle emitter were inside the bomb image, then the user could accidentally tap a stray fuse particle and lose unfairly.

As a reminder, we're going to force the Z position of bombs to be 1, which is higher than the default value of 0. This is so that bombs always appear in front of penguins, because hours of play testing has made it clear to me that it's awful if you don't realize there's a bomb lurking behind something when you swipe it!

Creating a bomb also needs to play a fuse sound, but that has its own complexity. You've already seen that **SKAction** has a very simple way to play sounds, but it's so simple that it's not useful here because we want to be able to stop the sound and **SKAction** sounds don't let you do that. It would be confusing for the fuse sound to be playing when no bombs are visible, so we need a better solution.

That solution is called **AVAudioPlayer**, and it's not a SpriteKit class – it's available to use in your UIKit apps too if you want. We're going to have an **AVAudioPlayer** property for our class that will store a sound just for bomb fuses so that we can stop it as needed.

Let's put numbers to the tasks this chunk of code needs to perform:

1. Create a new **SKSpriteNode** that will hold the fuse and the bomb image as children, setting its Z position to be 1.
2. Create the bomb image, name it "bomb", and add it to the container.
3. If the bomb fuse sound effect is playing, stop it and destroy it.
4. Create a new bomb fuse sound effect, then play it.
5. Create a particle emitter node, position it so that it's at the end of the bomb image's fuse, and add it to the container.

That's all you need to know in order to continue. We need to start by importing the AVFoundation framework, so add this line now next to **import SpriteKit**:

```
import AVFoundation
```

You'll also need to declare the **bombSoundEffect** property, so put this just after the declaration of **isSwooshSoundActive**:

```
var bombSoundEffect: AVAudioPlayer?
```

Now for the real work. Please replace the **// bomb code goes here** comment with this, watching out for my numbered comments to help you match code against meaning:

```
// 1
enemy = SKSpriteNode()
enemy.zPosition = 1
enemy.name = "bombContainer"

// 2
let bombImage = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "sliceBomb")
bombImage.name = "bomb"
enemy.addChild(bombImage)
```

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

```
// 3
if bombSoundEffect != nil {
    bombSoundEffect?.stop()
    bombSoundEffect = nil
}

// 4
if let path = Bundle.main.url(forResource: "sliceBombFuse",
withExtension: "caf") {
    if let sound = try? AVAudioPlayer(contentsOf: path) {
        bombSoundEffect = sound
        sound.play()
    }
}

// 5
if let emitter = SKEmitterNode(fileName: "sliceFuse") {
    emitter.position = CGPoint(x: 76, y: 64)
    enemy.addChild(emitter)
}
```

After all that work, you're almost done with bombs. But there's one small bug that we can either fix now or fix when you can see it, but we might as well fix it now because your brain is thinking about all that bomb code.

The bug is this: we're using **AVAudioPlayer** so that we can stop the bomb fuse when bombs are no longer on the screen. But where do we actually stop the sound? Well, we don't yet – but we need to.

To fix the bug, we need to modify the **update()** method, which is something we haven't touched before – in fact, so far we've just been deleting it! This method is called every frame before it's drawn, and gives you a chance to update your game state as you want. We're going to use this method to count the number of bomb containers that exist in our game, and stop the

fuse sound if the answer is 0.

Change your **update()** method to this:

```
override func update(_ currentTime: TimeInterval) {
    var bombCount = 0

    for node in activeEnemies {
        if node.name == "bombContainer" {
            bombCount += 1
            break
        }
    }

    if bombCount == 0 {
        // no bombs – stop the fuse sound!
        bombSoundEffect?.stop()
        bombSoundEffect = nil
    }
}
```

Follow the sequence

You've come so far already, and really there isn't a lot to show for your work other than being able to draw glowing slice shapes when you move touches around the screen. But that's all about to change, because we're now about to create the interesting code – we're going to make the game actually create some enemies.

Now, you might very well be saying, “but Paul, we just wrote the enemy creating code, and I never want to see it again!” You're right (and I never want to see it again either!) but it's a bit more complicated: the `createEnemy()` method creates one enemy as required. The code we're going to write now will call `createEnemy()` in different ways so that we get varying groups of enemies.

For example, sometimes we want to create two enemies at once, sometimes we want to create four at once, and sometimes we want to create five in quick sequence. Each one of these will call `createEnemy()` in different ways.

There's a *lot* to cover here, so let's get started: add this new enum before the **ForceBomb** enum you added a few minutes ago:

```
enum SequenceType: CaseIterable {
    case oneNoBomb, one, twoWithOneBomb, two, three, four,
    chain, fastChain
}
```

That outlines the possible types of ways we can create enemy: one enemy that definitely is not a bomb, one that might or might not be a bomb, two where one is a bomb and one isn't, then two/three/four random enemies, a chain of enemies, then a fast chain of enemies.

The first two will be used exclusively when the player first starts the game, to give them a gentle warm up. After that, they'll be given random sequence types from **twoWithOneBomb** to **fastChain**.

You might have noticed I slipped in a new protocol there: **CaseIterable**. This is one of Swift's

most useful protocols, and it will automatically add an **allCases** property to the **SequenceType** enum that lists all its cases as an array. This is really useful in our project because we can then use **randomElement()** to pick random sequence types to run our game.

We're going to need quite a few new properties in order to make the plan work, so please add these now:

```
var popupTime = 0.9
var sequence = [SequenceType]()
var sequencePosition = 0
var chainDelay = 3.0
var nextSequenceQueued = true
```

And here's what they do:

- The **popupTime** property is the amount of time to wait between the last enemy being destroyed and a new one being created.
- The **sequence** property is an array of our **SequenceType** enum that defines what enemies to create.
- The **sequencePosition** property is where we are right now in the game.
- The **chainDelay** property is how long to wait before creating a new enemy when the sequence type is **.chain** or **.fastChain**. Enemy chains don't wait until the previous enemy is offscreen before creating a new one, so it's like throwing five enemies quickly but with a small delay between each one.
- The **nextSequenceQueued** property is used so we know when all the enemies are destroyed and we're ready to create more.

Whenever we call our new method, which is **tossEnemies()**, we're going to decrease both **popupTime** and **chainDelay** so that the game gets harder as they play. Sneakily, we're always going to increase the speed of our physics world, so that objects move rise and fall faster too.

Nearly all the **tossEnemies()** method is a large **switch/case** statement that looks at the **sequencePosition** property to figure out what sequence type it should use. It then calls

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

`createEnemy()` correctly for the sequence type, passing in whether to force bomb creation or not.

The one thing that will need to be explained is the way enemy chains are created. Unlike regular sequence types, a chain is made up of several enemies with a space between them, and the game doesn't wait for an enemy to be sliced before showing the next thing in the chain.

The best thing for you to do is to put this source code into your project, and we can talk about the chain complexities in a moment:

```
func tossEnemies() {
    popupTime *= 0.991
    chainDelay *= 0.99
    physicsWorld.speed *= 1.02

    let sequenceType = sequence[sequencePosition]

    switch sequenceType {
        case .oneNoBomb:
            createEnemy(forceBomb: .never)

        case .one:
            createEnemy()

        case .twoWithOneBomb:
            createEnemy(forceBomb: .never)
            createEnemy(forceBomb: .always)

        case .two:
            createEnemy()
            createEnemy()

        case .three:
```

Follow the sequence

```
createEnemy()
createEnemy()
createEnemy()

case .four:
    createEnemy()
    createEnemy()
    createEnemy()
    createEnemy()

case .chain:
    createEnemy()

        DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() +
(chainDelay / 5.0)) { [weak self] in self?.createEnemy() }
        DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() +
(chainDelay / 5.0 * 2)) { [weak self] in self?.createEnemy() }
        DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() +
(chainDelay / 5.0 * 3)) { [weak self] in self?.createEnemy() }
        DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() +
(chainDelay / 5.0 * 4)) { [weak self] in self?.createEnemy() }

case .fastChain:
    createEnemy()

        DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() +
(chainDelay / 10.0)) { [weak self] in self?.createEnemy() }
        DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() +
(chainDelay / 10.0 * 2)) { [weak self] in self?.createEnemy() }
        DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() +
(chainDelay / 10.0 * 3)) { [weak self] in self?.createEnemy() }
        DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() +
```

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

```
(chainDelay / 10.0 * 4)) { [weak self] in self?.createEnemy() }
```

```
}
```

```
sequencePosition += 1
```

```
nextSequenceQueued = false
```

```
}
```

That looks like a massive method, I know, but in reality it's just the same thing being called in different ways. The interesting parts are the **.chain** and **.fastChain** cases, and also I want to explain in more detail the **nextSequenceQueued** property.

Each sequence in our array creates one or more enemies, then waits for them to be destroyed before continuing. Enemy chains are different: they create five enemies with a short break between, and don't wait for each one to be destroyed before continuing.

To handle these chains, we have calls to **asyncAfter()** with a timer value. If we assume for a moment that **chainDelay** is 10 seconds, then:

- That makes **chainDelay / 10.0** equal to 1 second.
- That makes **chainDelay / 10.0 * 2** equal to 2 seconds.
- That makes **chainDelay / 10.0 * 3** equal to three seconds.
- That makes **chainDelay / 10.0 * 4** equal to four seconds.

So, it spreads out the **createEnemy()** calls quite neatly.

The **nextSequenceQueued** property is more complicated. If it's false, it means we don't have a call to **tossEnemies()** in the pipeline waiting to execute. It gets set to true only in the gap between the previous sequence item finishing and **tossEnemies()** being called. Think of it as meaning, "I know there aren't any enemies right now, but more will come shortly."

We can make our game come to life with enemies with two more pieces of code. First, add this just before the end of **didMove(to:)**:

```
sequence =
```

Follow the sequence

```
[.oneNoBomb, .oneNoBomb, .twoWithOneBomb, .twoWithOneBomb, .thr
ee, .one, .chain]

for _ in 0 ... 1000 {
    if let nextSequence = SequenceType.allCases.randomElement()
    {
        sequence.append(nextSequence)
    }
}

DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() + 2) { [weak
self] in
    self?.tossEnemies()
}
```

That code fills the `sequence` array with seven pre-written sequences to help players warm up to how the game works, then adds 1001 (the `...` operator means “up to and including”) random sequence types to fill up the game. Finally, it triggers the initial enemy toss after two seconds.

The way we generate random sequence type values is using the **CaseIterable** protocol I mentioned earlier. If you cast your mind back, this is how we defined the **SequenceType** enum:

```
enum SequenceType: CaseIterable {
    case oneNoBomb, one, twoWithOneBomb, two, three, four,
chain, fastChain
}
```

Note that it says `enum SequenceType: CaseIterable`, and it means we’ll automatically get an `allCases` property generated for our enum that contains each case in the enum in the order it was defined. So, to generate lots of random sequence types we can use `SequenceType.allCases.randomElement()` again and again.

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

The second change we're going to make is to remove enemies from the game when they fall off the screen. This is required, because our game mechanic means that new enemies aren't created until the previous ones have been removed. The exception to this rule are enemy chains, where multiple enemies are created in a batch, but even then the game won't continue until all enemies from the chain have been removed.

We're going to modify the **update()** method so that:

1. If we have active enemies, we loop through each of them.
2. If any enemy is at or lower than Y position -140, we remove it from the game and our **activeEnemies** array.
3. If we don't have any active enemies *and* we haven't already queued the next enemy sequence, we schedule the next enemy sequence and set **nextSequenceQueued** to be true.

Put this code first in the **update()** method:

```
if activeEnemies.count > 0 {  
    for (index, node) in activeEnemies.enumerated().reversed() {  
        if node.position.y < -140 {  
            node.removeFromParent()  
            activeEnemies.remove(at: index)  
        }  
    }  
} else {  
    if !nextSequenceQueued {  
        DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() +  
popupTime) { [weak self] in  
            self?.tossEnemies()  
        }  
  
        nextSequenceQueued = true  
    }  
}
```

Follow the sequence

And now the part you've been waiting for extremely patiently: press Cmd+R to run the game, because it should now be getting close to useful!



Slice to win

We need to modify **touchesMoved()** to detect when users slice penguins and bombs. The code isn't complicated, but it *is* long, so I'm going to split it into three. First, here's the structure – place this just before the end of **touchesMoved()**:

```
let nodesAtPoint = nodes(at: location)

for case let node as SKSpriteNode in nodesAtPoint {
    if node.name == "enemy" {
        // destroy penguin
    } else if node.name == "bomb" {
        // destroy bomb
    }
}
```

Now, let's take a look at what destroying a penguin should do. It should:

1. Create a particle effect over the penguin.
2. Clear its node name so that it can't be swiped repeatedly.
3. Disable the **isDynamic** of its physics body so that it doesn't carry on falling.
4. Make the penguin scale out and fade out at the same time.
5. After making the penguin scale out and fade out, we should remove it from the scene.
6. Add one to the player's score.
7. Remove the enemy from our **activeEnemies** array.
8. Play a sound so the player knows they hit the penguin.

Replace the **// destroy penguin** with this, following along with my numbered comments:

```
// 1
if let emitter = SKEmitterNode(fileNamed: "sliceHitEnemy") {
    emitter.position = node.position
    addChild(emitter)
```

```

}

// 2
node.name = ""

// 3
node.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false

// 4
let scaleOut = SKAction.scale(to: 0.001, duration: 0.2)
let fadeOut = SKAction.fadeOut(withDuration: 0.2)
let group = SKAction.group([scaleOut, fadeOut])

// 5
let seq = SKAction.sequence([group, .removeFromParent()])
node.run(seq)

// 6
score += 1

// 7
if let index = activeEnemies.firstIndex(of: node) {
    activeEnemies.remove(at: index)
}

// 8
run(SKAction.playSoundFileNamed("whack.caf", waitForCompletion:
false))

```

You've now seen the two ways of collecting SpriteKit actions together: groups and sequences. An action **group** specifies that all actions inside it should execute simultaneously, whereas an action **sequence** runs them all one at a time. In the code above we have a group inside a

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

sequence, which is common.

If the player swipes a bomb by accident, they lose the game immediately. This uses much the same code as destroying a penguin, but with a few differences:

- The node called "bomb" is the bomb image, which is inside the bomb container. So, we need to reference the node's parent when looking up our position, changing the physics body, removing the node from the scene, and removing the node from our **activeEnemies** array..
- I'm going to create a different particle effect for bombs than for penguins.
- We end by calling the (as yet unwritten) method **endGame()**.

Replace the **// destroy bomb** comment with this:

```
guard let bombContainer = node.parent as? SKSpriteNode else
{ continue }

if let emitter = SKEmitterNode(fileName: "sliceHitBomb") {
    emitter.position = bombContainer.position
    addChild(emitter)
}

node.name = ""
bombContainer.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false

let scaleOut = SKAction.scale(to: 0.001, duration: 0.2)
let fadeOut = SKAction.fadeOut(withDuration: 0.2)
let group = SKAction.group([scaleOut, fadeOut])

let seq = SKAction.sequence([group, .removeFromParent()])
bombContainer.run(seq)

if let index = activeEnemies.firstIndex(of: bombContainer) {
```

```

    activeEnemies.remove(at: index)

}

run(SKAction.playSoundFileNamed("explosion.caf",
waitForCompletion: false))
endGame(triggeredByBomb: true)

```

Before I walk you through the `endGame()` method, we need to adjust the `update()` method a little. Right now, if a penguin or a bomb falls below -140, we remove it from the scene. We're going to modify that so that if the player misses slicing a penguin, they lose a life. We're also going to delete the node's name just in case any further checks for enemies or bombs happen – clearing the node name will avoid any problems.

In the `update()` method, replace this code:

```

if node.position.y < -140 {
    node.removeFromParent()
    activeEnemies.remove(at: index)
}

```

...with this:

```

if node.position.y < -140 {
    node.removeAllActions()

    if node.name == "enemy" {
        node.name = ""
        subtractLife()

        node.removeFromParent()
        activeEnemies.remove(at: index)
    } else if node.name == "bombContainer" {
        node.name = ""
    }
}

```

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

```
    node.removeFromParent()
    activeEnemies.remove(at: index)
}
}
```

That's mostly the same, except now we call **subtractLife()** when the player lets any penguins through. So, if you miss a penguin you lose one life; if you swipe a bomb, you lose all your lives. Or at least you would if our code actually compiled, which it won't: you're missing the **subtractLife()** and **endGame()** methods!

Game over, man: SKTexture

You are now within reach of the end of this project, and not a moment too soon, I suspect. You'll be pleased to know that you're just two methods away from the end, and neither of them are particularly taxing.

First is the **subtractLife()** method, which is called when a penguin falls off the screen without being sliced. It needs to subtract 1 from the **lives** property that we created what seems like years ago, update the images in the **livesImages** array so that the correct number are crossed off, then end the game if the player is out of lives.

To make it a bit clearer that something bad has happened, we're also going to add playing a sound and animate the life being lost – we'll set the X and Y scale of the life being lost to 1.3, then animate it back down to 1.0.

Here's the code:

```
func subtractLife() {
    lives -= 1

    run(SKAction.playSoundFileNamed("wrong.caf",
        waitForCompletion: false))

    var life: SKSpriteNode

    if lives == 2 {
        life = livesImages[0]
    } else if lives == 1 {
        life = livesImages[1]
    } else {
        life = livesImages[2]
        endGame(triggeredByBomb: false)
    }
}
```

Project 23: Swifty Ninja

```
life.texture = SKTexture(imageNamed: "sliceLifeGone")

life.xScale = 1.3
life.yScale = 1.3
life.run(SKAction.scale(to: 1, duration: 0.1))
}
```

Note how I'm using **SKTexture** to modify the contents of a sprite node without having to recreate it, just like in project 14.

Finally, there's the **endGame()** method. I've made this accept a parameter that sets whether the game ended because of a bomb, so that we can update the UI appropriately.

```
func endGame(triggeredByBomb: Bool) {
    if isGameEnded {
        return
    }

    isGameEnded = true
    physicsWorld.speed = 0
    isUserInteractionEnabled = false

    bombSoundEffect?.stop()
    bombSoundEffect = nil

    if triggeredByBomb {
        livesImages[0].texture = SKTexture(imageNamed:
"sliceLifeGone")
        livesImages[1].texture = SKTexture(imageNamed:
"sliceLifeGone")
        livesImages[2].texture = SKTexture(imageNamed:
"sliceLifeGone")
    }
}
```

Game over, man: SKTexture

```
    }  
}
```

If the game hasn't already ended, this code stops every object from moving by adjusting the speed of the physics world to be 0. It stops any bomb fuse fizzing, and sets all three lives images to have the same "life gone" graphic. Nothing surprising in there, but you do need to declare **isGameEnded** as a property for your class, like this:

```
var isGameEnded = false
```

Even though the game has ended, some actions can still take place. This should be banned if possible, so add these lines to the start of **tossEnemies()** and **touchesMoved()**:

```
if isGameEnded {  
    return  
}
```

That's it, your game is done!

Wrap up

You've just finished a massive project, and regardless of how much you have learned you deserve kudos for all your patience. This project required you to follow several long steps before you could see your code run. I hope it was worth it, and I hope in retrospect that you can see why all the code was needed.

Along the way, you've learned all about **SKShapeNode**, **AVAudioPlayer**, physics speed, **CaseIterable**, **removeFirst()**, action groups, and more, so you're several steps closer to your goal of being an experienced Swift developer. Well done!

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 23.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Try removing the magic numbers in the **createEnemy()** method. Instead, define them as constant properties of your class, giving them useful names.
2. Create a new, fast-moving type of enemy that awards the player bonus points if they hit it.
3. Add a "Game over" sprite node to the game scene when the player loses all their lives.

Project 24

Swift Strings

Dive deep into how strings work in Swift, and learn how to add formatting on top.

Setting up

After a long project 23, it's time to ease off and look at something that you might think would be much easier: strings. Yes, those pieces of text we take for granted in almost every program we write – they ought to be fairly straightforward things, but it turns out that they are complicated little beasts and take a little thinking.

In this technique project we're going to look at why strings often confuse newcomers to Swift, we'll try out a variety of properties and methods that are useful, and we're also going to look at how to add *formatting* to strings – bold, italics, color, and more – using a separate class called **NSAttributedString**. Supported for attributed strings is baked into most of UIKit, so you can use it with **UILabel**, **UITextView**, and more.

In Xcode, go to the File menu and choose New > Playground. Name it Project24, make sure iOS is selected as the platform, then choose Next and save it somewhere you can find later.

Strings are not arrays

One of the things that confuses learners is that Swift's strings look like arrays of letters, but that's not really true.

Sure, we can loop over them like this:

```
let name = "Taylor"

for letter in name {
    print("Give me a \(letter)!")
}
```

However, we *can't* read individual letters from the string. So, this kind of code won't work:

```
print(name[3])
```

The reason for this is that letters in a string aren't just a series of alphabetical characters – they can contain accents such as á, é, í, ó, or ú, they can contain combining marks that generate wholly new characters by building up symbols, or they can even be emoji.

Because of this, if you want to read the fourth character of **name** you need to start at the beginning and count through each letter until you come to the one you're looking for:

```
let letter = name[name.index(name.startIndex, offsetBy: 3)]
```

Apple could change this easily enough by adding a rather complex extension like this:

```
extension String {
    subscript(i: Int) -> String {
        return String(self[index(startIndex, offsetBy: i)])
    }
}
```

Project 24: Swift Strings

With that in place, we can now read `name[3]` just fine. However, it creates the possibility that someone might write code that loops over a string reading individual letters, which they might not realize creates a loop within a loop and has the potential to be slow.

Similarly, reading `name.count` isn't a quick operation: Swift literally needs to go over every letter counting up however many there are, before returning that. As a result, it's always better to use `someString.isEmpty` rather than `someString.count == 0` if you're looking for an empty string.

Working with strings in Swift

We've used strings in lots of the projects so far, and I've tried to introduce you to a handful of important properties and methods as we go. Here, though, I'm going to run through some of those, plus a few more, while also looking at how we can write extensions to make strings a little more useful.

First, there are methods for checking whether a string starts with or ends with a substring: `hasPrefix()` and `hasSuffix()`. They look like this:

```
let password = "12345"  
password.hasPrefix("123")  
password.hasSuffix("345")
```

We can add extension methods to `String` to extend the way prefixing and suffixing works:

```
extension String {  
    // remove a prefix if it exists  
    func deletingPrefix(_ prefix: String) -> String {  
        guard self.hasPrefix(prefix) else { return self }  
        return String(self.dropFirst(prefix.count))  
    }  
  
    // remove a suffix if it exists  
    func deletingSuffix(_ suffix: String) -> String {  
        guard self.hasSuffix(suffix) else { return self }  
        return String(self.dropLast(suffix.count))  
    }  
}
```

That uses the `dropFirst()` and `dropLast()` method of `String`, which removes a certain number of letters from either end of the string.

Project 24: Swift Strings

We've used **lowercased()** and **uppercased()** in previous projects, but there's also the **capitalized** property that gives the first letter of each word a capital letter. For example:

```
let weather = "it's going to rain"  
print(weather.capitalized)
```

That will print “It’s Going To Rain”.

We could add our own specialized capitalization that uppercases only the first letter in our string:

```
extension String {  
    var capitalizedFirst: String {  
        guard let firstLetter = self.first else { return "" }  
        return firstLetter.uppercased() + self.dropFirst()  
    }  
}
```

One thing you *can't* see in that is an interesting subtlety of working with strings: individual letters in strings aren't instances of **String**, but are instead instances of **Character** – a dedicated type for holding single-letters of a string.

So, that **uppercased()** method is actually a method on *Character* rather than *String*. However, where things get *really* interesting is that **Character.uppercased()** actually returns a string, not an uppercased **Character**. The reason is simple: language is complicated, and although many languages have one-to-one mappings between lowercase and uppercase characters, some do not.

For example, in English “a” maps to “A”, “b” to “B”, and so on, but in German “ß” becomes “SS” when uppercased. “SS” is clearly two separate letters, so **uppercased()** has no choice but to return a string.

One last useful method of strings is **contains()**, which returns true if it contains another string. So, this will return true:

```
let input = "Swift is like Objective-C without the C"
input.contains("Swift")
```

So, **contains()** takes a string parameter and returns true or false depending on whether that parameter exists in the string. Keep that in your head for a moment.

Now look at this code:

```
let languages = [ "Python", "Ruby", "Swift"]
languages.contains("Swift")
```

That will also return true, because arrays have a **contains()** method that returns true or false depending on whether they contain the element you were looking for.

Now for the part that confuses people – brace yourself!

We have an array of strings (`["Python", "Ruby", "Swift"]`) and we have an input string (**"Swift is like Objective-C without the C"**). How can we check whether any string in our array exists in our input string?

Well, we might start writing an extension on **String** like this:

```
extension String {
    func containsAny(of array: [String]) -> Bool {
        for item in array {
            if self.contains(item) {
                return true
            }
        }
        return false
    }
}
```

Project 24: Swift Strings

We can now run our check like this:

```
input.containsAny(of: languages)
```

That certainly *works*, but it's not elegant – and Swift has a better solution built right in.

You see, arrays have a *second* **contains()** method called **contains(where:)**. This lets us provide a closure that accepts an element from the array as its only parameter and returns true or false depending on whatever condition we decide we want. This closure gets run on all the items in the array until one returns true, at which point it stops.

Now let's put together the pieces:

- When used with an array of strings, the **contains(where:)** method wants to call a closure that accepts a string and returns true or false.
- The **contains()** method of **String** accepts a string as its parameter and returns true or false.
- Swift massively blurs the lines between functions, methods, closures, and more.

So, what we can actually do is pass one function directly into the other, like this:

```
languages.contains(where: input.contains)
```

Don't feel bad if you need to read that single line of code several times – it's not easy! Let's break it down.

contains(where:) will call its closure once for every element in the **languages** array until it finds one that returns true, at which point it stops.

In that code we're passing **input.contains** as the closure that **contains(where:)** should run. This means Swift will call **input.contains("Python")** and get back false, then it will call **input.contains("Ruby")** and get back false again, and finally call **input.contains("Swift")** and get back true – then stop there.

So, because the **contains()** method of strings has the exact same signature that **contains(where:)** expects (take a string and return a Boolean), this works perfectly – do you see what I mean about how Swift blurs the lines between these things?

Formatting strings with NSAttributedString

Swift's strings are plain text, which works fine in the vast majority of cases we work with text. But sometimes we want *more* – we want to be able to add formatting like bold or italics, select from different fonts, or add some color, and for *those* jobs we have a new class called **NSAttributedString**.

Attributed strings are made up of two parts: a plain Swift string, plus a dictionary containing a series of attributes that describe how various segments of the string are formatted. In its most basic form you might want to create one set of attributes that affect the whole string, like this:

```
let string = "This is a test string"
let attributes: [NSAttributedString.Key: Any] = [
    .foregroundColor: UIColor.white,
    .backgroundColor: UIColor.red,
    .font: UIFont.boldSystemFont(ofSize: 36)
]

let attributedString = NSAttributedString(string: string,
                                         attributes: attributes)
```

It's common to use an explicit type annotation when making attributed strings, because inside the dictionary we can just write things like **.foregroundColor** for the key rather than **NSAttributedString.Key.foregroundColor**.

The *values* of the attributes dictionary are of type **Any**, because **NSAttributedString** attributes can be all sorts of things: numbers, colors, fonts, paragraph styles, and more.

If you look in the output pane of your playground, you should be able to click on the box next to where it says “This is a test string” to get a live preview of how our string looks – you should see large, white text with a red background.

Of course, we could get the same effect with a regular string placed inside a **UILabel**: change the font and colors, and it would look the same. But what labels *can't* do is add formatting to different parts of the string.

To demonstrate this we're going to use **NSMutableAttributedString**, which is an attributed string that you can modify:

```
let attributedString = NSMutableAttributedString(string:  
string)  
attributedString.addAttribute(.font, value:  
UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 8), range: NSRange(location: 0,  
length: 4))  
attributedString.addAttribute(.font, value:  
UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 16), range: NSRange(location: 5,  
length: 2))  
attributedString.addAttribute(.font, value:  
UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 24), range: NSRange(location: 8,  
length: 1))  
attributedString.addAttribute(.font, value:  
UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 32), range: NSRange(location: 10,  
length: 4))  
attributedString.addAttribute(.font, value:  
UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 40), range: NSRange(location: 15,  
length: 6))
```

When you preview *that* you'll see the font size get larger with each word – something a regular Swift string certainly can't do even with help from **UILabel**.

There are lots of formatting options for attributed strings, including:

- Set **.underlineStyle** to a value from **NSUnderlineStyle** to strike out characters.
- Set **.strikethroughStyle** to a value from **NSUnderlineStyle** (no, that's not a typo) to strike out characters.

Project 24: Swift Strings

- Set **.paragraphStyle** to an instance of **NSMutableParagraphStyle** to control text alignment and spacing.
- Set **.link** to be a **URL** to make clickable links in your strings.

And that's just a subset of what you can do.

You might be wondering how useful all this knowledge is, but here's the important part: **UILabel**, **UITextField**, **UITextView**, **UIButton**, **UINavigationBar**, and more all support attributed strings just as well as regular strings. So, for a label you would just use **attributedText** rather than **text**, and UIKit takes care of the rest.

Wrap up

Coming into this project you might thought strings were trivial, but I hope I've shown you that there's more to them than meets the eye.

We've looked at how strings are different from arrays, how we can write useful extensions for strings, how Swift lets us combine functions together beautifully, and how **NSAttributedString** lets us add formatting to strings.

Of course, we've only just scratched the surface of strings here, but the challenges below will encourage you to write some extensions of your own so you get a better feel for how it works.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 24.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Create a **String** extension that adds a **withPrefix()** method. If the string already contains the prefix it should return itself; if it doesn't contain the prefix, it should return itself with the prefix added. For example: `"pet".withPrefix("car")` should return "carpet".
2. Create a **String** extension that adds an **isNumeric** property that returns true if the string holds any sort of number. Tip: creating a **Double** from a **String** is a failable initializer.
3. Create a **String** extension that adds a **lines** property that returns an array of all the lines in a string. So, "this\nis\na\ntest" should return an array with four elements.

Project 25

Selfie Share

Make a multipeer photo sharing app in just 150 lines of code.

Setting up

This project is going to give you some practice with collection views, the image picker and GCD, but at the same time introduce you to a new technology called the multipeer connectivity framework. This is a way to let users form impromptu connections to each other and send data, rather like BitTorrent.

The app we're going to make will show photos of your choosing in a collection view. That much is easy enough, because we did pretty much that already in project 10. But this time there's a subtle difference: when you add a photo it's going to automatically send it to any other devices you are currently connected to, and any photos they select will appear for you.

Create a new Single View App project in Xcode, naming it Project25. Please note: the nature of peer-to-peer apps is that you need to have at least two copies of your app running, one to send and one to receive. There are a few ways of setting this up, but I recommend using one physical device talking to the iOS simulator – that's more than enough.

Importing photos again

We've used the **UIImagePickerController** class twice now: once in project 10 and again in project 13, so I hope you're already comfortable with it. We also used a collection view in project 10, but we haven't used it since so you might not be quite so familiar with it.

We need to use a collection view controller, just like in project 10. So, start by opening ViewController.swift and changing this line:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {
```

To this:

```
class ViewController: UICollectionViewController {
```

Now open Main.storyboard in Interface Builder, then delete the existing view controller and replace it with a new collection view controller. Use the attributes inspector to make it the initial view controller, use the identity inspector to give it the class "ViewController", then finally embed it inside a navigation controller.

With the collection view selected, set cell size to be 145 wide and 145 high, and give all four section insets a value of 10. Click inside the prototype cell that Xcode made for you and give it the reuse identifier "ImageView". Finally, drop an image view into the cell so that it occupies all its space, and give it the tag 1000.

All the constraints in this project can be made automatically, so select the collection view using the document outline then go to the Editor menu and choose Resolve Auto Layout Issues > Reset to Suggested Constraints.

We're done with Interface Builder, so open up ViewController.swift because it's time to write the code. Note that almost all of this has been covered in other projects, so we're not going to waste much time here when there are far more interesting things around the corner!

To start, add a right bar button item that uses the system's camera icon and calls an

importPicture() method that we'll write shortly. I'm also going to customize the title of the view controller so that it isn't empty, so here's the new **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    title = "Selfie Share"
    navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
    UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .camera, target: self,
    action: #selector(importPicture))
}
```

Next, let's make the collection view work correctly, starting with the easy stuff: make your view controller conform to the **UINavigationControllerDelegate** and **UIImagePickerControllerDelegate** protocols, because we need those to work with the image picker.

We will store all our apps images inside a **UIImage** array, so please add this property now:

```
var images = [UIImage]()
```

We're going to use that array to know how many items are in our collection view, so you should know to write this method yourself:

```
override func collectionView(_ collectionView:
UICollectionView, numberOfItemsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
    return images.count
}
```

Next comes the only thing out of the ordinary in all this code, which is the **cellForItemAt** method for our collection view. To get us through this part of the project as quickly as possible, I took a shortcut: when it comes to configuring cells to look correct, we can dequeue using the identifier "ImageView" then find the **UIImageView** inside them without a property.

Project 25: Selfie Share

I asked you to set the tag of the image view to be 1000, and here's why: all **UIView** subclasses have a method called **viewWithTag()**, which searches for any views inside itself (or indeed itself) with that tag number. We can find our image view just by using this method, although I'll still use **if let** and a conditional typecast to be sure.

Here's the code for **cellForItemAt**:

```
override func collectionView(_ collectionView:  
UICollectionView, cellForItemAt indexPath: IndexPath) ->  
UICollectionViewCell {  
    let cell =  
collectionView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:  
"ImageView", for: indexPath)  
  
    if let imageView = cell.viewWithTag(1000) as? UIImageView {  
        imageView.image = images[indexPath.item]  
    }  
  
    return cell  
}
```

That makes the collection view work just fine, but we still need three more methods in order to get our basic app ready, and these are the methods to handle the image picker. If this code isn't identical to the code we've previously written, it might as well be – check project 10 if your memory is bad!

```
@objc func importPicture() {  
    let picker = UIImagePickerController()  
    picker.allowsEditing = true  
    picker.delegate = self  
    present(picker, animated: true)  
}
```

Importing photos again

```
func imagePickerController(_ picker: UIImagePickerController,  
didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo info:  
[UIImagePickerController.InfoKey : Any]) {  
    guard let image = info[.editedImage] as? UIImage else  
{ return }  
  
    dismiss(animated: true)  
  
    images.insert(image, at: 0)  
    collectionView.reloadData()  
}
```

Done – no more boring old code now. At this point you can run the app if you want, but there's no need to other than being sure your code works – this is just a cut-down version of project 10 so far.

Going peer to peer: MCSession, MCBrowserViewController

The next step is to add a left bar button item to our view controller, using the "add" system icon, and making it call a method called **showConnectionPrompt()**. We're going to make that method ask users whether they want to connect to an existing session with other people, or whether they want to create their own. Here's the code for the bar button item – put this in **viewDidLoad()**:

```
navigationItem.leftBarButtonItem =  
    UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target: self,  
    action: #selector(showConnectionPrompt))
```

Asking users to clarify how they want to take an action is of course the purpose of **UIAlertController** as an action sheet, and our **showConnectionPrompt()** method is going to use one to ask users what kind of connection they want to make. Put this code into your view controller:

```
@objc func showConnectionPrompt() {  
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Connect to others",  
    message: nil, preferredStyle: .alert)  
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Host a session",  
    style: .default, handler: startHosting))  
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Join a session",  
    style: .default, handler: joinSession))  
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Cancel", style: .cancel))  
    present(ac, animated: true)  
}
```

Now, here's where it gets trickier. Multipeer connectivity requires four new classes:

1. **MCSession** is the manager class that handles all multipeer connectivity for us.

Going peer to peer: MCSession, MCBrowserViewController

2. **MCPeerID** identifies each user uniquely in a session.
3. **MCAdvertiserAssistant** is used when creating a session, telling others that we exist and handling invitations.
4. **MCBrowserViewController** is used when looking for sessions, showing users who is nearby and letting them join.

We're going to use all four of them in our app, but only three need to be properties.

Start by importing the multipeer framework:

```
import MultipeerConnectivity
```

Now add these to your view controller:

```
var peerID = MCPeerID(displayName: UIDevice.current.name)  
var mcSession: MCSession?  
var mcAdvertiserAssistant: MCAdvertiserAssistant?
```

Although both the session and advertiser assistant are optional, that code creates the **MCPeerID** up front using the name of the current device, which will usually be something like "Paul's iPhone" – there's no need to make an optional for that.

Depending on what users select in our alert controller, we need to call one of two methods: **startHosting()** or **joinSession()**. Because both of these are coming from the result of a **UIAction** being tapped, both methods must accept a **UIAlertAction** as their only parameter.

Before I show you the code to get multipeer connectivity up and running, I want to go over what they will do. Most important of all is that all multipeer services on iOS must declare a service type, which is a 15-digit string that uniquely identify your service. Those 15 digits can contain only the letters A-Z, numbers and hyphens, and it's usually preferred to include your company in there somehow.

Apple's example is, "a text chat app made by ABC company could use the service type **abc-txtchat**"; for this project I'll be using **hws-project25**.

Project 25: Selfie Share

This service type is used by both **MCAdvertiserAssistant** and **MCBrowserViewController** to make sure your users only see other users of the same app. They both also want a reference to your **MCSession** instance so they can take care of connections for you.

We're going to start by initializing our **MCSession** so that we're able to make connections. Put this code into **viewDidLoad()**:

```
mcSession = MCSession(peer: peerID, securityIdentity: nil,  
encryptionPreference: .required)  
mcSession?.delegate = self
```

Our peer ID is used to create the session, along with the encryption option of **.required** to ensure that any data transferred is kept safe.

Don't worry about conforming to any extra protocols just yet; we'll do that in just a minute.

At this point, the code for **startHosting()** and **joinSession()** will look quite trivial. Here goes:

```
func startHosting(action: UIAlertAction) {  
    guard let mcSession = mcSession else { return }  
    mcAdvertiserAssistant = MCAdvertiserAssistant(serviceType:  
"hws-project25", discoveryInfo: nil, session: mcSession)  
    mcAdvertiserAssistant?.start()  
}  
  
func joinSession(action: UIAlertAction) {  
    guard let mcSession = mcSession else { return }  
    let mcBrowser = MCBrowserViewController(serviceType: "hws-  
project25", session: mcSession)  
    mcBrowser.delegate = self  
    present(mcBrowser, animated: true)  
}
```

Going peer to peer: MCSession, MCBrowserViewController

We're making our view controller the delegate of a second object, so that's two protocols we need to conform to in order to fix our current compile failures. Easily done: add **MCSessionDelegate** and **MCBrowserViewControllerDelegate** to your class definition... and now there are even more errors, because we need to implement lots of new methods.

Invitation only: MCPeerID

Merely by saying that we conform to the **MCSessionDelegate** and **MCBrowserViewControllerDelegate** protocols, your code won't build any more. This is because the two protocols combined have seven required methods that you need to implement just to be compatible.

Helpfully, for this project you can effectively ignore three of them, two more are trivial, and one further is just for diagnostic information in this project. That leaves only one method that is non-trivial and important to the program.

Let's tackle the ones we can effectively ignore. Of course, you can't *ignore* required methods, otherwise they wouldn't be required. But these methods aren't ones that do anything useful to our program, so we can just create empty methods. Remember, once you've said you conform to a protocol, Xcode's code completion is updated so you can just start typing the first few letters of a method name in order to have Xcode prompt you with a list to choose from.

Here are the three methods that we need to provide, but don't actually need any code inside them:

```
func session(_ session: MCSession, didReceive stream:  
InputStream, withName streamName: String, fromPeer peerID:  
MCPeerID) {  
  
}  
  
func session(_ session: MCSession,  
didStartReceivingResourceWithName resourceName: String,  
fromPeer peerID: MCPeerID, with progress: Progress) {  
  
}  
  
func session(_ session: MCSession,
```

```
didFinishReceivingResourceWithName resourceName: String,  
fromPeer peerID: MCPeerID, at localURL: URL?, withError error:  
Error?) {  
  
}
```

They are really long, so make sure you use code completion!

The two methods we're going to implement that are trivial are both for the multipeer browser: one is called when it finishes successfully, and one when the user cancels. Both methods just need to dismiss the view controller that is currently being presented, which means this is their entire code:

```
func browserViewControllerDidFinish(_ browserViewController:  
MCBrowserViewController) {  
    dismiss(animated: true)  
}  
  
func browserViewControllerWasCancelled(_ browserViewController:  
MCBrowserViewController) {  
    dismiss(animated: true)  
}
```

Brilliant! Isn't it easy being a coder?

There are two methods left: one that is used in this project only for diagnostic information, and one that's actually useful. Let's eliminate the diagnostic method first so that we can focus on the interesting bit.

When a user connects or disconnects from our session, the method `session(_:peer:didChangeState:)` is called so you know what's changed – is someone connecting, are they now connected, or have they just disconnected? We're not going to be using this information in the project, but I do want to show you how it might be used by

Project 25: Selfie Share

printing out some diagnostics. This is helpful for debugging, because it means you can look in Xcode's debug console to see these messages and know your code is working.

When this method is called, you'll be told what peer changed state, and what their new state is. There are only three possible session states: not connected, connecting, and connected. So, we can make our app print out useful information just by using switch/case and a bit of `print()`:

```
func session(_ session: MCSession, peer peerID: MCPeerID,  
didChange state: MCSessionState) {  
    switch state {  
        case .connected:  
            print("Connected: \(peerID.displayName)")  
  
        case .connecting:  
            print("Connecting: \(peerID.displayName)")  
  
        case .notConnected:  
            print("Not Connected: \(peerID.displayName)")  
  
        @unknown default:  
            print("Unknown state received: \(peerID.displayName)")  
    }  
}
```

There's one final case in there to handle any unknown cases that crop up in the future. While we *could* have made one of the other cases handle that using a regular `default` case, in this project none of them really make sense for whatever might occur in the future so I've added a dedicated `@unknown default` case to handle future cases.

That just leaves one more method that must be implemented before you're fully compliant with the protocols, but before I talk you through it you need to know how the core of this app works. It's not hard, but it is important, so listen carefully!

Right now, when we add a picture to the collection view it is shown on our screen but doesn't go anywhere. We're going to add some code to the image picker's **didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo** method so that when an image is added it also gets sent out to peers.

Sending images across a multipeer connection is remarkably easy. In project 10 we used the function **jpegData()** to convert a **UIImage** object into a **Data** so it can be saved to disk, and here we'll be using **pngData()** that does the same thing with the PNG image format. Once we have that, **MCSession** objects have a **sendData()** method that will ensure that data gets transmitted reliably to your peers.

Once the data arrives at each peer, the method **session(_:didReceive:fromPeer:)** will get called with that data, at which point we can create a **UIImage** from it and add it to our **images** array. There is one catch: when you receive data it might not be on the main thread, and you never manipulate user interfaces anywhere but the main thread, right? Right.

Here's the final protocol method, to catch data being received in our session:

```
func session(_ session: MCSession, didReceive data: Data,
fromPeer peerID: MCPeerID) {
    DispatchQueue.main.async { [weak self] in
        if let image = UIImage(data: data) {
            self?.images.insert(image, at: 0)
            self?.collectionView.reloadData()
        }
    }
}
```

Take note of the call to **async()** to ensure we definitely only manipulate the user interface on the main thread!

The final piece of code to finish up this whole project is the bit that sends image data to peers. This is so easy you might not even believe me. In fact, the code is only as long as it is because

Project 25: Selfie Share

there's some error checking in there.

This final code needs to:

1. Check if we have an active session we can use.
2. Check if there are any peers to send to.
3. Convert the new image to a **Data** object.
4. Send it to all peers, ensuring it gets delivered.
5. Show an error message if there's a problem.

Converting that into code, you get the below. Put this into your **didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo** method, just after the call to **reloadData()**:

```
// 1
guard let mcSession = mcSession else { return }

// 2
if mcSession.connectedPeers.count > 0 {
    // 3
    if let imageData = image.pngData() {
        // 4
        do {
            try mcSession.send(imageData, toPeers:
mcSession.connectedPeers, with: .reliable)
        } catch {
            // 5
            let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Send error",
message: error.localizedDescription, preferredStyle: .alert)
            ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK",
style: .default))
            present(ac, animated: true)
        }
    }
}
```

```
}
```

Yes, the code to ensure data gets sent intact to all peers, as opposed to having some parts lost in the ether, is just to use transmission mode **.reliable** – nothing more.

It's possible that sending data might throw errors, so we need to surround our code in a **do/catch** block as shown above. When any error is thrown in the **do** block, Swift immediately jumps straight to the **catch** block where you can handle it – or in our case show a message. Swift automatically creates an **error** constant telling you what went wrong.

Anyway, I hope you'll agree that the multipeer connectivity framework is super easy to use. The advertiser assistant takes care of telling the world that our app is looking for connections, as well as handling people who want to join. The browser controller takes care of finding all compatible sessions, and sending invitations. Our job is just to hook it all together with a nice user interface, then relax and wait for the App Store riches to come in. Sort of.

Remember: to test your project, you'll need to either run it on multiple devices, or use one device and one simulator.

Wrap up

Multipeer connectivity is something that used to be awfully hard, but in iOS it's less than 150 lines of code to produce this entire app – and over half of that is code for the collection view and the image picker!

The advantage it has compared to traditional data sharing over Wi-Fi is that multipeer can use an existing Wi-Fi network, or can silently create a new Wi-Fi network or even a Bluetooth network depending on what's available. All this is an implementation detail that Apple solves on your behalf – we don't have to care how it works.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 25.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Show an alert when a user has disconnected from our multipeer network. Something like “Paul’s iPhone has disconnected” is enough.
2. Try sending text messages across the network. You can create a **Data** from a string using **Data(yourString.utf8)**, and convert a **Data** back to a string by using **String(decoding: yourData, as: UTF8.self)**.
3. Add a button that shows an alert controller listing the names of all devices currently connected to the session – use the **connectedPeers** property of your session to find that information.

Project 26

Marble Maze

Respond to device tilting by steering a ball around a vortex maze.

Setting up

In this game project you'll create a rolling ball game for iPad, using the accelerometer – you tilt your device, and the balls rolls in that direction, hopefully avoiding holes as you go.

Along with the accelerometer, you're also going to learn how to load level layouts, how to have fine-grained contact bitmasks, and how to write code that executes in the simulator but not on devices (or vice versa). So, you learn things, you make a cool game, and I get to bask in the warmth of knowing that your Swift mastery continues to grow.

Create a new SpriteKit project named it Project26, then configure it to work on iPads in **landscape right** orientation, which is more restrictive than we usually use. We can't enable landscape left because we'll be tilting the device in all directions, and it would be annoying to have the device rotate because we tipped the iPad too far!

Please do the usual cleaning job on Xcode's SpriteKit template, remembering to set the anchor point to X:0 Y:0 and size to 1024x768 in GameScene.sks. Now download the files for this project from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>) and copy its Content folder into your project.

In this project we're going to use the accelerometer, which is not supported in the iOS Simulator. To make things easier, we're going to add some code that lets you control the game through touch – it's nowhere near as fun, but at least it can be tested in the simulator.

Loading a level: categoryBitMask, collisionBitMask, contactTestBitMask

We're going to start by looking at the biggest method in the project, and perhaps even the entire Hacking with Swift series. It's called **loadLevel()** and is responsible for loading a level file from disk and creating SpriteKit nodes onscreen.

The method isn't long because it's complicated, it's long just because it does a lot. When you finish this project one of the suggested ways to improve the code is to split this method off into smaller chunks, so you should pay close attention to how it works!

At the core of the method it loads a level file from disk, then splits it up by line. Each line will become one row of level data on the screen, so the method will loop over every character in the row and see what letter it is. Our game will recognize five possible options: a space will mean empty space, "x" means a wall, "v" means a vortex (deadly to players), "s" means a star (awards points), and "f" means level finish.

Using this kind of very simple level text format means that you can write your levels in a text editor, and visually see exactly how they will look in your game. You've already tackled most of the code required for the skeleton of **loadLevel()**, but there are a few things I want to highlight:

- We'll be using the **enumerated()** method again. In case you've forgotten, this loops over an array, extracting each item and its position in the array.
- We'll be positioning items as we go. Each square in the game world occupies a 64x64 space, so we can find its position by multiplying its row and column by 64. But: remember that SpriteKit calculates its positions from the center of objects, so we need to add 32 to the X and Y coordinates in order to make everything lines up on our screen.
- You might also remember that SpriteKit uses an inverted Y axis to UIKit, which means for SpriteKit Y:0 is the bottom of the screen whereas for UIKit Y:0 is the top. When it comes

Project 26: Marble Maze

to loading level rows, this means we need to read them in reverse so that the last row is created at the bottom of the screen and so on upwards.

Here's the initial code for **loadLevel()**:

```
func loadLevel() {
    guard let levelURL = Bundle.main.url(forResource: "level1",
withExtension: "txt") else {
    fatalError("Could not find level1.txt in the app
bundle.")
}

    guard let levelString = try? String(contentsOf: levelURL)
else {
    fatalError("Could not load level1.txt from the app
bundle.")
}

    let lines = levelString.components(separatedBy: "\n")

    for (row, line) in lines.reversed().enumerated() {
        for (column, letter) in line.enumerated() {
            let position = CGPoint(x: (64 * column) + 32, y: (64 *
row) + 32)

            if letter == "x" {
                // load wall
            } else if letter == "v" {
                // load vortex
            } else if letter == "s" {
                // load star
            } else if letter == "f" {
                // load finish
            }
        }
    }
}
```

```
        Loading a level: categoryBitMask, collisionBitMask, contactTestBitMask

    } else if letter == " " {
        // this is an empty space - do nothing!
    } else {
        fatalError("Unknown level letter: \"\(letter)\"")
    }
}
```

There are lots of comments in there where we're going to do work to load the various level components. Much of the code for these is the same: load in an image, position it, give it a physics body, then add it to the scene. But they do vary, because we want the player to be able to collide with some, we want to be notified of collisions with some, and so on.

But first: we're going to be using the **categoryBitMask**, **contactTestBitMask** and **collisionBitMask** properties in their fullest for this project, because we have very precise rules that make the game work. To clarify, here's what each of them mean:

- The **categoryBitMask** property is a number defining the type of object this is for considering collisions.
 - The **collisionBitMask** property is a number defining what categories of object this node should collide with,
 - The **contactTestBitMask** property is a number defining which collisions we want to be notified about.

They all do very different things, although the distinction might seem fine before you fully understand. Category is simple enough: every node you want to reference in your collision bitmasks or your contact test bitmasks must have a category attached. If you give a node a collision bitmask but not a contact test bitmask, it means they will bounce off each other but you won't be notified. If you do the opposite (contact test but not collision) it means they won't bounce off each other but you will be told when they overlap.

By default, physics bodies have a collision bitmask that means "everything", so everything

Project 26: Marble Maze

bounces off everything else. By default, they also have a contact test bitmask that means "nothing", so you'll never get told about collisions.

A bitmask is a complicated beast to explain, but what it means in practice is that you can combine values together. In our game, vortexes, stars and the finish flag all have the player set for their contact test bitmask, and the player has star *and* vortex *and* finish flag.

SpriteKit expects these three bitmasks to be described using a **UInt32**. It's a particular way of storing numbers, but rather than using numbers we're going to use enums with a raw value. This means we can refer to the various options using names. Put this enum definition above your class in GameScene.swift:

```
enum CollisionTypes: UInt32 {
    case player = 1
    case wall = 2
    case star = 4
    case vortex = 8
    case finish = 16
}
```

Note that your bitmasks should start at 1 then double each time. With that, let's start replacing the comments in the **loadLevel()** method with real code. First, here's how to create a wall – replace the **// load wall** comment with this:

```
let node = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "block")
node.position = position

node.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(rectangleOf: node.size)
node.physicsBody?.categoryBitMask =
CollisionTypes.wall.rawValue
node.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
addChild(node)
```

Loading a level: categoryBitMask, collisionBitMask, contactTestBitMask

It uses rectangle physics, it's not dynamic because the walls should be fixed... this is all child's play to you now, right? When assigning a value to **categoryBitMask** we can't use our enum directly because it expects to receive a **UInt32**. So, we're getting the number from the enum using its **rawValue** property.

Next, replace the // **load vortex** comment with this:

```
let node = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "vortex")
node.name = "vortex"
node.position = position
node.run(SKAction.repeatForever(SKAction.rotate(byAngle: .pi,
duration: 1)))
node.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:
node.size.width / 2)
node.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false

node.physicsBody?.categoryBitMask =
CollisionTypes.vortex.rawValue
node.physicsBody?.contactTestBitMask =
CollisionTypes.player.rawValue
node.physicsBody?.collisionBitMask = 0
addChild(node)
```

This is a little more interesting, because it uses **rotate(byAngle:)** and **repeatForever()** to make each vortex rotate around and around for as long the game lasts. It also sets the **contactTestBitMask** property to the value of the player's category, which means we want to be notified when these two touch.

The code to load stars and the finish flag are almost identical and quite trivial for you at this point, so here's the code to load stars:

```
let node = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "star")
node.name = "star"
```

Project 26: Marble Maze

```
node.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:  
node.size.width / 2)  
node.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false  
  
node.physicsBody?.categoryBitMask =  
CollisionTypes.star.rawValue  
node.physicsBody?.contactTestBitMask =  
CollisionTypes.player.rawValue  
node.physicsBody?.collisionBitMask = 0  
node.position = position  
addChild(node)
```

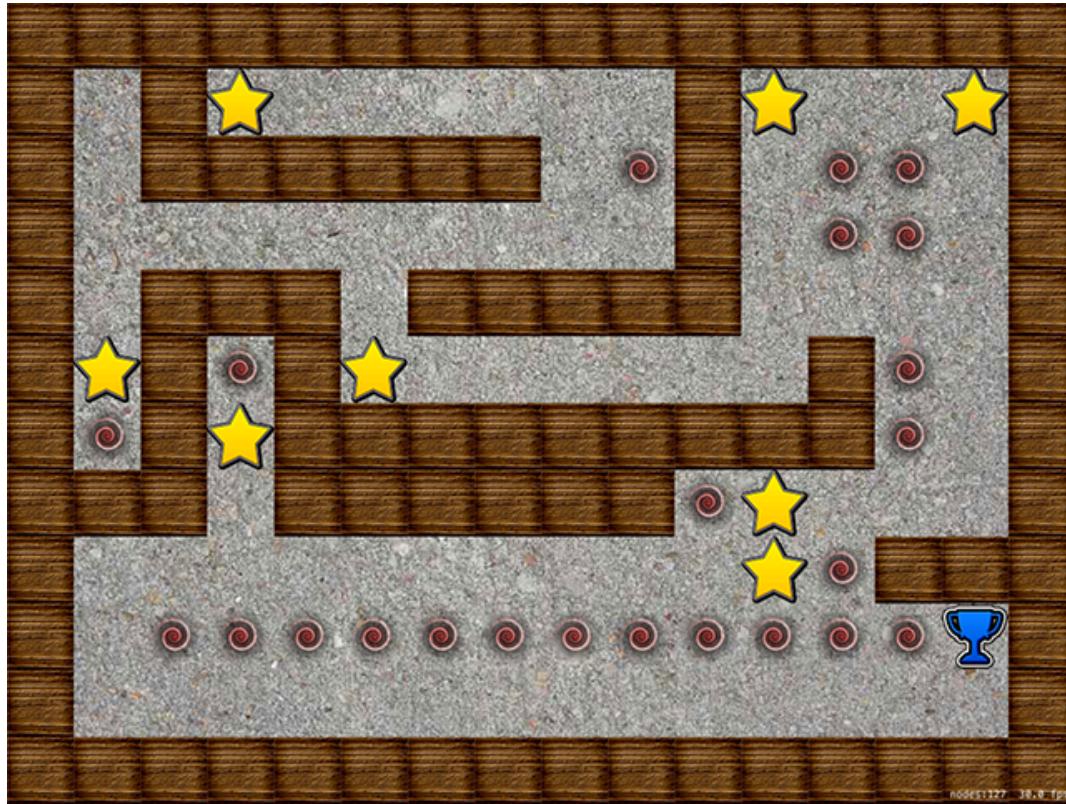
And the code to load the finish flag:

```
let node = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "finish")  
node.name = "finish"  
node.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:  
node.size.width / 2)  
node.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false  
  
node.physicsBody?.categoryBitMask =  
CollisionTypes.finish.rawValue  
node.physicsBody?.contactTestBitMask =  
CollisionTypes.player.rawValue  
node.physicsBody?.collisionBitMask = 0  
node.position = position  
addChild(node)
```

That completes the method. It's long, but it's quite repetitive – there are several ways it could be refactored into something neater, but that would be cheating for later!

To see the fruits of your labor, add a call to **loadLevel()** in **didMove(to:)** then run your game. Remember to use the lowest-spec iPad simulator you can find in order to help it run quickly!

Loading a level: categoryBitMask, collisionBitMask, contactTestBitMask



To finish off the level-loading code, we should add a background picture. You've done this many times so far, so please just go ahead and put this code into **didMove(to:)**, before the **loadLevel()** call:

```
let background = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "background.jpg")
background.position = CGPoint(x: 512, y: 384)
background.blendMode = .replace
background.zPosition = -1
addChild(background)
```

Tilt to move: CMMotionManager

We're going to control this game using the accelerometer that comes as standard on all iPads, but it has a problem: it doesn't come as standard on any Macs, which means we either resign ourselves to testing only on devices or we put in a little hack. This course isn't calling Giving Up with Swift, so we're going to add a hack – in the simulator you'll be able to use touch, and on devices you'll have to use tilting.

To get started, add this property so we can reference the player throughout the game:

```
var player: SKSpriteNode!
```

We're going to add a dedicated **createPlayer()** method that loads the sprite, gives it circle physics, and adds it to the scene, but it's going to do three other things that are important.

First, it's going to set the physics body's **allowsRotation** property to be false. We haven't changed that so far, but it does what you might expect – when false, the body no longer rotates. This is useful here because the ball looks like a marble: it's shiny, and those reflections wouldn't rotate in real life.

Second, we're going to give the ball a **linearDamping** value of 0.5, which applies a lot of friction to its movement. The game will still be hard, but this does help a little by slowing the ball down naturally.

Finally, we'll be combining three values together to get the ball's **contactTestBitMask**: the star, the vortex and the finish.

Here's the code for **createPlayer()**:

```
func createPlayer() {
    player = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "player")
    player.position = CGPoint(x: 96, y: 672)
    player.zPosition = 1
    player.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:
```

```

player.size.width / 2)
    player.physicsBody?.allowsRotation = false
    player.physicsBody?.linearDamping = 0.5

    player.physicsBody?.categoryBitMask =
CollisionTypes.player.rawValue
    player.physicsBody?.contactTestBitMask =
CollisionTypes.star.rawValue | CollisionTypes.vortex.rawValue |
CollisionTypes.finish.rawValue
    player.physicsBody?.collisionBitMask =
CollisionTypes.wall.rawValue
    addChild(player)
}

```

You can go ahead and add a call to **createPlayer()** directly after the call to **loadLevel()** inside **didMove(to:)**. Note: you must create the player after the level, otherwise it will appear below vortexes and other level objects.

If you try running the game now, you'll see the ball drop straight down until it hits a wall, then it bounces briefly and stops. This game has players looking down on their iPad, so by default there ought to be no movement – it's only if the player tilts their iPad down that the ball should move downwards.

The ball is moving because the scene's physics world has a default gravity roughly equivalent to Earth's. We don't want that, so in **didMove(to:)** add this somewhere:

```
physicsWorld.gravity = .zero
```

Playing the game *now* hasn't really solved much: sure, the ball isn't moving now, but... the ball isn't moving now! This would make for a pretty terrible game on the App Store.

Before we get onto how to work with the accelerometer, we're going to put together a hack that lets you simulate the experience of moving the ball using touch. What we're going to do is

Project 26: Marble Maze

catch **touchesBegan()**, **touchesMoved()**, and **touchesEnded()**, and use them to set or unset a new property called **lastTouchPosition**. Then in the **update()** method we'll subtract that touch position from the player's position, and use it set the world's gravity.

It's a hack. And if you're happy to test on a device, you don't really need it. But if you're stuck with the iOS Simulator or are just curious, let's put in the hack. First, declare the new property:

```
var lastTouchPosition: CGPoint?
```

Now use **touchesBegan()** and **touchesMoved()** to set the value of that property using the same three lines of code, like this:

```
override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    guard let touch = touches.first else { return }
    let location = touch.location(in: self)
    lastTouchPosition = location
}

override func touchesMoved(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    guard let touch = touches.first else { return }
    let location = touch.location(in: self)
    lastTouchPosition = location
}
```

When **touchesEnded()** is called, we need to set the property to be **nil** – it is optional, after all:

```
override func touchesEnded(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    lastTouchPosition = nil
}
```

Easy, I know, but it gets (only a little!) trickier in the **update()** method. This needs to unwrap our optional property, calculate the difference between the current touch and the player's position, then use that to change the **gravity** value of the physics world. Here it is:

```
override func update(_ currentTime: TimeInterval) {
    if let currentTouch = lastTouchPosition {
        let diff = CGPoint(x: currentTouch.x - player.position.x,
                           y: currentTouch.y - player.position.y)
        physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx: diff.x / 100, dy:
                                         diff.y / 100)
    }
}
```

This is clearly not a permanent solution, but it's good enough that you can run the app now and test it out.

Now for the new bit: working with the accelerometer. This is easy to do, which is remarkable when you think how much is happening behind the scenes.

All motion detection is done with an Apple framework called Core Motion, and most of the work is done by a class called **CMMotionManager**. Using it here won't require any special user permissions, so all we need to do is create an instance of the class and ask it to start collecting information. We can then read from that information whenever and wherever we need to, and in this project the best place is **update()**.

Add **import CoreMotion** just above the **import SpriteKit** line at the top of your game scene, then add this property:

```
var motionManager: CMMotionManager!
```

Now it's just a matter of creating the object and asking it start collecting accelerometer data. This is done using the **startAccelerometerUpdates()** method, which instructs Core Motion to start collecting accelerometer information we can read later. Put this this into **didMove(to:)**:

Project 26: Marble Maze

```
motionManager = CMMotionManager()
motionManager.startAccelerometerUpdates()
```

The last thing to do is to poll the motion manager inside our `update()` method, checking to see what the current tilt data is. But there's a complication: we already have a hack in there that lets us test in the simulator, so we want one set of code for the simulator and one set of code for devices.

Swift solves this problem by adding special compiler instructions. If the instruction evaluates to true it will compile one set of code, otherwise it will compile the other. This is particularly helpful once you realize that any code wrapped in compiler instructions that evaluate to false never get seen – it's like they never existed. So, this is a great way to include debug information or activity in the simulator that never sees the light on devices.

The compiler directives we care about are: `#if targetEnvironment(simulator)`, `#else` and `#endif`. As you can see, this is mostly the same as a standard Swift if/else block, although here you don't need braces because everything until the `#else` or `#endif` will execute.

The code to read from the accelerometer and apply its tilt data to the world gravity look like this:

```
if let accelerometerData = motionManager.accelerometerData {
    physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx:
        accelerometerData.acceleration.y * -50, dy:
        accelerometerData.acceleration.x * 50)
}
```

The first line safely unwraps the optional accelerometer data, because there might not be any available. The second line changes the gravity of our game world so that it reflects the accelerometer data. You're welcome to adjust the speed multipliers as you please; I found a value of 50 worked well.

Note that I passed accelerometer Y to `CGVector`'s X and accelerometer X to `CGVector`'s Y.

This is not a typo! Remember, your device is rotated to landscape right now, which means you also need to flip your coordinates around.

We need to put that code inside the current `update()` method, wrapped inside the new compiler directives. Here's how the method should look now:

```
override func update(_ currentTime: TimeInterval) {  
    #if targetEnvironment(simulator)  
        if let currentTouch = lastTouchPosition {  
            let diff = CGPoint(x: currentTouch.x - player.position.x,  
                               y: currentTouch.y - player.position.y)  
            physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx: diff.x / 100, dy:  
                                              diff.y / 100)  
        }  
    #else  
        if let accelerometerData = motionManager.accelerometerData {  
            physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx:  
                                              accelerometerData.acceleration.y * -50, dy:  
                                              accelerometerData.acceleration.x * 50)  
        }  
    #endif  
}
```

If you can test on a device, please do. It took only a few lines of code, but the game is now adapting beautifully to device tilting!

Contacting but not colliding

All the game is missing now is some challenge, and that's where our star and vortex level elements come in. Players will get one point for every star they collect, and lose one point every time they fall into a vortex. To track scores, we need a property to hold the score and a label to show it, so add these now:

```
var scoreLabel: SKLabelNode!  
  
var score = 0 {  
    didSet {  
        scoreLabel.text = "Score: \(score)"  
    }  
}
```

We're going to show the label in the top-left corner of the screen, so add this to **didMove(to:)**:

```
scoreLabel = SKLabelNode(fontNamed: "Chalkduster")  
scoreLabel.text = "Score: 0"  
scoreLabel.horizontalAlignmentMode = .left  
scoreLabel.position = CGPoint(x: 16, y: 16)  
scoreLabel.zPosition = 2  
addChild(scoreLabel)
```

When a collision happens, we need to figure out whether it was the player colliding with a star, or the star colliding with a player – the same semi-philosophical problem we had in project 11. And our solution is identical too: figure out which is which, then call another method.

First, we need to make ourselves the contact delegate for the physics world, so make your class conform to **SKPhysicsContactDelegate** then add this line in **didMove(to:)**:

```
physicsWorld.contactDelegate = self
```

We already know which node is our player, which means we know which node *isn't* our player. This means our **didBegin()** method is easy:

```
func didBegin(_ contact: SKPhysicsContact) {
    guard let nodeA = contact.bodyA.node else { return }
    guard let nodeB = contact.bodyB.node else { return }

    if nodeA == player {
        playerCollided(with: nodeB)
    } else if nodeB == player {
        playerCollided(with: nodeA)
    }
}
```

There are three types of collision we care about: when the player hits a vortex they should be penalized, when the player hits a star they should score a point, and when the player hits the finish flag the next level should be loaded. I'll deal with the first two here, and you can think about the third one yourself!

When a player hits a vortex, a few things need to happen. Chief among them is that we need to stop the player controlling the ball, which will be done using a single boolean property called **isGameOver**. Add this property now:

```
var isGameOver = false
```

You'll need to modify your **update()** method so that it works only when **isGameOver** is false, like this:

```
override func update(_ currentTime: TimeInterval) {
    guard isGameOver == false else { return }

    #if targetEnvironment(simulator)
        if let currentTouch = lastTouchPosition {
```

Project 26: Marble Maze

```
        let diff = CGPoint(x: currentTouch.x -
player.position.x, y: currentTouch.y - player.position.y)
        physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx: diff.x / 100, dy:
diff.y / 100)
    }
#elseelse
    if let accelerometerData =
motionManager.accelerometerData {
    physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx:
accelerometerData.acceleration.y * -50, dy:
accelerometerData.acceleration.x * 50)
}
#endif
}
```

Of course, a number of other things need to be done when a player collides with a vortex:

- We need to stop the ball from being a dynamic physics body so that it stops moving once it's sucked in.
- We need to move the ball over the vortex, to simulate it being sucked in. It will also be scaled down at the same time.
- Once the move and scale has completed, we need to remove the ball from the game.
- After all the actions complete, we need to create the player ball again and re-enable control.

We'll put that together using an **SKAction** sequence, followed by a trailing closure that will execute when the actions finish. When colliding with a star, we just remove the star node from the scene and add one to the score.

```
func playerCollided(with node: SKNode) {
    if node.name == "vortex" {
        player.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
        isGameOver = true
    }
}
```

```
score -= 1

let move = SKAction.move(to: node.position, duration:
0.25)
let scale = SKAction.scale(to: 0.0001, duration: 0.25)
let remove = SKAction.removeFromParent()
let sequence = SKAction.sequence([move, scale, remove])

player.run(sequence) { [weak self] in
    self?.createPlayer()
    self?.isGameOver = false
}
} else if node.name == "star" {
    node.removeFromParent()
    score += 1
} else if node.name == "finish" {
    // next level?
}
}
```

That method finishes the game, so it's down to you now to try and play the whole level without falling into a vortex. What happens when you hit the finish flag? Nothing... *yet*.

Wrap up

There's something wonderfully tactile about using the accelerometer to affect gravity in a game, because it feels incredibly realistic even though we're not using particularly good graphics.

SpriteKit is of course doing most of the hard work of collision detection, and Core Motion takes away all the complexity of working with accelerometers, so again it's our job to sew the components together to make something bigger than the sum of its parts.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 26.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Rewrite the `loadLevel()` method so that it's made up of multiple smaller methods. This will make your code easier to read and easier to maintain, or at least it should do if you do a good job!
2. When the player finally makes it to the finish marker, nothing happens. What should happen? Well, that's down to *you* now. You could easily design several new levels and have them progress through.
3. Add a new block type, such as a teleport that moves the player from one teleport point to the other. Add a new letter type in `loadLevel()`, add another collision type to our enum, then see what you can do.

Project 27

Core Graphics

Draw 2D shapes using Apple's high-speed drawing framework.

Setting up

You're probably tired of me saying this: iOS is full of powerful and easy to use programming frameworks. It's true, and you've already met UIKit, SpriteKit, Core Animation, Core Motion, Core Image, Core Location, Grand Central Dispatch and more. But how would you feel if I said that we've yet to use one of the biggest, most powerful and most important frameworks of all?

Well, it's true. And in this technique project we're going to right that wrong. The framework is called Core Graphics, and it's responsible for device-independent 2D drawing – when you want to draw shapes, paths, shadows, colors or so on, you'll want Core Graphics. Being device-independent means you can draw things to the screen or draw them in a PDF without having to change your code.

Create a new Single View App project, name it Project27, then adjust its project settings so that it's iPad-only. We're going to create a Core Graphics sandbox that's similar to project 15's Core Animation sandbox – a button you can type will trigger Core Graphics drawing in different ways.

If you haven't already downloaded the files for this project, please do so now from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>), then copy the mouse picture into your project.

Creating the sandbox

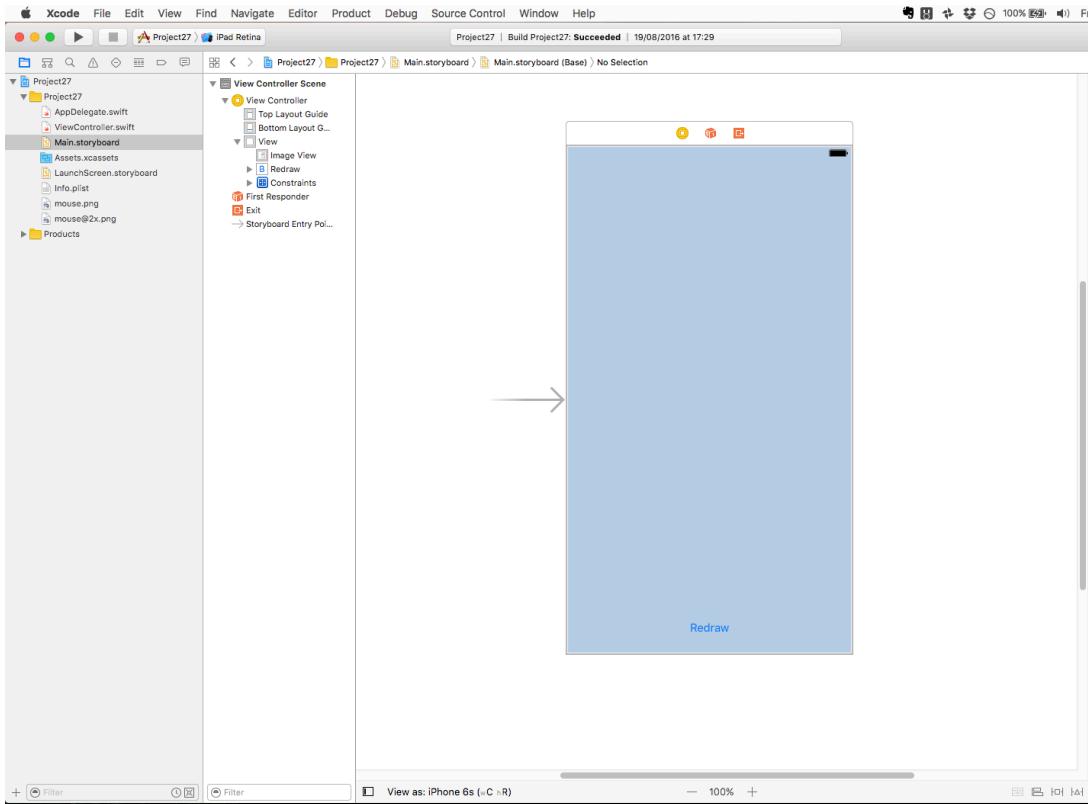
Open Main.storyboard in Interface Builder, then drag out an image view so that it fills the whole space of the view. Set its aspect mode to be Aspect Fit, so that images will be correctly resized according to the device's aspect ratio. Now place a button near the bottom of the view controller, centered horizontally, then give it the title “Redraw”.

We can make Interface Builder do all the constraints for this one: select the main view in the document outline, then go to Editor > Resolve Auto Layout Issues > Reset to Suggested Constraints.

We're going to need to reference the image view in code, so please switch to the assistant editor and create an outlet for it called **imageView**. While you're there, you should also create an action for the button being tapped, called **redrawTapped()**.

Switch back to the standard editor, and open up ViewController.swift because that's our user interface done; the rest is code!

Project 27: Core Graphics



We're going to use a similar code structure to project 15: a property that we increment through, using a switch/case to call different methods each time. In addition, we need **viewDidLoad()** to call an initial method so that we start by drawing something. Start by adding this property to your view controller:

```
var currentDrawType = 0
```

And now create this empty method – we'll be filling it shortly:

```
func drawRectangle() {  
}
```

As with project 15, the button we placed needs to add one to the property, wrapping it back to zero when it reaches a certain point. The property is then used to decide what method to call, although right now we're only going to have one useful case: **drawRectangle()**.

Here's the initial code for `redrawTapped()`; we'll be adding more cases over time:

```
@IBAction func redrawTapped(_ sender: Any) {
    currentDrawType += 1

    if currentDrawType > 5 {
        currentDrawType = 0
    }

    switch currentDrawType {
    case 0:
        drawRectangle()

    default:
        break
    }
}
```

The only remaining step to make our sandbox complete is to have `viewDidLoad()` call the `drawRectangle()` method so that the screen starts by showing something. Change your `viewDidLoad()` method to this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    drawRectangle()
}
```

Running the app at this point will do very little, because although your user interface works the code effectively does nothing. We're going to fix that by filling in the `drawRectangle()` method, then proceed to add more cases to the `switch/case` block.

Drawing into a Core Graphics context with **UIGraphicsImageRenderer**

Carl Sagan once said, "if you wish to make an apple pie from scratch, you must first invent the universe." Filling in the **drawRectangle()** method doesn't require you to invent the universe, but it *does* require a fair amount of Core Graphics learning before you get to the actual drawing part. I will, of course, try to remove as much of it as I can so that the remaining bits are important.

The most important thing to understand is that, like Core Animation, Core Graphics sits at a lower technical level than UIKit. This means it doesn't understand classes you know like **UIColor** and **UIBezierPath**, so you either need to use their counterparts (**CGColor** and **CGPath** respectively), or use helper methods from UIKit that convert between the two.

Second you need to understand that Core Graphics differentiates between creating a path and drawing a path. That is, you can add lines, squares and other shapes to a path as much as you want to, but none of it will do anything until you actually draw the path. Think of it like a simple state machine: you configure a set of states you want (colors, transforms, and so on), then perform actions. You can even maintain multiple states at a time by pushing and popping in order to backup and restore specific states.

Finally, you should know that Core Graphics is extremely fast: you can use it for updating drawing in real time, and you'll be very impressed. Core Graphics can work on a background thread – something that UIKit can't do – which means you can do complicated drawing without locking up your user interface.

It's time to start looking at some code, so it's time to meet the **UIGraphicsImageRenderer** class. This was introduced in iOS 10 to allow fast and easy graphics rendering, while also quietly adding support for wide color devices like the iPad Pro. It works with closures, which might seem annoying if you're still not comfortable with them, but has the advantage that you

Drawing into a Core Graphics context with **UIGraphicsImageRenderer**

can build complex drawing instructions by composing functions.

Now, wait a minute: that class name starts with "UI", so what makes it anything to do with Core Graphics? Well, it *isn't* a Core Graphics class; it's a UIKit class, but it acts as a gateway to and from Core Graphics for UIKit-based apps like ours. You create a renderer object and start a rendering context, but everything between will be Core Graphics functions or UIKit methods that are designed to work with Core Graphics contexts.

In Core Graphics, a context is a canvas upon which we can draw, but it also stores information about how we want to draw (e.g., what should our line thickness be?) and information about the device we are drawing to. So, it's a combination of canvas and metadata all in one, and it's what you'll be using for all your drawing. This Core Graphics context is exposed to us when we render with **UIGraphicsImageRenderer**.

When you create a renderer, you get to specify how big it should be, whether it should be opaque or not, and what pixel to point scale you want. To kick off rendering you can either call the **image()** function to get back a **UIImage** of the results, or call the **pngData()** and **jpegData()** methods to get back a **Data** object in PNG or JPEG format respectively.

Armed with this knowledge, you can write the first version of **drawRectangle()**:

```
func drawRectangle() {
    let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width:
512, height: 512))

    let img = renderer.image { ctx in
        // awesome drawing code
    }

    imageView.image = img
}
```

In that code, we create a **UIGraphicsImageRenderer** with the size 512x512, leaving it with

Project 27: Core Graphics

default values for scale and opacity – that means it will be the same scale as the device (e.g. 2x for retina) and transparent.

Creating the renderer doesn't actually start any rendering – that's done in the **image()** method. This accepts a closure as its only parameter, which is code that should do all the drawing. It gets passed a single parameter that I've named **ctx**, which is a reference to a **UIGraphicsImageRendererContext** to draw to. This is a thin wrapper around another data type called **CGContext**, which is where the majority of drawing code lives.

When the rendering has finished it gets placed into the **image** constant, which in turn gets sent to the image view for display. Our rendering code is empty right now, but it will still result in an empty 512x512 image being created.

Let's make things more interesting by having the **drawRectangle()** method actually draw a rectangle. And not just *any* rectangle – a **stroked** rectangle, which is a rectangle with a line around it.

There are a number of ways of drawing boxes in Core Graphics, but I've chosen the easiest: we'll define a **CGRect** structure that holds the bounds of our rectangle, we'll set the context's fill color to be red and its stroke color to be black, we'll set the context's line drawing width to be 10 points, then add a rectangle path to the context and draw it.

The part that might seem strange is the way we're adding a path then drawing it. This is because you can actually add multiple paths to your context before drawing, which means Core Graphics batches them all together. Your path can be as simple or as complicated as you want, you still need to set up your Core Graphics state as you want it then draw the path.

Although the **UIGraphicsImageRendererContext** does have a handful of methods we can call to do basic drawing, almost all the good stuff lies in its **cgContext** property that gives us the full power of Core Graphics.

Let's take a look at the five new methods you'll need to use to draw our box:

1. **setFillColor()** sets the fill color of our context, which is the color used on the insides of the

Drawing into a Core Graphics context with `UIGraphicsImageRenderer`

rectangle we'll draw.

2. `setStrokeColor()` sets the stroke color of our context, which is the color used on the line around the edge of the rectangle we'll draw.
3. `setLineWidth()` adjusts the line width that will be used to stroke our rectangle. Note that the line is drawn centered on the edge of the rectangle, so a value of 10 will draw 5 points inside the rectangle and five points outside.
4. `addRect()` adds a `CGRect` rectangle to the context's current path to be drawn.
5. `drawPath()` draws the context's current path using the state you have configured.

All five of those are called on the Core Graphics context that comes from `ctx.cgContext`, using a parameter that does the actual work. So for setting colors the parameter is the color to set (remember how to convert `UIColor` values to `CGColor` values? I hope so!), for setting the line width it's a number in points, for adding a rectangle path it's the `CGRect` of your rectangle, and for drawing it's a special constant that says whether you want just the fill, just the stroke, or both.

Time for some code: replace // **awesome drawing code** with this:

```
let rectangle = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 512, height: 512)

ctx.cgContext.setFillColor(UIColor.red.cgColor)
ctx.cgContext.setStrokeColor(UIColor.black.cgColor)
ctx.cgContext.setLineWidth(10)

ctx.cgContext.addRect(rectangle)
ctx.cgContext.drawPath(using: .fillStroke)
```

At long last, this project does something useful: when you run it, you'll see a red box with a black line around it. You can't really see it just yet, but the black line will be just five points across in its original image because it's centered on the edge of its path and therefore is cropped. You'll see this more clearly in a moment.

Ellipses and checkerboards

Add a case to your `redrawTapped()` method to call a new method: `drawCircle()`. This will... wait for it... *draw a circle*. So, your `switch/case` should look like this:

```
switch currentDrawType {
    case 0:
        drawRectangle()

    case 1:
        drawCircle()

    default:
        break
}
```

There are several ways of drawing rectangles using Core Graphics, but the method we used in `drawRectangle()` is particularly useful because in order to draw a circle we need to change just one line of code. This is because drawing circles (or indeed any elliptical shape) in Core Graphics is done by specifying its rectangular bounds.

So, where before you had:

```
ctx.cgContext.addRect(rectangle)
```

...you can now use this:

```
ctx.cgContext.addEllipse(in: rectangle)
```

It even has the same parameters! So, the full `drawCircle()` method is this:

```
func drawCircle() {
    let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width:
512, height: 512))
```

```
let img = renderer.image { ctx in
    let rectangle = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 512, height:
512)

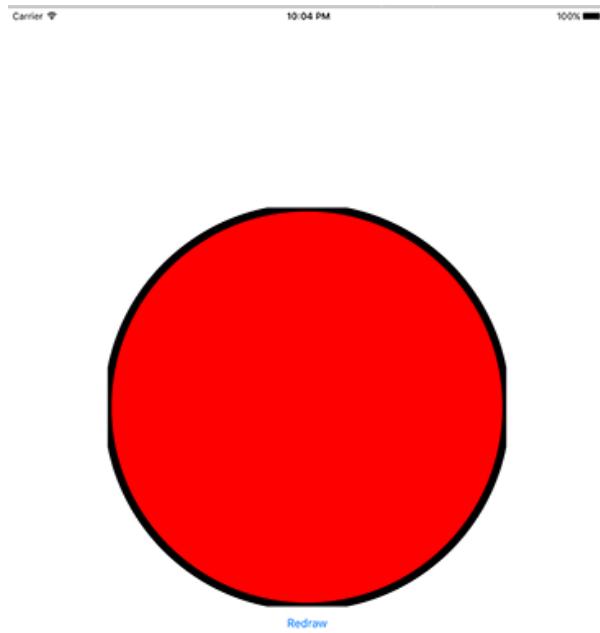
    ctx.cgContext.setFillColor(UIColor.red.cgColor)
    ctx.cgContext.setStrokeColor(UIColor.black.cgColor)
    ctx.cgContext.setLineWidth(10)

    ctx.cgContext.addEllipse(in: rectangle)
    ctx.cgContext.drawPath(using: .fillStroke)
}

imageView.image = img
}
```

Run the app now and click the button once to make it draw a circle. Notice how the stroke around the edge appears to be clipped at the top, right, bottom and left edges? This is a direct result of what I was saying about stroke positioning: the stroke is centered on the edge of the path, meaning that a 10 point stroke is 5 points inside the path and 5 points outside.

Project 27: Core Graphics



The rectangle being used to define our circle is the same size as the whole context, meaning that it goes edge to edge – and thus the stroke gets clipped. To fix the problem, change the rectangle to this:

```
let rectangle = CGRect(x: 5, y: 5, width: 502, height: 502)
```

That indents the circle by 5 points on all sides, so the stroke will now look uniform around the entire shape.

While that works fine, there is a better option: **CGRect** has an **insetBy()** method that lets us push each edge in by a certain amount. So instead of the above, a much cleaner piece of code is this:

```
let rectangle = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 512, height: 512).insetBy(dx: 5, dy: 5)
```

That adds 5 points of inset on each edge, which has the same result.

A different way of drawing rectangles is just to fill them directly with your target color. Add a "case 2" to your **switch/case** that calls a method named **drawCheckerboard()**, and give it this code:

```
func drawCheckerboard() {
    let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width:
512, height: 512))

    let img = renderer.image { ctx in
        ctx.cgContext.setFillColor(UIColor.black.cgColor)

        for row in 0 ..< 8 {
            for col in 0 ..< 8 {
                if (row + col) % 2 == 0 {
                    ctx.cgContext.fill(CGRect(x: col * 64, y: row *
64, width: 64, height: 64))
                }
            }
        }
    }

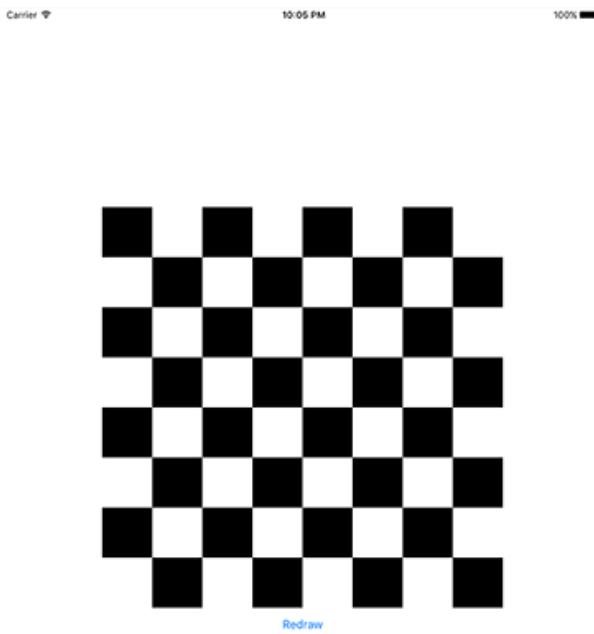
    imageView.image = img
}
```

The only piece of code in there that you won't recognize is **fill()**, which skips the add path / draw path work and just fills the rectangle given as its parameter using whatever the current fill color is. You already know about ranges and modulo, so you should be able to see that this method makes every other square black, alternating between rows.

There are two things to be aware of with that code. First, we're filling every other square in black, but leaving the other squares alone. As we haven't specified that our renderer is opaque,

Project 27: Core Graphics

this means those places where we haven't filled anything will be transparent. So, if the view behind was green, you'd get a black and green checkerboard. Second, you can actually make checkerboards using a Core Image filter – check out **CICheckerboardGenerator** to see how!



Transforms and lines

Add another case to your **switch/case** block, and make this one call another new method named **drawRotatedSquares()**. This is going to demonstrate how we can apply transforms to our context before drawing, and how you can stroke a path without filling it.

To make this happen, you need to know three new Core Graphics methods:

1. **translateBy()** translates (moves) the current transformation matrix.
2. **rotate(by:)** rotates the current transformation matrix.
3. **strokePath()** strokes the path with your specified line width, which is 1 if you don't set it explicitly.

The current transformation matrix is very similar to those **CGAffineTransform** modifications we used in project 15, except its application is a little different in Core Graphics. In UIKit, you rotate drawing around the center of your view, as if a pin was stuck right through the middle. In Core Graphics, you rotate around the top-left corner, so to avoid that we're going to move the transformation matrix half way into our image first so that we've effectively moved the rotation point.

This also means we need to draw our rotated squares so they are centered on our center: for example, setting their top and left coordinates to be -128 and their width and height to be 256.

Here's the code for the method:

```
func drawRotatedSquares() {
    let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width:
512, height: 512))

    let img = renderer.image { ctx in
        ctx.cgContext.translateBy(x: 256, y: 256)

        let rotations = 16
        let amount = Double.pi / Double(rotations)
```

Project 27: Core Graphics

```
        for _ in 0 ..< rotations {
            ctx.cgContext.rotate(by: CGFloat(amount))
            ctx.cgContext.addRect(CGRect(x: -128, y: -128, width:
256, height: 256))
        }

        ctx.cgContext.setStrokeColor(UIColor.black.cgColor)
        ctx.cgContext.strokePath()
    }

    imageView.image = img
}
```

Run the app and look at the output: beautiful, rotated, stroked squares, with no extra calculations required. I mean, just stop for a moment and consider the math it would take to calculate the four corners of each of those rectangles. If sine and cosine are distant memories for you, be glad to have the current transformation matrix!

One thing that I should make clear: modifying the CTM is cumulative, which is what makes the above code work. That is, when you rotate the CTM, that transformation is applied on top of what was there already, rather than to a clean slate. So the code works by rotating the CTM a small amount more every time the loop goes around.

The last shape drawing I want to show you is how to draw lines, and you're going to need two new functions: **move(to:)** and **addLine(to:)**. These are the Core Graphics equivalents to the **UIBezierPath** paths we made in project 20 to move the fireworks.

Add another case to your switch/case block, this time calling **drawLines()**. I'm going to make this translate and rotate the CTM again, although this time the rotation will always be 90 degrees. This method is going to draw boxes inside boxes, always getting smaller, like a square spiral. It's going to do this by adding a line to more or less the same point inside a loop, but each time the loop rotates the CTM so the actual point the line ends has moved too. It will also

slowly decrease the line length, causing the space between boxes to shrink like a spiral. Here's the code:

```
func drawLines() {
    let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width:
512, height: 512))

    let img = renderer.image { ctx in
        ctx.cgContext.translateBy(x: 256, y: 256)

        var first = true
        var length: CGFloat = 256

        for _ in 0 ..< 256 {
            ctx.cgContext.rotate(by: .pi / 2)

            if first {
                ctx.cgContext.move(to: CGPoint(x: length, y: 50))
                first = false
            } else {
                ctx.cgContext.addLine(to: CGPoint(x: length, y:
50))
            }

            length *= 0.99
        }

        ctx.cgContext.setStrokeColor(UIColor.black.cgColor)
        ctx.cgContext.strokePath()
    }

    imageView.image = img
}
```

Project 27: Core Graphics

The end result looks like one of the hand-crafted effects from the Twilight Zone, but it shows a little of the power that transforms and lines can bring to your drawing.

Images and text

Add one final case to your switch/case statement calling a method `drawImagesAndText()`, because no discussion of Core Graphics would be useful without telling you how to draw images and text to your context.

If you have an attributed string in Swift, how can you place it into a graphic? The answer is simpler than you think: attributed strings have a built-in method called `draw(with:)` that draws the string in a rectangle you specify. Even better, your attributed string styles are used to customize the font and size, the formatting, the line wrapping and more all with that one method.

Remarkably, the same is true of `UIImage`: any image can be drawn straight to a context, and it will even take into account the coordinate reversal of Core Graphics.

To help make the code clearer, here's a bulleted list of all the things the method needs to do:

1. Create a renderer at the correct size.
2. Define a paragraph style that aligns text to the center.
3. Create an attributes dictionary containing that paragraph style, and also a font.
4. Wrap that attributes dictionary and a string into an instance of `NSAttributedString`.
5. Load an image from the project and draw it to the context.
6. Update the image view with the finished result.

Below is that the same process, now coded in Swift. As per usual, the number comments match the list above:

```
func drawImagesAndText() {
    // 1
    let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width:
512, height: 512))

    let img = renderer.image { ctx in
```

Project 27: Core Graphics

```
// 2
let paragraphStyle = NSMutableParagraphStyle()
paragraphStyle.alignment = .center

// 3
let attrs: [NSAttributedString.Key: Any] = [
    .font: UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 36),
    .paragraphStyle: paragraphStyle
]

// 4
let string = "The best-laid schemes o' nmice an' men gang
aft agley"
let attributedString = NSAttributedString(string: string,
attributes: attrs)

// 5
attributedString.draw(with: CGRect(x: 32, y: 32, width:
448, height: 448), options: .usesLineFragmentOrigin, context:
nil)

// 5
let mouse = UIImage(named: "mouse")
mouse?.draw(at: CGPoint(x: 300, y: 150))
}

// 6
imageView.image = img
}
```

That completes our project – good job!

Images and text

Carrier

10:08 PM

100%

The best-laid schemes o'
mice an' men gang aft agley



[Redraw](#)

Wrap up

I could easily have written twice as much about Core Graphics, because it's capable of some extraordinary effects. Clipping paths, gradients, blend modes and more are just a few lines of code away, so there really is no excuse not to give them a try! And if you don't give it a try yourself, don't worry: we'll be drawing with Core Graphics in project 29, so you can't avoid it.

This project has given you a sandbox where you can play around with various Core Graphics techniques easily, so I would highly encourage you to spend more time tinkering with the code in your project. There are some suggested challenges below, but you can also use code completion to try new functions, change my values to others to see what happens, and so on. Playing with code like this can help you to discover new functionality, and will also help you remember more later. Have fun!

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 27.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Pick any emoji and try creating it using Core Graphics. You should find some easy enough, but for a harder challenge you could also try something like the star emoji.
2. Use a combination of **move(to:)** and **addLine(to:)** to create and stroke a path that spells "TWIN" on the canvas.
3. Go back to project 3 and change the way the selected image is shared so that it has some rendered text on top saying "From Storm Viewer". This means reading the **size** property of

Wrap up

the original image, creating a new canvas at that size, drawing the image in, then adding your text on top.

Project 28

Secret Swift

Save user data securely using the device keychain and Touch ID.

Setting up

This project will introduce you to three important iOS technologies together: Touch ID, Face ID and the keychain. The first two are used to identify users biometrically using the fingerprint sensor on iPhones and iPads, or the face scanner on iPhone X or similar; the latter is a secure, encrypted data storage area on every device that you can read and write to.

Of course, there's little point learning about technologies without using them, so this project will have you build a secure text editor. Users can type whatever they want and have it saved, but to read it again they'll need to unlock the app using Touch ID or Face ID.

You might remember in project 12 that I said **User Defaults** is great for its simplicity but isn't good for private data. Well, the keychain is securely encrypted, so we can be assured that data we put there is safe.

This project is modeled on project 19, where you met **UITextView** for the first time. This means we'll need to use the same keyboard detection and adjustment code – if you already completed project 19, you might find it easiest to copy and paste your code as needed.

To get started, make a new Single View App project in Xcode named Project28.

Creating a basic text editor

Open Main.storyboard in Interface Builder, and embed the default view controller inside a navigation controller. Now place a text view inside (*not* a text field!) so that it fills up most of the space: it should touch the left and right edges of our view, go up to the bottom of the navigation bar, then go down to the bottom of the safe area – that's where IB will snap to when you drag near the virtual home indicator at the bottom of the view controller. We don't need anything special for our Auto Layout constraints, so just go to Editor > Resolve Auto Layout Issues > Add Missing Constraints to place them automatically.

Delete the "Lorem ipsum" text in the text view, then use the assistant editor to make an outlet for it called **secret**. That's us done with the storyboard for now; switch back to the standard editor and open ViewController.swift.

We need to add the same code we used in project 19 to make the text view adjust its content and scroll insets when the keyboard appears and disappears. This code is identical apart from the outlet is called **secret** now.

First, put this into **viewDidLoad()**:

```
let notificationCenter = NotificationCenter.default
notificationCenter.addObserver(self, selector:
#selector(adjustForKeyboard), name:
UIResponder.keyboardWillHideNotification, object: nil)
notificationCenter.addObserver(self, selector:
#selector(adjustForKeyboard), name:
UIResponder.keyboardWillChangeFrameNotification, object: nil)
```

As a reminder, that asks iOS to tell us when the keyboard changes or when it hides. As a double reminder: the hide is required because we do a little hack to make the hardware keyboard toggle work correctly – see project 19 if you don't remember why this is needed.

Here's the **adjustKeyboard()** method, which again is identical apart from the outlet name to

that seen in project 19:

```
@objc func adjustForKeyboard(notification: Notification) {
    guard let keyboardValue = notification.userInfo?[UIResponder.keyboardFrameEndUserInfoKey] as? NSValue else
    { return }

    let keyboardScreenEndFrame = keyboardValue.cgRectValue
    let keyboardViewEndFrame =
    view.convert(keyboardScreenEndFrame, from: view.window)

    if notification.name ==
    UIResponder.keyboardWillHideNotification {
        secret.contentInset = .zero
    } else {
        secret.contentInset = UIEdgeInsets(top: 0, left: 0,
        bottom: keyboardViewEndFrame.height -
        view.safeAreaInsets.bottom, right: 0)
    }

    secret.scrollIndicatorInsets = secret.contentInset

    let selectedRange = secret.selectedRange
    secret.scrollRangeToVisible(selectedRange)
}
```

None of that is new, so you're probably bored by now. Not to worry: we're going to fix up our storyboard in preparation for authentication, so re-open Main.storyboard.

Place a button over the text view, give it the title "Authenticate" and make it 44 points high. For constraints, give it a fixed height constraint, then make it align horizontally and vertically with its superview. Now use the assistant editor to create an action for it called "authenticateTapped".

Project 28: Secret Swift

Before you leave Interface Builder, you need to do something we haven't done yet, which is to move views backwards and forwards relative to each other. When the user has authenticated, we need to show the text box while making sure the button is no longer visible, and the easiest way to do that is to place the button behind the text view so that when the text is visible it covers up the button.

To move the text view to the front, select the Authenticate button in the document outline then drag it *above* the text view. When you do this the button will disappear on the canvas, but that's OK – it's still there, and we can still use it.

The last thing to do is ensure the text view starts life hidden, so select it in Interface Builder, choose the attributes inspector, and check the Hidden box – it's near the bottom, not far below Tag. That's our layout complete!

Writing somewhere safe: the iOS keychain

When the app first runs, users should see a totally innocuous screen, with nothing secret visible. But we also don't want secret information to be visible when the user leaves the app for a moment then comes back, or if they double-tap the home button to multitask – doing so might mean that the app is left unlocked, which is the last thing we want.

To make this work, let's start by giving the view controller a totally innocuous title that absolutely won't make anyone wonder what's going on. Put this into `viewDidLoad()`:

```
title = "Nothing to see here"
```

Next we're going to create two new methods: `unlockSecretMessage()` to load the message into the text view, and `saveSecretMessage()`. But before we do that, I want to introduce you to a helpful class called **KeychainWrapper**, which we'll be using to read and write keychain values.

This class was not made by Apple; instead, it's open source software released under the MIT license, which means we can use it in our own projects as long as the copyright message remains intact. This class is needed because working with the keychain is *complicated* – far harder than anything we have done so far. So instead of using it directly, we'll be using this wrapper class that makes the keychain work like **UserDefaults**.

If you haven't already downloaded this project's files from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>), please do so now. In there you'll find the files `KeychainWrapper.swift` and `KeychainItemAccessibility.swift`; please copy them into your Xcode project to make the class available.

The first of our two new methods, `unlockSecretMessage()`, needs to show the text view, then load the keychain's text into it. Loading strings from the keychain using **KeychainWrapper** is as simple as using its `string(forKey:)` method, but the result is optional so you should unwrap

Project 28: Secret Swift

it once you know there's a value there.

Here it is:

```
func unlockSecretMessage() {
    secret.isHidden = false
    title = "Secret stuff!"

    if let text = KeychainWrapper.standard.string(forKey:
"SecretMessage") {
        secret.text = text
    }
}
```

If you prefer, you can use nil coalescing to provide the default value of an empty string, like this:

```
func unlockSecretMessage() {
    secret.isHidden = false
    title = "Secret stuff!"

    secret.text = KeychainWrapper.standard.string(forKey:
"SecretMessage") ?? ""
}
```

Use whichever you prefer!

The second of our two new methods, `saveSecretMessage()`, needs to write the text view's text to the keychain, then make it hidden. This is done using the `set()` method of `KeychainWrapper`, so it's just as easy as reading. Note that we should only execute this code if the text view is visible, otherwise if a save happens before the app is unlocked then it will overwrite the saved text!

Here's the code:

```

objc func saveSecretMessage() {
    guard secret.isHidden == false else { return }

    KeychainWrapper.standard.set(secret.text, forKey:
"SecretMessage")
    secret.resignFirstResponder()
    secret.isHidden = true
    title = "Nothing to see here"
}

```

I slipped a new method in there: **resignFirstResponder()**. This is used to tell a view that has input focus that it should give up that focus. Or, in Plain English, to tell our text view that we're finished editing it, so the keyboard can be hidden. This is important because having a keyboard present might arouse suspicion – as if our rather obvious navigation bar title hadn't done enough already...

Now, there are still two questions remaining: how should users trigger a save when they are ready, and how do we ensure that as soon as the user starts to leave the app we make their data safe? For the first problem, consider this: how often do you see a save button in iOS? Hardly ever, I expect!

It turns out that one answer solves both problems: if we automatically save when the user leaves the app then the user need never worry about saving because it's done for them, and our save method above automatically hides the text when it's called so the app becomes safe as soon as any action is taken to leave it.

We're already using **NotificationCenter** to watch for the keyboard appearing and disappearing, and we can watch for another notification that will tell us when the application will stop being active – i.e., when our app has been backgrounded or the user has switched to multitasking mode. This notification is called **UIApplication.willResignActiveNotification**, and you should make us an observer for it in **viewDidLoad()** like this:

Project 28: Secret Swift

```
notificationCenter.addObserver(self, selector:  
#selector(saveSecretMessage), name:  
UIApplication.willResignActiveNotification, object: nil)
```

That calls our **saveSecretMessage()** directly when the notification comes in, which means the app automatically saves any text and hides it when the app is moving to a background state.

The last thing to do before the app is actually useful is to make tapping the button call **unlockSecretMessage()**, like this:

```
@IBAction func authenticateTapped(_ sender: Any) {  
    unlockSecretMessage()  
}
```

It's not actually secure at this point (other than saving its data in the iOS keychain!), but by saving and loading its text it is at least useful.

Touch to activate: Touch ID, Face ID and LocalAuthentication

Touch ID and Face ID are part of the Local Authentication framework, and our code needs to do three things:

1. Check whether the device is capable of supporting biometric authentication – that the hardware is available and is configured by the user.
2. If so, request that the biometry system begin a check now, giving it a string containing the reason why we're asking. For Touch ID the string is written in code; for Face ID the string is written into our Info.plist file.
3. If we get success back from the authentication request it means this is the device's owner so we can unlock the app, otherwise we show a failure message.

One caveat that you must be careful of: when we're told whether Touch ID/Face ID was successful or not, it might not be on the main thread. This means we need to use **async()** to make sure we execute any user interface code on the main thread.

The job of task 1 is done by the **canEvaluatePolicy()** method of the **LAContext** class, requesting the security policy type **.deviceOwnerAuthenticationWithBiometrics**. The job of task 2 is done by the **evaluatePolicy()** of that same class, using the same policy type, but it accepts a trailing closure telling us the result of the policy evaluation: was it successful, and if not what was the reason?

Like I said, all this is provided by the Local Authentication framework, so the first thing we need to do is import that framework. Add this above **import UIKit**:

```
import LocalAuthentication
```

And now here's the new code for the **authenticateTapped()** method. We already walked through what it does, so this shouldn't be too surprising:

Project 28: Secret Swift

```
@IBAction func authenticateTapped(_ sender: Any) {
    let context = LAContext()
    var error: NSError?

    if context.canEvaluatePolicy(.deviceOwnerAuthenticationWithBiometrics, error: &error) {
        let reason = "Identify yourself!"

        context.evaluatePolicy(.deviceOwnerAuthenticationWithBiometrics, localizedReason: reason) {
            [weak self] success, authenticationError in

                DispatchQueue.main.async {
                    if success {
                        self?.unlockSecretMessage()
                    } else {
                        // error
                    }
                }
            }
        } else {
            // no biometry
        }
    }
}
```

There is one important new piece of syntax in there that we haven't used before, which is **&error**. The LocalAuthentication framework uses the Objective-C approach to reporting errors back to us, which is where the **NSError** type comes from – where Swift likes to have an enum that conforms to the **Error** protocol, Objective-C had a dedicated **NSError** type for handling errors.

Here, though, we want LocalAuthentication to tell *us* what went wrong, and it can't do that by returning a value from the `canEvaluatePolicy()` method – that already returns a Boolean telling us whether biometric authentication is available or not. So, instead what we use is the Objective-C equivalent of Swift's `inout` parameters: we pass an empty `NSError` variable into our call to `canEvaluatePolicy()`, and if an error occurs that error will get filled with a real `NSError` instance telling us what went wrong.

Objective-C's equivalent to `inout` is what's called a *pointer*, so named because it effectively points to a place in memory where something exists rather than passing around the actual value instead. If we had passed `error` into the method, it would mean "here's the error you should use." By passing in `&error` – Objective-C's equivalent of `inout` – it means "if you hit an error, here's the place in memory where you should store that error so I can read it."

I hope you can now see this is another example of why Swift was such a leap forward compared to Objective-C – having to pass around pointers to things wasn't terribly pleasant!

Apart from that, there are a couple of reminders: we need `[weak self]` inside the first closure but not the second because it's already weak by that point. You also need to use `self?.` inside the closure to make capturing clear. Finally, you must provide a reason why you want Touch ID/Face ID to be used, so you might want to replace mine ("Identify yourself!") with something a little more descriptive.

You can see the "Identify yourself!" string in our code, which will be shown to Touch ID users. Face ID is handled slightly differently – open Info.plist, then add a new key called "Privacy - Face ID Usage Description". This should contain similar text to what you use with Touch ID, so give it the value "Identify yourself!" .

That's enough to get basic biometric authentication working, but there are error cases you need to catch. For example, you'll hit problems if the device does not have biometric capability or it isn't configured. Similarly, you'll get an error if the user failed authentication, which might be because their fingerprint or face wasn't scanning for whatever reason, but also if the system has to cancel scanning for some reason.

Project 28: Secret Swift

To catch authentication failure errors, replace the // **error** comment with this:

```
let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Authentication failed",
message: "You could not be verified; please try again.",
preferredStyle: .alert)
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
self.present(ac, animated: true)
```

We also need to show an error if biometry just isn't available, so replace the // **no Touch ID** comment with this:

```
let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Biometry unavailable",
message: "Your device is not configured for biometric
authentication.", preferredStyle: .alert)
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
self.present(ac, animated: true)
```

That completes the authentication code, so go ahead and try running the app now. If you're using a physical device your regular Touch ID / Face ID should work just fine, but if you're using the Simulator there are useful options under the Hardware menu – go to Hardware > Touch ID/Face ID > Toggle Enrolled State to opt in to biometric authentication, then use Hardware > Touch ID/Face ID > Matching Touch/Face when you're asked for a fingerprint/face.

Wrap up

The great thing about biometric authentication is that you don't get any access to fingerprints, face scans, or other secure information. Instead, the system does all the authentication for you, which keeps both your app and users safe.

More importantly, users *trust* it: they know that Touch ID and Face ID are highly secure system that guarantee security in our apps, so it immediately makes our apps feel both more personal and more safe.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 28.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Add a Done button as a navigation bar item that causes the app to re-lock immediately rather than waiting for the user to quit. This should only be shown when the app is unlocked.
2. Create a password system for your app so that the Touch ID/Face ID fallback is more useful. You'll need to use an alert controller with a text field like we did in project 5, and I suggest you save the password in the keychain!
3. Go back to project 10 (Names to Faces) and add biometric authentication so the user's pictures are shown only when they have unlocked the app. You'll need to give some thought to how you can hide the pictures – perhaps leave the array empty until they are authenticated?

Project 28: Secret Swift

Project 29

Exploding Monkeys

Remake a classic DOS game and learn about destructible terrain and scene transitions.

Setting up

This game project will be hugely recognizable to people over the age of 35 because it was the classic way to waste time during computer classes at school.

The game? It's called Gorillas, and it first shipped with an old text-based operating system called MS-DOS 5.0 way back in 1991. Of course, we're going to re-make it using SpriteKit, but at the same time you're going to learn some new things: how to make colors from hues, texture atlases, scene transitions, mixing UIKit with SpriteKit, and destructible terrain. You'll also get a recap on the Core Graphics techniques from project 27.

"Destructible terrain" means "terrain that can be destroyed," which is a key part of Gorillas. If you've never played it before, you won't know that it pits two players against each other, both standing on high-rise buildings and both flinging exploding bananas at each other using physics. Realistic, right? Well, no, but it's certainly fun!

Make a new SpriteKit project named Project29. Please make it target iPads in landscape orientation, then through the usual project cleaning effort to remove all of the unneeded template code – including, as always, setting the anchor point to X:0 Y:0 and size 1024x768. You should download the files for this project from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>), but for now please don't copy any of its files into your project.

Building the environment: SKTexture and filling a path

We're going to start by making the game environment, which means building the night-time, high-rise skyscraper scene that forms the backdrop for the game. We're going to do most of this with an **SKSpriteNode** subclass for buildings that sets up physics, draws the building graphic, and ultimately handles the building being hit by stray bananas. Are you ready to flex your Core Graphics muscle a little?

Add a new file, choosing iOS > Source > Cocoa Touch Class, name it "BuildingNode" and make it a subclass of **SKSpriteNode**. Open the new file for editing, and add **import SpriteKit** just above the UIKit import.

Initially, this class needs to have three methods:

1. **setup()** will do the basic work required to make this thing a building: setting its name, texture, and physics.
2. **configurePhysics()** will set up per-pixel physics for the sprite's current texture.
3. **drawBuilding()** will do the Core Graphics rendering of a building, and return it as a **UIImage**.

In amongst those three points was one small thing that you may have missed: "the sprite's *current* texture." This tells you that the texture will change as bits get blown off by those exploding bananas. To make this work, we're going to keep a copy of the building's texture as a **UIImage** so that we can modify it later.

Before we dive into the code we need to define some collision bitmasks. This is identical to project 26, except now we need only three categories: buildings, bananas and players. In the case of buildings, the only thing they'll collide with is a banana, which triggers our explosion. So, go back to GameScene.swift and add this enum just above the **GameScene** class definition:

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

```
enum CollisionTypes: UInt32 {
    case banana = 1
    case building = 2
    case player = 4
}
```

OK, back to BuildingNode.swift. Please add this code to the class – it's a property followed by two methods:

```
var currentImage: UIImage!

func setup() {
    name = "building"

    currentImage = drawBuilding(size: size)
    texture = SKTexture(image: currentImage)

    configurePhysics()
}

func configurePhysics() {
    physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(texture: texture!, size: size)
    physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
    physicsBody?.categoryBitMask =
CollisionTypes.building.rawValue
    physicsBody?.contactTestBitMask =
CollisionTypes.banana.rawValue
}
```

This is using the same "don't override the initializer" hack from project 14, because quite frankly if I wanted to explain to you how and why Swift's initialization system worked I'd probably have to add another whole book to this series! Instead, we'll be creating the sprites as

red-colored blocks of the right size, then drawing buildings into them.

As you can see in that code, it calls a **drawBuilding()** method that returns a **UIImage**, which then gets saved into the property and converted into a texture. It also calls **configurePhysics()** rather than putting the code straight into its method. Both of these two methods are separate because they will be called every time the building is hit, so we'll be using them in two different places.

That was the easy bit: you already know about bitmasks, per-pixel physics, textures and so on. The next method is **drawBuilding()** and it's going to get harder because we're going to use Core Graphics. You *did* read project 27, right? If so, this will be a cinch.

This method needs to:

1. Create a new Core Graphics context the size of our building.
2. Fill it with a rectangle that's one of three colors.
3. Draw windows all over the building in one of two colors: there's either a light on (yellow) or not (gray).
4. Pull out the result as a **UIImage** and return it for use elsewhere.

There's nothing complicated in there, but just to keep you on your toes I'm going to introduce a new way to create colors: hue, saturation and brightness, or HSB. Using this method of creating colors you specify values between 0 and 1 to control how saturated a color is (from 0 = gray to 1 = pure color) and brightness (from 0 = black to 1 = maximum brightness), and 0 to 1 for hue.

"Hue" is a value from 0 to 1 also, but it represents a position on a color wheel, like using a color picker on your Mac. Hues 0 and 1 both represent red, with all other colors lying in between.

Now, programmers often look at HSB and think it's much clumsier than straight RGB, but there are reasons for both. The helpful thing about HSB is that if you keep the saturation and brightness constant, changing the hue value will cycle through all possible colors – it's an easy

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

way to generate matching pastel colors, for example.

There's one more thing you need to know, but you'll be pleased to know it's a fairly basic Swift feature that we just haven't needed to use so far. It's a function called **stride()**, which lets you loop from one number to another with a specific interval. We're going to use this to count from the left edge of the building to the right edge in intervals of 40, to position our windows. We'll also do this vertically, to position the windows across the whole height of the building. To make it a little more attractive, we'll actually indent the left and right edges by 10 points.

By itself, **stride()** looks like this:

```
for row in stride(from: 10, to: Int(size.height - 10), by: 40)  
{
```

That means "count from 10 up to the height of the building minus 10, in intervals of 40." So, it will go 10, 50, 90, 130, and so on. Note that **stride()** has two variants: **stride(from:to:by:)** and **stride(from:through:by:)**. The first counts up to but *excluding* the **to** parameter, whereas the second counts up to and *including* the **through** parameter. We'll be using **stride(from:to:by:)** below.

Now add this code for **drawBuilding()**, with numbered comments lining up to the list above:

```
func drawBuilding(size: CGSize) -> UIImage {  
    // 1  
    let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: size)  
    let img = renderer.image { ctx in  
        // 2  
        let rectangle = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: size.width,  
                               height: size.height)  
        let color: UIColor  
  
        switch Int.random(in: 0...2) {  
            case 0:  
                color = UIColor(hue: 0.502, saturation: 0.98,
```

Building the environment: SKTexture and filling a path

```
brightness: 0.67, alpha: 1)

case 1:
    color = UIColor(hue: 0.999, saturation: 0.99,
brightness: 0.67, alpha: 1)
default:
    color = UIColor(hue: 0, saturation: 0, brightness:
0.67, alpha: 1)
}

color.setFill()
ctx.cgContext.addRect(rectangle)
ctx.cgContext.drawPath(using: .fill)

// 3
let lightOnColor = UIColor(hue: 0.190, saturation: 0.67,
brightness: 0.99, alpha: 1)
let lightOffColor = UIColor(hue: 0, saturation: 0,
brightness: 0.34, alpha: 1)

for row in stride(from: 10, to: Int(size.height - 10),
by: 40) {
    for col in stride(from: 10, to: Int(size.width - 10),
by: 40) {
        if Bool.random() {
            lightOnColor.setFill()
        } else {
            lightOffColor.setFill()
        }

        ctx.cgContext.fill(CGRect(x: col, y: row, width:
15, height: 20))
    }
}
```

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

```
    }

    // 4

}

return img
}
```

The only things new in there – and they are so tiny you probably didn't even notice – is my use of `.fill` rather than `.stroke` to draw the rectangles, and my use of `Bool.random()` to generate either true or false randomly.

That's the **BuildingNode** class finished for now; we'll return to it later to add a method that will be called whenever it gets hit by a banana.

Go back to GameScene.swift because we have a small amount of work to do in order to use these new building nodes to build the night sky scene.

First, add a property that will store an array of buildings. We'll be using this to figure out where to place players later on:

```
var buildings = [BuildingNode]()
```

At this point, the `didMove(to:)` method needs to do only two things: give the scene a dark blue color to represent the night sky, then call a method called `createBuildings()` that will create the buildings. Here it is:

```
override func didMove(to view: SKView) {
    backgroundColor = UIColor(hue: 0.669, saturation: 0.99,
    brightness: 0.67, alpha: 1)

    createBuildings()
}
```

Building the environment: SKTexture and filling a path

All those HSB values aren't an accident, by the way – I've chosen them so they look similar to the original design.

The **createBuildings()** method is the important one here, and calling it will finish our background scene. It needs to move horizontally across the screen, filling space with buildings of various sizes until it hits the far edge of the screen. I'm going to make it start at -15 rather than the left edge so that the buildings look like they keep on going past the screen's edge. I'm also going to leave a 2-point gap between the buildings to distinguish their edges slightly more.

Each building needs to be a random size. For the height, it can be anything between 300 and 600 points high; for the width, I want to make sure it divides evenly into 40 so that our window-drawing code is simple, so we'll generate a random number between 2 and 4 then multiply that by 40 to give us buildings that are 80, 120 or 160 points wide.

As I said earlier, we'll be creating each building node with a solid red color to begin with, then drawing over it with the building texture once it's generated. Remember: SpriteKit positions nodes based on their center, so we need to do a little division of width and height to place these buildings correctly. Here's the **createBuildings()** method – please put this directly beneath **didMove(to:)**:

```
func createBuildings() {
    var currentX: CGFloat = -15

    while currentX < 1024 {
        let size = CGSize(width: Int.random(in: 2...4) * 40,
height: Int.random(in: 300...600))
        currentX += size.width + 2

        let building = BuildingNode(color: UIColor.red, size:
size)
        building.position = CGPoint(x: currentX - (size.width /
2), y: size.height / 2)
        building.setup()
    }
}
```

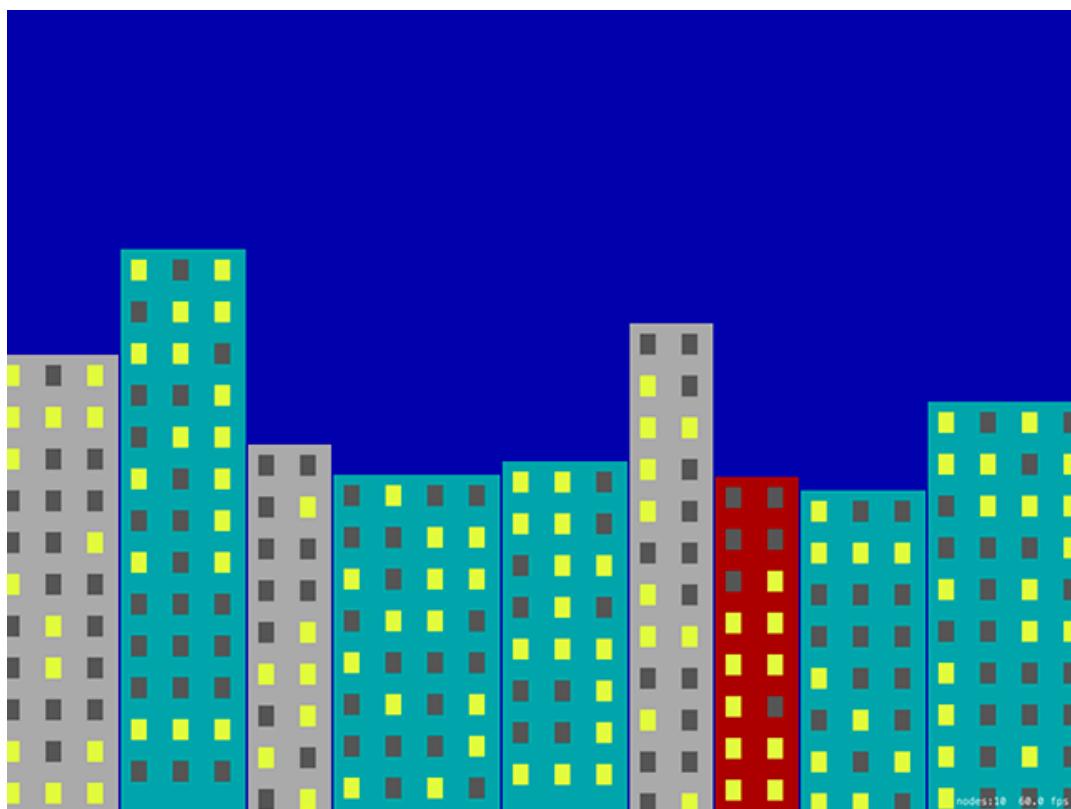
Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

```
addChild(building)

buildings.append(building)
}

}
```

Make sure you select the lowest-spec iPad from the list of simulator options, then press Play to see the results of your hard work – a random set of buildings will be generated each time you run the game. Well done!



Mixing UIKit and SpriteKit: UISlider and SKView

We've been mixing UIKit and SpriteKit ever since our first SpriteKit project, way back in project 11. Don't believe me? Look inside **GameViewController.swift** and you'll see a plain old **UIViewController** do all the work of loading and showing our **GameScene** code. There's a Main.storyboard file containing that view controller, and if you go to the identity inspector (Alt+Cmd+3) you'll see it has **SKView** set for its custom class – that's the view holding our scene.

This UIKit setup existed all along, but so far we've been ignoring it. No more: we're going to add some controls to that view so that players can fire bananas. The way the game works, each player gets to enter an angle and a velocity for their throw. We'll be recreating this with a **UISlider** for both of these numbers, along with a **UILabel** so players can see exactly what numbers they chose. We'll also add a "Launch" button that makes the magic happen.

Now, think about this for a moment: our game view controller needs to house and manage the user interface, and the game scene needs to manage everything inside the game. But they also need to talk to each other: the view controller needs to tell the game scene to fire a banana when the launch button is clicked, and the game scene needs to tell the view controller when a player's turn has finished so that another banana can be launched again.

This two-way communication could be done using **NotificationCenter**, but it's not very pleasant: we know the sender and receiver, and we know exactly what kind of data they will send and receive, so the easiest solution here is to give the view controller a property that holds the game scene, and give the game scene a property that holds the view controller.

Hopefully that should be setting off some alarm bells in your head, because if two objects own each other then we have a strong reference cycle – neither object can be destroyed. The solution is to make one of them have a weak reference to the other: either the game controller owns the game scene strongly, or the game scene owns the game controller strongly, but not both. As it so happens, the game controller already strongly owns the game scene, albeit

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

indirectly: it owns the **SKView** inside itself, and the view owns the game scene. So, it's owned, we just don't have a reference to it.

So, our solution is straightforward: add a strong reference to the game scene inside the view controller, and add a weak reference to the view controller from the game scene. Add this property to the game scene:

```
weak var viewController: GameViewController!
```

Now add this property to the game view controller:

```
var currentGame: GameScene!
```

Like I said, the game controller already owns the game scene, but it's a pain to get to. Adding that property means we have direct access to the game scene whenever we need it. To set the property, put this into the **viewDidLoad()** method of the game view controller, just after the call to **presentScene()**:

```
currentGame = scene as? GameScene  
currentGame.viewController = self
```

The first line sets the property to the initial game scene so that we can start using it. The second line makes sure that the reverse is true so that the scene knows about the view controller too.

Now to design the user interface: this needs two sliders, each with two labels, plus a launch button and one more label that will show whose turn it is. When you open Main.storyboard you'll probably see that it's shaped like an iPhone, which isn't helpful when designing this user interface. Instead, I'd like you to click the View As button at the bottom of Interface Builder, and select a 9.7-inch iPad in landscape orientation so that we have more space for drawing.

Drop two sliders into your layout, both 300 points wide. The first should be at X:20, the second should be at X:480, and both should be at Y:20. Now place two labels in there, both 120 points wide. The first should be at X:325, the second should be at X:785, and both should

be at Y:24 – this is slightly lower than the sliders so that everything is centered neatly.

For the launch button, place a button at X:910 Y:13, with width 100 and height 44; for the "which player is it?" label, place a label at X:370 Y:64 with width 285 and height 35.

That's the basic layout, but to make it all perfect we need a few tweaks. Using the attributes inspector, change the left-hand slider so that it has a maximum value of 90 and a current value of 45, then change the right-hand slider so that it has a maximum value of 250 and a current value of 125.

Make sure all three of your labels have their text color set to white, then give the bottom one the text “<<< PLAYER ONE” and center alignment. Select the button then give it a system bold font of size 22, a title of "LAUNCH" and a red text color.

That's the layout all done, but we also need lots of outlets: using the assistant editor, create these outlets:

- For the left slider: **angleSlider**
- For the left label: **angleLabel**
- For the right slider: **velocitySlider**
- For the right label: **velocityLabel**
- For the launch button: **launchButton**
- For the player number: **playerNumber**

You'll also need to create actions from the left slider, the right slider and the button: **angleChanged()**, **velocityChanged()** and **launch()** respectively.

That's all the layout done, so we're finished with Interface Builder and you can open up GameViewController.swift.

We need to fill in three methods (**angleChanged()**, **velocityChanged()** and **launch()**), write one new method, then make two small changes to **viewDidLoad()**.

The action methods for our two sliders are both simple: they update the correct label with the

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

slider's current value. A **UISlider** always stores its values as a **Float**, but we only care about the integer value of that float so we're going to convert the values to **Ints** then use string interpolation to update the labels. Here's the code for both these methods:

```
@IBAction func angleChanged(_ sender: Any) {
    angleLabel.text = "Angle: \(Int(angleSlider.value))°"
}

@IBAction func velocityChanged(_ sender: Any) {
    velocityLabel.text = "Velocity: \
(Int(velocitySlider.value))"
}
```

The only hard thing there is typing the ° symbol that represents degrees – to do that, press Shift+Option+8. With those methods written, we need to call both of them inside **viewDidLoad()** in order to have them load up with their default values. Add this to **viewDidLoad()** just after the call to **super**:

```
angleChanged(angleSlider)
velocityChanged(velocitySlider)
```

You could easily have typed default values into Interface Builder, and sometimes it's helpful to do so in order to measure your layout correctly, but setting it in code means you have only one place that can set those values so it's easier to change later if needed.

When a player taps the launch button, we need to hide the user interface so they can't try to fire again until we're ready, then tell the game scene to launch a banana using the current angle and velocity. Our game will then proceed with physics calculations until the banana is destroyed or lost (i.e., off screen), at which point the game will tell the game controller to change players and continue.

The code for the **launch()** method is trivial, largely because the work of actually launching the banana is hidden behind a call to a **launch()** method that we'll add to the game scene shortly:

Mixing UIKit and SpriteKit: UISlider and SKView

```
@IBAction func launch(_ sender: Any) {
    angleSlider.isHidden = true
    angleLabel.isHidden = true

    velocitySlider.isHidden = true
    velocityLabel.isHidden = true

    launchButton.isHidden = true

    currentGame.launch(angle: Int(angleSlider.value), velocity:
Int(velocitySlider.value))
}
```

Finally, we're going to create a **activatePlayer()** method that will be called from the game scene when control should pass to the other player. This will just update the player label to say who is in control, then show all our controls again:

```
func activatePlayer(number: Int) {
    if number == 1 {
        playerNumber.text = "<<< PLAYER ONE"
    } else {
        playerNumber.text = "PLAYER TWO >>>"
    }

    angleSlider.isHidden = false
    angleLabel.isHidden = false

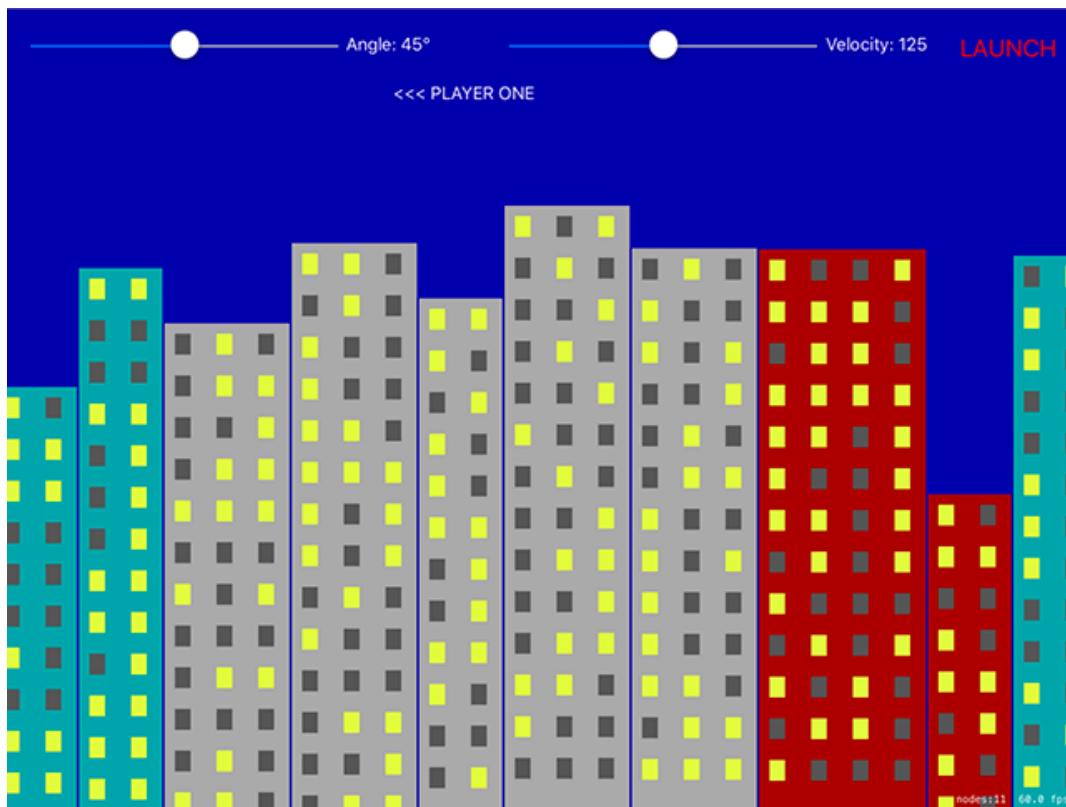
    velocitySlider.isHidden = false
    velocityLabel.isHidden = false

    launchButton.isHidden = false
}
```

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

To make your code compile, you need to add a `launch()` method to `GameScene.swift`. It doesn't need to be the real thing, but it does need to accept parameters for angle and velocity. Give it this code for now:

```
func launch(angle: Int, velocity: Int) {  
}
```



Unleash the bananas: SpriteKit texture atlases

It's time to get down to the nitty-gritty business of writing code: we need to create our players then fill in the `launch()` method so that the fun can begin.

We're going to start with the easy bit, which is creating players. This needs to do two things:

1. Create a player sprite and name it "player1".
2. Create a physics body for the player that collides with bananas, and set it to not be dynamic.
3. Position the player at the top of the second building in the array. (This is why we needed to keep an array of the buildings.)
4. Add the player to the scene.
5. Repeat all the above for player 2, except they should be on the second to last building.

The player physics body can be made using a circle, because the sprite used (which is the same for both players) is more or less round. We used the second building for player 1 and the second to last for player 2 so that they aren't at the very edges of the screen. Positioning them at the top is just a matter of adding the building's height to the player's height and dividing by two, then adding that to the building's Y co-ordinate. SpriteKit measures from the center of nodes, remember!

Before we look at the code, you'll need to create some properties to hold both players, plus the banana and which player is currently in control:

```
var player1: SKSpriteNode!
var player2: SKSpriteNode!
var banana: SKSpriteNode!

var currentPlayer = 1
```

Now here's the code for `createPlayers()` – please put this in GameScene.swift:

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

```
func createPlayers() {
    player1 = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "player")
    player1.name = "player1"
    player1.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:
player1.size.width / 2)
    player1.physicsBody?.categoryBitMask =
CollisionTypes.player.rawValue
    player1.physicsBody?.collisionBitMask =
CollisionTypes.banana.rawValue
    player1.physicsBody?.contactTestBitMask =
CollisionTypes.banana.rawValue
    player1.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false

    let player1Building = buildings[1]
    player1.position = CGPoint(x: player1Building.position.x, y:
player1Building.position.y + ((player1Building.size.height +
player1.size.height) / 2))
    addChild(player1)

    player2 = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "player")
    player2.name = "player2"
    player2.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:
player2.size.width / 2)
    player2.physicsBody?.categoryBitMask =
CollisionTypes.player.rawValue
    player2.physicsBody?.collisionBitMask =
CollisionTypes.banana.rawValue
    player2.physicsBody?.contactTestBitMask =
CollisionTypes.banana.rawValue
    player2.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false

    let player2Building = buildings[buildings.count - 2]
```

```
player2.position = CGPoint(x: player2Building.position.x, y:  
player2Building.position.y + ((player2Building.size.height +  
player2.size.height) / 2))  
addChild(player2)  
}
```

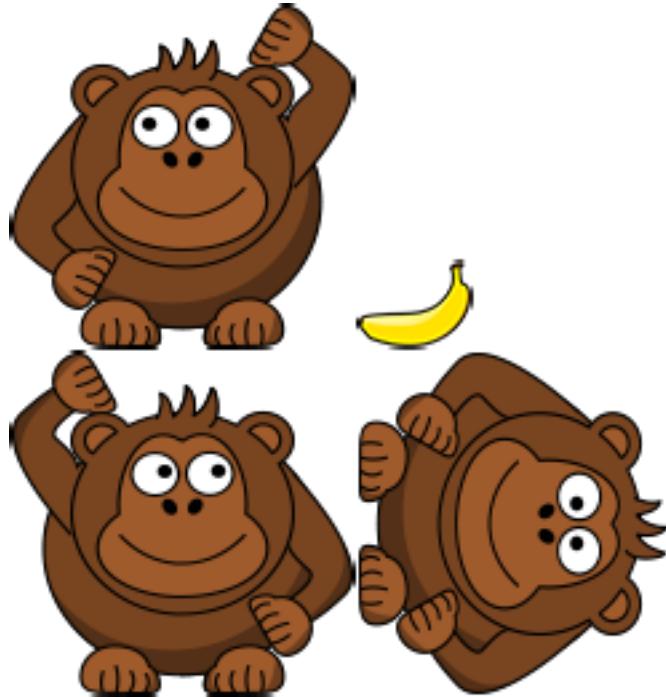
Now, one thing we haven't done yet is actually add in the images to be used inside the game, and the reason for that is because we're going to use a special technique called texture atlases. SpriteKit doesn't use them by default, which is why we haven't used them yet – there are bigger things to worry about! But this game is perfect for texture atlases, so we're going to use them now.

A texture atlas is a set of pictures that are combined into a single image. They might be stored in their original orientation, or they might be rotated. Alongside those images, the atlas also contains positions and sizes, which means to render one of those pictures SpriteKit loads the whole atlas and just draws the small window that represents the image you want.

Texture atlases allows SpriteKit to draw lots of images without having to load and unload textures – it effectively just crops the big image as needed. Xcode automatically generates these atlases for us, even rotating sprites to make them fit more efficiently. And the best bit: just like using Assets.xcassets, you don't need to change your code to make them work; just load sprites the same way you've always done.

We want to use a texture atlas for our game, so open Assets.xcassets, right-click in the big empty space below AppIcon, and choose New Sprite Atlas. You should then drag all the images for this project onto that atlas, and drag the two particle systems directly into your Xcode project.

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys



(Note: observant readers may notice that the player images are in fact monkeys not gorillas. This is largely down to me not being able to find a public domain gorilla picture that was good enough, and I figured penguins deserved a break.)

With the `createPlayers()` method in place, all you need to do is call it inside `didMove(to:)`, just after the `createBuildings()` line:

```
override func didMove(to view: SKView) {
    backgroundColor = UIColor(hue: 0.669, saturation: 0.99,
brightness: 0.67, alpha: 1)

    createBuildings()
    createPlayers()
}
```

It's now time to flesh out the `launch()` method. This is a complicated method because it needs to do quite a few things:

1. Figure out how hard to throw the banana. We accept a velocity parameter, but I'll be

dividing that by 10. You can adjust this based on your own play testing.

2. Convert the input angle to radians. Most people don't think in radians, so the input will come in as degrees that we will convert to radians.
3. If somehow there's a banana already, we'll remove it then create a new one using circle physics.
4. If player 1 was throwing the banana, we position it up and to the left of the player and give it some spin.
5. Animate player 1 throwing their arm up then putting it down again.
6. Make the banana move in the correct direction.
7. If player 2 was throwing the banana, we position it up and to the right, apply the opposite spin, then make it move in the correct direction.

There are few things you need to know before we translate that long list into Swift. First, converting degrees to radians is done with a fixed formula that we will put into a method called **deg2rad()**:

```
func deg2rad(degrees: Int) -> Double {
    return Double(degrees) * Double.pi / 180
}
```

Second, SpriteKit uses a number of optimizations to help its physics simulation work at high speed. These optimizations don't work well with small, fast-moving objects, and our banana is just such a thing. To be sure everything works as intended, we're going to enable the **usesPreciseCollisionDetection** property for the banana's physics body. This works slower, but it's fine for occasional use.

Third, I said we needed to make the banana move in "the correct direction" without really explaining how we get to that. This isn't a trigonometry book, so here's the answer as briefly as possible: if we calculate the cosine of our angle in radians it will tell us how much horizontal momentum to apply, and if we calculate the sine of our angle in radians it will tell us how much vertical momentum to apply.

Once that momentum is calculated, we multiply it by the velocity we calculated (or negative

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

velocity in the case of being player 2, because we want to throw to the left), and turn it into a **CGVector**. Remember, a vector is like an arrow where its base is at 0,0 (our current position) and tip at the point we specify, so this effectively points an arrow in the direction the banana should move.

To make the banana actually move, we use the **applyImpulse()** method of its physics body, which accepts a **CGVector** as its only parameter and gives it a physical push in that direction.

Time for the code; so you don't have to flick around so much while reading, here's a repeat list of what this method will do, with numbers matching comments in the code:

1. Figure out how hard to throw the banana. We accept a velocity parameter, but I'll be dividing that by 10. You can adjust this based on your own play testing.
2. Convert the input angle to radians. Most people don't think in radians, so the input will come in as degrees that we will convert to radians.
3. If somehow there's a banana already, we'll remove it then create a new one using circle physics.
4. If player 1 was throwing the banana, we position it up and to the left of the player and give it some spin.
5. Animate player 1 throwing their arm up then putting it down again.
6. Make the banana move in the correct direction.
7. If player 2 was throwing the banana, we position it up and to the right, apply the opposite spin, then make it move in the correct direction.

And here's the code:

```
func launch(angle: Int, velocity: Int) {  
    // 1  
    let speed = Double(velocity) / 10.0  
  
    // 2  
    let radians = deg2rad(degrees: angle)
```

```
// 3
if banana != nil {
    banana.removeFromParent()
    banana = nil
}

banana = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "banana")
banana.name = "banana"
banana.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:
banana.size.width / 2)
banana.physicsBody?.categoryBitMask =
CollisionTypes.banana.rawValue
banana.physicsBody?.collisionBitMask =
CollisionTypes.building.rawValue |
CollisionTypes.player.rawValue
banana.physicsBody?.contactTestBitMask =
CollisionTypes.building.rawValue |
CollisionTypes.player.rawValue
banana.physicsBody?.usesPreciseCollisionDetection = true
addChild(banana)

if currentPlayer == 1 {
    // 4
    banana.position = CGPoint(x: player1.position.x - 30, y:
player1.position.y + 40)
    banana.physicsBody?.angularVelocity = -20

    // 5
    let raiseArm = SKAction.setTexture(SKTexture(imageNamed:
"player1Throw"))
    let lowerArm = SKAction.setTexture(SKTexture(imageNamed:
"player"))
}
```

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

```
let pause = SKAction.wait(forDuration: 0.15)
let sequence = SKAction.sequence([raiseArm, pause,
lowerArm])
player1.run(sequence)

// 6
let impulse = CGVector(dx: cos(radians) * speed, dy:
sin(radians) * speed)
banana.physicsBody?.applyImpulse(impulse)
} else {
// 7
banana.position = CGPoint(x: player2.position.x + 30, y:
player2.position.y + 40)
banana.physicsBody?.angularVelocity = 20

let raiseArm = SKAction.setTexture(SKTexture(imageNamed:
"player2Throw"))
let lowerArm = SKAction.setTexture(SKTexture(imageNamed:
"player"))
let pause = SKAction.wait(forDuration: 0.15)
let sequence = SKAction.sequence([raiseArm, pause,
lowerArm])
player2.run(sequence)

let impulse = CGVector(dx: cos(radians) * -speed, dy:
sin(radians) * speed)
banana.physicsBody?.applyImpulse(impulse)
}
}
```

With that code, the game is starting to come together. Sure, the bananas don't actually explode, and player 2 never actually gets a shot, but all in good time...

Destructible terrain: presentScene()

It's time for the most challenging part of our project, but as per usual I've tried to keep things as simple as possible because the fun is in getting results not in learning algorithms. We're going to add collision detection to our code so that players can carve chunks out of the buildings or, better, blow up their opponents.

You will, as always, need to assign **self** to be the delegate of your scene's physics world so that you can get notified of collisions. So, put this in **didMove(to:)**:

```
physicsWorld.contactDelegate = self
```

Make sure you modify your class definition to say that you conform to the **SKPhysicsContactDelegate** protocol.

When it comes to implementing the **didBegin()** method, there are various possible contacts we need to consider: banana hit building, building hit banana (remember the philosophy?), banana hit player1, player1 hit banana, banana hit player2 and player2 hit banana.

This is a lot to check, so we're going to eliminate half of them by eliminating whether "banana hit building" or "building hit banana". Take another look at our category bitmasks:

```
enum CollisionTypes: UInt32 {
    case banana = 1
    case building = 2
    case player = 4
}
```

They are ordered numerically and alphabetically, so what we're going to do is create two new variables of type **SKPhysicsBody** and assign one object from the collision to each: the first physics body will contain the lowest number, and the second the highest.

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

So, if we get banana (collision type 1) and building (collision type 2) we'll put banana in body 1 and building in body 2, but if we get building (2) and banana (1) then we'll still put banana in body 1 and building in body 2.

Once we have eliminated half the checks, we're going to optionally unwrap both the bodies. They are optional because they might be **nil**, and this is highly likely in our project. The reason it's likely is because we might get "banana hit building" and "building hit banana" one after the other, but when either of these happens we'll destroy the banana so the second one will definitely be **nil**.

If the banana hit a player, we're going to call a new method named **destroy(player:)**. If the banana hit a building, we'll call a different new method named **bananaHit(building:)**, but we'll also pass in the contact point. This value tells us where on the screen the impact actually happened, and it's important because we're going to destroy the building at that point.

That's all you need to know, so here's the code for **didBegin()**:

```
func didBegin(_ contact: SKPhysicsContact) {
    let firstBody: SKPhysicsBody
    let secondBody: SKPhysicsBody

    if contact.bodyA.categoryBitMask <
        contact.bodyB.categoryBitMask {
        firstBody = contact.bodyA
        secondBody = contact.bodyB
    } else {
        firstBody = contact.bodyB
        secondBody = contact.bodyA
    }

    guard let firstNode = firstBody.node else { return }
    guard let secondNode = secondBody.node else { return }
```

Destructible terrain: presentScene()

```
    if firstNode.name == "banana" && secondNode.name ==  
"building" {  
    bananaHit(building: secondNode, atPoint:  
contact.contactPoint)  
}  
  
    if firstNode.name == "banana" && secondNode.name ==  
"player1" {  
    destroy(player: player1)  
}  
  
    if firstNode.name == "banana" && secondNode.name ==  
"player2" {  
    destroy(player: player2)  
}  
}
```

Note: We haven't written those functions yet, so Xcode will complain.

If a banana hits a player, it means they have lost the game: we need to create an explosion (yay, particles!), remove the destroyed player and the banana from the scene, then... what? Well, so far we've just left it there – we haven't looked at how to make games restart.

There are a number of things you could do: take players to a results screen, take them to a menu screen, and so on. In our case, we're going to reload the level so they can carry on playing. We could just delete all the buildings and generate it all from scratch, but that would be passing up a great opportunity to learn something new!

SpriteKit has a super-stylish and built-in way of letting you transition between scenes. This means you can have one scene for your menu, one for your options, one for your game, and so on, then transition between them as if they were view controllers in a navigation controller.

To transition from one scene to another, you first create the scene, then create a transition

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

using the list available from **SKTransition**, then finally use the **presentScene()** method of our scene's view, passing in the new scene and the transition you created. For example, this will cross-fade in a new scene over 2 seconds:

```
let newGame = GameScene(size: self.size)
let transition = SKTransition.crossFade(withDuration: 2)
self.view?.presentScene(newGame, transition: transition)
```

In the **destroy(player:)** method we're going to execute the scene transition after two seconds so that players have a chance to see who won and, let's face it, laugh at the losing player. But when we create the new game scene we also need to do something very important: we need to update the view controller's **currentGame** property and set the new scene's **viewController** property so they can talk to each other once the change has happened.

We also need to call the **changePlayer()** method when a player is destroyed. We haven't written this method yet, but it transfers control of the game to the other player, then calls the **activatePlayer()** method on the game view controller so that the game controls are re-shown. Calling this method here ensures that the player who lost gets the first turn in the new game.

First, here's the code for **destroy(player:)**:

```
func destroy(player: SKSpriteNode) {
    if let explosion = SKEmitterNode(fileNamed: "hitPlayer") {
        explosion.position = player.position
        addChild(explosion)
    }

    player.removeFromParent()
    banana.removeFromParent()

    DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() + 2) {
        let newGame = GameScene(size: self.size)
        newGame.viewController = self.viewController
    }
}
```

Destructible terrain: presentScene()

```
    self.viewController.currentGame = newGame

    self.changePlayer()
    newGame.currentPlayer = self.currentPlayer

    let transition = SKTransition.doorway(withDuration: 1.5)
    self.view?.presentScene(newGame, transition: transition)
}

}
```

Important: after calling `changePlayer()`, we must set the new game's `currentPlayer` property to our own `currentPlayer` property, so that whoever died gets the first shot.

The `changePlayer()` method is trivial, so here it is:

```
func changePlayer() {
    if currentPlayer == 1 {
        currentPlayer = 2
    } else {
        currentPlayer = 1
    }

    viewController.activatePlayer(number: currentPlayer)
}
```

Now it's time for the real work. How do we allow our exploding bananas to create holes in buildings? Surprisingly, it's not that hard. I'm going to split it into two parts: a `bananaHit(building:)` game scene method that handles creating the explosion, deleting the banana and changing players, and a `hit(at:)` building node method that handles damaging the building. The first one is easy, so put this into the game scene:

```
func bananaHit(building: SKNode, atPoint contactPoint: CGPoint) {

```

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

```
        guard let building = building as? BuildingNode else
    { return }
        let buildingLocation = convert(contactPoint, to: building)
        building.hit(at: buildingLocation)

        if let explosion = SKEmitterNode(fileName: "hitBuilding") {
            explosion.position = contactPoint
            addChild(explosion)
        }

        banana.name = ""
        banana.removeFromParent()
        banana = nil

        changePlayer()
    }
```

Note: We haven't written **hit(at:)** yet, so don't worry about Xcode's error message.

The only new thing in there is the call to **convert()**, which asks the game scene to convert the collision contact point into the coordinates relative to the building node. That is, if the building node was at X:200 and the collision was at X:250, this would return X:50, because it was 50 points into the building node.

If you're curious why I use **banana.name = ""**, it's to fix a small but annoying bug: if a banana just so happens to hit two buildings at the same time, then it will explode twice and thus call **changePlayer()** twice – effectively giving the player another throw. By clearing the banana's name here, the second collision won't happen because our **didBegin()** method won't see the banana as being a banana any more – its name is gone.

And now for the part where we handle destroying chunks of the building. With your current knowledge of Core Graphics, this is something you can do with only one new thing: blend modes. When you draw anything to a Core Graphics context, you can set how it should be

drawn. For example, should it be drawn normally, or should it add to what's there to create a combination?

Core Graphics has quite a few blend modes that might look similar, but we're going to use one called **.clear**, which means "delete whatever is there already." When combined with the fact that we already have a property called **currentImage** you might be able to see how our destructible terrain technique will work!

Put simply, when we create the building we save its **UIImage** to a property of the **BuildingNode** class. When we want to destroy part of the building, we draw that image into a new context, draw an ellipse using **.clear** to blast a hole, then save that back to our **currentImage** property and update our sprite's texture.

Here's a full break down of what the method needs to do:

1. Figure out where the building was hit. Remember: SpriteKit's positions things from the center and Core Graphics from the bottom left!
2. Create a new Core Graphics context the size of our current sprite.
3. Draw our current building image into the context. This will be the full building to begin with, but it will change when hit.
4. Create an ellipse at the collision point. The exact co-ordinates will be 32 points up and to the left of the collision, then 64x64 in size - an ellipse centered on the impact point.
5. Set the blend mode **.clear** then draw the ellipse, literally cutting an ellipse out of our image.
6. Convert the contents of the Core Graphics context back to a **UIImage**, which is saved in the **currentImage** property for next time we're hit, and used to update our building texture.
7. Call **configurePhysics()** again so that SpriteKit will recalculate the per-pixel physics for our damaged building.

Here's that in code – put this method into the **BuildingNode** class:

```
func hit(at point: CGPoint) {
    let convertedPoint = CGPoint(x: point.x + size.width / 2.0,
y: abs(point.y - (size.height / 2.0)))
```

Project 29: Exploding Monkeys

```
let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: size)
let img = renderer.image { ctx in
    currentImage.draw(at: .zero)

    ctx.cgContext.addEllipse(in: CGRect(x: convertedPoint.x - 32, y: convertedPoint.y - 32, width: 64, height: 64))
    ctx.cgContext.setBlendMode(.clear)
    ctx.cgContext.drawPath(using: .fill)
}

texture = SKTexture(image: img)
currentImage = img

configurePhysics()
}
```

We haven't used the `abs()` function before, but its job is quite simple: it makes negative number positive. So, if you pass it 1000 it sends back 1000, but if you pass in -1000 it still sends back 1000.

That's it for destructible terrain! There's one curious quirk of SpriteKit's physics implementation: if you slice a building in two with lots of bananas, only one half will respond to physics because it won't put two (now separate) physics bodies into one. Fortunately, the chances of that happening are pretty slim unless you're an appalling shot!

There is just one more thing to do with the game before we're finished: what if the banana misses the other player and misses all the other buildings? If you put in a 45° angle and full velocity, changes are it will shoot right off the screen, at which point the game won't end. We're going to fix this by using the `update()` method: if the banana is ever way off the screen, remove it and change players:

```
override func update(_ currentTime: TimeInterval) {
```

Destructible terrain: presentScene()

```
guard banana != nil else { return }

if abs(banana.position.y) > 1000 {
    banana.removeFromParent()
    banana = nil
    changePlayer()
}

}
```

That's it, your game is finished. Go and play!

Wrap up

This was a huge project, and gave you lots to learn about mixing UIKit and SpriteKit, texture atlases, scene transitions, and of course destructible terrain – while also giving you another real-world project under your belt.

This project should also have shown you how you can bring skills together to make something bigger and better: Core Graphics and physics combined to make destructible terrain, and really it wasn't that hard!

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It's my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I've prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 29.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what's going on:

1. Add code and UI to track the player scores across levels, then make the game end after one player has won three times.
2. Add Auto Layout rules for the UI components in our storyboard, allowing them to remain positioned neatly regardless of which iPad size is used.
3. Use the physics world's gravity to add random wind to each level, making sure to add a label telling players the direction and strength.

Project 30

Instruments

Become a bug detective and track down lost memory, slow drawing and more.

Setting up

This technique project is different to all the others so far. You see, I've already written all the code for you and I'm giving you a working app. Sure it has a few bugs here and there, but it's not *too* bad. Well, OK: perhaps it's full of bugs, and perhaps this whole project is about showing you how to find and fix those bugs!

We're going to be using a tool called Instruments. It ships as part of Xcode, and is responsible for profiling your app. "Profiling" is the term used when we monitor performance, memory usage and other information of an app, with the aim of improving efficiency.

I'm not going to make you a master of Instruments, but I can at least show you how it helps you find problems with your code. Plus, along the way you'll learn a few extra bits about how iOS works, including shadows, image caching, cell reuse and more.

You should download the source code for this project from GitHub (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>) then modify it as we go. When you open the project, go ahead and run the project either on a real device or using the simulator. The real device will always be more trustworthy in terms of performance, but some options are only available in the simulator.

What are we working with?

This is a really simple app, albeit quite a broken one. Obviously the breakages are deliberate, but they are all things I have seen in real, shipping code. The app shows a table view containing garish images of popular internet acronyms.

When one of the rows is tapped, a detail view controller appears, showing the image at full size. Every time you tap on the big image, it adds one to a count of how many times that image was tapped, and that count is shown in the original view controller.

That's it – that's all the app does. I haven't even used a storyboard, because I want all the problems to be visible (and fixable!) in Swift code.

And how bad are the problems? Well, if you run the app on a device, you'll probably find that it crashes after you've viewed several pictures – on my iPhone I get about two-thirds of the way through before it gives up.

You might also notice that scrolling isn't smooth in the table view, particularly on older devices. If you scroll around a few times iOS might be able to smooth the scrolling a little, but you'll certainly struggle to get it a flawless 60 frames per second on iPhone, or 120 frames per second on iPad Pro – the gold standard for iOS drawing.

I hope you've never seen an app that manages to have all these problems at the same time, but I can guarantee you've seen apps that have one or two at a time. The goal of this project is to help you learn the skills needed to identify, fix, and test solutions to these common problems, so let's dive in now...

What can Instruments tell us?

Press Cmd+I to run your app using Instruments, and after a few seconds a window will appear offering you a variety of profiling templates. Please select Time Profiler then click Choose. When the new window appears, click the red circle in the top-left corner to start recording of the app.

Your app will launch on your device (or in the simulator) and Instruments will begin monitoring its usage in realtime. You'll see a spike in Instruments' readings to begin with, which reflects the huge amount of work any app does just to start up. We don't care about that for now, we're more interested in the workload of the app once it's running.

So, scroll around a bit, tap an image, go back, scroll around some more, tap another image, and so on. Aim to get about at least 20 seconds or so of real app usage, then press the Stop button, which is where the record button was earlier.

The top half of your Instruments window will show readings from your app; the bottom half is showing details on those readings. By default, the detail view shows everything in the app run that was captured, but I want you to click and drag in the top window to select part of the readings when you tapped on an image. All being well (or as well as can be expected in this broken code!) you should see the readings noticeably spike at those places.

When you select an area of the readings like this, the detail view now shows information just on the part you chose. You should see that the vast majority of the time that was selected was spent on the main thread, which means we're not taking much advantage of having multiple CPU cores.

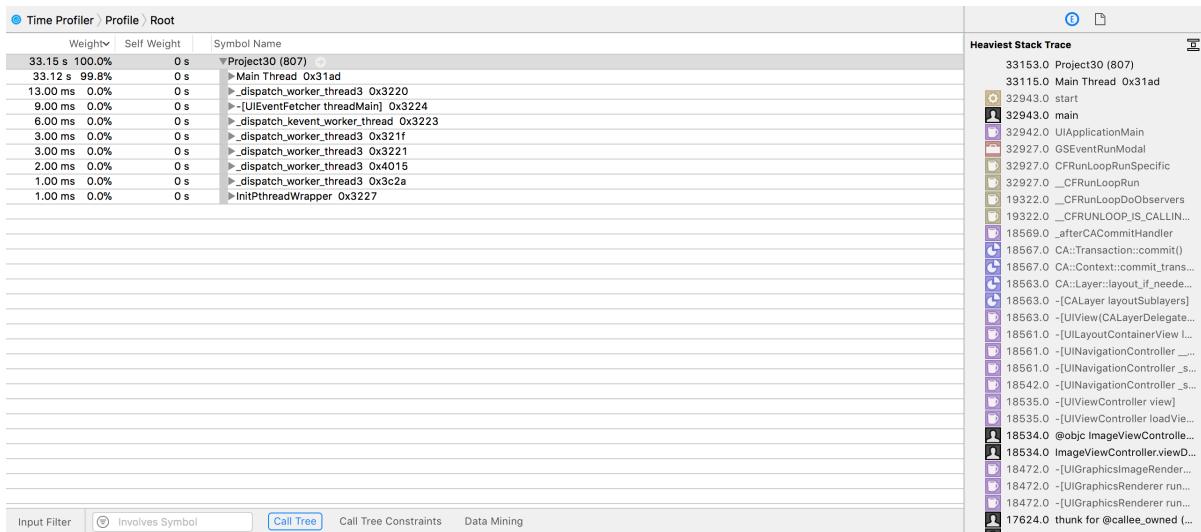
Immediately to the left of "Main thread" in the detail view is a disclosure arrow. You can click that to open up all the top-level calls made on the Main Thread, which will just be "Start", which in turn has its own calls under its own arrow. You can if you want hold down Option and click on these arrows, which causes all the children (and their children's children) to be opened up, but that gets messy.

Instead, there are two options. First, you should have a right-hand detail pane with two buttons:

What can Instruments tell us?

Extended Detail and Run Info (accessible through Cmd+1 and Cmd+2). Select "Main thread" in the detail view then press Cmd+1 to choose the extended detail view: this will automatically show you the "heaviest" stack trace, which is the code that took the most time to run.

In the picture below you can see the bottom half of Instruments after running a time profile. The pane on the right is showing the heaviest stack trace, and on the left you can see all the threads that were executing as well as what they were doing.



If you scroll down to the bottom, you'll see it's probably all around either in the table view's **cellForRowAt** or the detail view's **viewDidLoad()** depending on whether you spent more of your time flicking through the table view or going into the detail controller.

This heaviest stack trace is the part of your code that took up the most time. That might not always be your problem: sometimes something that runs slowly is just something that's always going to be slow, because it's doing a lot of work. That said, it's always a good place to start!

The second option is inside the Call Tree menu that inside the status bar at the bottom of the Time Profiler window, and is called Invert Call Tree. This will show you the heaviest code first, with a disclosure arrow revealing what called it, and so on. Chances are you'll now see lots of image-related functions: **argb32_sample_argb32()** is called by **argb32_image_mark()**, which is called by **argb32_imag()**, and so on.

Project 30: Instruments

There is a third option, but it's of mixed help. It's called "Hide system libraries" and is near to the "Invert Call Tree" checkbox. This eliminates all time being used by Apple's frameworks so you can focus on your own code. This is great if you have lots of complicated code that could be slow, but it doesn't help at all if your app is slow because you're using the system libraries poorly!

Now, although profiling your code is best done on a real device, using the simulator gives us some bonus functionality that will help us identify performance problems. So, try running the app in the simulator now.

Under the Debug menu on your Mac you'll see a few options. Two in particular are very useful:

- **Color Blended Layers** shows views that are opaque in green and translucent in red. If there are multiple transparent views inside each other, you'll see more and more red.
- **Color Offscreen-Rendered** shows views that require an extra drawing pass in yellow. Some special drawing work must be drawn individually off screen then drawn again onto the screen, which means a lot more work.

Broadly speaking, you want "Color Blended Layers" to show as little red as possible, and "Color Offscreen-Rendered Yellow" to show no yellow.

Try these options on both the table view and the detail view to see how things look.

Fixing the bugs: slow shadows

It's time for us to start fixing the problems. **Important:** when making performance changes you should change only one thing at a time, then re-test to make sure your change helped. If you changed two or more things and performance got better, which one worked? Or, if performance got worse, perhaps one thing worked and one didn't!

Let's begin with the table view: you should have seen parts of the table view turn dark yellow when Color Offscreen-Rendered Yellow was selected. This is happening because the images are being rendered inefficiently: the rounded corners effect and the shadow are being done in real-time, which is computationally expensive.

You can find the code for this in SelectionViewController.swift, inside the **cellForRowAt** method:

```
let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: original.size)

let rounded = renderer.image { ctx in
    ctx.cgContext.addEllipse(in: CGRect(origin: CGPoint.zero,
size: original.size))
    ctx.cgContext.clip()

    original.draw(at: CGPoint.zero)
}

cell.imageView?.image = rounded

// give the images a nice shadow to make them look a bit more
dramatic
cell.imageView?.layer.shadowColor = UIColor.black.cgColor
cell.imageView?.layer.shadowOpacity = 1
cell.imageView?.layer.shadowRadius = 10
cell.imageView?.layer.shadowOffset = CGSize.zero
```

Project 30: Instruments

There are two new techniques being demonstrated here: creating a clipping path and rendering layer shadows.

We've used **UIGraphicsImageRenderer** before to create custom-rendered images, and the rendering here is made up of three commands: adding an ellipse and drawing a **UIImage** are both things you've seen before, but the call to **clip()** is new. As you know, you can create a path and draw it using two separate Core Graphics commands, but instead of running the draw command you can take the existing path and use it for clipping instead. This has the effect of only drawing things that lie inside the path, so when the **UIImage** is drawn only the parts that lie inside the elliptical clipping path are visible, thus rounding the corners.

The second new technique in this code is rendering layer shadows. iOS lets you add a basic shadow to any of its views, and it's a simple way to make something stand out on the screen. But it's not fast: it literally scans the pixels in the image to figure out what's transparent, then uses that information to draw the shadow correctly.

The combination of these two techniques creates a huge amount of work for iOS: it has to load the initial image, create a new image of the same size, render the first image into the second, then render the second image off-screen to calculate the shadow pixels, then render the whole finished product to the screen. When you hit a performance problem, you either drop the code that triggers the problem or you make it run faster.

In our case, we'll assume the designer insists the drop shadow is gorgeous so we need to make the code faster. There are several different approaches we could take, and I want to walk you through each of them so you can see the relative benefits of each.

The first possibility: Core Graphics is more than able of drawing shadows itself, which means we could handle the shadow rendering in our **UIGraphicsImageRenderer** pass rather than needing an extra render pass. To do that, we can use the Core Graphics **setShadow()** method, which takes three parameters: how far to offset the shadow, how much to blur it, and what color to use. You'll notice there's no way of specifying what shape the shadow should be, because Core Graphics has a simple but powerful solution: once you enable a shadow, it gets

applied to everything you draw until you disable it by specifying a nil color.

So, we can replicate our current shadow like this:

```
let rounded = renderer.image { ctx in
    ctx.cgContext.setShadow(offset: CGSize.zero, blur: 200,
    color: UIColor.black.cgColor)
    ctx.cgContext.fillEllipse(in: CGRect(origin: CGPoint.zero,
    size: original.size))
    ctx.cgContext.setShadow(offset: CGSize.zero, blur: 0, color:
    nil)

    ctx.cgContext.addEllipse(in: CGRect(origin: CGPoint.zero,
    size: original.size))
    ctx.cgContext.clip()

    original.draw(at: CGPoint.zero)
}
```

Notice how the blur is 200 points, which is quite different from the shadow radius of 10 in the old code? The reason for this is important, because it highlights another significant problem in the code. When the original code set the shadow size using **cell.imageView?.layer.shadowRadius** it was specified in points relative to the size of the **UIImageView**. When the new code sets the shadow size using **setShadow()** it's in points relative to the size of the image being drawn, which is created like this:

```
let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: original.size)
```

The problem is that the images being loaded are 750x750 pixels at 1x resolution, so 1500x1500 at 2x and 2250x2250 at 3x. If you look at **viewDidLoad()** you'll see that the row height is 90 points, so we're loading huge pictures into a tiny space. That means loading a 1500x1500 image or larger, creating a second render buffer that size, rendering the image into it, and so on.

Project 30: Instruments

Clearly those images don't need to be anything like that size, but sometimes you don't have control over it. In this app you might be able to go back to the original designer and ask them to provide smaller assets, or if you were feeling ready for a fight you could resize them yourself, but what if you had fetched these assets from a remote server? And wait until you see the size of the images in the detail view – those images might only take up 500KB on disk, but when they are uncompressed by iOS they'll need around 45 MB of RAM!

A second thing to notice is that the result of this new shadowing isn't quite the same, because the shadow being rendered is now properly clipped inside the bounds of its image view. Although it's more technically correct, it doesn't look the same, and I'm going to assume that the original look – ugly as it was – was intentional.

So, option 1 – making Core Graphics draw the shadow – helps eliminate the second render pass, but it has very different results and a result we should rule it out. However, it did at least point us to an interesting problem: we're squeezing very large images into a tiny space. iOS doesn't know or care that this is happening because it just does what its told, but we have more information: we know the image isn't needed at that crazy size, so we can use that knowledge to deliver huge performance increases.

First, change the rendering code to this:

```
let renderRect = CGRect(origin: .zero, size: CGSize(width: 90,  
height: 90))  
let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: renderRect.size)  
  
let rounded = renderer.image { ctx in  
    ctx.cgContext.addEllipse(in: renderRect)  
    ctx.cgContext.clip()  
  
    original.draw(in: renderRect)  
}
```

That still causes iOS to load and render a large image, but it now gets scaled down to the size it

needs to be for actual usage, so it will immediately perform faster.

However, it still incurs a second rendering pass: iOS still needs to trace the resulting image to figure out where the shadow must be drawn. Calculating the shadow is hard, because iOS doesn't know that we clipped it to be a circle so it needs to figure out what's transparent itself. Again, though, we have more information: the shadow is going to be a perfect circle, so why bother having iOS figure out the shadow for itself?

We can tell iOS not to automatically calculate the shadow path for our images by giving it the exact shadow path to use. The easiest way to do this is to create a new **UIBezierPath** that describes our image (an ellipse with width 90 and height 90), then convert it to a **CGPath** because **CALayer** doesn't understand what **UIBezierPath** is.

Here's the updated shadow code:

```
// give the images a nice shadow to make them look a bit more dramatic

cell.imageView?.layer.shadowColor = UIColor.black.cgColor
cell.imageView?.layer.shadowOpacity = 1
cell.imageView?.layer.shadowRadius = 10
cell.imageView?.layer.shadowOffset = CGSize.zero
cell.imageView?.layer.shadowPath = UIBezierPath(ovalIn:
renderRect).cgPath
```

When you run that, you'll still see the same shadows everywhere, but the dark yellow color is gone. This means we've successfully eliminated the second render pass by giving iOS the pre-calculated shadow path, and we've also sped up drawing by scaling down the amount of work being done. You can turn off Color Offscreen-Rendered Yellow now; we don't need it any more.

Working with rounded corners *and* shadows can be tricky, as you've seen here. If it weren't for the shadowing, we could eliminate the first render pass by setting **layer.cornerRadius** to have iOS round the corners for us – it's a nice and easy way to create rounded rectangle shapes

Project 30: Instruments

(or even circles!) without any custom rendering code.

Fixing the bugs: wasted allocations

Back in Xcode, press Cmd+I to launch a fresh instance of Instruments, and this time I want you to choose the Allocations instrument. This tells you how many objects you're creating and what happens to them. Press record, then scroll around the table view a few times to get a complete picture of the app running. At the very least, you should go all the way down to the bottom and back up two or three times.

What you'll see is a huge collection of information being shown – lots of "malloc", lots of "CFString", lots of "__NSArrayM" and more. Stuff we just don't care about right now, because most of the code we have is user interface work. Fortunately, there's a search box just below the detail pane – it should say "Instrument Detail" but if you type "UI" in there it will only show information that has "UI" somewhere in there, which just happens to be all of Apple's user interface libraries!

In the picture below you can see how filtering for "UI" inside Instruments shows only data that has "UI" in its name somewhere, which primarily restricts the view to things that come from Apple's UIKit libraries.

Project 30: Instruments

Allocations > Statistics > Allocation Summary							
Graph	Category	Persistent B..	# Persistent	# Transient	Total Bytes	# Total	Transient/Total Bytes
<input type="checkbox"/>	VM: UITableViewLabel...	5.59 MiB	26	69	20.41 MiB	95	
<input type="checkbox"/>	VM: CoreUI image file	108.00 KiB	1	1	112.00 KiB	2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UITableViewCell	39.00 KiB	26	99	187.50 KiB	125	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CUIBOM_malloczero	26.55 KiB	33	42	32.59 KiB	75	
<input type="checkbox"/>	VM: UILabel (CALayer)	20.00 KiB	1	0	20.00 KiB	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UITableViewLabel	19.09 KiB	26	99	91.80 KiB	125	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UIImageView	16.47 KiB	31	101	70.12 KiB	132	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UITableViewCellContent...	12.59 KiB	26	99	60.55 KiB	125	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UILongPressGestureRec...	9.70 KiB	27	99	45.28 KiB	126	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UITapGestureRecognizer	5.06 KiB	27	99	23.62 KiB	126	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UITraitCollection	4.88 KiB	39	650	86.12 KiB	689	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UIStatusBar	3.50 KiB	1	1	7.00 KiB	2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UIStatusBarComposedD...	3.00 KiB	1	10	33.00 KiB	11	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UITableView	3.00 KiB	1	0	3.00 KiB	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UIImage	2.91 KiB	31	237	25.12 KiB	268	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UILabel	2.81 KiB	4	1	3.52 KiB	5	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_CUIInternalLinkRendition	2.81 KiB	3	0	2.81 KiB	3	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UIDeviceWhiteColor	2.48 KiB	53	203	12.00 KiB	256	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_UILabelLayer	2.34 KiB	30	100	10.16 KiB	130	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UIGestureGraphNode	2.31 KiB	37	99	8.50 KiB	136	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CUIBOM_malloc	1.73 KiB	5	48	1.41 MiB	53	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CUIBitmapVector	1.56 KiB	20	5	1.95 KiB	25	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UINavigationController	1.50 KiB	1	0	1.50 KiB	1	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_CUIThemePixelRendition	1.17 KiB	3	0	1.17 KiB	3	
<input type="checkbox"/>	CUIRenditionKey	1.12 KiB	12	24	3.38 KiB	36	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UILayoutGuide	1.09 KiB	5	0	1.09 KiB	5	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UIStatusBarLayoutMana...	1.08 KiB	3	0	1.08 KiB	3	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UIGestureRecognizerTar...	1.03 KiB	33	99	4.12 KiB	132	
<input type="checkbox"/>	_UISystemGestureGateG...	960 Bytes	4	0	960 Bytes	4	
<input type="checkbox"/>	UIView	960 Bytes	2	0	960 Bytes	2	

Once you filter by "UI" you'll see see **UIImage**, **UIImageView**, **UITableViewCell** and more. The allocations instrument will tell you how many of these objects are persistent (created and still exist) and how many are transient (created and since destroyed). Notice how just swiping around has created a large number of transient **UIImageView** and **UITableViewCell** objects?

This is happening because each time the app needs to show a cell, it creates it then creates all the subviews inside it – namely an image view and a label, plus some hidden views we don't usually care about. iOS works around this cost by using the method

dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:), but if you look at the **cellForRowAt** method you won't find it there. This means iOS is forced to create a new cell from scratch, rather than reusing an existing cell. This is a common coding mistake to make when you're not using storyboards and prototype cells, and it's guaranteed to put a speed bump in your apps.

If you look inside **cellForRowAt** method you'll see this line:

```
let cell = UITableViewCell(style: .default, reuseIdentifier:
```

```
"Cell")
```

That's the only place where table view cells are being created, so clearly it's the culprit because it creates a new cell every time the table view asks for one. This has been slow since the very first days of iOS development, and Apple has always had a solution: ask the table view to dequeue a cell, and if you get **nil** back then create a cell yourself.

This is different from when we were using prototype cells with a storyboard. With storyboards, if you dequeue a prototype cell then iOS automatically handles creating them as needed.

If you're creating table view cells in code, you have two options to fix this intense allocation of views. First, you could rewrite the above line to be this:

```
var cell: UITableViewCell! =
tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Cell")

if cell == nil {
    cell = UITableViewCell(style: .default, reuseIdentifier:
"Cell")
}
```

That dequeues a cell, but if it gets **nil** back then we create one. Note the force unwrapped optional at the end of the first line – we're saying that **cell** might initially be empty, but it will definitely have a value by the time it's used.

The other solution you could use is to register a class with the table view for the reuse identifier "Cell". Using this method you would add this to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
tableView.register(UITableViewCell.self,
forCellReuseIdentifier: "Cell")
```

And now we can use our usual method dequeuing table view cells inside **cellForRowAtIndex**:

```
let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:
```

Project 30: Instruments

```
"Cell", for: indexPath)
```

With this approach, you will never get **nil** when dequeuing a cell with the identifier "Cell". As with prototype cells, if there isn't one to dequeue a new cell will be created automatically.

The second solution is substantially newer than the first and can really help cut down the amount of code you need. But it has two drawbacks: with the first solution you can specify different kinds of cell styles than just **.default**, not least the **.subtitle** option we used in project 7; also, with the first solution you explicitly know when a cell has just been created, so it's easy to force any one-off work into the **if cell == nil {** block.

Regardless of which solution you chose (you'll use both in your production code, I expect), you should be able to run the allocations instrument again and see far fewer table view cell allocations. With this small change, iOS will just reuse cells as they are needed, which makes your code run faster and operate more efficiently.

Fixing the bugs: Running out of memory

Now, why does the app crash when you go the detail view controller enough times? There are two answers to this question, one code related and one not. For the second question, I already explained that we're working with supremely over-sized images here – far larger than we actually need.

But there's something else subtle here, and it's something we haven't covered yet so this is the perfect time. When you create a **UIImage** using **UIImage(named:)** iOS loads the image and puts it into an image cache for reuse later. This is sometimes helpful, particularly if you know the image will be used again. But if you know it's unlikely to be reused or if it's quite large, then don't bother putting it into the cache – it will just add memory pressure to your app and probably flush out other more useful images!

If you look in the **viewDidLoad()** method of **ImageViewController** you'll see this line of code:

```
let original = UIImage(named: image)!
```

How likely is it that users will go back and forward to the same image again and again? Not likely at all, so we can skip the image cache by creating our images using the **UIImage(contentsOfFile:)** initializer instead. This isn't as friendly as **UIImage(named:)** because you need to specify the exact path to an image rather than just its filename in your app bundle. The solution is to use **Bundle.main.path(forResource ofType:)**, which is similar to the **Bundle.main.url(forResource:)** method we've used previously, except it returns a simple string rather than a **URL**:

```
let path = Bundle.main.path(forResource: image, ofType: nil)!  
let original = UIImage(contentsOfFile: path)!
```

Let's take a look at one more problem, this time quite subtle. Loading the images was slow

Project 30: Instruments

because they were so big, and iOS was caching them unnecessarily. But **UIImage**'s cache is intelligent: if it senses memory pressure, it automatically clears itself to make room for other stuff. So why does our app run out of memory?

To find another problems, profile the app using Instruments and select the allocations instrument again. This time filter on "imageviewcontroller" and to begin with you'll see nothing because the app starts on the table view. But if you tap into a detail view then go back, you'll see one is created *and remains persistent* – it hasn't been destroyed. Which means the image it's showing also hasn't been destroyed, hence the massive memory usage.

What's causing the image view controller to never be destroyed? If you read through `SelectionViewController.swift` and `ImageViewController.swift` you might spot these two things:

1. The selection view controller has a **viewControllers** array that claims to be a cache of the detail view controllers. This cache is never actually used, and even if it were used it really isn't needed.
2. The image view controller has a property **var owner: SelectionViewController!** – that makes it a strong reference to the view controller that created it.

The first problem is easily fixed: just delete the **viewControllers** array and any code that uses it, because it's just not needed. The second problem smells like a strong reference cycle, so you should probably change it to this:

```
weak var owner: SelectionViewController!
```

Run Instruments again and you'll see that the problem is... still there?! That's right: those two were either red herrings or weren't enough to solve the problem, because something far more sneaky is happening.

The view controllers aren't destroyed because of this line of code in `ImageViewController.swift`:

```
animTimer = Timer.scheduledTimer(withTimeInterval: 5, repeats:
```

```
true) { timer in
```

That timer does a hacky animation on the image, and it could easily be replaced with better animations as done inside project 15. But even so, why does that cause the image view controllers to never leak?

The reason is that when you provide code for your timer to run, the timer holds a strong reference to it so it can definitely be called when the timer is up. We're using **self** inside our timer's code, which means our view controller owns the timer strongly and the timer owns the view controller strongly, so we have a strong reference cycle.

There are several solutions here: rewrite the code using smarter animations, use a **weak self** closure capture list, or destroy the timer when it's no longer needed, thus breaking the cycle. We're going to take the last option here, to give you a little more practice with invalidating timers – all we need to do is detect when the image view controller is about to disappear and stop the timer. We'll do this in **viewWillDisappear()**:

```
override func viewWillDisappear(_ animated: Bool) {
    super.viewWillDisappear(animated)
    animTimer.invalidate()
}
```

Calling **invalidate()** on a timer stops it immediately, which also forces it to release its strong reference on the view controller it belongs to, thus breaking the strong reference cycle. If you profile again, you'll see all the **ImageViewController** objects are now transient, and the app should no longer be quite so crash-prone.

That being said, the app might still crash *sometimes* because despite our best efforts we're still juggling pictures that are far too big. However, the code is at least a great deal more efficient now, and none of the problems were too hard to find.

Wrap up

Hold up your right hand and repeat after me: “I will never ship an app without running it through Instruments first.” It doesn’t take long, it’s not difficult, and I promise it will pay off – your user interfaces will be smoother, your code will run faster, and you’ll avoid wasting memory, all using a tool that’s completely free and you already have installed.

I have, predictably, only touched briefly on the many features of Instruments, Xcode, and the Simulator here, but I hope I’ve inspired you to learn more. Instruments can tell you exactly what each CPU core is doing at any given time, it can tell you when every object was created and when it was destroyed along with what code triggered it, and it can even simulate user interface interactions to help you stress test your apps!

At the same time, I also snuck in a few more techniques for you to try in your own apps – layer shadows, Core Graphics clipping, and how **UIImage** has an automatic cache for when you need it.

So: all in all another great technique project, and you’ve learned some important skills that will be useful in every iOS project you make from now on.

Review what you learned

Anyone can sit through a tutorial, but it takes actual work to remember what was taught. It’s my job to make sure you take as much from these tutorials as possible, so I’ve prepared a short review to help you check your learning.

[Click here to review what you learned in project 30.](#)

Challenge

One of the best ways to learn is to write your own code as often as possible, so here are three ways you should try your new knowledge to make sure you fully understand what’s going on:

1. Go through project 30 and remove all the force unwraps. Note: implicitly unwrapped

optionals are not the same thing as force unwraps – you’re welcome to fix the implicitly unwrapped optionals too, but that’s a bonus task.

2. Pick any of the previous 29 projects that interests you, and try exploring it using the Allocations instrument. Can you find any objects that are persistent when they should have been destroyed?
3. For a tougher challenge, take the image generation code out of **cellForRowAt**: generate all images when the app first launches, and use those smaller versions instead. For bonus points, combine the **getDocumentsDirectory()** method I introduced in project 10 so that you save the resulting cache to make sure it never happens again.

As a reminder, here’s the code for **getDocumentsDirectory()**:

```
func getDocumentsDirectory() -> URL {  
    let paths =  
FileManager.default.urls(for: .documentDirectory,  
in: .userDomainMask)  
    return paths[0]  
}
```

Project 31

Multibrowser

Get started with UIStackView and see just how easy iPad multitasking is.

Setting up

If you've read from the introduction to here you're now a fairly competent iOS developer. You've learned a lot about the Swift language, but also UIKit, SpriteKit, Auto Layout, MapKit, iBeacons, Core Graphics, Core Image and more all from scratch, using incremental learning and real projects to make the experience fun and productive.

At this point, the pace changes a little. I'd still encourage you to follow the projects in sequence, but for these final projects I no longer enforce a strict app-game-technique series. Instead, the goal is to try to fill in the gaps: some things I missed earlier because they were complicated, some things I missed and I wanted to add based on reader feedback, but quite a few things got added by Apple after I wrote the first 30 projects. These final projects aim will really help round out your knowledge.

Now for the important stuff: what are we going to build? Well, we're going to start with two great new features first seen in iOS 9: **UIStackView** and iPad multitasking. Both of these are stand out technologies in iOS 9, and, remarkably, both are so easy to adopt that we can make this entire project in about 20 minutes. We're also going to touch on Size Classes briefly for the first time, so there's a lot to learn.

The project itself is called Multibrowser, and it shows one or more web views that the user can simultaneously browse. So, you could have one pane with live sports results, one pane with the latest news, and another on Reddit – just like Safari tabs, except they are all visible at the same time.

Please go ahead and create a new project in Xcode, choosing the Single View App template. Name it Project31, then choose Swift for your language. When the project is created, use the project editor so that it's iPad-only – multitasking is only available as an iPad feature.

UIStackView by example

It's very rare I say this, but Android does have some features that are enviable, and one of them is called **LinearLayout**. When you add views to a **LinearLayout**, they automatically stack up vertically one above the other, or horizontally, side by side. You don't have to worry about sizing them to fit correctly because they automatically fill the space, and you don't have to worry about moving other things around when you remove a view. Well, that's exactly what the UIKit component **UIStackView** gives us: a flexible, Auto Layout-powered view container that makes it even easier to build complex user interfaces.

As an example, let's say you want users to fill in a short form: you have a label saying "Name" then a **UITextField** to the right of it; beneath that you have another label saying "Address" and a **UITextView** beneath it; below that you have a label saying "Opt-in to marketing" and to the right of that a switch; and so on. This isn't uncommon, and to be fair it's not exactly hard to make this in Auto Layout, but you do still need to do a lot of grunt work for not much benefit.

The problems usually occur if you want to make changes later: what if there's no longer enough space to show your Name label and its **UITextField** side by side? Previously this would happen if your app was running on iPhone, but with the new multitasking system in iPad it can happen if your user activates Slide Over or uses your app in Split View.

Multitasking comes in two varieties:

- **Slide Over** is when your app literally sits over the screen on the right edge, with the original application remaining full screen but dimmed. This is supported on most newer iPads.
- **Split View** is activated if the user drags the Slide Over divider to the left slightly, and it causes your app to be pinned to the screen edge while the original application is resized to take up less space. This is supported only on iPad Air 2 and newer devices.

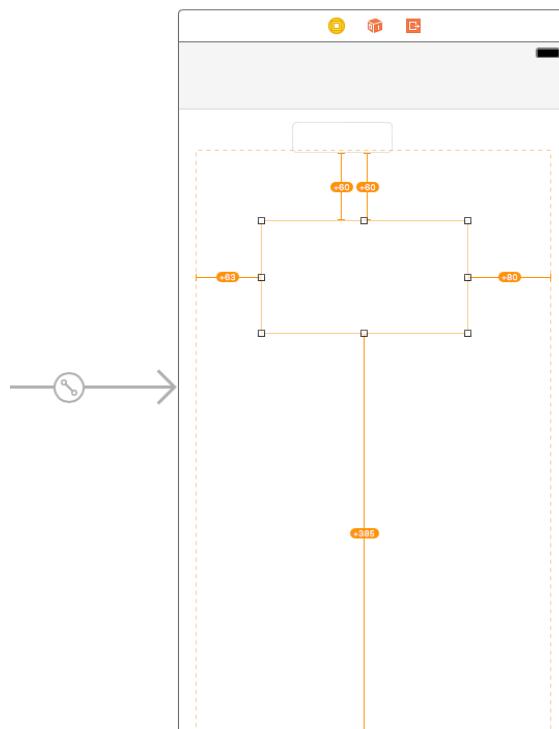
In both these scenarios, your app now has much less space to work with, so your label and text field won't sit well side by side. Fortunately, **UIStackView** can fix this problem: you can tell it to place items side by side when your app has lots of space, or placed vertically when space is

restricted. So, your app will look great on iPhone, iPad, in Slide Over and in Split View, all with a single layout.

What's more, **UIStackViews** can be nested, meaning that you can have stack views inside stack views to create a flexible grid-like layout in no time at all.

In our app, we're going to have a **UIStackView** take up nearly all the screen, and it will host multiple web views inside it. Our interface will also need a **UITextField** in there so users can enter a URL to visit. We'll use Auto Layout to pin these views in place and resize to fill the screen, but that's all.

So, open Main.storyboard in Interface Builder, then embed the existing view controller inside a navigation controller and move it across so you can see it fully. Using the object library, drag a Text Field anywhere into your view, then drag a Horizontal Stack View directly below it. Don't worry about size and position: all that matters is that the text field is above the stack view.



Project 31: Multibrowser

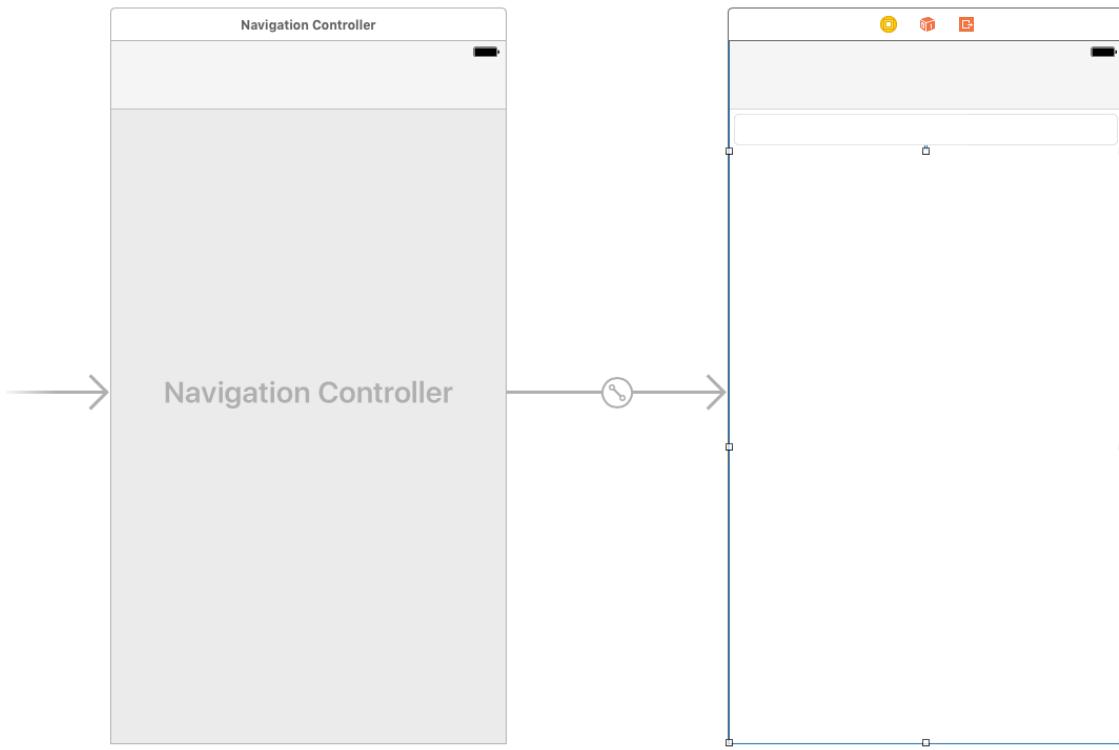
I want you to make the text field stretch from the left edge to the right edge in its view, with some space above and below. We've used a couple of different Auto Layout techniques so far, but I want to show you one more now: the Pin menu.

With the text field selected, look at the bottom of the Interface Builder window to where it says "View as: iPhone 8". To the right of that is the zoom controls, probably showing 100% right now. But to the right of *that* are four buttons that can help you with your layout. The third of those is the Pin menu, which sets Auto Layout constraints based on containers and neighbors. Please click that now to bring up the Pin menu.

Using the menu that appears, deselect Constrain to Margins, then type 5 in each of the four text boxes. This will color the four pin lines as solid red rather than dashed lines, and you can then click "Add 4 Constraints" at the bottom of the Pin menu to save your changes.

When you click "Add 4 Constraints", four Auto Layout warnings will appear telling you that your view isn't placed correctly. Ignore them for a moment. Select your stack view, then open up the Pin menu for that. Deselect Constrain to Margins again, then enter the number 5 for the top value and 0 for the left, right and bottom values. Again, click "Add 4 Constraints".

You'll see even more Auto Layout warnings, and your view still looks like a mess. We're going to fix that now: go to the Editor menu and choose Resolve Auto Layout Issues button > Update Frames option from under where it says "All Views in View Controller". Boom! Your view will re-layout to match our exact requirements: the text field along the top, and a stack view below, both occupying all the screen. Easy, huh?



Before we're done with Interface Builder, we're going to make two small changes to the stack view, so make sure it's selected then open the attributes inspector (Alt+Command+4). From the list of attributes, please change Distribution to Fill Equally, then for Spacing enter 5.

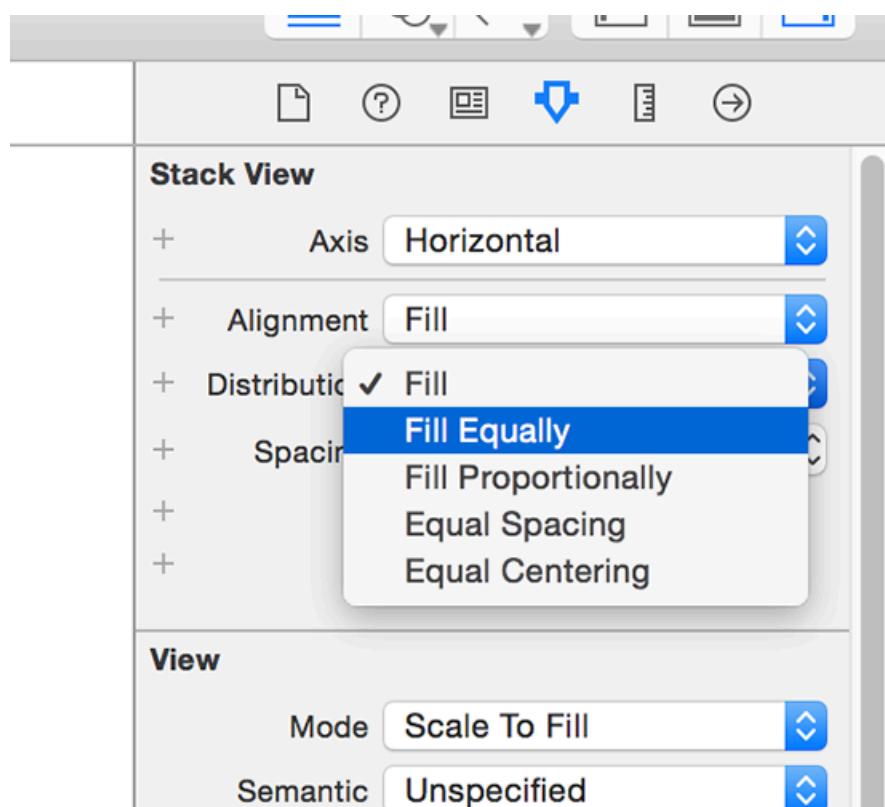
There are a few options for the Distribution attribute, and it's worth covering what they do briefly. If our stack view had four subviews in there, then:

- **Fill** will leave three of them their natural size, and make the fourth one take up the most space. It uses Auto Layout's content hugging priority to decide which one to stretch.
- **Fill Equally** will make each subview the same size so they fill all the space available to the stack view.
- **Fill Proportionally** uses the intrinsic content size of each subview to resize them by an equal amount. So view 1 was designed to have twice as much height as views 2, 3 and 4, that ratio will remain when they are resized – all the subviews get proportionally bigger or smaller.
- **Equal Spacing** does not resize the subviews, and instead resizes the spacing between the

Project 31: Multibrowser

subviews to fill the space.

- **Equal Centering** is the most complicated, but for many people also the most aesthetically pleasing. It attempts to ensure the centers of each subview are equally spaced. This might mean that the right edge of view 1 is only 10 points from the left edge of view 2, while the right edge of view 2 is 50 points from the left edge of view 3, but what matters is that the centers of view 1, 2, 3 and 4 are all identically spaced.



As for the Spacing attribute, this just determines how much margin to place between items in the stack view. We've set it to 5 here so there's a nice gap between our web views.

The last thing to do is create some connections, so hit Alt+Cmd+Return to go to the Assistant Editor. Now create IBOutlets for the text field and stack view, called **addressBar** and **stackView** respectively. Please also set the view controller to be the delegate of the text field by Ctrl+dragging from the text field to the gold and white View Controller icon in the document outline.

UIStackView by example

We're done with Interface Builder, so press Cmd+Return to return to the Standard Editor, then open ViewController.swift for editing. Time to write some code! And I hope you're ready for just how easy this is going to be...

Adding views to UIStackView with addArrangedSubview()

With our storyboard designed, it's time to write the code. As you know, our plan is to produce an app where the user can have multiple web views visible at one time, stacked together and usable in their own right. We have one address bar, so the user will need to tap a web view to select it, then enter a URL to visit.

To make this interface work, we need two buttons in our navigation bar: one to add a new web view, and one to delete whichever one the user doesn't want any more. We're also going to use the title space in the navigation bar to show the page title of whichever web view is currently active.

So, modify your **viewDidLoad()** method to this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    setDefaultTitle()

    let add = UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target:
self, action: #selector(addWebView))
    let delete = UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .trash,
target: self, action: #selector(deleteWebView))
    navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem = [delete, add]
}
```

That uses three new methods we haven't created yet, and we'll fix them in turn starting with the missing **setDefaultTitle()** method. This is a fairly simple method in this project, but you're welcome to extend it later to add more interesting information for users prompting them to get started. Put this method directly beneath **viewDidLoad()**:

Adding views to UIStackView with addArrangedSubview()

```
func setDefaultTitle() {
    title = "Multibrowser"
}
```

The second missing method, **addWebView()**, is responsible for adding a new **WKWebView** to our **UIStackView**. This is done using a method on the stack view called **addArrangedSubview()** and *not* **addSubview()**. That's worth repeating, because it's extremely important: **you do not call addSubview() on UIStackView**. The stack view has its own subviews that it manages invisibly to you. Instead, you add to its arranged subviews array, and the stack view will arrange them as needed.

So, our first draft of **addWebView()** is pretty easy: we create a new **WKWebView**, set our view controller to be the web view's delegate, add it to the stack view, then point it at an example URL to get things started.

First, add an import for **WebKit** so we can use **WKWebView**:

```
import WebKit
```

Now here's the code for **addWebView()** – put this into **ViewController.swift**, just below **setDefaultTitle()**:

```
@objc func addWebView() {
    let webView = WKWebView()
    webView.navigationDelegate = self

    stackView.addArrangedSubview(webView)

    let url = URL(string: "https://www.hackingwithswift.com")!
    webView.load(URLRequest(url: url))
}
```

You can't assign **self** to **webView.navigationDelegate** without conforming to the

Project 31: Multibrowser

WKNavigationDelegate delegate, so please add that. While you're there, you should also add **UITextFieldDelegate** and **UIGestureRecognizerDelegate** – we'll be using these later. So, your view controller's class should start like this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController, WKNavigationDelegate,  
UITextFieldDelegate, UIGestureRecognizerDelegate {
```

Notice that we don't need to give the web view a frame or any Auto Layout constraints – that's all handled for us by **UIStackView**.

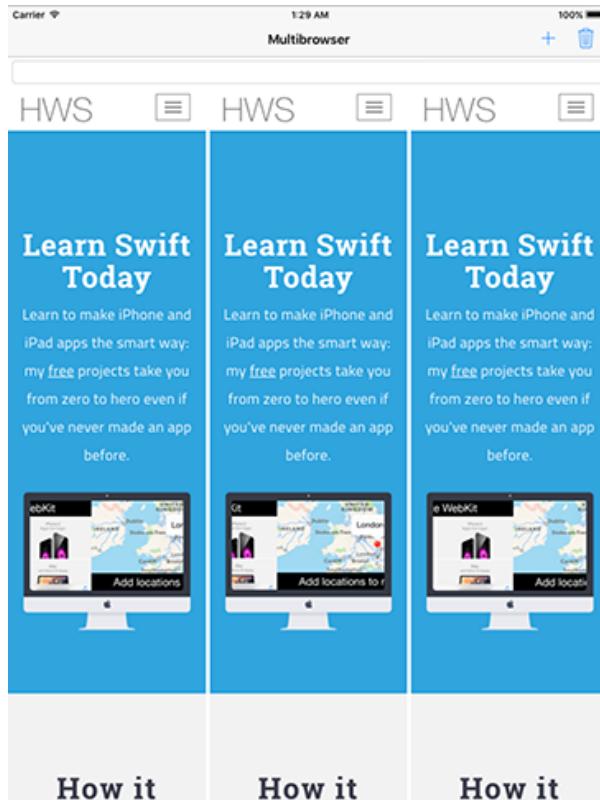
Remember, iOS apps can only load HTTPS websites by default, and you need to enable App Transport Security exceptions if you want to load non-secure websites. If you want to learn how to do that, [see my guide to App Transport Security](#).

To make the project build cleanly, I want you to create an empty **deleteWebView()** method now:

```
@objc func deleteWebView() {  
}
```

With that in place you can run the project now and try clicking + a couple of times to add new web views, and you'll see them stack up beautifully. Stack views are amazing, right? If you find that the web views aren't appearing correctly, make sure you have set the Distribution attribute of the stack view to be Fill Equally.

Adding views to UIStackView with addArrangedSubview()



Now that you can see why stack views are perfectly suited to our project, you may notice a major flaw in the plan: how does the user control each web view? And how do they know which one is currently being controlled?

We're going to fix both these problems at once using something brilliant in its simplicity: we're going to let users tap on a web view to activate it, then highlight the selected web view in blue so the user knows what's in control. When a web view is activated we also want to show its page title in the navigation bar, and if the user enters a new URL in the address bar it will be loaded inside the active web view.

We're going to draw a blue line around the selected web view so readers can clearly see their current status. To make things easier, we'll draw a blue line around every one of the web views, but because the default line width is 0 it won't be visible until we say so. I'm going to put the code to select web views inside a method so that it can be called when we create a new web view (so that each new web view starts life active) and also when a web view is tapped.

Project 31: Multibrowser

As for handling taps, we'll do that by adding a **UITapGestureRecognizer** to each web view as it's created. This has one minor complication, but it's easily fixed: **WKWebView** already has a pile of gesture recognizers attached to it, and it will catch and consume any taps before our own gesture recognizer. The fix is easy, though, and it's just a matter of telling iOS we want our recognizer and the built-in ones to work at the same time.

So, add this code to the end of **addWebView()**:

```
webView.layer.borderColor = UIColor.blue.cgColor
selectWebView(webView)

let recognizer = UITapGestureRecognizer(target: self, action:
#selector(webViewTapped))
recognizer.delegate = self
webView.addGestureRecognizer(recognizer)
```

We haven't written **selectWebView()** yet, but before we do I just want to recap its job. This method will get called whenever we want to activate a web view, meaning that we want it to be the one used to navigate to any URL the user requests, and we also want it to be highlighted so the user knows which view is in control.

We're going to track the active web view inside a property called **activeWebView**, so add this now:

```
weak var activeWebView: WKWebView?
```

It's **weak** because it might go away at any time if the user deletes it.

With that property created, the **selectWebView()** method is straightforward: it needs to loop through the array of web views belonging to the stack view, updating each of them to have a zero-width border line, then set the newly selected one to have a border width of three points. Here's the code – place it below **addWebView()**:

```
func selectWebView(_ webView: WKWebView) {
```

Adding views to UIStackView with addArrangedSubview()

```
for view in stackView.arrangedSubviews {
    view.layer.borderWidth = 0
}

activeWebView = webView
webView.layer.borderWidth = 3
}
```

There are two more things to do before our app starts to become useful: we need to implement the **webViewTapped()** method so that our tap gesture recognizers start working, then we need to detect when users have entered a new URL so we can navigate to it.

First up, here's the **webViewTapped()** method that gets called by the tap gesture recognizers when they are triggered:

```
@objc func webViewTapped(_ recognizer: UITapGestureRecognizer) {
    if let selectedWebView = recognizer.view as? WKWebView {
        selectWebView(selectedWebView)
    }
}
```

Like I said, you need to tell iOS we want these gesture recognizers to trigger alongside the recognizers built into the **WKWebView**, so add this too:

```
func gestureRecognizer(_ gestureRecognizer:
    UIGestureRecognizer, shouldRecognizeSimultaneouslyWith
    otherGestureRecognizer: UIGestureRecognizer) -> Bool {
    return true
}
```

We already set our view controller to be the delegate of the **UITapGestureRecognizer**s we create for the web views, which means that new method will automatically tell iOS to trigger

Project 31: Multibrowser

all gesture recognizers at the same time.

Finally, at least for this chapter, we need to detect when the user enters a new URL in the address bar. We already set this view controller to be the delegate of the address bar, so we'll get sent the **textFieldShouldReturn()** delegate method when the user presses Return on their iPad keyboard. We then need to make sure we have an active web view and that there's a URL to navigate to, and make it happen. We're also going to call **resignFirstResponder()** on the text field so that the keyboard hides.

Put this into your code, below **selectWebView()**:

```
func textFieldShouldReturn(_ textField: UITextField) -> Bool {
    if let webView = activeWebView, let address =
addressBar.text {
        if let url = URL(string: address) {
            webView.load(URLRequest(url: url))
        }
    }

    textField.resignFirstResponder()
    return true
}
```

Notice that there are a few **if lets** in there to make sure all the data is unwrapped safely, and particularly important is the URL: if you try to enter a URL without “<https://>“ iOS will reject it. That's something you can fix later!

At this point your project should compile, although we still haven't added any code to the delete navigation button so don't tap it just yet. You can, though, click + a few times to add some web views, then select one and enter a URL to navigate.

Removing views from a UIStackView with removeArrangedSubview()

That was a long chapter, and I hope you learned a lot. But you deserve a break, so I have some good news: it's trivial to remove views from a UIStackView. Heck, at its simplest it's just a matter of telling `removeArrangedSubview()` which view you don't want then removing that view from its superview – the others are automatically resized and re-arranged to fill the space.

In this particular project, we need to do a little more:

- We want the delete button to work only if there's a web view selected.
- We want to find the location of the active web view inside the stack view, then remove it.
- If there are now no more web views, we want to call `setDefaultTitle()` to reset the user interface.
- We need to find whatever web view immediately follows the one that was removed.
- We then make that the new selected web view, highlighting it in blue.

We already pointed the delete button at a method called `deleteWebView()`, so all you need to do is plug this in. I've added comments to make sure it's all clear:

```
@objc func deleteWebView() {  
    // safely unwrap our webview  
    if let webView = activeWebView {  
        if let index = stackView.arrangedSubviews.firstIndex(of:  
            webView) {  
            // we found the current webview in the stack view!  
            Remove it from the stack view  
            stackView.removeArrangedSubview(webView)  
  
            // now remove it from the view hierarchy – this is
```

Project 31: Multibrowser

```
important!

        webView.removeFromSuperview()

    if stackView.arrangedSubviews.count == 0 {
        // go back to our default UI
        setDefaultTitle()
    } else {
        // convert the Index value into an integer
        var currentIndex = Int(index)

        // if that was the last web view in the stack, go
back one
        if currentIndex == stackView.arrangedSubviews.count
        {
            currentIndex = stackView.arrangedSubviews.count
            - 1
        }

        // find the web view at the new index and select it
        if let newSelectedWebView =
stackView.arrangedSubviews[currentIndex] as? WKWebView {
            selectWebView(newSelectedWebView)
        }
    }
}
```

So, although the act of removing a view from a **UIStackView** is just a matter of calling **removeArrangedSubview()** and **removeFromSuperview()**, we need to do a little more to make sure the user interface updates correctly.

Removing views from a UIStackView with removeArrangedSubview()

You might be wondering why **removeFromSuperview()** is required when we're already calling **removeArrangedSubview()**. The reason is that you can remove something from a stack view's arranged subview list then re-add it later, without having to recreate it each time – it was hidden, not destroyed. We don't want a memory leak, so we want to remove deleted web views entirely. If you find your memory usage ballooning, you probably forgot this step!

The last thing we're going to do is talk about multitasking on iPad, and add a few user interface clean ups to make the project complete...

iPad multitasking

Although Multitasking is fairly recent in iOS, it's already seen widespread adoption. This is partly because it's so easy to do, but partly because users are asking for it so much.

You'll be pleased to know that supporting multitasking is easy. In fact, it's so easy that our current app *already supports it*. Don't believe me? Try it out now: launch your app, rotate the simulator to landscape (Cmd + left or right cursor key), then drag from the right edge of the screen.

The first time you do this, you'll see a list of various apps to choose from. Please choose Calendar for now. When you do this, iOS will activate Slide Over, which means your app still owns the full screen, but it's dimmed as the Calendar app has focus in the right part of the screen. On the left edge of Calendar you'll see a thin white line, which is the divider – drag that a little to the left and you'll see the whole interface change as iOS switches from Slide Over to Split View.

Now, the reason I asked you to change the simulator to landscape mode is because Split View actually has two snap points. The first, which you probably triggered this time, has your original app taking up about 2/3rds of the screen on the left and Calendar taking up the remainder on the right. The second, which you can get to by dragging the divider into the center of the screen, has both apps taking up half the screen each. If you're in portrait orientation you have only one mode, which is about 60/40.

So, our app already supports multitasking pretty well, although we'll make it better in a moment. First, though: what if you're upgrading existing apps? Well, you might not have such an easy ride, but if your code is modern you're probably still OK. To make multitasking work, you need to:

1. Have a launch XIB. This is the same thing that enables iPhone 6 support with iOS 8, and has been created for new projects ever since iOS 8 was released, so you probably already have one. If not, add a new file, choose User Interface, then Launch Screen. Then, in your plist, add a key for "Launch screen interface file base name" and point it to the name of

your launch XIB, without the ".xib" extension. For example, if your launch screen is called LaunchScreen.xib, give this key the value of "LaunchScreen".

2. Make sure your app is configured to support all orientations. This may already be configured this way, but if not make sure you choose all orientations now. As you might imagine, selectively choosing only some orientations would cause havoc with multitasking!
3. Use Auto Layout everywhere. If your app pre-dates Auto Layout or if you found it intimidating at first, you might still be struggling along with autoresizing masks. Now is the time to change: the various multitasking sizes make Auto Layout a no-brainer.
4. Use adaptive UI wherever needed. Adaptive layout is Apple's term for technologies like Size Classes and Dynamic Type, the former of which is a huge advantage when working with multitasking. Size Classes let you make your interface adjust to two major screen sizes, compact and regular, which previously were great for working with iPhone and iPad, but are now also used for iPad multitasking.

Even though this particular project works with multitasking by default, it doesn't have any adaptive user interface built in. As a result, if we use multitasking the *other* way – i.e., if it's our app that is the one occupying 1/3rd of the screen while some other app has the remainder – then it looks terrible: our vertically stacked web views end up being so thin that they are unusable.

The solution is simple: we're going to tell the stack view to arrange its web views horizontally when we have lots of space, and vertically when we don't. This is done using the **traitCollectionDidChange()** method, which gets called automatically when our app's size class has changed. We can then query which size class we now have, and adapt our user interface.

There is one complication, and that's understanding size classes. There are two axes for size classes, namely horizontal and vertical, and each of them has two sizes, Compact and Regular. No matter what orientation or multitasking setup, the vertical size class is always regular on iPad. For the other possibilities, here are the key rules:

- An iPad app running by itself in portrait or landscape has a regular horizontal size classes.

Project 31: Multibrowser

- In landscape where the apps are split 50/50, both are running in a compact horizontal size class.
- In landscape where the apps are split 70/30, the app on the left is a regular horizontal size class and the app on the right is compact.
- In portrait where the apps are split 60/40, both are running in a compact horizontal size class.

We're going to use this information so that we detect when the size class has changed and update our stack view appropriately. When we have a regular horizontal size class we'll use horizontal stacking, and when we have a compact size class we'll use vertical stacking. Here's the code:

```
override func traitCollectionDidChange(_  
previousTraitCollection: UITraitCollection?) {  
    if traitCollection.horizontalSizeClass == .compact {  
        stackView.axis = .vertical  
    } else {  
        stackView.axis = .horizontal  
    }  
}
```

The project is technically finished at this point, but we're going to do two more things just to make it a bit more polished. First, we're going to create a method that updates the navigation bar to show the page title from the active web view when it changes. This will read the **title** property of the web view to set the view controller's title, then place the current URL into our address bar.

Here's that method:

```
func updateUI(for webView: WKWebView) {  
    title = webView.title  
    addressBar.text = webView.url?.absoluteString ?? ""  
}
```

Second, we need to call that method in the two places it's needed: whenever we select a web view, and whenever the web view changes page. The former is just a matter of adding this line just before the end of `selectWebView()`:

```
updateUI(for: webView)
```

The latter is a matter of implementing the web view's `didFinish` method, which we can receive because we configured our view controller to be the delegate of each of the web views. So, put this code somewhere in `ViewController.swift`:

```
func webView(_ webView: WKWebView, didFinish navigation:  
WKNavigation!) {  
    if webView == activeWebView {  
        updateUI(for: webView)  
    }  
}
```

As you can see, we only update the user interface to reflect a page's title if it comes from the active web view, otherwise it would be confusing. That's it – the project is done!

Wrap up

With **UIStackView** in place that's another UIKit component under your belt – good job! The addition of multitasking and size classes helps make the app much more polished, and I think you have the seeds of a great app here.

If you want to try extending this project, the sensible place to start is in the URL entry: if users don't type "http://" before their web site addresses the app fails, which isn't very helpful.

Another smart place to improve the app is inside the **setDefaultTitle()** method: it just writes Multibrowser in the navigation bar while leaving a large white space in the center – hardly intuitive, and it wouldn't be hard to add a placeholder label in there telling users what to do.

Project 32

SwiftSearcher

Add your app's content to iOS Spotlight and take advantage of Safari integration.

Setting up

I hope you're all set for a massive project, because this one is going to cram a lot in. In this project, you're going to make an app for this tutorial series, Hacking with Swift – very meta, I know. The app is going to list all the projects and let users choose which ones they favorite, which by itself sounds like the kind of thing we might have done in project 7 or so.

So how come it's way back here as project 32? Simple: when users favorite a project, we're going to store that in Core Spotlight so they can find it later. And when they view a project, we'll use the **SFSafariViewController** class for them to read, which lets you embed Safari right inside your app. If those two new features weren't enough for you, I'm going to throw in a little bit of **UITableViewCell** automatic sizing, a little bit of Dynamic Type and even some attributed strings to handle formatted string drawing.

Are you feeling it now? I hope so. Please go ahead and create a new project in Xcode, choosing the Single View App template. Name it Project32, then choose Swift for your language.

Automatically resizing UITableViewCells with Dynamic Type and NSAttributedString

We're going to make a **UITableView** with formatted text that matches a user's preferred size, and where every cell automatically resizes to fit its contents. What's more, it's going to be so easy that you'll barely notice – Apple really has polished this technology, so you get an incredible amount of power for free.

First, though, we need to put in place the same basic **UITableViewController** foundations we've used several times before. So, start by opening ViewController.swift, and making the **ViewController** class inherit from **UITableViewController** rather than **UIViewController**.

Next, open Main.storyboard and delete the current view controller from the canvas. Replace it with a new Table View Controller, check its “Is Initial View Controller” box, change its class to be “ViewController”, then embed it inside a navigation controller.

Finally, select the table view's single prototype cell, then give it the identifier “Cell” and the style “Basic”. That's our complete interface, so you can close Main.storyboard and return to ViewController.swift.

We want our view controller to track an array called **projects**, in which we'll track lots of Hacking with Swift projects for this app. There are lots of pieces of metadata we could store about Hacking with Swift projects, but the goal here isn't to teach you about custom subclasses – we already did that in the tutorial on UserDefaults and NSCoding. So, we're going to take an epic shortcut here so we can spend more time focusing on the new stuff: the projects array will hold an array of String arrays.

Arrays within arrays aren't complicated, but I'm just going to clarify in case some people didn't quite understand. Each project will be stored as an array of two elements: the project name and its subtitle. We'll then store an array of those to contain all the projects. At the end of this project we'll return to this as homework to test your skills, but for the purpose of this project

Project 32: SwiftSearcher

it's perfectly fine.

So, add this property to the **ViewController** class now:

```
var projects = [[String]]()
```

Let's fill up that new property with the first eight projects from Hacking with Swift. I would do more, but there's no point – you get the idea, and it just takes up more space on your screen!

Put this at the end of your **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
projects.append(["Project 1: Storm Viewer", "Constants and variables, UITableView, UIImageView, FileManager, storyboards"])
projects.append(["Project 2: Guess the Flag", "@2x and @3x images, asset catalogs, integers, doubles, floats, operators (+= and -=), UIButton, enums, CALayer, UIColor, random numbers, actions, string interpolation, UIAlertController"])
projects.append(["Project 3: Social Media", "UIBarButtonItem, UIActivityViewController, the Social framework, URL"])
projects.append(["Project 4: Easy Browser", "loadView(), WKWebView, delegation, classes and structs, URLRequest, UIToolbar, UIProgressView., key-value observing"])
projects.append(["Project 5: Word Scramble", "Closures, method return values, booleans, NSRange"])
projects.append(["Project 6: Auto Layout", "Get to grips with Auto Layout using practical examples and code"])
projects.append(["Project 7: Whitehouse Petitions", "JSON, Data, UITabBarController"])
projects.append(["Project 8: 7 Swifty Words", "addTarget(), enumerated(), count, index(of:), property observers, range operators."])
```

So far, so easy. The next step is hardly challenging either: let's show each project's title and

Automatically resizing UITableViewCells with Dynamic Type and NSAttributedString

subtitle in the table view cells.

We're going to do this in a very basic way at first, but it's enough to get you started. As you know, we need to write two basic table view methods in order to get up and running:

numberOfRowsInSection and **cellForRowAt**. Here's the first:

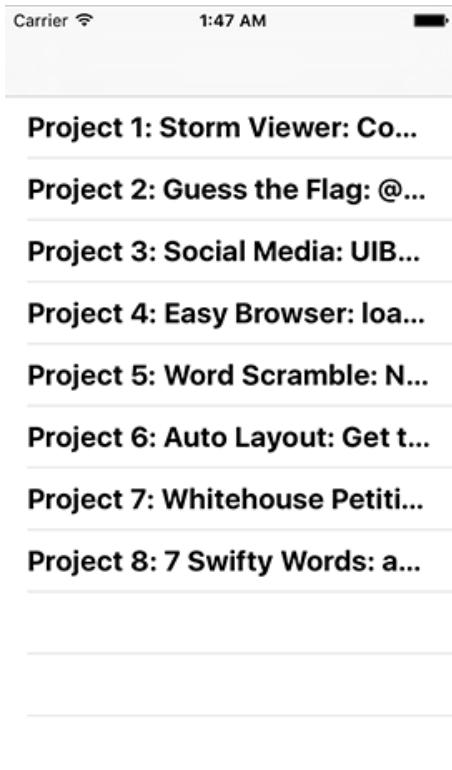
```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {  
    return projects.count  
}
```

The **cellForRowAt** method is only fractionally harder: we're going to make it show each project's title and subtitle using Swift's string interpolation. Here's the new code:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt  
indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {  
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:  
"Cell", for: indexPath)  
  
    let project = projects[indexPath.row]  
    cell.textLabel?.text = "\(project[0]): \(project[1])"  
  
    return cell  
}
```

Your project is now good to run, but what you'll see is deeply unsatisfying: each of the table view cells shows only one line of text, so our summaries get truncated after only a few letters, making them rather pointless.

Project 32: SwiftSearcher



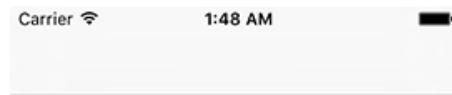
Fortunately, iOS allows us to request automatic sizing of table view cells based on their contents. Even better, this technology is already baked right into our project!

To make our project titles and subtitles fully visible, we just need to tell the **UITableViewCell** that its label should show more than one line. Go back to Main.storyboard, then use the document outline to select the “Title” label inside the table view cell – you'll know when you have the correct thing selected because the Attributes inspector will say Label at the top.

Once the label is selected, look for the Lines property – it will be 1 by default, but you should change that to 0, which means "as many lines as it takes to fit the text."

That's it. No, really: go ahead and run your app now and you'll see every cell now correctly fits its content. And if you rotate between portrait and landscape you'll even see everything resize smoothly – it really couldn't be simpler.

Automatically resizing UITableViewCells with Dynamic Type and NSAttributedString



Project 1: Storm Viewer:
Constants and variables,
UITableView, UIImageView,
NSFileManager, storyboards

Project 2: Guess the Flag:
@2x and @3x images, asset
catalogs, integers, doubles,
floats, operators (+=, ++, and
--), UIButton, enums,
CALayer, UIColor, random
numbers, actions, string
interpolation,
UIAlertController

Project 3: Social Media:
UIBarButtonItem,
UIActivityViewController, the
Social framework, NSURL

Project 4: Feed Processor

But this has exposed another problem: the app looks terrible! All that text doesn't help users see what's important and what's not, so it's terrible user interface design. We're going to fix this with a technology called **NSAttributedString**, which is a way of adding formatting such as fonts, colors and alignment to text, and can even be used to add hyperlinks if you want them.

In our case, we're going to make the project titles big and their subtitles small. We could do this by creating a **UIFont** at various sizes, but a much smarter (and user friendly!) way is to use a technology called Dynamic Type. This lets users control font size across all applications to match their preferences – they just make their choice in Settings, and Dynamic Type-aware apps respect it.

Apple pre-defined a set of fonts for use with Dynamic Type, all highly optimized for readability, and all responsive to a user's settings. To use them, all you need to do is use the **preferredFont(forTextStyle:)** method of **UIFont** and tell it what style you want. In our case we're going to use **.headline** for the project title and **.subheadline** for the project subtitle.

Project 32: SwiftSearcher

Remarkably enough, that's all you need to handle Dynamic Type in this project, so we can turn to look at **NSAttributedString**. Like I said, this class is designed to show text with formatting, and you can use it all across iOS to show formatted labels, buttons, navigation bar titles, and more. You create an attributed string by giving it a plain text string plus a dictionary of the attributes you want to set. If you want finer-grained control you can provide specific ranges for formatting, e.g. "bold and underline the first 10 characters, then underline everything else."

For this project, our use of attributed strings isn't complicated: we're going to create one set of formatting attributes for the title and another for the subtitle, create an attributed string out of both of them, then merge them together and return. To make things easier to read for the user, we're going to separate the title and subtitle with a line break, which looks a lot nicer.

To keep our code easy to understand, I put the attributed string work into a new method called **makeAttributedString()**. Here's the code:

```
func makeAttributedString(title: String, subtitle: String) ->
    NSAttributedString {
    let titleAttributes = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:
        UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .headline),
        NSAttributedString.Key.foregroundColor: UIColor.purple]
    let subtitleAttributes = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:
        UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .subheadline)]
    let titleString = NSMutableAttributedString(string: "\n
(title)\n", attributes: titleAttributes)
    let subtitleString = NSAttributedString(string: subtitle,
    attributes: subtitleAttributes)
    titleString.append(subtitleString)
    return titleString
}
```

Automatically resizing UITableViewCells with Dynamic Type and NSAttributedString

There are some new things in there, so let's go over them quickly:

- **NSAttributedString.Key.font** is the dictionary key that specifies what font the attributed text should use. This should be provided with a **UIFont** as its value, and like I said already we're using **preferredFont(forTextStyle:)** so we can take advantage of Dynamic Type.
- **NSAttributedString.Key.foregroundColor** is the dictionary key that specifies what text color to use. This isn't needed in this project, but I figured it would be boring to have only attributes!
- Both attributed strings are created by providing a plain text string and the matching dictionary of attributes. The title string is created as a **NSMutableAttributedString** because we append the subtitle to the title to make one attributed string that can be returned.

The last piece of the puzzle is to use the return value from **makeAttributedString()** inside **cellForRowAt** so that our interface looks better. This is just a matter of setting the **attributedText** property rather than the **text** property of the cell's text label, like this:

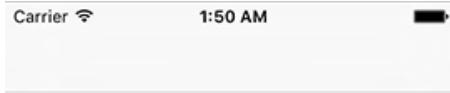
```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Cell", for: indexPath)

    let project = projects[indexPath.row]
    cell.textLabel?.attributedText = makeAttributedString(title: project[0], subtitle: project[1])

    return cell
}
```

That's it! Go ahead and run the app now and admire your purple headlines!

Project 32: SwiftSearcher



Project 1: Storm Viewer

Constants and variables, UITableView, UIImageView, NSFileManager, storyboards

Project 2: Guess the Flag

@2x and @3x images, asset catalogs, integers, doubles, floats, operators (+=, +, and --), UIButton, enums, CALayer, UIColor, random numbers, actions, string interpolation, UIAlertController

Project 3: Social Media

UIBarButtonItem, UIActivityViewController, the Social framework, NSURL

Project 4: Easy Browser

loadView(), WKWebView, delegation, classes and structs, NSURLRequest, UIToolbar, UIProgressView., key-value observing

Project 5: Word Scramble

How to use SFSafariViewController to browse a web page

You just learned about automatic cell resizing, **NSAttributedString** and Dynamic Type, so you deserve a pat on the back. But there's more: I want to introduce you to Yet Another Way To Embed Web Pages In Your App.

When a user taps on one of our table rows, we want to show the Hacking with Swift project that matches their selection. In Ye Olden Days we would do this either with **UIWebView** or **WKWebView**, adding our own user interface to handle navigation. But this had a few problems: everyone's user interface was different, features such as cookies and Auto Fill were unavailable for security reasons, and inevitably users looked for an "Open in Safari" button because that was what they trusted.

Apple fixed all these problems in iOS 9 using a new class called **SFSafariViewController**, which effectively embeds all of Safari inside your app using an opaque view controller. That is, you can't style it, you can't interact with it, and you certainly can't pull any private data out of it, and as a result **SFSafariViewController** can take advantage of the user's secure web data in ways that **UIWebView** and **WKWebView** never could.

What's more, Apple builds powerful features right into **SFSafariViewController**, so you get things like content blocking free of charge – and users get consistent features, consistent UI, and consistent security. Everybody wins!

SFSafariViewController is not part of UIKit, so you need to import a new framework to use it. Add this to the existing **import UIKit** line at the top of ViewController.swift:

```
import SafariServices
```

We're going to create a method that accepts an integer and shows the matching tutorial. All the Hacking with Swift tutorials are numbered from 1 upwards, so we can match that up to our

Project 32: SwiftSearcher

projects array (which is zero-based) just by adding 1. We'll convert that to a **URL** then pass that to a new **SFSafariViewController** to show to the user.

When working with **SFSafariViewController** there are two things you need to know. First, you can either create it just with a URL or with a URL and some configuration settings. For example, you can enable reader mode if it's available (Apple's name for a text-only view of web pages), or disable the bar collapsing behavior when the user scrolls. Reader mode doesn't work on Hacking with Swift, but I'm including it here so you can see how it works.

Second, the **SFSafariViewController** is dismissed when a user taps a Done button in its user interface. This calls a **safariViewControllerDidFinish()** method on the delegate of the **SFSafariViewController**, which you can use to run any code to handle picking up where the user left off. We won't be using it here, but if you want it in your own projects make sure you conform to the **SFSafariViewControllerDelegate** protocol.

Bringing all that together, let's write some code. Go ahead and add this new method somewhere in the class:

```
func showTutorial(_ which: Int) {
    if let url = URL(string: "https://www.hackingwithswift.com/
read/\(which + 1)") {
        let config = SFSafariViewController.Configuration()
        config.entersReaderIfAvailable = true

        let vc = SFSafariViewController(url: url, configuration:
config)
        present(vc, animated: true)
    }
}
```

You can see how easy it is to control reader mode – just set the **entersReaderIfAvailable** flag to be true or false as needed in the configuration object.

How to use SFSafariViewController to browse a web page

There's only one more thing to do to finish this stage of the project: when any table row is tapped, we need to call that new **showTutorial()** method and pass in the index path of the row so the correct tutorial can be shown. This is as simple as adding a **didSelectRowAt** method like this:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
didSelectRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) {  
    showTutorial(indexPath.row)  
}
```

That's it for the new **SFSafariViewController** – easy, huh?

How to add Core Spotlight to index your app content

One of the most important additions in iOS 9 was the ability for apps to communicate bidirectionally with Spotlight, the iOS system-wide search feature. What this means is that apps can ask for their content to be shown in the Spotlight search results and, if the user taps one of those search results, the app gets launched and told what was tapped so it can load the right content.

In this project, we're going to have users favorite the Hacking with Swift projects that most interest them. When they do that, we'll store the project title and subtitle in Spotlight so they can search for things like "wk" and find the **WKWebView** tutorial that is project 4.

We're going to tackle this problem in three stages: updating the user interface to reflect saved favorites, adding and removing items from Core Spotlight, then responding to deep links when our app is launched from a search result in Spotlight.

First up: creating a user interface that lets user favorite and unfavorite projects, and saving those choices. There are various ways of doing this, but I've chosen the simplest: we're going to set the table to be in editing mode, use the "Insert" and "Delete" icons to let users select their favorites, and use a checkmark accessory type to show which projects are already favorited.

Behind the scenes we'll also need an array of integers that tracks which project numbers are currently favorited, and that will be saved to **User Defaults** whenever a change is made.

That's all we have to do in theory, but in practice there are two catches:

1. When a table is in editing mode, you can't tap the cells any more. Given that this is our way of reading the projects, that's a big problem! Fortunately, we can just set the **allowsSelectionDuringEditing** property to true to fix this.
2. When a table is in editing mode, you can't just set the **accessoryType** because that isn't shown. Instead, you need to set **editingAccessoryType**, which functions the same but is visible while editing.

How to add Core Spotlight to index your app content

Let's do the easy stuff first: add this property to your class:

```
var favorites = [Int]()
```

We need to load that from **UserDefaults** if it exists there already, which means using **if let** to conditionally unwrap the result of **object(forKey:)** as an **Int** array. Put this just before the end of **viewDidLoad()**:

```
let defaults = UserDefaults.standard
if let savedFavorites = defaults.object(forKey: "favorites")
as? [Int] {
    favorites = savedFavorites
}
```

To make the list of favorites work in our user interface, we need to add two more lines to **viewDidLoad()**. Like I said already, these set the table view to be in editing mode, and tell it to let users tap on rows to select them. Add these lines now:

```
tableView.isEditing = true
tableView.allowsSelectionDuringEditing = true
```

Next we need to update **cellForRowAt** so that cells show a checkmark if they exist in the **favorites** array, or nothing otherwise. This is done just by using the **contains()** method of the **favorites** array, like this:

```
if favorites.contains(indexPath.row) {
    cell.editingAccessoryType = .checkmark
} else {
    cell.editingAccessoryType = .none
}
```

You should put that inside **cellForRowAt**, just before the **return cell** line.

Project 32: SwiftSearcher

Now it's just a matter of telling the table view that some rows should have the "insert" icon and others the "delete" icon. To do that, you just need to implement the **editingStyleForRowAt** method and check whether the item in question is in the **favorites** array. Put this into your class:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
editingStyleForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) ->  
UITableViewCellEditingStyle {  
    if favorites.contains(indexPath.row) {  
        return .delete  
    } else {  
        return .insert  
    }  
}
```

If you run the app now all the rows will have a green + symbol to their left and no checkmark on the right, because no projects have been marked as a favorite. If you click the + nothing will happen, because we haven't told the app what to do in that situation. To make this work, we need to handle the **tableView(_:commit:forRowAt:)** method, checking whether the user is trying to insert or delete their favorite.

If the user is adding a favorite, we're going to call a method called **index(item:)** that we'll write in a moment. We'll also add it to the **favorites** array, save it to **UserDefaults** then reload the table to reflect the change. If they are deleting a favorite, we do pretty much the opposite: call **deindex(item:)** (also not yet written), remove it from the favorites array, save that array and reload the table.

There's one small catch here, which is that removing an item from an array requires you to know its position in the array. We don't know the position of a project in the **favorites** array because they can add any projects they want – the array could contain 5, 2, 4, for example. We'll solve this by using the **indexOf()** method to find the position of a project number in the **favorites** array, then use that index to remove it.

How to add Core Spotlight to index your app content

Here's new code for the **commit** method that's currently empty, plus stubs for **index(item:)** and **deindex(item:)**:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, commit
editingStyle: UITableViewCell.EditingStyle, forRowAt indexPath:
IndexPath) {
    if editingStyle == .insert {
        favorites.append(indexPath.row)
        index(item: indexPath.row)
    } else {
        if let index = favorites.firstIndex(of: indexPath.row) {
            favorites.remove(at: index)
            deindex(item: indexPath.row)
        }
    }
}

let defaults = UserDefaults.standard
defaults.set(favorites, forKey: "favorites")

tableView.reloadRows(at: [indexPath], with: .none)
}

func index(item: Int) {
}

func deindex(item: Int) {
```

You should replace your existing **commit** method with that new one, but the other two are new.

OK, that's our first stage complete: the user interface now updates to reflect saved favorites. You could give it a try now if you really wanted, but I suggest you don't to avoid

Project 32: SwiftSearcher

confusing yourself later on. The next stage is adding and removing items from Core Spotlight, which means filling out those **index(item:)** and **deindex(item:)** methods that get called when favorites are added and deleted.

Using Core Spotlight means importing two extra frameworks: `CoreSpotlight` and `MobileCoreServices`. The former does all the heavy lifting of indexing items; the latter is just there to identify what type of data we want to store. So, import these two now:

```
import CoreSpotlight
import MobileCoreServices
```

Now for the new stuff: **index(item:)** accepts an `Int` identifying which project has been favorited. It needs to look inside the `projects` array to find that project, then create a `CSSearchableItemAttributeSet` object from it. This attribute set can store lots of information for search, including a title, description and image, as well as use-specific information such as dates (for events), camera focal length and flash setting (for photos), latitude and longitude (for places), and much more.

Regardless of what you choose, you wrap up the attribute set inside a `CSSearchableItem` object, which contains a unique identifier and a domain identifier. The former must identify the item absolutely uniquely inside your app, but the latter is a way to group items together. Grouping items is how you get to say "delete all indexed items from group X" if you choose to, but in our case we'll just use "com.hackingwithswift" because we don't need grouping. As for the unique identifier, we can use the project number.

To index an item, you need to call **indexSearchableItems()** on the default searchable index of `CSSearchableIndex`, passing in an array of `CSSearchableItem` objects. This method runs asynchronously, so we're going to use a trailing closure to be told whether the indexing was successful or not.

Here's the code:

```
func index(item: Int) {
    let project = projects[item]
```

```
let attributeSet =  
CSSearchableItemAttributeSet(itemContentType: kUTTypeText as  
String)  
attributeSet.title = project[0]  
attributeSet.contentDescription = project[1]  
  
let item = CSSearchableItem(uniqueIdentifier: "\(item)",  
domainIdentifier: "com.hackingwithswift", attributeSet:  
attributeSet)  
CSSearchableIndex.default().indexSearchableItems([item])  
{ error in  
    if let error = error {  
        print("Indexing error: \(error.localizedDescription)")  
    } else {  
        print("Search item successfully indexed!")  
    }  
}  
}
```

The only thing in there that I haven't explained is **kUTTypeText as String**, which tells iOS we want to store text in our indexed record.

By default, content you index has an expiration date of one month after you add it. This is probably OK for most purposes (although you do need to make sure you re-index items when your app runs in case they have expired!), but you can change the expiration date if you want. It's not something that can easily be tested, but this kind of code probably works to make your items never expire:

```
let item = CSSearchableItem(uniqueIdentifier: "\(item)",  
domainIdentifier: "com.hackingwithswift", attributeSet:  
attributeSet)  
item.expirationDate = Date.distantFuture
```

Project 32: SwiftSearcher

The last thing we need to do is fill in the **deindex(item:)** method, which is very similar to the **index(item:)** in that it receives an **Int**, calls a method on the default searchable index of **CSSearchableIndex**, then has a trailing closure to handle error reporting. Here's the code:

```
func deindex(item: Int) {  
  
    CSSearchableIndex.default().deleteSearchableItems(withIdentifiers:  
        rs: ["\\" + item + "\"]){ error in  
        if let error = error {  
            print("Deindexing error: \"  
            (error.localizedDescription)\"")  
        } else {  
            print("Search item successfully removed!")  
        }  
    }  
}
```

With that, the second stage of our Core Spotlight integration is complete: adding and removing items works! That just leaves the final stage, which is responding to deep links when our app is launched from a search result in Spotlight.

Now that we are indexing our content in Spotlight, users can search for our projects and tap on results. This will launch our app and pass in the unique identifier of the item that was tapped, and it's down to the app to do something with it. This is all done using in an **AppDelegate.swift** method called **application(_:continue:restorationHandler:)**, with the important part being what's given to us as the **continue** parameter.

This app delegate method is called when the application has finished launching and it's time to launch the activity requested by the user. If the user activity has the type **CSSearchableItemActionType** it means we're being launched as a result of a Spotlight search, so we need to unwrap the value of the **CSSearchableItemActivityIdentifier** that was passed in – that's the unique identifier of the indexed item that was tapped. In this project,

that's the project number.

Once we know which project caused the app to be launched, we need to do a little view controller dance that involves conditionally typecasting the window's root view controller as a **UINavigationController**, then conditionally typecasting its **topViewController** as a **ViewController** object, and finally calling the **showTutorial()** method on the result if it succeeded.

AppDelegate.swift doesn't already import the CoreSpotlight framework, so if you rely on code completion (as you should!) add this import to AppDelegate.swift now:

```
import CoreSpotlight
```

Now add this new method to the bottom of AppDelegate.swift, after the existing methods:

```
func application(_ application: UIApplication, continue userActivity: NSUserActivity, restorationHandler: @escaping ([UIUserActivityRestoring]?) -> Void) -> Bool {
    if userActivity.activityType == CSSearchableItemActionType {
        if let uniqueIdentifier = userActivity.userInfo?[CSSearchableItemActivityIdentifier] as? String {
            if let navigationController =
                window?.rootViewController as? UINavigationController {
                    if let viewController =
                        navigationController.topViewController as? ViewController {
                            viewController.showTutorial(Int(uniqueIdentifier)!)
                        }
                    }
                }
            }

    return true
}
```

Project 32: SwiftSearcher

}

That's the third and final stage complete, which means the project is also complete. Run it now, and try clicking the + button next to Project 4. Now press Shift+Cmd+H to return to the home screen in the simulator and swipe to the left until you reach the Spotlight search tab. You should be able to type "uit" into the search box to have it find the reference to **UIToolbar** in project 4's description.

Now, before you go off indexing all sorts of information, be warned: Apple has said that iOS will automatically monitor how frequently users interact with your search results, and if you consistently serve up unhelpful results because you indexed your data badly then your results may stop appearing. Index only what's important!

Wrap up

This project covered a huge amount, including Core Spotlight, **SFSafariViewController**, **NSAttributedString**, automatically sized table view cells, and also Dynamic Type. Plus, you have another project complete, and you're now able to customize it to fit your needs – as nice as a Hacking with Swift browser is, I'm sure you have better ideas!

If you want to work on this project some more, a great place to start is to convert the **projects** array to contain objects of a custom subclass rather than just an array. Not only is it safer coding, but it's also more extensible – you might want to add images or other data, and our array stops being so simple when you add more to it! You should follow much the same technique as taught in project 12 to handle loading and saving.

I'd also recommend you investigate some of the many other formatting options you can use with **NSAttributedString**. Right-click on **NSAttributedString.Key.font** and choose Jump to Definition to see a list, and just try things out! You'll see that Apple has put comments next to each key so you can see what kind of data to provide.

There's one more thing, which is the user changing their Dynamic Type size. This won't happen very often, but if it happens while your app is running you'll receive the **UIContentSizeCategoryDidChange** notification if you subscribe to it using **NotificationCenter**. This is your chance to refresh your user interface so that it's drawn at a larger size if needed, but many UIKit components should adapt themselves by default.

Project 33

What's that Whistle?

Build a crowd-sourced song recognition app using Apple's free platform as a service: CloudKit.

Setting up

As I write these initial words, I already know this is going to be one of the most expansive and useful Hacking with Swift tutorials to date. We're going to be using CloudKit to load and save user data, we'll read from the microphone using **AVAudioRecorder**, we'll add **UIStackView** and **NSAttributedString** for great layout, and we're going to tie in push messaging for dynamic updates.

This tutorial is going to show you CloudKit to a depth you won't see much elsewhere. Yes, we're going to be loading and saving text data, but we're also going to be loading and saving binary data, registering for updates, and delivering push messages – in short, we're going to be covering the majority of CloudKit in one project, and you'll learn a huge amount along the way. We're even going to be covering the simple and advanced methods of working with CloudKit, because it gives a much better user experience.

As you know, my usual plan is to pick which technologies I want to teach, then strap a real project around it. In this case, the project is called "What's that Whistle?" It's an app where users can whistle or hum into their microphone, and upload it to iCloud. Other users can then download whistles and try to identify what song it's from. This is a genuinely useful app: think how often you know how a song goes but just can't remember its name, and boom: this app is for you. Of course, you could also turn it into a game – who can guess the song first? It's down to you.

To make things more exciting, we'll let users choose which music genres they specialize in, and we'll deliver them a push message whenever a new whistle comes in for that genre. They can then swipe to unlock and launch the app, and start posting suggestions for the song name.

CloudKit is something that was announced back in 2014, but it had some remarkably low limits that made it so unappealing I decided not to write a tutorial about it. Back then, each app got just 25MB per day of data transfer, growing at 0.5MB – yes, half a megabyte – per user per day, which was absurdly low. Since then Apple announced they were raising the limits so that every app now gets 2GB per month plus a further 50MB per user per month. Even better, database transfer is now judged on requests per second rather than an arbitrary data cap.

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

If you're not aware of what CloudKit does, I'll be going into much more detail later. For now, the least you need to know is that CloudKit lets you send and retrieve remote data for your app, effectively providing a server back-end for your app to talk to. Even better, unless you go over Apple's new generous limits, it's completely free.

Important warning: this project requires an active Apple developer program account, because CloudKit requires iCloud developer access. Although everything except push messaging works great in the simulator, you'll find CloudKit responds much faster on devices so you might find it easier to work from a device the entire time.

Please go ahead and create a new project in Xcode, choosing the Single View App template. Name it Project 33, then choose Swift for your language. Now strap yourself in, because this is going to be awesome...

Recording from the microphone with AVAudioRecorder

We're going to start off this project easily enough by looking at **AVAudioRecorder**: the iOS way of recording audio from the microphone. You might be tempted to skip past this so you can focus on the CloudKit parts, but please don't – I didn't put audio recording in here just for fun! Instead, it's used to demonstrate how to store binary assets (i.e., data files) inside CloudKit, so it's an integral part of the project.

The built-in Xcode template will have given you one empty view controller inside Main.storyboard, plus a ViewController.swift file. We're going to be doing almost all the user interface in code for this project, so you can almost ignore the storyboard entirely – in fact, all you need to do is select the view controller that was created and embed it inside a navigation controller. Now go to ViewController.swift and add these lines to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
title = "What's that Whistle?"
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
    UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target: self,
action: #selector(addWhistle))
navigationItem.backBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:
    "Home", style: .plain, target: nil, action: nil)
```

That gives us a button to tap to add a whistle to the app, then customizes the title of the navigation bar's back button to say "Home" rather than "What's that Whistle?" which is a bit too long. We're going to return to this view controller much later to add a table view and other bits, but for now let's write the very simple **addWhistle()** method:

```
@objc func addWhistle() {
    let vc = RecordWhistleViewController()
    navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated: true)
}
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

So, that creates a new object of type **RecordWhistleViewController** (not yet written), and pushes it onto the view controller stack. That's it for ViewController.swift for now – trust me, we'll be adding a *lot* more code to it later!

Add a new file to your project, choosing Cocoa Touch Class. Make it a subclass of **UIViewController** and name it **RecordWhistleViewController**. Make sure "Also create XIB file" is not selected and that "Swift" is chosen for your language, then click Next to save it.

To begin with, we're going to place a **UIStackView** into the view, along with a button saying "Tap to record". You might think the stack view isn't necessary, but once we've got the recording working we're going to add a playback button and have **UIStackView** animate it all nicely for us, so it is definitely needed.

First things first: let's create the stack view, then use Auto Layout to so that it's vertically centered and stretched to fill the full width of its container view. This way, the stack view will automatically grow as more views are added to it, which can be animated to look slick.

Add this property to the new **RecordWhistleViewController** class:

```
var stackView: UIStackView!
```

Like I said, we're going to be doing all the view layout in code to make it easier to follow. **UIStackView** takes care of all the layout of its subviews, so all we need to do is position and size the stack view correctly. Put this into your class to load the view:

```
override func loadView() {
    view = UIView()
    view.backgroundColor = UIColor.gray

    stackView = UIStackView()
    stackView.spacing = 30
    stackView.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
    stackView.distribution =
```

Recording from the microphone with AVAudioRecorder

```
UIStackView.Distribution.fillEqually
    stackView.alignment = .center
    stackView.axis = .vertical
    view.addSubview(stackView)

    stackView.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.leadingAnchor).isActive = true
    stackView.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
    stackView.centerYAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.centerYAnchor).isActive = true
}
```

As you've seen in previous tutorials, Auto Layout has a variety of ways of achieving the same result depending on your exact scenario. In this case, using anchors is the simplest, and it takes just three lines of code to get the result we want.

I've covered all that in previous projects, but now for the new stuff: using **AVAudioRecorder** to record audio from the microphone. If you're using the simulator this will automatically use your Mac's built-in microphone, so you can test either on device or in the simulator.

Recording audio in iOS uses two classes: **AVAudioSession** and **AVAudioRecorder**.

AVAudioSession is there to enable and track sound recording as a whole, and

AVAudioRecorder is there to track one individual recording. That is, the session is the bit that ensures we are able to record, the recorder is the bit that actual pulls data from the microphone and writes it to disk.

Use of the microphone is restricted by access controls, as you might imagine, so when we use **AVAudioSession** to request access it will automatically display a warning to the user, prompting them to confirm the access. Once we have access, we can record as much data as we want at whatever quality we want, and iOS will do most of the work.

To make the interface user friendly we're going to allow users to re-record their whistle as

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

many times as it takes, so we'll need a button to handle that. We're also going to change the background color of the view to either red or green, to show the recording or not recording state in a more visually obvious way.

First up, we need to import the **AVFoundation** framework for this class, so please add this import now:

```
import AVFoundation
```

We're also going to track three new properties: the record button, the recording session, and the **AVAudioRecorder** itself. Please add these three properties to your class:

```
var recordButton: UIButton!
var recordingSession: AVAudioSession!
var whistleRecorder: AVAudioRecorder!
```

Now for the complicated part: setting up the recording environment. To do this, we're going to get hold of the built-in system audio session and ask for play and record privileges – record so we can grab audio from the microphone, and play so users can preview what was recorded.

We'll use the **requestRecordPermission()** method of the audio session to ask the user whether we can record or not, and give that a trailing closure to execute when the user makes a choice.

If the user grants us access to the microphone, we'll execute a new method called **loadRecordingUI()**, otherwise we'll call **loadFailUI()**. Both of these need to be pushed onto the main thread because the callback from **requestRecordPermission()** can happen on any thread. I'll provide you with method stubs for **loadRecordingUI()** and **loadFailUI()** for now, but we'll add to them shortly. Replace your current **viewDidLoad()** with this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    title = "Record your whistle"
```

Recording from the microphone with AVAudioRecorder

```
navigationItem.backBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:  
"Record", style: .plain, target: nil, action: nil)  
  
recordingSession = AVAudioSession.sharedInstance()  
  
do {  
    try recordingSession.setCategory(.playAndRecord,  
mode: .default)  
    try recordingSession.setActive(true)  
    recordingSession.requestRecordPermission() { [unowned  
self] allowed in  
        DispatchQueue.main.async {  
            if allowed {  
                self.loadRecordingUI()  
            } else {  
                self.loadFailUI()  
            }  
        }  
    }  
} catch {  
    self.loadFailUI()  
}  
}  
  
func loadRecordingUI() {  
}  
  
func loadFailUI() {  
}
```

Just calling **requestRecordPermission()** isn't enough to record from the microphone. As with reading photos, we also need to add a string to the Info.plist file explaining to the user what we

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

intend to do with the audio. So, open the Info.plist file now, select any row, then click the + next that appears next to it. Select the key name “Privacy - Microphone Usage Description” then give it the value “We need to record your whistle.” Done!

To help the interface adapt to each user's preferences, we're going to use Dynamic Type to control our fonts. This means users can adjust the font size in the Settings app and have it reflected in our app. We don't need to worry about sizing up or positioning the buttons – just by using `.title1` and `.headline` we give the labels enough information to size themselves, and the stack view will do the rest.

Here's some new code for `loadRecordingUI()` and `loadFailUI()`; replace the previous stubs with this:

```
func loadRecordingUI() {
    recordButton = UIButton()
    recordButton.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints =
false
    recordButton.setTitle("Tap to Record", for: .normal)
    recordButton.titleLabel?.font =
UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .title1)
    recordButton.addTarget(self, action:
#selector(recordTapped), for: .touchUpInside)
    stackView.addSubview(recordButton)
}

func loadFailUI() {
    let failLabel = UILabel()
    failLabel.font =
UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .headline)
    failLabel.text = "Recording failed: please ensure the app
has access to your microphone."
    failLabel.numberOfLines = 0
}
```

Recording from the microphone with AVAudioRecorder

```
    stackView.addArrangedSubview(failLabel)
}
```

As you should know by now, setting **numberOfLines** to 0 means "wrap over as many lines as you need." Also, and this is important, you should also be aware that you never add a subview to a **UIStackView** directly. Instead, you use its **addArrangedSubview()** method, which is what triggers the layout work.

Tapping that button will trigger a method that we haven't written yet: **recordTapped()**. But before we get onto that, you need to know a little about how recording works:

- You need to tell iOS where to save the recording. This is done when you create the **AVAudioRecorder** object because iOS streams the audio to the file as it goes so it can write large files.
- Before recording begins, you need to decide on a format, bit rate, channel number and quality. We'll be using Apple's AAC format because it gets the most quality for the lowest bitrate. For bitrate we'll use 12,000Hz, which, when combined with the High AAC quality, sounds good in my testing. We'll specify 1 for the number of channels, because we don't need stereo for these simple recordings.
- If you set your view controller as the delegate of a recording, you'll be told when recording stops and whether it finished successfully or not.
- Recording won't stop if your app goes into the background briefly. Instead, it's things like a call coming in that might make it stop unexpectedly.

As our app is simple, we don't need a complicated method to figure out where to save our whistle audio. In project 10 I gave you a simple helper method called **getDocumentsDirectory()**, which returns the path to a writeable directory owned by your app. This is a great place to save the audio, so we'll take that and append "whistle.m4a" for our filename. Put these two new methods into your code:

```
class func getDocumentsDirectory() -> URL {
    let paths =
    FileManager.default.urls(for: .documentDirectory,
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
in: .userDomainMask)  
    let documentsDirectory = paths[0]  
    return documentsDirectory  
}  
  
class func getWhistleURL() -> URL {  
    return  
getDocumentsDirectory().AppendingPathComponent("whistle.m4a")  
}
```

Note that both of those methods have the **class** keyword at the beginning, which means you call them on the class not on instances of the class. This is important, because it means we can find the whistle URL from anywhere in our app rather than typing it in everywhere.

When we want to start recording, the app needs to do a few things:

1. Make the view have a red background color so the user knows they are in recording mode.
2. Change the title of the record button to say "Tap to Stop".
3. Use the **getWhistleURL()** method we just wrote to find where to save the whistle.
4. Create a settings dictionary describing the format, sample rate, channels and quality.
5. Create an **AVAudioRecorder** object pointing at our whistle URL, set ourselves as the delegate, then call its **record()** method.

Before I show you the code for that, there are two other important things to know. First, when working in the simulator I usually like to print out the URL to a file using **print()**, because it means I can look at it in Finder and be sure it's working correctly. Second, creating an **AVAudioRecorder** can throw an error, so we need to wrap it in a **do/try/catch** block.

That's it – here's the code for **startRecording()**, with numbers added to match the list above:

```
func startRecording() {  
    // 1  
    view.backgroundColor = UIColor(red: 0.6, green: 0, blue: 0,
```

Recording from the microphone with AVAudioRecorder

```
alpha: 1)

// 2
recordButton.setTitle("Tap to Stop", for: .normal)

// 3
let audioURL = RecordWhistleViewController.getWhistleURL()
print(audioURL.absoluteString)

// 4
let settings = [
    AVFormatIDKey: Int(kAudioFormatMPEG4AAC),
    AVSampleRateKey: 12000,
    AVNumberOfChannelsKey: 1,
    AVEncoderAudioQualityKey: AVAudioQuality.high.rawValue
]

do {
    // 5
    whistleRecorder = try AVAudioRecorder(url: audioURL,
settings: settings)
    whistleRecorder.delegate = self
    whistleRecorder.record()
} catch {
    finishRecording(success: false)
}
}
```

You'll get two errors with that code, and we'll fix them both now.

First, as soon as you try to set `self` for `whistleRecorder.delegate`, you'll need to conform to the **AVAudioRecorderDelegate** protocol, like this:

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
class RecordWhistleViewController: UIViewController,  
AVAudioRecorderDelegate {
```

Second, once recording has started, we naturally want to stop it at some point. For that, we're going to create a **finishRecording()** method, which will take one boolean parameter saying whether the recording was successful or not. It will make the view's background color green to show that recording is finished, then it will destroy the **AVAudioRecorder** object.

The special part of this method lies in whether the recording was a success or not. If it was a success, we're going to set the record button's title to be "Tap to Re-record", but then show a new right bar button item in the navigation bar, letting users progress to the next stage of submission. So, they can submit what they have, or re-record as often as they want. If the record wasn't a success, we'll put the button's title back to being "Tap to Record" then show an error message.

Here's the new method:

```
func finishRecording(success: Bool) {  
    view.backgroundColor = UIColor(red: 0, green: 0.6, blue: 0,  
alpha: 1)  
  
    whistleRecorder.stop()  
    whistleRecorder = nil  
  
    if success {  
        recordButton.setTitle("Tap to Re-record", for: .normal)  
        navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =  
UIBarButtonItem(title: "Next", style: .plain, target: self,  
action: #selector(nextTapped))  
    } else {  
        recordButton.setTitle("Tap to Record", for: .normal)  
  
        let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Record failed",
```

Recording from the microphone with AVAudioRecorder

```
message: "There was a problem recording your whistle; please
try again.", preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
    present(ac, animated: true)
}
}
```

To avoid adding yet another compiler error, add this empty **nextTapped()** method now:

```
@objc func nextTapped() {
}
```

So, that's the code to start and stop recording – amazingly you're most of the way there! Our one button will be used to trigger both events, so we need to write **recordTapped()**. All this will do is call **startRecording()** or **finishRecording()** depending on the current state of the app. And that's it! Here's the code:

```
@objc func recordTapped() {
    if whistleRecorder == nil {
        startRecording()
    } else {
        finishRecording(success: true)
    }
}
```

The last thing to do before we're done with recording is to catch the scenario where recording ends with a problem. We already set our view controller to be the delegate of our **AVAudioRecorder** object, so we'll get sent a **audioRecorderDidFinishRecording()** message when recording finished. If the recording wasn't a success, we'll call **finishRecording()** so it can clean up and restore the view to its pre-recording state.

Here's the code:

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
func audioRecorderDidFinishRecording(_ recorder:  
AVAudioRecorder, successfully flag: Bool) {  
    if !flag {  
        finishRecording(success: false)  
    }  
}
```

At this point your code will run, and I encourage you to try it in the iOS Simulator so you can see that it's working – if you kept my `print()` call in there, you can open that folder in Finder and see the finished m4a if everything has gone well.



Note: if you're a less experienced macOS user, you might not know how to navigate to a folder like the one the iOS Simulator uses, because it's hidden by default. For example, you'll get something like this: `file:///Users/twostraws/Library/Developer/CoreSimulator/Devices/E470B24D-5C0C-455F-9726-DC1EAF30D5A4/data/Containers/Data/Application/`

Recording from the microphone with AVAudioRecorder

D5E4C08C-2B1E-40BC-8EBE-97F136D0AFC0/Documents/whistle.m4a – which hardly trips off the tongue!

The easiest thing to do is copy that to a clipboard, open a Finder window, press Shift+Cmd+G, and paste it into the box. Now delete the "file://" from the start so that it reads "/Users/yourusername/.....", and "whistle.m4a" from the end, then press Return.

Animating UIStackView subview layout

Before we get onto the CloudKit part of this tutorial, we're going to add a bit more to our user interface. Specifically, we're going to add a "Tap to Play" button into the stack view, and have it animate so that it slides out when recording has finished. This is the work of only a few minutes thanks to **UIStackView**, and I'm sure you'll agree the results look marvelous.

While we're finishing up the user interface, we're going to quickly add a couple more simple view controllers to let the user attach some metadata to their whistle: they'll be able to select what genre it is, then enter some free text with any comments – something like "I definitely remember hearing it in the early 90s" to help listeners narrow the scope a little.

First, the play button. Add this new property:

```
var playButton: UIButton!
```

Now create it by placing this just before the end of **loadRecordingUI()**:

```
playButton = UIButton()
playButton.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
playButton.setTitle("Tap to Play", for: .normal)
playButton.isHidden = true
playButton.alpha = 0
playButton.titleLabel?.font =
UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .title1)
playButton.addTarget(self, action: #selector(playTapped),
for: .touchUpInside)
stackView.addSubview(playButton)
```

That's almost identical to the code for creating the record button, except the play button is set to hidden and alpha 0. Normally you need only one of these, but with stack views it's a little

different: a view that is not hidden but has an alpha of 0 appears hidden (i.e., the user can't see it) but still occupies space in the stack view. By setting the button to be hidden and have alpha 0, we're saying "don't show it to the user, and don't let it take up any space in the stack view."

We want to show and hide that play button when needed, meaning that we show it when recording finished successfully and hide it if the user taps to re-record. To solve the first of those, put this code into the **finishRecording()** method, just before setting the right bar button item:

```
if playButton.isHidden {
    UIView.animate(withDuration: 0.35) { [unowned self] in
        self.playButton.isHidden = false
        self.playButton.alpha = 1
    }
}
```

To solve the second, put this into **recordTapped()**, just after the call to **startRecording()**:

```
if !playButton.isHidden {
    UIView.animate(withDuration: 0.35) { [unowned self] in
        self.playButton.isHidden = true
        self.playButton.alpha = 0
    }
}
```

The **isHidden** property of any **UIView** subclass is a simple boolean, meaning that it's either true or false: a view is either hidden or it's not. As a result, if we had put this code anywhere else it would be meaningless to try to animate it, because there are no intermediate steps between "visible" and "invisible" to animate. But with **UIStackView** it has a meaning, and that meaning is brilliant: the stack view will animate the play button being shown, making it slide out neatly. Changing the alpha at the same time is the perfect finishing touch.

When we created the play button we attached a method called **playTapped()** to it, which isn't

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

written yet. But now that you've seen how to use **AVAudioRecorder**, the code to play using **AVAudioPlayer** should be second nature. Just in case you don't fancy writing the code for yourself, I'll walk you through the steps.

First, create a new property to hold the audio player:

```
var whistlePlayer: AVAudioPlayer!
```

Now, add a **playTapped()** method using the code below. This grabs the shared whistle URL, creates an **AVAudioPlayer** inside a **do/try/catch** block, and makes it play. If there's an error loading the sound it shows an alert message to the user. Easy, right?

```
@objc func playTapped() {
    let audioURL = RecordWhistleViewController.getWhistleURL()

    do {
        whistlePlayer = try AVAudioPlayer(contentsOf: audioURL)
        whistlePlayer.play()
    } catch {
        let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Playback failed",
message: "There was a problem playing your whistle; please try
re-recording.", preferredStyle: .alert)
        ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
        present(ac, animated: true)
    }
}
```

If you run the app now I think you'll agree it looks good, particularly as the play button slides out in the stack view. Being able to hear what you recorded is of course a nice touch!

Once the user has a recording they are happy with, we're going to ask them to choose which genre they think it belongs to, and add any comments. At this stage in your Swift coding career, both of these should be very simple view controllers that you can make in just a few

minutes.

Add a new file to your project, choosing Cocoa Touch Class. Make it a subclass of **UITableViewController** and name it **SelectGenreViewController**. Open the file for editing, and give it this property:

```
static var genres = ["Unknown", "Blues", "Classical",
"Electronic", "Jazz", "Metal", "Pop", "Reggae", "RnB", "Rock",
"Soul"]
```

This is marked as static so that we can use it in lots of other places – it's a shared list of all the music categories we want to work with. I added "Unknown" in there for people like me who struggle to tell the difference between some music types!

In this class's **viewDidLoad()** method we're going to give it a title, configure the back button to take up less space, then register a cell for re-use. All old stuff:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    title = "Select genre"
    navigationItem.backBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:
"Genre", style: .plain, target: nil, action: nil)
    tableView.register(UITableViewCell.self,
forCellReuseIdentifier: "Cell")
}
```

For handling the content of the table view, it's all code you've seen in previous projects, but I want to point out three things:

1. When referencing the **genres** array we need to use **SelectGenreViewController.genres** because the array belongs to the class, not to our instance of the class.
2. When reading the text of the cell that was tapped, we're going to use the nil coalescing

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

operator. The nil coalescing operator was covered in project 12, and in this situation it guarantees we have a genre.

3. When the user has selected a genre, we're going to create an instance of the class **AddCommentsViewController**, store that genre there, then push it onto our navigation stack.

That's it – here are the methods for handling the table view data source and delegate:

```
override func numberOfSections(in tableView: UITableView) -> Int {
    return 1
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
 numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
    return SelectGenreViewController.genres.count
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Cell", for: indexPath)
    cell.textLabel?.text =
    SelectGenreViewController.genres[indexPath.row]
    cell.accessoryType = .disclosureIndicator
    return cell
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
didSelectRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) {
    if let cell = tableView.cellForRow(at: indexPath) {
        let genre = cell.textLabel?.text ??

```

```

SelectGenreViewController.genres[0]
    let vc = AddCommentsViewController()
    vc.genre = genre
    navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated:
true)
}
}

```

That completes the class – I've deliberately kept it simple because this tutorial is about CloudKit rather than tables! You can now return to RecordWhistleViewController.swift and fill in the **nextTapped()** method like this:

```

@objc func nextTapped() {
    let vc = SelectGenreViewController()
    navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated: true)
}

```

There's one more easy class to add before we get onto CloudKit, and that's **AddCommentsViewController**. This will show a full-screen **UITextView** for the user to type any extra comments into.

We're going to give this new class three properties: one to hold the genre that gets passed in from **SelectGenreViewController**, one to hold a reference to the **UITextView**, and one to hold a placeholder string. That last property will be used to solve a long-standing **UITextView** annoyance: unlike **UITextField**, you can't give a **UITextView** a placeholder string, which is a piece of text telling users what to type in there. We'll replicate this behavior by putting a default string into the text view and removing it when the user taps it.

So, create a new Cocoa Touch class. Name it “AddCommentsViewController”, make it inherit from “UIViewController”, then give it these three properties:

```
var genre: String!
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
var comments: UITextView!
let placeholder = "If you have any additional comments that
might help identify your tune, enter them here."
```

We're going to override the `loadView()` method of this class, using it to create a new `UITextView` that is pinned to all edges using Auto Layout. The only vaguely interesting thing here is that we'll use Dynamic Type to make the font size adjustable for the user. Here's the code:

```
override func loadView() {
    view = UIView()
    view.backgroundColor = .white

    comments = UITextView()
    comments.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
    comments.delegate = self
    comments.font = UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .body)
    view.addSubview(comments)

    comments.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
        view.leadingAnchor).isActive = true
    comments.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
        view.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
    comments.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
        view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.topAnchor).isActive = true
    comments.bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
        view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.bottomAnchor).isActive = true
}
```

As per usual, assigning the view controller to be a delegate of something requires conforming to a protocol. In this case, it means conforming to `UITextViewDelegate`, so please add that now.

The absolute least we need to do to make this class work is to fill in the **viewDidLoad()** method with a title for the view controller and a right bar button item to let the user proceed with their submission, then to write a **submitTapped()** method that gets triggered when the button is tapped.

Submitting will use another new class that we'll define shortly, called **SubmitViewController**, and will pass in the genre we got from **SelectGenreViewController** and the user's comments if there are any. If they kept the placeholder intact, we'll send an empty string on. Here's the code:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    title = "Comments"
    navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:
    "Submit", style: .plain, target: self, action:
    #selector(submitTapped))
    comments.text = placeholder
}

@objc func submitTapped() {
    let vc = SubmitViewController()
    vc.genre = genre

    if comments.text == placeholder {
        vc.comments = ""
    } else {
        vc.comments = comments.text
    }

    navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated: true)
}
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

We could easily leave it there and get onto to the CloudKit work, but there's one small tweak we can make to improve the whole experience. As this view controller is the delegate for the **comments** text view, iOS will send us the **textViewDidBeginEditing()** message when the user starts editing it. We can then compare the text view's current text against the placeholder, and clear it if they match. Here's that code:

```
func textViewDidBeginEditing(_ textView: UITextView) {
    if textView.text == placeholder {
        textView.text = ""
    }
}
```

That's it: in order to build the **SubmitViewController** class, it's time to introduce CloudKit.

Writing to iCloud with CloudKit: CKRecord and CKAsset

We still have an error in our code, because we haven't created the **SubmitViewController** class yet. This is where CloudKit comes into play, because this view controller has only one job: to show the user that iCloud submission is happening until it completes, at which point we'll show a "Done" button.

To make the view a little more interesting, we're going to use another **UIStackView** to arrange a text label and an activity spinner to keep the user informed. We're also going to hide the back button so the user can't escape until iCloud finishes, successfully or otherwise.

The last two view controllers have been collecting and passing on metadata, specifically a genre and user comments. We'll need to add these as properties for **SubmitViewController**, along with properties for the stack view, the label and the activity spinner. So, create a new class called **SubmitViewController**, make it a subclass of **UIViewController**, then add these properties:

```
var genre: String!
var comments: String!

var stackView: UIStackView!
var status: UILabel!
var spinner: UIActivityIndicatorView!
```

As for the **loadView()** method, this is very similar to what we did with **RecordWhistleViewController**: we'll use a stack view that is pinned to the left and right edges then centered vertically. We'll add to this a **UILabel** to show the send status, and a **UIActivityIndicatorView** to show the user that something is happening, but otherwise there's nothing surprising in this code:

```
override func loadView() {
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
view = UIView()
view.backgroundColor = UIColor.gray

stackView = UIStackView()
stackView.spacing = 10
stackView.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
stackView.distribution =
UIStackView.Distribution.fillEqually
stackView.alignment = .center
stackView.axis = .vertical
view.addSubview(stackView)

stackView.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.leadingAnchor).isActive = true
stackView.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
stackView.centerYAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.centerYAnchor).isActive = true

status = UILabel()
status.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
status.text = "Submitting..."
status.textColor = UIColor.white
status.font = UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .title1)
status.numberOfLines = 0
status.textAlignment = .center

spinner = UIActivityIndicatorView(style: .whiteLarge)
spinner.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
spinner.hidesWhenStopped = true
spinner.startAnimating()
```

```
    stackView.addArrangedSubview(status)
    stackView.addArrangedSubview(spinner)
}
```

As I said already, we're going to hide the navigation bar's back button so the user can't back out of the view controller until submission has finished. Avoiding multiple submissions is a whole other discussion that I'll save for another day, so this is the easiest way out. Modify the existing `viewDidLoad()` method to this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    title = "You're all set!"
    navigationItem.hidesBackButton = true
}
```

There are just three more methods to write before we get onto the real meat of this tutorial: CloudKit. The first is `viewDidAppear()`, which we'll use to start the submission process. The second is a stub for `doSubmission()`, which is empty for now but we'll fill with CloudKit goodness shortly. The last one is `doneTapped()`, which will be called from a bar button item, which in turn will be created when the submission finishes.

Add this code:

```
override func viewDidAppear(_ animated: Bool) {
    super.viewDidAppear(animated)

    doSubmission()
}

func doSubmission() {

}
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
@objc func doneTapped() {
    _ = navigationController?.popToRootViewController(animated:
true)
}
```

I don't think we've used **popToRootViewController(animated:)** before, but it's not a difficult method: calling it pops off all the view controllers on a navigation controller's stack, returning us to the original view controller - in our case, that's the "What's that Whistle?" screen with the + button.

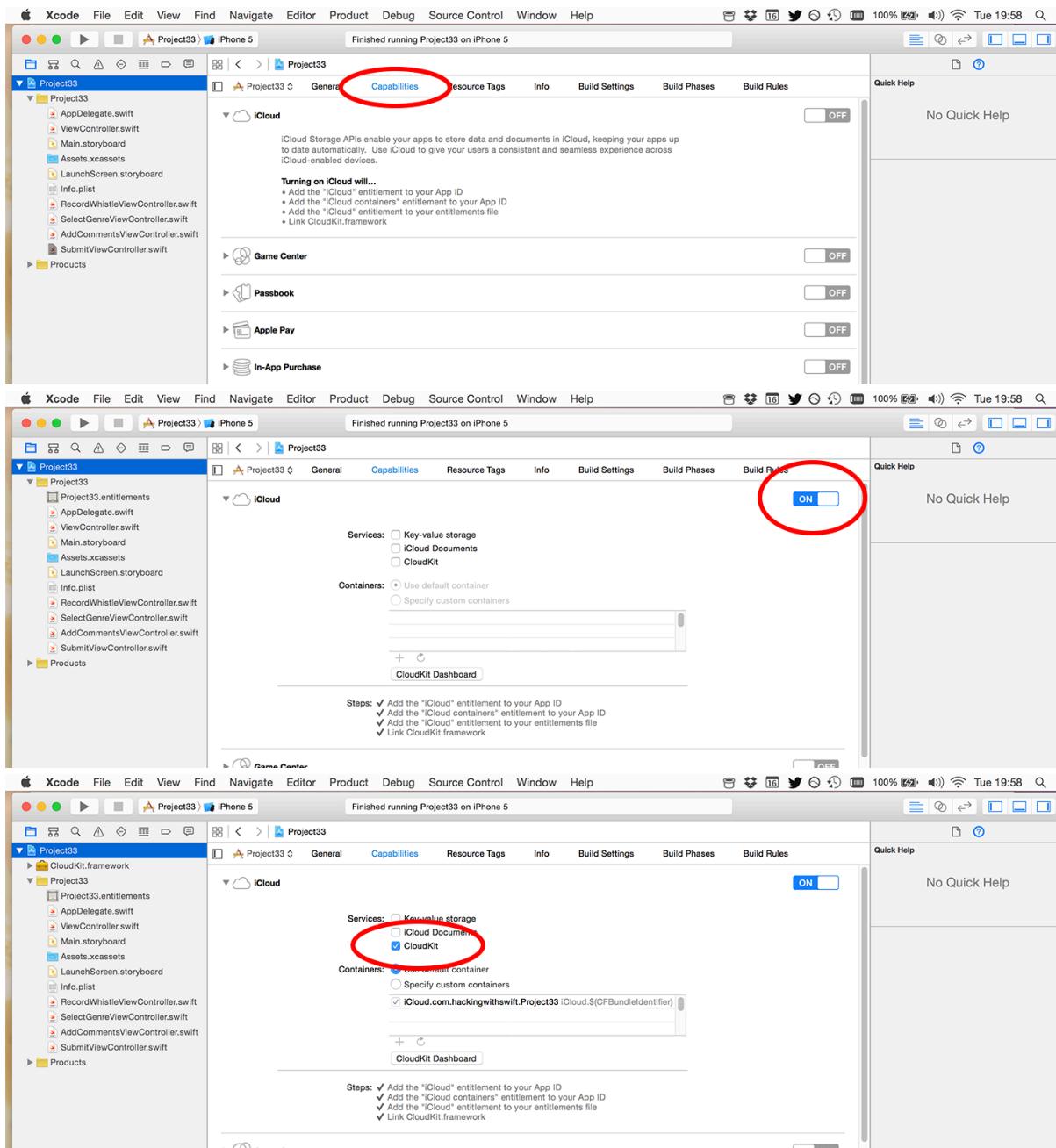
Note: in the code above, I assign the result of **popToRootViewController()** to `_`, which is Swift's way of saying "ignore this thing." This silences an "unused result" warning, because although this method returns the array of view controllers that got removed, we don't *care* about that, so we can throw it away.

OK, time for CloudKit: add this import to SubmitViewController.swift:

```
import CloudKit
```

Once that's done, a whole range of new classes become available for our Swift code, but our app can't use CloudKit just yet. This is because access to iCloud is restricted by Apple, so you need to state that your app wants permission to use iCloud. To do that, click the blue Project33 icon in the Project Navigator pane, then choose your Project33 target. Select the Capabilities tab, then turn iCloud to ON and make sure the CloudKit box is checked.

Writing to iCloud with CloudKit: CKRecord and CKAsset



When you do this, Apple will create an iCloud container for you called something like `iCloud.com.hackingwithswift.Project33`. Now: on your device (or in the simulator) you should make sure you are logged into iCloud and have iCloud Drive enabled. That's it: you're all set to use iCloud!

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

At this point in the project, here's what you need to know about iCloud and CloudKit:

- You create **CKRecord** objects to contain keys and values. They are like a dictionary, just with some extra smarts built in.
- You create **CKAsset** objects to hold binary blobs like our audio recording. You can attach these to a **CKRecord** just like any other value.
- Each app has its own CloudKit container (**CKContainer**), and each container has two databases (**CKDatabase**) called the public and the private database.
- The private database is for storing private user data. Any thing you upload there gets taken out of that user's iCloud quota. The public database is for storing data anyone can read. Any thing you upload there gets taken out of your CloudKit quota.
- When you write data to CloudKit it automatically figures out how to store it based on all the keys and values you provide, and their data types. You can change this later if you want.
- All CloudKit calls are asynchronous, so you provide completion blocks to be executed when the call finishes. This will tell you what went wrong if anything, but the block can be called on any thread so be careful!

Because CloudKit automatically figures out how to store your data, it means we can go ahead and start sending it whistles and whistle meta data and have it stored – no back-end configuration required.

To make things easier to explain, I'm going to split the **doSubmission()** method in two: a part that creates the record to send to iCloud, and a part that handles the result.

The first part is straightforward, because like I said the **CKRecord** class looks and works much like a dictionary: you set any key to any (valid!) value, and it does the rest. By "valid" I mean things that you can normally store in a dictionary: strings, numbers, arrays, dates and so forth. You can even store **CLLocation**s for doing map-based queries – it's surprisingly simple!

You can also store assets inside **CKRecord** objects, which is exactly what we're going to do: the genre and comments are both simple string keys, but the whistle audio itself needs to be uploaded as a **CKAsset** before it's attached. This isn't hard to do, because there's a constructor

method for **CKAsset** that takes a file URL just like we get back from **RecordWhistleViewController.getWhistleURL()**.

One last thing before I show you the code: each **CKRecord** has a record type, which is a string. This is a name you provide and has meaning only to you, but identifies the particular type of data you're trying to save. We're working with whistles, so we'll use the record type "Whistles". Make sure you type it correctly, because it needs to match when you write and read.

That's it – here's the first part of the **doSubmission()** method:

```
let whistleRecord = CKRecord(recordType: "Whistles")
whistleRecord["genre"] = genre as CKRecordValue
whistleRecord["comments"] = comments as CKRecordValue

let audioURL = RecordWhistleViewController.getWhistleURL()
let whistleAsset = CKAsset(fileURL: audioURL)
whistleRecord["audio"] = whistleAsset
```

Note: that code uses the (rare) **as** typecast because Swift doesn't automatically convert strings to **CKRecordValue**.

The second part of the method really isn't hard at all, but it does come with a few important notices. We're going to be using the **save()** method of the CloudKit public database, which sends a **CKRecord** off to iCloud and tell us how it went. The result of this method is handed to us in a trailing closure that can be called on any thread, so the first thing you'll see is that I bounce the code back to the main thread so we can manipulate the user interface.

You'll notice that every CloudKit send method has an **Error** being passed in to the closure, reporting whether there was a problem. It is really important that you don't ignore this: mobile networks vary in strength so actions might fail at any time, plus iCloud itself is a monstrously huge beast where a dozen things could go wrong behind the scenes, leading to your code failing. But that's OK, because you're going to catch the errors and do something sensible,

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

right? Right.

The last important notice is that we'll be setting a property on **ViewController** to be true. This property is called **isDirty** and it doesn't exist just yet, so expect an error.

All set? Here's the second part of **doSubmission()**:

```
CKContainer.default().publicCloudDatabase.save(whistleRecord)
{ [unowned self] record, error in
    DispatchQueue.main.async {
        if let error = error {
            self.status.text = "Error: \
(error.localizedDescription)"
            self.spinner.stopAnimating()
        } else {
            self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor(red: 0, green:
0.6, blue: 0, alpha: 1)
            self.status.text = "Done!"
            self.spinner.stopAnimating()

            ViewController.isDirty = true
        }
    }

    self.navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
UIBarButtonItem(title: "Done", style: .plain, target: self,
action: #selector(self.doneTapped))
}
}
```

As you can see, regardless of whether the operation succeeds or fails we show a "Done" button so the user can escape the screen. This calls the **doneTapped()** method we already wrote. Also, the **isDirty** property belongs to **ViewController**: again, it's a *static* property so we can set it on the whole class rather than trying to find the correct instance of the class.

Writing to iCloud with CloudKit: CKRecord and CKAsset

To silence the final warning, and to make your code build and run, add that static property to ViewController.swift:

```
static var isDirty = true
```

Please go ahead and build your code now, and try submitting a whistle to iCloud. If you see an error at the end asking for an authenticated account, make sure device/simulator has an iCloud account logged in, with iCloud Drive enabled, then try again.

Before we go any further, it's time for a tangent...

A hands-on guide to the CloudKit dashboard

If you already finished all the Hacking with Swift projects so far, you'll know I hate tangents. I'm here to teach you something cool, and I prefer to do that using as little waffle as possible – and tangents are apt to create the Perfect Storm for waffle. But in this case it's important, so please bear with me.

If you haven't already done so, you need to run your app, record a whistle, and tap Submit now. All being well it will work first time (if not you probably missed something!), but how do you know it's worked? I mean really be *sure* that's it worked? And what do you do if you want to change a data type because you made a mistake, or perhaps even delete the whole thing and start again?

Apple has a solution for this, and it's called the CloudKit Dashboard. Now that you have submitted your first record to iCloud, you can launch <https://icloud.developer.apple.com/dashboard> in your web browser and look behind the iCloud curtain as it were. The CloudKit dashboard shows you exactly what data your app is storing, who can access it, and how much of your free quota you're using.

So, just briefly, it's time for a tangent: I want to explain a few things about CloudKit Dashboard, because it's important. Yes, it *is* important – later code won't run unless you read my instructions, so please don't skip ahead.

When you log into CloudKit Dashboard, you may need to select your project from all the others you have. You'll then get a list of the various areas that make up your app, both in development and production. Under the Development environment please choose Data, and you'll move onto the Records tab in a new screen.

There are several tabs here, but for now I'd like you to select Record Types, and you'll see two Record Types already there: Users and Whistles. The first of those will come under the Default Types heading because it was created automatically for you by Apple, and tracks anonymized

A hands-on guide to the CloudKit dashboard

user IDs for your app. The second of these was created by you just a few minutes ago: as soon as you called `save()` CloudKit transformed your record into a database in iCloud, and added your test whistle there.

If you select the Whistles record type you'll see that CloudKit has identified that the comments and genre fields are both strings, and the audio field is an asset. There are also some system fields that CloudKit has created for you: ID, `recordName`, `createdBy`, `createdAt`, `modifiedBy`, `modifiedAt`, and `changeTag`. Some of these are great for searching, but you can't sort using these fields by default.

The screenshot shows the CloudKit Dashboard interface. The top navigation bar includes tabs for ZONES, RECORDS, RECORD TYPES (which is selected), INDEXES, SUBSCRIPTIONS, and SUBSCRIPTION TYPES. The main content area displays the 'Whistles' record type configuration. It lists various fields: 'audio' (Asset), 'comments' (String), 'genre' (String), 'recordName' (System Field, Reference), 'createdBy' (System Field, Reference), 'createdAt' (System Field, Date/Time), 'modifiedBy' (System Field, Reference), 'modifiedAt' (System Field, Date/Time), and 'changeTag' (System Field, String). A note indicates that 'Record types will be automatically created in the development environment when you use the native API to create records of that type.' At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Create New Type', 'Add Field', 'Delete Record Type', and 'Save Record Type'. A status bar at the bottom right shows 'Created: Aug 25 2016 12:21 AM by ...' and 'Modified: Aug 25 2016 12:23 AM by ...'.

We're going to want to sort by the `createdAt` field later on, so please click the Indexes tab, click Add Index, then select `createdAt` and `SORTABLE` for the two dropdowns. While you're there, please also add a `QUERYABLE` index for `recordName`, then click the Save Record Type button in the bottom-right of your browser window to commit those changes.

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

genre	SEARCHABLE	X
genre	SORTABLE	X
createdAt	SORTABLE	X
recordName	QUERYABLE	X
Add Index		

That was the critical stuff needed to continue this tutorial, but there are a few other niceties while you're here:

- Back in Record Types, any of your rows can be deleted by hovering over them and clicking the X on the right-hand side. System rows like **createdBy** cannot be deleted.
- You can add fields by clicking the Add Field button at the end of your own fields, then giving it a name and type.
- You can browse all the data that has been uploaded by going to the Records tab and clicking Query Records.
- When browsing individual records, you'll see links to download or remove the assets attached to the record.
- You'll also see a delete button with the record, which is what you click when you want to delete it.

So, the CloudKit Dashboard is basically a miniature CMS that lets you peek into your data and confirm everything is working OK. But it does one more thing, which is to provide usage data for your app, which is important because CloudKit is free only if you stay below certain usage limits.

To see how much of your quota you're using, click your app's bundle ID in the top bar, then choose Public Database Usage in the development environment. You'll see a scrolling list of charts that show you how many users you have, how many requests per second they've made, how much storage data transfer you're using for assets, and how much database storage you're using. CloudKit shows you a solid line to represent how much you've actually used, then a dashed line to show its projections about how much you're likely to use if current trends continue.

Note that all quota directly depends on the number of users you have – as you add more users,

Apple adds more quota. So, the first graph directly affects all the others.

What these charts don't show is how your usage maps against your quota, and there's a good reason for that: as soon as you add in your quota, your usage becomes so tiny that you won't be able to see it!

So, that's CloudKit Dashboard: it's the perfect debugging tool because it shows you exactly what content is being stored. If the data you see is bad it means your writing code is bad. If the data there is good but your app isn't showing correctly, it means your reading code is bad. Simple!

Tangent over. Back to the code!

Reading from iCloud with CloudKit: CKQueryOperation and NSPredicate

So far our app takes a recording from the microphone using **AVAudioRecorder** and sends it off to iCloud for storage. You should have just seen that data in the CloudKit Dashboard, so the next step is to write the code that pulls recordings back down to the device.

This is where things get a little bit more complicated, but only a little. You see, there are two ways of writing to CloudKit: a core API and a convenience API. The core API exposes every possible behavior of the system, offering effectively unlimited functionality to do what you want. The convenience API takes a subset of those features and simplifies them, making it easier to learn and use but less powerful.

When we wrote records two chapters ago we used the convenience API, but when it comes to reading we're going to use the core API. This isn't because I enjoy torturing you, there is a legitimate reason: when you read data using the convenience API it automatically downloads all the data for each record. Often that's helpful, because it means you have everything you need to show a record's data. But in our case that would mean downloading the audio for every record every time we loaded our data – and that's a huge waste of resources.

Remember, CloudKit gives you a basic quota of about 64MB per day of asset transfer, and you need to be careful not to waste it. One of the features offered by the core API that is absent from the convenience API is the ability to selectively download records. In our case, that means we want the genre and user comments, but not the audio – we'll fetch that separately, as needed.

Go ahead and select ViewController.swift for editing. We're going to be using the CloudKit framework, so please add this import:

```
import CloudKit
```

This view controller is a **UIViewController** subclass right now, but as it's going to contain a list of whistles to view I'd like you to change it to be a **UITableViewController** now. Yes, that includes doing a little work in Main.storyboard: you'll need to delete the existing view controller, replace it with a table view controller, and change its class to be "ViewController". This time, though, there's one more step: you need to Ctrl-drag from the navigation controller to the table view controller, then choose "Root View Controller" under "Relationship Segue."

The new table view controller has a single prototype cell by default, but you can zap it – we'll do it in code this time. To do that, select the table view, go to the attributes inspector, then change Prototype Cells from 1 to 0.

Our table is going to show a series of whistles to users, letting them see at a glance the genre and user comments before choosing which whistle to listen to. To make this work we're going to create a new class called **Whistle** that will store those two fields, but also a **URL** for where the audio is stored when it's downloaded, and the CloudKit record ID that identifies the whistle in iCloud so we can work with it.

In Swift there is usually a discussion as to whether a class or a struct is the right approach when considering data types, but here we have no choice as you'll see later: it needs to be a class.

Create a new file, choose Cocoa Touch Class, name it Whistle, then make it subclass from NSObject. It doesn't need much code in there, but it does need to use the CloudKit framework. Change the contents of Whistle.swift to this:

```
import CloudKit
import UIKit

class Whistle: NSObject {
    var recordID: CKRecord.ID!
    var genre: String!
    var comments: String!
    var audio: URL!
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

}

Back in ViewController.swift, we need a property that will store an array of Whistle objects so that we can show them in our table view. This is as simple as adding the following property:

```
var whistles = [Whistle]()
```

Every time the view is shown we're going to refresh our data from iCloud using a **loadWhistles()** method. That one does all the complicated CloudKit work so we're going to leave it to last, but we can at least write **viewWillAppear()** and put in a stub for **loadWhistles()**. The **viewWillAppear()** method is going to clear the table view's selection if it has one, then it will use the **isDirty** flag we made earlier to call **loadWhistles()** only if it's needed.

Here's the code:

```
override func viewWillAppear(_ animated: Bool) {
    super.viewWillAppear(animated)

    if let indexPath = tableView.indexPathForSelectedRow {
        tableView.deselectRow(at: indexPath, animated: true)
    }

    if ViewController.isDirty {
        loadWhistles()
    }
}

func loadWhistles() {
```

For the table view, we're going to use some techniques first seen in project 32, which was my Core Spotlight and SFSafariViewController tutorial. Specifically, we're going to use

Reading from iCloud with CloudKit: CKQueryOperation and NSPredicate

NSAttributedString to show text neatly formatted, then use automatic **UITableViewCell** sizing to make each cell fit its contents.

Let's start by using an almost identical **makeAttributedString()** method here, except this version doesn't try to add space for user comments if there aren't any:

```
func makeAttributedString(title: String, subtitle: String) ->
NSAttributedString {
    let titleAttributes = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:
        UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .headline),
        NSAttributedString.Key.foregroundColor: UIColor.purple]
    let subtitleAttributes = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:
        UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .subheadline)]
    
    let titleString = NSMutableAttributedString(string: "\\" +
        (title)", attributes: titleAttributes)

    if subtitle.count > 0 {
        let subtitleString = NSAttributedString(string: "\n\\" +
        (subtitle)", attributes: subtitleAttributes)
        titleString.append(subtitleString)
    }

    return titleString
}
```

Just like in project 32, that uses Dynamic Type to ensure user font choices are respected. Putting that into each table view cell is identical to project 32, except here we're modifying the **numberOfLines** property by hand because we don't have prototype cells to work with:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
"Cell", for: indexPath)
    cell.accessoryType = .disclosureIndicator
    cell.textLabel?.attributedText =
makeAttributedString(title: whistles[indexPath.row].genre,
subtitle: whistles[indexPath.row].comments)
    cell.textLabel?.numberOfLines = 0
    return cell
}
```

To make that code work, you'll need to register the "Cell" re-use identifier in **viewDidLoad()**, like this:

```
tableView.register(UITableViewCell.self,
forCellReuseIdentifier: "Cell")
```

And now we need one very simple method to tell iOS how many rows we need:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
    return self.whistles.count
}
```

I know – this is all a bit easy now, right? Well, the next part isn't, because the next part is where CloudKit comes in. To make this work you're going to need to meet a few new classes:

- **NSPredicate** describes a filter that we'll use to decide which results to show.
- **NSSortDescriptor** tells CloudKit which field we want to sort on, and whether we want it ascending or descending.
- **CKQuery** combines a predicate and sort descriptors with the name of the record type we want to query. That will be "Whistles" for us, if you remember.
- **CKQueryOperation** is the work horse of CloudKit data fetching, executing a query and returning results.

Reading from iCloud with CloudKit: CKQueryOperation and NSPredicate

What complicates **CKQueryOperation** – and at the same time makes it so incredibly powerful – is that it has two separate closures attached to it. One streams records to you as they are downloaded, and one is called when all the records have been downloaded. To handle this, we're going to create a new array that will hold the whistles as they are parsed, and use it inside both closures.

As I said already, one of the advantages of this core API is that we can request only the record keys we want, but it also lets us specify how many results we want to receive from iCloud. Putting all this together, we can write the first part of **loadWhistles()**:

```
func loadWhistles() {
    let pred = NSPredicate(value: true)
    let sort = NSSortDescriptor(key: "creationDate", ascending:
false)
    let query = CKQuery(recordType: "Whistles", predicate: pred)
    query.sortDescriptors = [sort]

    let operation = CKQueryOperation(query: query)
    operation.desiredKeys = ["genre", "comments"]
    operation.resultsLimit = 50

    var newWhistles = [Whistle]()

    // more to come here
}
```

Our use of **NSPredicate** is trivial right now: we just say "all records that match true," which means "all records." Notice how we set the **desiredKeys** property to be an array of the record keys we want – that's what makes this API so useful.

The next part of the method is going to set a **recordFetchedBlock** closure on our **CKQueryOperation** object. This will be given one **CKRecord** value for every record that gets downloaded, and we'll convert that into a **Whistle** object. This means pulling out the

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

record ID for the **recordID** property, then reading the **genre** and **comments** values of the dictionary. Both those two values must be converted to strings, because by default they come out as the data type **CKRecordValue**.

Here's the next part of **loadWhistles()** – replace the **// more to come here** comment with this:

```
operation.recordFetchedBlock = { record in
    let whistle = Whistle()
    whistle.recordID = record.recordID
    whistle.genre = record["genre"]
    whistle.comments = record["comments"]
    newWhistles.append(whistle)
}
```

At this point, the last part isn't too hard: we're going to set a **queryCompletionBlock** closure for the query operation. This will be called by CloudKit when all records have been downloaded, and will be given two parameters: a query cursor and an error if there was one. The query cursor is useful if you want to implement paging, because you can use that query cursor to have CloudKit show the next 50 rows, then the next 50 rows, and so on.

We won't be using the cursor here, but we do want to know whether there was any error. Additionally, error or not, we're going to be doing user interface work and this closure might be run on any thread, so we need to push all the work onto the main thread.

And what is that work? Well, if there was no error we're going to overwrite our current **whistles** array with the **newWhistles** array that was built up from downloaded records. We also need to clear the **isDirty** flag so we know the update was fetch, then reload the table view. If there was an error, we'll show a **UIAlertController** with a meaningful message to help you debug.

Here's the third part of **loadWhistles()**:

```
operation.queryCompletionBlock = { [unowned self] (cursor,
error) in
```

Reading from iCloud with CloudKit: CKQueryOperation and NSPredicate

```
DispatchQueue.main.async {
    if error == nil {
        ViewController.isDirty = false
        self.whistles = newWhistles
        self.tableView.reloadData()
    } else {
        let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Fetch failed",
message: "There was a problem fetching the list of whistles;
please try again: \(error!.localizedDescription)",
preferredStyle: .alert)
        ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK",
style: .default))
        self.present(ac, animated: true)
    }
}
```

The last part of the method is the easiest: now that we've created a query, added it to a **CKQueryOperation**, then configured its two closures to handle downloading data, it's just a matter of asking CloudKit to run it. Put this at the end of the method, and you're done:

```
CKContainer.default().publicCloudDatabase.add(operation)
```

At this point your code is in a working state, so you should be able to run the app now and see the whistle you submitted earlier listed in the table. If not, you should see an error that gives you an idea of what went wrong. Some things to check:

- Did you see your data in the CloudKit Dashboard?
- Did you name your record type "Whistles" when writing and reading?
- For the Metadata Indexes, did you select Query next to ID, and Sort next to Date Created?
- Is your device definitely online?

Working with CloudKit records: **CKRecord.Reference**, **fetch(withRecordID:)**, and **save()**

I promised this was going to be a thorough CloudKit tutorial, and I'm going to keep that promise over the next two chapters, starting here: we're going to learn about references and records, as well as the **fetch(withRecordID:)** convenience API.

So far, our app records whistles using **AVAudioRecorder**, submits it to CloudKit, then shows all whistles into a table view. The next step is to let users tap a whistle that interests them so they can see more information, and in our case that will show the user's comments, any suggestions submitted by other users, and a Listen button that downloads the whistle.

The valuable thing about this screen is that it gives me a chance to show you the **CKRecord.Reference** class, which is used to link records together. Specifically, we're going to build what's called a one-to-many relationship: one whistle can have many suggestions attached to it. Using **CKRecord.Reference** let us query to find all suggestions for a specific whistle, but it has another brilliant advantage known as *cascade deletes*: if we delete a whistle from our database, iCloud will automatically delete any suggestions that belong to it.

Now, an important warning: as each whistle holds multiple suggestions, and each suggestion is just going to be a string saying something like "I think this is the theme tune from Star Wars," you might be tempted to think "ah, that means our whistle should have an array of strings attached to its record." If you try that, it'll work, and it'll work great – in testing. But when it comes to shipping apps, this approach hits a core problem: conflicts.

A conflict occurs when CloudKit receives two sets of different information, and it's something that record arrays are particularly prone to. You see, if I get the record and it has no suggestions, I might write "that's the Star Wars theme tune." But before I hit Submit, you also download the record, see that it has no suggestions, and write "That's totally the theme tune to a big movie, but I can't remember which one," then hit Submit straight away. In iCloud, that

Working with CloudKit records: CKRecord.Reference, fetch(withRecordID:), and save()

record is now updated to have your (quite useless!) suggestion, so when I submit mine there's a conflict: I'm telling CloudKit the record has one suggestion (mine) and CloudKit thinks it already had one suggestion (yours), so it isn't sure what to do.

Conflict resolution isn't something CloudKit handles for you, because the correct answer depends on your app. In this case, the correct answer is to merge both the arrays, but really the whole premise is bad – using arrays to reference child objects like this is a terrible idea. This method of referencing is known as forward references, and as you can see it's error-prone. A much better solution are back references, which are where our Whistle record doesn't keep track of its suggestions; instead, the suggestions all know which whistle own it. So, the references go from the child back to the parent, rather than from the parent forward to its child.

Enough theory – time for action. Create a new **UITableViewController** subclass called **ResultsController**. This will need to import AVFoundation so we can listen to whistles, and also CloudKit so we can download whistle audio and any user suggestions. So, add these imports now:

```
import AVFoundation  
import CloudKit
```

The view controller will need three extra properties: a **Whistle** object that will pass in whichever whistle object was selected in the main view controller, an array of strings for the suggestions (these are *not* stored in the whistle record, remember!), and an **AVAudioPlayer** object that will be used to play the downloaded whistle. Add these now:

```
var whistle: Whistle!  
var suggestions = [String]()  
  
var whistlePlayer: AVAudioPlayer!
```

Now let's talk about user interface. This is a **UITableViewController** subclass, because we have structured data that fits neatly into a table view. It's going to have two sections: one for showing the user's comments in big text, and one for showing user suggestions.

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

We're going to use a new method called **titleForHeaderInSection**, which lets us provide a title for the second section so that users can see what it's supposed to do. More importantly, the second section is going to have as many rows as there are suggestions, with one extra: a row that says "Add suggestion" so that users can tap that and suggest their own matches for the whistle. That last row will be the only one that responds to taps, so we'll set the **selectionStyle** of the other cells to be **.none**.

All the cells in this table view will have their **numberOfLines** property set to 0 so that lines wrap, which in turn means they will automatically expand their cells to fit as much content as they have. That explains all the code, so please put this code into ResultsViewController.swift:

```
override func numberOfSections(in tableView: UITableView) -> Int {
    return 2
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
    titleForHeaderInSection section: Int) -> String? {
    if section == 1 {
        return "Suggested songs"
    }

    return nil
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
    numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
    if section == 0 {
        return 1
    } else {
        return suggestions.count + 1
    }
}
```

Working with CloudKit records: CKRecord.Reference, fetch(withRecordID:), and save()

```

}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Cell", for: indexPath)
    cell.selectionStyle = .none
    cell.textLabel?.numberOfLines = 0

    if indexPath.section == 0 {
        // the user's comments about this whistle
        cell.textLabel?.font =
        UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .title1)

        if whistle.comments.count == 0 {
            cell.textLabel?.text = "Comments: None"
        } else {
            cell.textLabel?.text = whistle.comments
        }
    } else {
        cell.textLabel?.font =
        UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .body)

        if indexPath.row == suggestions.count {
            // this is our extra row
            cell.textLabel?.text = "Add suggestion"
            cell.selectionStyle = .gray
        } else {
            cell.textLabel?.text = suggestions[indexPath.row]
        }
    }
}

```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
    return cell  
}
```

At this point your iOS career, every line of that should be second nature – I'm only repeating it here to help jog your memory. The real work happens when a user taps on the "Add suggestion" table view cell. This code needs to show a **UIAlertController** with a text field prompting the user to enter their suggestion. This code is a bit clumsy: if you haven't already read my addTextField tutorial that was inside project 5, that's a good place to start.

To summarize, here's what we're going to do:

- We're going to hook into the **didSelectRowAt** method of our table view, which will be triggered when any row is tapped.
- If the row that was tapped was not the last row in the second section (the "Add suggestion" row) we'll exit the method.
- We'll create a **UIAlertController** in the style **.alert**, then add a text field to it.
- We'll add a Submit button to the alert that, when tapped, will submit the suggestion if the text field has any text.
- Because we configure the text field in one closure and submit it in another, we need to create it outside of both – just like in project 5.
- As an added touch, we're going to deselect the row that was tapped, making it highlighted only temporarily.

Here's the code:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
didSelectRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) {  
    guard indexPath.section == 1 && indexPath.row ==  
suggestions.count else { return }  
  
    tableView.deselectRow(at: indexPath, animated: true)  
  
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Suggest a song...",
```

Working with CloudKit records: CKRecord.Reference, fetch(withRecordID:),
and save()

```
message: nil, preferredStyle: .alert)

ac.addTextField()

ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Submit", style: .default)
{ [unowned self, ac] action in
    if let textField = ac.textFields?[0] {
        if textField.text!.count > 0 {
            self.add(suggestion: textField.text!)
        }
    }
} )

ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Cancel", style: .cancel))
present(ac, animated: true)
}
```

Don't worry that `self.add(suggestion: suggestion.text!)` will error at this point – we haven't written that yet.

It's time for some CloudKit action again, and this time we're going to be using the **CKRecord.Reference** class to link a user's suggestion to the whistle they were reading about. When you create a **CKRecord.Reference** you need to provide it two things: a record ID to link to, and a behavior to trigger when that linked record is deleted. We already have the record ID to link to because we're storing it in the **whistle** property, and for the action to trigger we'll use **.deleteSelf** – when the parent whistle is deleted, delete the child suggestions too.

CKRecord.Reference, like **CKAssets**, can be placed directly into a **CKRecord**, which means the first part of **add(suggestion:)** is easy:

```
func add(suggestion: String) {
    let whistleRecord = CKRecord(recordType: "Suggestions")
    let reference = CKRecord.Reference(recordID:
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
whistle.recordID, action: .deleteSelf)
whistleRecord["text"] = suggestion as CKRecordValue
whistleRecord["owningWhistle"] = reference as CKRecordValue

// more code to come!
}
```

Note that I'm using the name "Suggestions" as the record type for our user suggestions, and **owningWhistle** as the key for that reference value.

The second part of **add(suggestion:)** isn't much more difficult, because we'll use **save()** to post that new record back to iCloud, then check for errors.

Remember: CloudKit tells us when the save completes by executing our code as a closure, and that could be running on any thread. We want to either reload the table view or show a message depending on whether there was an error, but regardless this work needs to be pushed to the main thread as it involves user interface changes.

Here's the second part of **add(suggestion:)** – put this where the **more code to come!** comment is:

```
CKContainer.default().publicCloudDatabase.save(whistleRecord)
{ [unowned self] record, error in
    DispatchQueue.main.async {
        if error == nil {
            self.suggestions.append(suggestion)
            self.tableView.reloadData()
        } else {
            let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Error", message:
                "There was a problem submitting your suggestion: \
                (\(error!.localizedDescription))", preferredStyle: .alert)
            ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK",
                style: .default))
        }
    }
}
```

Working with CloudKit records: CKRecord.Reference, fetch(withRecordID:), and save()

```
    self.present(ac, animated: true)
}
}
}
```

Note that I append the user's new suggestion to the existing **suggestions** array so they see it has been posted successfully.

There are two more tasks to do before this view controller is complete. First, when the view is loaded, we need to fetch the existing list of user suggestions and show them in the table. Second, we need to let users download and listen to each whistle so they can try to guess what it is.

To download all suggestions that belong to a particular whistle we need to create another **CKRecord.Reference**, just like before. We can then pass that into an **NSPredicate** that will check for suggestions where **owningWhistle** matches that predicate. This time we're going to sort by **creationDate** ascending so that oldest suggestions appear first, but otherwise this isn't tricky – here's the first part of the new **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    title = "Genre: \(whistle.genre!)"
    navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:
    "Download", style: .plain, target: self, action:
    #selector(downloadTapped))

    tableView.register(UITableViewCell.self,
    forCellReuseIdentifier: "Cell")

    let reference = CKRecord.Reference(recordID:
    whistle.recordID, action: .deleteSelf)
    let pred = NSPredicate(format: "owningWhistle == %@",
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
reference)

let sort = NSSortDescriptor(key: "creationDate", ascending:
true)
let query = CKQuery(recordType: "Suggestions", predicate:
pred)
query.sortDescriptors = [sort]

// more code to come!
```

When it comes to running this query, we can aren't going to take the same approach from the last chapter: **CKQueryOperation** isn't needed here because we want all the fields, which means we can use the much easier convenience API: **performQuery()**. Tell this method what query to run and where it should be run (or nil for the default), and it will return back either results or an error.

The remainder of **viewDidLoad()** is easy thanks to this convenience API, although I have cheated a bit by calling out to an as-yet unwritten **parseResults()** method. Here it is:

```
CKContainer.default().publicCloudDatabase.perform(query,
inZoneWith: nil) { [unowned self] results, error in
    if let error = error {
        print(error.localizedDescription)
    } else {
        if let results = results {
            self.parseResults(records: results)
        }
    }
}
```

If that fails to fetch the suggestions, it prints a message to the Xcode log – see if you can have a go at making it a bit smarter.

The last step in handling suggestions is to write that **parseResults** method. This gets called

Working with CloudKit records: CKRecord.Reference, fetch(withRecordID:), and save()

once the record results array has been unwrapped, so we know we'll definitely get a list of records through. It's then just a matter of looping through that array, pulling out the **text** property of each record, and adding it to our **suggestions** string array. To make things safer on multiple threads, we'll actually use an intermediate array called **newSuggestions** – it's never smart to modify data in a background thread that is being used on the main thread.

Here's the **parseResults()** method:

```
func parseResults(records: [CKRecord]) {
    var newSuggestions = [String]()

    for record in records {
        newSuggestions.append(record["text"] as! String)
    }

    DispatchQueue.main.async { [unowned self] in
        self.suggestions = newSuggestions
        self.tableView.reloadData()
    }
}
```

The final task for this view controller is to let users download and listen to whistles from other users. We already set up a right bar button item named "Download" in **viewDidLoad()**, but we haven't yet written the **downloadTapped()** method it will call.

This new method needs to:

1. Replace the button with a spinner so the user knows the data is being fetched.
2. Ask CloudKit to pull down the full record for the whistle, including the audio.
3. If it successfully gets audio for the whistle, attach it to the **Whistle** object of this view controller.
4. Create a new right bar button item that says "Listen" and will call **listenTapped()**.
5. If something goes wrong, show a meaningful error message and put the Download button

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

back.

Fetching whole records is done through a simple CloudKit convenience API: **fetch(withRecordID:)**. Once that fetches the complete whistle record, we can pull out the **CKAsset** and read its **fileURL** property to know where CloudKit downloaded it to. Please note: this download is just a cache – CloudKit will automatically remove downloaded files at a later date.

Remember, all user interface work needs to be pushed onto the main thread, and you should be careful to handle your CloudKit errors properly. I put a comment in this code that you should replace with an error of your choosing – don't forget!

Here's the **downloadTapped()** method:

```
@objc func downloadTapped() {
    let spinner = UIActivityIndicatorView(style: .gray)
    spinner.tintColor = UIColor.black
    spinner.startAnimating()
    navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
    UIBarButtonItem(customView: spinner)

    CKContainer.default().publicCloudDatabase.fetch(withRecordID:
whistle.recordID) { [unowned self] record, error in
        if let error = error {
            DispatchQueue.main.async {
                // meaningful error message here!
                self.navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
                UIBarButtonItem(title: "Download", style: .plain, target: self,
action: #selector(self.downloadTapped))
            }
        } else {
            if let record = record {

```

Working with CloudKit records: CKRecord.Reference, fetch(withRecordID:), and save()

```
        if let asset = record["audio"] as? CKAsset {
            self.whistle.audio = asset.fileURL

            DispatchQueue.main.async {
                self.navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
                    UIBarButtonItem(title: "Listen", style: .plain, target: self,
action: #selector(self.listenTapped))
            }
        }
    }
}
```

There's only one more thing to do before this view controller is complete, and that's to write the `listenTapped()` method. This is almost identical to the "Tap to Play" button we already used in **RecordWhistleViewController**, so I'm not going to explain what it does here:

```
@objc func listenTapped() {
    do {
        whistlePlayer = try AVAudioPlayer(contentsOf:
whistle.audio)
        whistlePlayer.play()
    } catch {
        let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Playback failed",
message: "There was a problem playing your whistle; please try
re-recording.", preferredStyle: .alert)
        ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
        present(ac, animated: true)
    }
}
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

That's **ResultsController** complete. All you need to do now is go back to ViewController.swift and tell it to show a new **ResultsController** when any whistle is tapped, passing in the **Whistle** object so it knows what to show:

```
func tableView(tableView: UITableView, didSelectRowAtIndexPath indexPath: IndexPath) {
    let vc = ResultsViewController()
    vc.whistle = whistles[indexPath.row]
    navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated: true)
}
```

Go ahead and run the app now, then submit a suggestion for your whistle. Once that's done, go to the CloudKit Dashboard to make sure the record type was created as expected (i.e., that everything works!), then check the Metadata Indexes boxes next to Query for ID and Sort for Date Created, just like you did for Whistles.

Delivering notifications with CloudKit push messages: CKQuerySubscription

You're probably feeling very tired at this point: this has been a long tutorial and you've had to learn a lot. Fortunately, this last chapter is a bonus – you don't need to read this to have a great CloudKit app, but I do add some neat CloudKit technologies here that make the whole experience better.

So far, the app lets users record a whistle using **AVAudioRecorder**, send it off to CloudKit, download whistles others have posted, then write suggestions for what song they think it is. What we're going to add now is the ability for users to register themselves as experts for particular genres - they can say "I know all about jazz and blues music." When they do that, we'll automatically tell them when a new whistle has been posted in one of those categories, and they can jump right into the app to have a go at identifying it.

We're going to do this with one of the most important technologies in iOS, called push notifications. These are alerts that are delivered straight to the lock screens of users whenever something interesting happens, and the app usually isn't running at the time. Push is so important to iOS that it comes built into CloudKit, and it's done so elegantly that this tutorial will be over in no time. In short: don't worry, the end is in sight!

Create a new **UITableViewController** subclass called **MyGenresViewController**. Add a CloudKit import to it, then add this property:

```
var myGenres: [String]!
```

We'll use that to track the list of genres the user considers themselves an expert on.

Before we start adding code to this new view controller, we need to make two small changes in `ViewController.swift`. First, add this in **viewDidLoad()**:

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
navigationItem.leftBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:  
    "Genres", style: .plain, target: self, action:  
    #selector(selectGenre))
```

Second, add the following method that allows users to choose genres:

```
@objc func selectGenre() {  
    let vc = MyGenresViewController()  
    navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated: true)  
}
```

Now, back to `MyGenresViewController.swift`. We can split this code into two parts: all the bits that handle users selecting their experts genres and saving that list, and the CloudKit part that tells iCloud we want to be notified when a new whistle has been published that might be of interest to this user.

Letting the user choose which genres interest them is easy: we're going to use **UserDefaults** to save an array of their expert genres. If there isn't one already saved, we'll create an empty array. We're also going to use a right bar button item with the title "Save" that handles the CloudKit synchronization. More on that later; for now, here's the `viewDidLoad()` method that handles loading saved genres:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {  
    super.viewDidLoad()  
  
    let defaults = UserDefaults.standard  
    if let savedGenres = defaults.object(forKey: "myGenres") as?  
        [String] {  
        myGenres = savedGenres  
    } else {  
        myGenres = [String]()  
    }
```

Delivering notifications with CloudKit push messages: CKQuerySubscription

```
title = "Notify me about..."
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:
"Save", style: .plain, target: self, action:
#selector(saveTapped))
tableView.register(UITableViewCell.self,
forCellReuseIdentifier: "Cell")
}
```

When it comes to how many sections and rows we have, we're going to specify 1 and the value of **SelectGenreViewController.genres.count** – that static property contains all the genres used in the app, so re-using it here is perfect:

```
override func numberOfSections(in tableView: UITableView) ->
Int {
    return 1
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
    return SelectGenreViewController.genres.count
}
```

Now for the interesting part: we want users to be able to tap on rows that they like, and have iOS show a checkmark next to them. Once a genre is added to the **myGenres** array, we can check whether it's in there using the **contains()** of that array – if the array contains the genre, we put a check next to it.

Here's the **cellForRowAt** method that does just that:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt
indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:
"Cell", for: indexPath)
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
let genre = SelectGenreViewController.genres[indexPath.row]
cell.textLabel?.text = genre

if myGenres.contains(genre) {
    cell.accessoryType = .checkmark
} else {
    cell.accessoryType = .none
}

return cell
}
```

The other part of this approach is catching **didSelectRowAt** so that we check and uncheck rows as they are tapped, adding and removing them from the **myGenres** array as necessary. Adding things to an array is as simple as calling the **append()** method on the array, but removing takes a little more hassle: we need to use **firstIndex(of:)** to find the location of an item in the array, and if that returns a value then we use **remove(at:)** to remove the item from the array at that index.

As a finishing touch, we'll call **deselectRow(at:)** to deselect the selected row, so it highlights only briefly. That's all there is to it – here's the **didSelectRowAt** method:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
didSelectRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) {
    if let cell = tableView.cellForRow(at: indexPath) {
        let selectedGenre =
SelectGenreViewController.genres[indexPath.row]

        if cell.accessoryType == .none {
            cell.accessoryType = .checkmark
            myGenres.append(selectedGenre)
        } else {
```

Delivering notifications with CloudKit push messages: CKQuerySubscription

```
cell.accessoryType = .none

if let index = myGenres.firstIndex(of: selectedGenre)
{
    myGenres.remove(at: index)
}

}

}

tableView.deselectRow(at: indexPath, animated: false)
}
```

And now for the challenging part: when users click Save, we want to write their list of genres to **UserDefaults**, then send them all to iCloud. Then, when new whistles arrive that match a user's selected genres, we want to notify them with a push message.

Thanks to what was I'm sure many months of effort from Apple engineers, registering for push messages is a breeze thanks to a class called **CKQuerySubscription**. This lets you configure a query to run on the iCloud servers, and as soon as that query matches something it will automatically trigger a push message. In our case, that query will be "when anyone publishes a whistle in a genre we care about."

But first: we need to flush out any existing subscriptions so that we don't get duplicate errors. In the interests of keeping it brief, the easiest way to do this is by calling **fetchAllSubscriptions()** to fetch all **CKQuerySubscriptions**, then passing each of them into **delete(withSubscriptionID:)**. As always, it's up to you to do useful error handling – I've done it enough for you already, so you're most of the way there.

Note: the two parameters you get from **fetchAllSubscriptions()** are an optional array of subscriptions and an error if one occurred. You need to unwrap the optional array, because the user might not have any subscriptions. Here's an initial version of **saveTapped()**:

```
@objc func saveTapped() {
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
let defaults = UserDefaults.standard
defaults.set(myGenres, forKey: "myGenres")

let database = CKContainer.default().publicCloudDatabase

database.fetchAllSubscriptions { [unowned self]
    subscriptions, error in
    if error == nil {
        if let subscriptions = subscriptions {
            for subscription in subscriptions {
                database.delete(withSubscriptionID:
                    subscription.subscriptionID) { str, error in
                    if error != nil {
                        // do your error handling here!
                        print(error!.localizedDescription)
                    }
                }
            }
        }
    }
    // more code to come!
}
} else {
    // do your error handling here!
    print(error!.localizedDescription)
}
}
```

Again, please do put in some user-facing error messages telling users what's going on – they won't see the Xcode log messages, and it's important to keep them informed.

There's just one more thing to do before this entire project is done, and that's registering

Delivering notifications with CloudKit push messages: CKQuerySubscription

subscriptions with iCloud and handling the result. You tell it what condition to match and what message to send, then call the `save()` method, and you're done – iCloud takes care of the rest. Normally you'd need to opt into push messages and create a push certificate, but again Xcode and iCloud have taken away all this work when you enabled CloudKit what feels like long ago.

To make this work, we're going to loop through each string in the `myGenres` array, create a predicate that searches for it, then use that to create a `CKQuerySubscription` using the option `.firesOnRecordCreation`. That means we want this subscription to be informed when any record is created that matches our genre predicate.

If you want to attach a visible message to a push notification, you need to create a `CKSubscription.NotificationInfo` object and set its `alertBody` property. If you want an invisible push (one that launches your app in the background silently) you should set `shouldSendContentAvailable` to be true instead.

We're going to set a notification message that contains the genre that changed by using Swift's string interpolation. We're also going to use the value `default` for the `soundName` property, which will trigger the default iOS tri-tone sound when the message arrives. With that done, we can call `save()` to send it off to iCloud, then handle any error messages that come back.

That's it – here's the code to put in place of the **more code to come!** comment:

```
for genre in self.myGenres {
    let predicate = NSPredicate(format:"genre = %@", genre)
    let subscription = CKQuerySubscription(recordType:
    "Whistles", predicate: predicate,
    options: .firesOnRecordCreation)

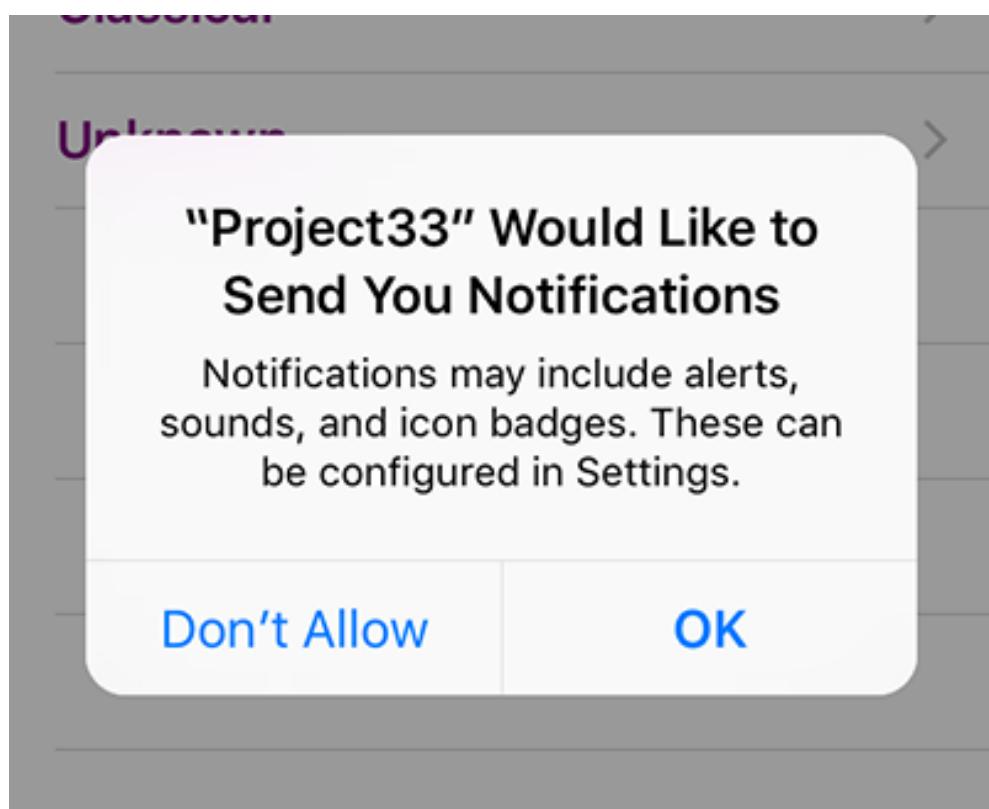
    let notification = CKSubscription.NotificationInfo()
    notification.alertBody = "There's a new whistle in the \
    (genre) genre."
    notification.soundName = "default"
```

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
subscription.notificationInfo = notification

database.save(subscription) { result, error in
    if let error = error {
        print(error.localizedDescription)
    }
}
```

If you run the app now you'll be able to save your genre preferences and send them off to iCloud, but you won't get any push messages through just yet. That's because although iCloud is now totally configured to send push messages when interesting things happened, the user hasn't opted in to receive them. As you might imagine, Apple doesn't want to send push messages to users who haven't explicitly opted in to receive them, so we need to ask for push message permission.



Delivering notifications with CloudKit push messages: CKQuerySubscription

Go to AppDelegate.swift and add an import for the UserNotifications framework:

```
import UserNotifications
```

Now put this code into the **didFinishLaunchingWithOptions** method, before the **return true** line:

```
UNUserNotificationCenter.current().requestAuthorization(options: [.alert, .sound, .badge]) { granted, error in
    if let error = error {
        print("D'oh: \(error.localizedDescription)")
    } else {
        application.registerForRemoteNotifications()
    }
}
```

That requests permission to show alerts to the user, with a small error message being printed if something goes wrong. If there was no error, we call **registerForRemoteNotifications()**, which creates a unique device token that can be used to message this device. That device token is silently handed off to CloudKit, so we don't need to do anything other than request it.

For the sake of completeness, it's worth adding that if a remote notification arrives while the app is already running, it will be silently ignored. If you want to force iOS to show the alert you must do three things:

1. Make the **AppDelegate** class conform to **UNUserNotificationCenterDelegate**.
2. Set your app delegate to be the delegate for the user notification center.
3. Implement user notification center delegate's **willPresent** method, calling its completion handler with how you want the alert shown.

To satisfy step 2, add this line of code before **return true** inside the app delegate's **didFinishLaunchingWithOptions** method:

Project 33: What's that Whistle?

```
UNUserNotificationCenter.current().delegate = self
```

For step 3, if you want the alert, sound, and badge of the notification to be shown even when the app is already running, you'd add this method to the app delegate:

```
func userNotificationCenter(_ center: UNUserNotificationCenter,  
willPresent notification: UNNotification, withCompletionHandler  
completionHandler: @escaping  
(UNNotificationPresentationOptions) -> Void) {  
    completionHandler([.alert, .sound, .badge])  
}
```

If you want only part of the notification to be used, just change the array being passed to **completionHandler()**.

That's it. No, really – this epic project is now done. Go ahead and run the app on a real iOS device, register for certain genres, then quit the app – unplug your phone, lock it, and put it to one side. Now launch the app in the simulator and create a new whistle in one of the genre you just marked, and you'll get your push.

Wrap up

This was an epic tutorial: epic in length, epic in breadth, and I hope you'll agree epic in what we've accomplished. You've built another real app, you've learned about **AVAudioRecorder**, **CKQuery**, **CKRecord**, **CKAsset**, **CKQueryOperation**, **CKQuerySubscription**, **NSPredicate**, **NSSortDescriptor** and more, while also having some bonus practice working with **UIStackView**, **UITableView** and **NSAttributedString**.

So yes, the tutorial was long, but even though you're tired I'd like to think you're pleased with the end result. Take a break, perhaps even a couple of days, then come back and have a think about how you could improve this project. It's so big there are lots of possibilities, not least:

- If the iCloud fetch fails, we tell the user. How about adding a "Retry" button to the user interface?
- We made the **Whistle** class inherit from **NSObject**. Can you make it conform to the **NSCoding** protocol? You might find project 12's guide to NSCoding and UserDefaults in Swift useful.
- Fix the **AddCommentsViewController** class so that it correctly adjusts the text view when the keyboard appears. I already showed you how to do this in project 16.
- Stop people from posting too many line breaks in their comments, or at least trim the comments when shown in the main table view.

Of course, the other thing you could do is perhaps the most important of all: go back through all your code and make sure you handle CloudKit errors gracefully. Seriously, put your hand in the air and repeat after me: I promise to show meaningful iCloud errors to my users.

Now, I know you didn't actually do that, but you really ought to at least *mean* it. As Apple has said, handling errors is the difference between working apps and non-working apps, and you don't want a non-working app, do you?

Project 34

Four in a Row

Let iOS take over the AI in your games using GameplayKit AI.

Setting up

One of the most powerful features Apple introduced in iOS 9 is called GameplayKit. It's a library designed to handle non-drawing game functionality such as artificial intelligence, path finding and randomness, and it is pretty dazzling in its scope, so I was really looking forward to write a tutorial about it.

In this project, we're going to create a Four-in-a-Row (4IR) game, and I'm going to be honest with you: I've cheated a bit. You see, Apple already released some sample code for a 4IR game based on GameplayKit, and it works pretty well.

Why, then, am I choosing to write a tutorial based on it? Well, for some reason known only to Apple, the source code for the project isn't up to their usual standard. Not only is it in Objective-C, but it includes arcane C functions like `memcpy()`, it uses **CABasicAnimation** and **CAShapeLayer** when regular **UIView** functionality would do, and includes a 90-line method to detect wins that can be replaced with code a third that size and easier to understand.

Frustrating things further, this sample code is what's used to document GameplayKit, so you're kind of stuck trying to learn about a very large new technology while studying an unfriendly project, or reading the documentation... that's about the same unfriendly project. I wanted to produce a project that was easier to understand and easier to learn, then produce a tutorial that explained how it all worked.

So, I took the Objective-C code and rewrote it in Swift. I then simplified the structure to make it more useful for learners, renamed some methods to make more sense, then cleaned up the user interface. Where it wasn't too strange I have tried to keep Apple's original structure, so if you choose to check out their original source code you won't be too lost – look for `FourInARow` in the Apple sample code. I accept any and all blame for bugs introduced in the Swift conversion process!

You might well say, "well, if you didn't like the 4IR game, how about Apple's DemoBots sample code? That's really cool, and it uses GameplayKit!" Yes, it does use GameplayKit. But it's also made up of 84 Swift files, 6,952 images, 14 SKS files for effects and scenes, and a

Project 34: Four in a Row

custom shader. Cool: yes. Easy to learn from: not really. By all means download it, but this tutorial is aimed at people just getting started with GameplayKit.

So, please go ahead and create a new project in Xcode, choosing the Single View App template. Name it Project34, and choose Swift for your language. When it's created, please lock the app orientation to landscape and set it to be iPad-only.

Creating the interface with UIStackView

Once you start using UIStackView it's hard to stop, so naturally I wanted it in this project even though we're making a game. The nature of 4IR games is that you have rows and columns, and we're going to create a **UIStackView** to host the columns. If I didn't want to animate the chips falling into the board we'd be using stack views for the columns too!

Open Main.storyboard in Interface Builder, then embed the existing view controller inside a navigation controller. Now select the navigation controller you just created, find its Navigation Bar in the document outline, then deselect Translucent in the attributes inspector – we don't want our game going behind the navigation bar, after all.

From the object library drag a Horizontal Stack View into your view controller, then resize it to fill the entire view up to the bottom of the navigation bar. When that's done, go to Editor > Resolve Auto Layout Issues > Reset to Suggested Constraints to add in the Auto Layout constraints required to keep it filling the view.

Now drag seven buttons into the stack view. By default, the stack view will show the first one large and all the others as small as possible, but you should select the stack view, go to the attributes inspector, then change Distribution to Fill Equally. While you're there, give Spacing a value of 2.

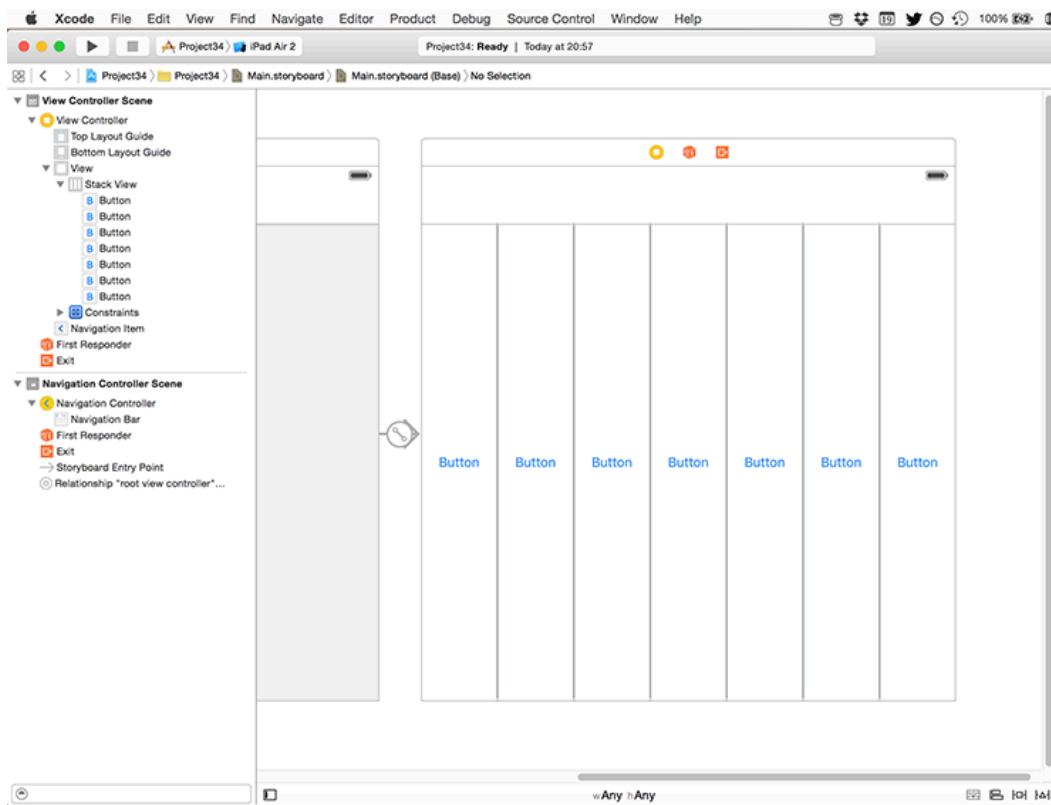
These seven buttons will be used to store the columns in our game, so to make them stand out I'd like you to select them all and give them all a white background color. Button background color is quite a way down the attributes inspector, so you will need to scroll to find it. Now clear the text for all the buttons, making them just large white spaces that respond to taps.

Now I need you to select each of the buttons in order and give them increasing Tag values. The one on the far left can keep its Tag of 0, but the second one should have a Tag of 1, then 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6. This will be used to identify which button was tapped later on.

To make the buttons stand out as columns, select the view itself (you might need to use the

Project 34: Four in a Row

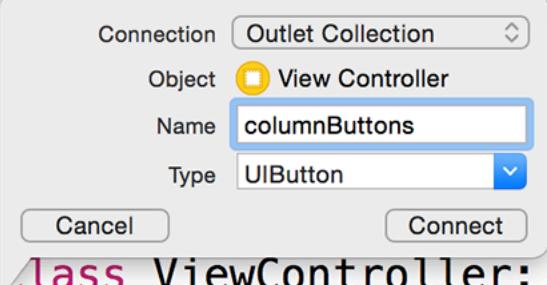
document outline view for this) then give it a gray background color. Don't try to give the stack view a background color – it's doesn't actually do any drawing, so your background color will be ignored.



There are two more things to do in Interface Builder before we can get on with some code. The first is to create IBOutlets for those buttons so we can control them from code, but rather than create individual outlets we're going to use something called an **IBOutletCollection**. These are just IBOutlet arrays that work like normal Swift arrays, except in IB you connect multiple outlets to the same thing.

To create an outlet collection, switch to the assistant editor by pressing Alt+Cmd+Return, then Ctrl+drag from the first button on the left from IB into your source code, just before the `viewDidLoad()` line. When you release the action/outlet menu will appear, and I'd like you to choose Outlet Collection. Note: if you see only Outlet and Outlet Collection in the list (i.e., Action is missing) it means you probably selected the stack view rather than a button, so try again!

Name the outlet collection **columnButtons** and click Connect. Now Ctrl+drag from the other six buttons, but this time connect them to the same **@IBOutlet** that was just created – you need to hover over the **var columnButtons: [UIButton]!** part in order for this to work.



```

4 // 
5 // Created by Hudzilla on 19/09/2015.
6 Connection Outlet Collection
7 Object View Controller
8 Name columnButtons
9 Type UIButton
10 Cancel Connect
11 class ViewController: UIViewController {
12
13     override func viewDidLoad() {
14         super.viewDidLoad()
15         // Do any additional setup after loading the view.

```

The second change to make is to hook up an IBAction for those buttons. We set each of them to have their own Tag because we're going to use the same action for seven buttons – the tag will be used to figure out which button was tapped.

So, Ctrl+drag from the first button into some free space inside the class, then create an action called **makeMove**. Make sure you change the Type value to be **UIButton** rather than **Any** – this will be used later. Now Ctrl+drag from the other six buttons onto that **makeMove()** method, and we're done with Interface Builder.

Preparing for basic play

We're going to put together the absolute basics required to represent a 4IR game on iOS.

Because of the way GameplayKit works, it's especially important to keep a good separation between your model (the state of the game) and your view (how things look).

Over the course of this project we're going to produce three different data models: one for the game board (stores the complete game state), one for players (for storing their color and name), and one for a "move" (for storing the position of one valid move in the game.)

We're going to start with the game board now, so add a new file to the project: choose Cocoa Touch Class and click Next, name it **Board** and make it subclass from **NSObject**, then click Next and Create.

To begin with, this **Board** class is just going to have two properties: one for tracking the width of the board, and one to track the height. We'll be adding more later, but for now add these two:

```
static var width = 7  
static var height = 6
```

Now go back to `ViewController.swift`. Like I said, there's an important distinction between the model and the view. That **Board** class will hold our model, which means it will store where all the chips are and who is winning. This view controller will store its own array of where the chips are, but it does this so it can draw the view correctly.

A "chip" in this case is a 4IR piece, either red or black. We'll be using **UIViews** for this purpose, setting a high corner radius so they look like circles – it's a simple trick, but effective. To store this, we'll need an array of arrays. That is, we'll need an array to store each column, and another array to hold all those column arrays. We're also going to add a property to store a **Board** object, using that class we just created. So, add these two properties to `ViewController.swift`:

```
var placedChips = [[UIView]]()
```

```
var board: Board!
```

When the game is first run, we need to populate that **placedChips** property with empty arrays.

When a game is started, we'll wipe those arrays (removing any views that were added), and also create a new game board to track progress. This is all done in two methods:

viewDidLoad() to do the initial set up, and **resetBoard()** to create the game board variable and clear out any views from the previous game. Add these two now:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    for _ in 0 ..< Board.width {
        placedChips.append([UIView]())
    }

    resetBoard()
}

func resetBoard() {
    board = Board()

    for i in 0 ..< placedChips.count {
        for chip in placedChips[i] {
            chip.removeFromSuperview()
        }

        placedChips[i].removeAll(keepingCapacity: true)
    }
}
```

There won't be any views to clear out in the first run of that method, but we'll be adding more to the **resetBoard()** method later so it makes sense to call it during the first run.

Project 34: Four in a Row

Now for some complicated coding: we need to give the game board enough logic to keep track of chips. Specifically, we have to make the **Board** class do five new things:

1. Report what chip is at a specific row and column.
2. Set a particular slot to contain a chip, i.e. "make row 4 column 3 a red chip."
3. Determine whether the player can make a move in a column.
4. Find the next empty slot in a column, which is where a chip would land if it were dropped in there.
5. Add a chip to a column at the next available space.

On top of that, we also need to create the default array of slots, which will be filled with blanks to begin with.

First up, though, we need to define a new enum that will be used to store the current state of each slot. A slot can either contain a red chip, a black chip, or no chip, so we're going to encapsulate that in an enum called **ChipColor**. Put this enum in `Board.swift`, just before the class definition:

```
enum ChipColor: Int {  
    case none = 0  
    case red  
    case black  
}
```

Note that I have given it a raw type of `Int`, then given the first value a specific number: 0. When you do this, Swift will assign the following values an auto-incremented number, which means Red will be 1 and Black will be 2. This will be important later!

With that enum defined, we can create an array of **ChipColors**, and initialize it when the class is instantiated. Add this property and method to the **Board** class:

```
var slots = [ChipColor]()
```

```

override init() {
    for _ in 0 ..< Board.width * Board.height {
        slots.append(.none)
    }

    super.init()
}

```

This array has only one dimension, which means it's a regular array rather than an array of arrays. One-dimensional arrays are less easy to work with but significantly faster, which is important because we'll be using this array *a lot* in this project.

The custom **init()** method pre-fills the array with **.none**, which means all the slots have no chip in them by default, as you would expect.

Now that we have a **slots** array, we can create the two most frequently used methods in this game: **chip(inColumn:row:)** and **set(chip:in:)**. The first is used to read the chip color of a specific slot, and the second is used to set the chip color of a specific slot. As **slots** is a one-dimensional array, you need to do a small amount of maths to find the correct row/column: you multiply the column number by the height of the board, then add the row.

Add these two methods to the **Board** class:

```

func chip(inColumn column: Int, row: Int) -> ChipColor {
    return slots[row + column * Board.height]
}

func set(chip: ChipColor, in column: Int, row: Int) {
    slots[row + column * Board.height] = chip
}

```

Those two methods will be used extensively to check what moves are valid, so it's good to keep them as small as possible.

Project 34: Four in a Row

Next up: determining whether a player can place a chip in a column. To make this work, we're going to use a helper method called **nextEmptySlot(in:)**, which will return the first row number that contains no chips in a specific column. With that helper method in place, we can check whether a player can move in a column just by checking to see if there is an empty slot there.

The **nextEmptySlot(in:)** helper method works by counting up in a column, from 0 up to the height of the board. For every slot, it calls **chip(inColumn:row:)** to see what chip color is there already, and if it gets back **.none** it means that row is good to use. If it gets to the end of the board without finding a **.none** it will return **nil** – this column has no free slots.

Here's the code:

```
func nextEmptySlot(in column: Int) -> Int? {
    for row in 0 ..< Board.height {
        if chip(inColumn: column, row: row) == .none {
            return row
        }
    }

    return nil
}
```

As promised, figuring out whether a player can play a particular column is now easy: we just call **nextEmptySlot(in:)** and check whether it returns **nil** or not, like this:

```
func canMove(in column: Int) -> Bool {
    return nextEmptySlot(in: column) != nil
}
```

The last method we need to add to our model at this time is **add(chip:in:)**, which blends two of our above methods: find the next available slot in a column using **nextEmptySlot(in:)**, and if the result is not **nil** then use **set(chip:)** to change that slot's color. Here it is:

```
func add(chip: ChipColor, in column: Int) {
    if let row = nextEmptySlot(in: column) {
        set(chip: chip, in: column, row: row)
    }
}
```

Annoyingly, all that code doesn't have any visual impact on our game: this is all model stuff, which is the behind-the-scenes representation how the game works. We have three other methods to write in ViewController.swift in order to update our view to match the model! I realize this seems like unnecessary duplication, but as you'll see later it's important to keep your GameplayKit classes as light as possible.

The first of our new methods is called **addChip(inColumn:row:)** and it matches the board's **add(chip:in:)** method. Adding a chip in the view takes more than just three lines of code, though: it needs to calculate the size of a chip, create a **UIView** with the correct background color, position it correctly inside the board, then add it to the **placedChips** array.

To make doubly certain the move is safe, we're only going to add a chip if the row is set correctly – i.e., if we aren't trying to add a chip below the existing row height. We're also going to animate the **transform** property of the chip view so that it starts off the top of the screen and slides in. Here's the code to put into the **ViewController** class – note that you'll get an error for the time being:

```
func addChip(inColumn column: Int, row: Int, color: UIColor) {
    let button = columnButtons[column]
    let size = min(button.frame.width, button.frame.height / 6)
    let rect = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: size, height: size)

    if (placedChips[column].count < row + 1) {
        let newChip = UIView()
        newChip.frame = rect
        newChip.isUserInteractionEnabled = false
        newChip.backgroundColor = color
```

Project 34: Four in a Row

```
        newChip.layer.cornerRadius = size / 2
        newChip.center = positionForChip(inColumn: column, row:
row)
        newChip.transform = CGAffineTransform(translationX: 0, y:
-800)
        view.addSubview(newChip)

        UIView.animate(withDuration: 0.5, delay: 0,
options: .curveEaseIn, animations: {
            newChip.transform = CGAffineTransform.identity
        })

        placedChips[column].append(newChip)
    }
}
```

There are three other small things in that code I want to pick out as interesting. First, user interaction is disabled on the view so that tapping on a chip is ignored and the tap is pass through to its column button. Second, the corner radius of the chip is set to `size / 2`, which will make it a circle. Finally, I've used the `.curveEaseIn` animation speed so that the chip starts dropping slowly and picks up pace.

The error in the code is that it calls a method we haven't defined yet, called `positionForChip(inColumn:row)`. We'll call this method with a row and a column, and it will return the `CGPoint` where the chip should be placed. This uses six lines of code that make sense once they have been explained, but might make you draw a blank at first. So, here's how it works:

1. It pulls out the **UIButton** that represents the correct column.
2. It sets the chip size to be either the width of the column button, or the height of the column button divided by six (for six full rows) – whichever is the lowest.
3. It uses **midX** to get the horizontal center of the column button, used for the X position of

the chip.

4. It uses **maxY** to get the bottom of the column button, then subtracts half the chip size because we're working with the center of the chip.
5. It then multiplies the row by the size of each chip to figure out how far to offset the new chip, and subtracts that from the Y position calculated in 4.
6. Finally, it creates a **CGPoint** return value by putting together the X offset calculated in step 3 with the Y offset calculated in step 5.

It's not a graceful piece of code, I'll give you that, but once you understand what it's doing it's innocent enough.

Here's the code for the missing method:

```
func positionForChip(inColumn column: Int, row: Int) -> CGPoint
{
    let button = columnButtons[column]
    let size = min(button.frame.width, button.frame.height / 6)

    let xOffset = button.frame.midX
    var yOffset = button.frame.maxY - size / 2
    yOffset -= size * CGFloat(row)
    return CGPoint(x: xOffset, y: yOffset)
}
```

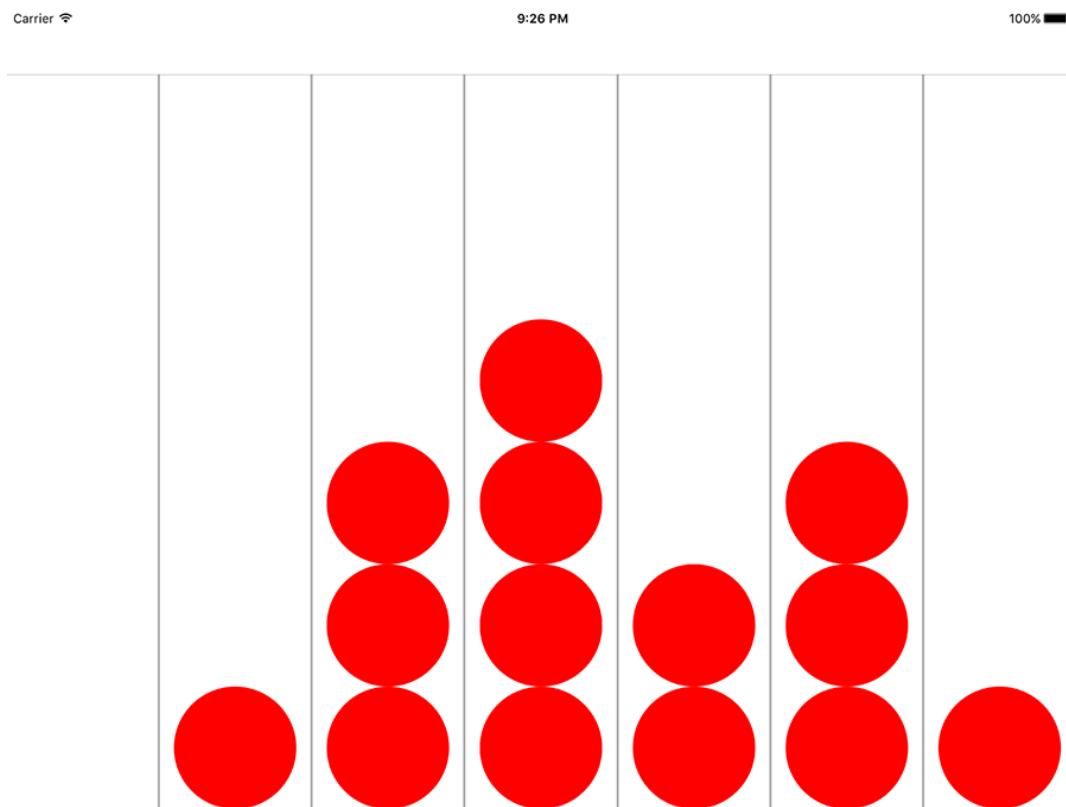
That just leaves one final method before our code springs into life, and this is just a matter of filling in **makeMove()**. This uses the tag of the button that was tapped to figure out which column the player wants to use. We then use that column as the input for **nextEmptySlot(in:)** to figure out which row to play, then call **add(chip:)** on the board model and **addChip(inColumn:row:)** to create the chip's **UIView**. Here's the code:

```
@IBAction func makeMove(_ sender: UIButton) {
    let column = sender.tag
```

Project 34: Four in a Row

```
if let row = board.nextEmptySlot(in: column) {  
    board.add(chip: .red, in: column)  
    addChip(inColumn: column, row: row, color: .red)  
}  
}
```

At this point the code works, although it's a pretty dull game: there's only one player, so you can click in any column you like again and again, adding more and more chips until the board is full. The board does, however, respect the game logic: you can't add more than six chips in a column, and the chips stack up neatly.



Adding in players: GKGameModelPlayer

It's time to take our first step into GameplayKit, although at first this step will be small. Right now our game is single-player, and all chips that get dropped are red chips. We're going to upgrade this so that there are two players by creating a new **Player** class that stores a player's chip type, their name, their color, and a special GameplayKit value called **playerId** – this is just a number that identifies every player uniquely.

On top of that, we're also going to create a static property for players, which means it's a property that belongs to the class and thus can be called from anywhere. This will be an **allPlayers** array holding both **Player** objects for easy reference

So, please create a new Cocoa Touch Class in your project. Name it “Player”, then make it inherit from **NSObject**. Let's go ahead and create the properties up front. As a reminder, we need:

- The chip color of the player, either **.red**, **.black**, or **.none**.
- The drawing color the player, set to a **UIColor**.
- The name of the player, which will be either "Red" or "Black".
- A GameplayKit **playerId** property, which we'll just set to the raw value of their chip type.
(We set this enum up as an integer, remember?)
- A static array of two players, red and black.

Add these properties now:

```
var chip: ChipColor  
var color: UIColor  
var name: String  
var playerId: Int  
  
static var allPlayers = [Player(chip: .red),
```

Project 34: Four in a Row

```
Player(chip: .black) ]
```

Now for what is going to be a huge anti-climax: let's bring in GameplayKit by adding this import:

```
import GameplayKit
```

Now make your **Player** class conform to the **GKGameModelPlayer** protocol, like this:

```
class Player: NSObject, GKGameModelPlayer {
```

Xcode will be flagging up errors all over your code, but none of them are a result of GameplayKit – in fact, those two changes are all it takes to make GameplayKit work with our player data. Instead, the errors are because we've declared four properties non-optional and haven't given them any values, so we need to create a custom initializer.

This initializer will accept one parameter, which is the chip color to use for each player. From that we can set the player ID (as the raw value of the chip type enum), the color (either red or black **UIColor**), and the player name (either "Red" or "Black"). It's pretty straightforward really – here's the code:

```
init(chip: ChipColor) {
    self.chip = chip
    self.playerId = chip.rawValue

    if chip == .red {
        color = .red
        name = "Red"
    } else {
        color = .black
        name = "Black"
    }
}
```

```
super.init()
}
```

We're going to add one more thing to this class before we're done, which is a small computed property that returns the opponent for a specific player. If the player is red, it returns the black player from the `allPlayers` array, and if the player is black, it returns the red player. Here's the code:

```
var opponent: Player {
    if chip == .red {
        return Player.allPlayers[1]
    } else {
        return Player.allPlayers[0]
    }
}
```

That's the **Player** class finished: we won't be adding any more to it in this project. But after that code, nothing has really changed because we're not actually using those players.

To take the next step in our game, we're going to start using the new **Player** class so that we have two players in the game, and we're also going to update the user interface to mark whose turn it is.

Updating the user interface requires two methods in the **Board** class: one to determine if the board is full of pieces, and one to determine if a particular player has won. With these two we can show either "Red/Black Wins!" or "Draw!" in the user interface, but for now we're just going to return false from these methods – we'll put the real code in later.

Put these two into your **Board** class:

```
func isFull() -> Bool {
    return false
}
```

Project 34: Four in a Row

```
func isWin(for player: Player) -> Bool {
    return false
}
```

Now onto the real work: we're going to create two new methods called **continueGame()** and **updateUI()**, both in the **ViewController** class. The first will get called after every move, and will end the game with an alert if needed, otherwise it will switch players. The second is responsible for updating the title of the view controller to show whose turn it is, although later on we'll also be making it kick off AI work.

The code in **updateUI()** is trivial, so let's get it out of the way. Open **ViewController.swift** and add this method:

```
func updateUI() {
    title = "\u{board.currentPlayer.name}'s Turn"
}
```

We aren't tracking the current player just yet so you'll get an error at first, but we'll fix it in a moment.

The **continueGame()** method is longer, but isn't really very complicated. To help you along I'll break it down into numbered steps in the code:

1. We create a **gameOverTitle** optional string set to nil.
2. If the game is over or the board is full, **gameOverTitle** is updated to include the relevant status message.
3. If **gameOverTitle** is not nil (i.e., the game is won or drawn), show an alert controller that resets the board when dismissed.
4. Otherwise, change the current player of the game, then call **updateUI()** to set the navigation bar title.

Here's the code, with the number comments matching the list above:

Adding in players: GKGameModelPlayer

```
func continueGame() {
    // 1
    var gameOverTitle: String? = nil

    // 2
    if board.isWin(for: board.currentPlayer) {
        gameOverTitle = "\u{board.currentPlayer.name} Wins!"
    } else if board.isFull() {
        gameOverTitle = "Draw!"
    }

    // 3
    if gameOverTitle != nil {
        let alert = UIAlertController(title: gameOverTitle,
message: nil, preferredStyle: .alert)
        let alertAction = UIAlertAction(title: "Play Again",
style: .default) { [unowned self] (action) in
            self.resetBoard()
        }

        alert.addAction(alertAction)
        present(alert, animated: true)
    }

    return
}

// 4
board.currentPlayer = board.currentPlayer.opponent
updateUI()
}
```

The final steps are actually pretty straightforward. First we need to create the **currentPlayer**

Project 34: Four in a Row

property in the **Board** class so that it silences the Xcode errors:

```
var currentPlayer: Player
```

That's a non-optional value, so by fixing the previous errors we introduce a new one: **currentPlayer** must be given a value inside the board's initializer. Add this at the start of the **init()** method in **Board.swift**:

```
currentPlayer = Player.allPlayers[0]
```

We're almost done with this chapter, and in fact we need only make a couple more changes for our game to work with two players. First, we need to update the **makeMove()** method so that it drops in chips of the correct color rather than always using red. This is easy now that we have the **board.currentPlayer** property:

```
@IBAction func makeMove(_ sender: UIButton) {
    let column = sender.tag

    if let row = board.nextEmptySlot(in: column) {
        board.add(chip: board.currentPlayer.chip, in: column)
        addChip(inColumn: column, row: row, color:
            board.currentPlayer.color)
        continueGame()
    }
}
```

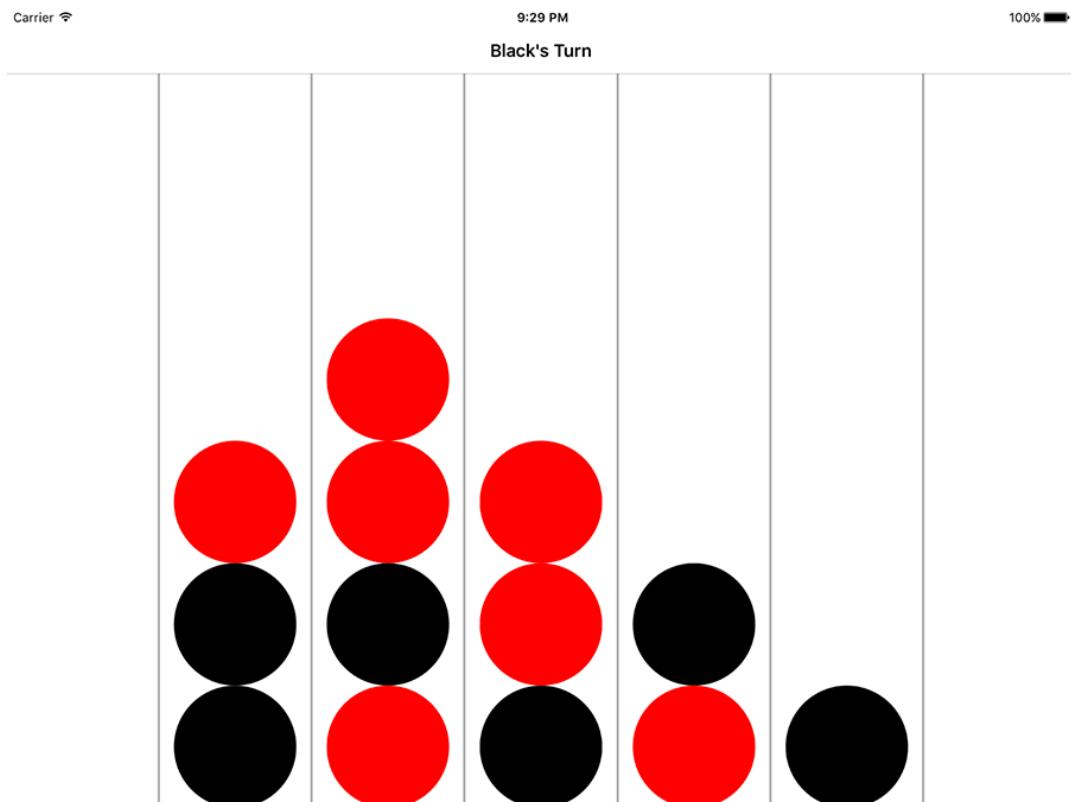
Note that I snuck in a call to **continueGame()** so that control automatically flips between players after each move.

Finally, we need to set the initial view controller title when the game is started or reset, which means modifying the **resetBoard()** method so that it calls **updateUI()**. Modify the start of the method to this:

Adding in players: GKGameModelPlayer

```
func resetBoard() {  
    board = Board()  
    updateUI()  
}
```

If you run your app now, you'll see things are starting to come together: you can tap on a column to play a chip, then control hands over to the other player and the user interface updates. The game doesn't end, though, because it has no idea whether one player has made four in a row, or whether it's a draw. Let's tackle that now...



Detecting wins and draws in Four in a Row

Now it's time to make our game an actual game – i.e., something a player can win. Four in a Row is what's called a zero-sum game, which means for one player to win the other must lose. This in turn means it's very easy to determine a winner: as soon as either player manages to place four chips in a row in any direction, they win. As for detecting a draw, that's just a matter of checking to see if no more moves are available.

Of the two, detecting a draw is far easier, so let's write that first. We already put a stub for **isFull()** into the **Board** class, but we can fill that out now: it will return false if any column passes the **canMove(in:)** test, otherwise it will return false. Here's the updated method for **Board.swift**:

```
func isFull() -> Bool {
    for column in 0 ..< Board.width {
        if canMove(in: column) {
            return false
        }
    }

    return true
}
```

Now for the more challenging method: how to detect when a player has won? In Apple's original code for this, they took a brute force approach with four different methods for detecting wins: left to right, up to down, and two types of diagonal. It's probably very efficient code, but it's unpleasant to read and understand, so I've ditched their code and replaced it with something substantially shorter and easier to understand.

My solution involves two methods: **isWin(for:)** and **squaresMatch(initialChip:)**, and we'll start with the second one first.

For a player to win, they must have four chips of the same color lined up in a row anywhere on the board. The **squaresMatch(initialChip:)** method has the job of being given a square on the board and checking for one possible win type. It will accept five parameters:

- The chip color to check.
- The row and column of the initial chip.
- The X and Y movement of our check.

That last one is the tricky part, so let me explain further. To detect a horizontal win, we'll call this method with an X movement of 1 and a Y movement of 0. The method can then check a slot, move along by X:1 and Y:0 (i.e., one place to the right), check a second slot, move along by X:1 and Y:0, check a third slot, then move along by X:1 and Y:0 and check the final slot. If all four have matched the player's chip color, they win.

The advantage to using this technique is that it can check for all other win types. For example, checking a vertical win means passing an X movement of 0 and a Y movement of 1, and checking a diagonal win means passing an X movement of 1 and a Y movement of 1.

Remember, though, that diagonal wins go both up and down, so we need to have a second diagonal check with a Y movement of -1.

To make the **squaresMatch(initialChip:)** method safe to call from any slot on the board, we'll make it return false if it will try to check outside the bounds of the board. For example, if it starts in the bottom left and tries to search for a downward win, we'll bail out immediately. The method will also return false as soon as it has failed to detect a win for a particular movement, because there's no point checking slots 3 and 4 if slot 2 doesn't match the player's chip color.

That's everything you need to know, so here's the code for **squaresMatch(initialChip:)** – put this into the **Board** class:

```
func squaresMatch(initialChip: ChipColor, row: Int, col: Int,
moveX: Int, moveY: Int) -> Bool {
    // bail out early if we can't win from here
    if row + (moveY * 3) < 0 { return false }
```

Project 34: Four in a Row

```
if row + (moveY * 3) >= Board.height { return false }
if col + (moveX * 3) < 0 { return false }
if col + (moveX * 3) >= Board.width { return false }

// still here? Check every square
if chip(inColumn: col, row: row) != initialChip { return
false }
if chip(inColumn: col + moveX, row: row + moveY) != initialChip { return false }
if chip(inColumn: col + (moveX * 2), row: row + (moveY *
2)) != initialChip { return false }
if chip(inColumn: col + (moveX * 3), row: row + (moveY *
3)) != initialChip { return false }

return true
}
```

That just leaves one final task before our game starts being useful: we need to fill in the **isWin(for:)** method so that it loops over every slot in the board, calling **squaresMatch(initialChip:)** four times for each slot: once for horizontal wins, once for vertical wins, and once for both kinds of diagonal wins. As soon as any of those calls returns true for any slot, the whole method returns true. If the loop finishes with no win, the method will return false so that play continues.

This also involves one small further change: now that our **Player** class conforms to **GKGameModelPlayer**, we need to make the **isWin(for:)** method accept a **GKGameModelPlayer** as its parameter. This is what's given to us by GameplayKit later on, but we can typecast it back to a regular **Player** inside the method.

Add this import to `Board.swift` now:

```
import GameplayKit
```

Detecting wins and draws in Four in a Row

Now replace your existing `isWin(for:)` method with this updated version:

```
func isWin(for player: GKGameModelPlayer) -> Bool {
    let chip = (player as! Player).chip

    for row in 0 ..< Board.height {
        for col in 0 ..< Board.width {
            if squaresMatch(initialChip: chip, row: row, col: col,
moveX: 1, moveY: 0) {
                return true
            } else if squaresMatch(initialChip: chip, row: row,
col: col, moveX: 0, moveY: 1) {
                return true
            } else if squaresMatch(initialChip: chip, row: row,
col: col, moveX: 1, moveY: 1) {
                return true
            } else if squaresMatch(initialChip: chip, row: row,
col: col, moveX: 1, moveY: -1) {
                return true
            }
        }
    }

    return false
}
```

At this point, you have a complete two-player Four in a Row game on your hands. If it weren't for GameplayKit, we'd be done here. But you want to add an AI opponent, don't you? Sure you do. So go ahead and run your app briefly, marvel at your coding prowess, then get back to Xcode: this is where the difficulty ramps up!

How GameplayKit AI works: **GKGameModel**, **GKGameModelPlayer** and **GKGameModelUpdate**

Amongst the many features introduced in GameplayKit, one of the most immediately useful is its ability to provide artificial intelligence that can evaluate a situation and make smart choices. We're going to be using it in our Four in a Row game to provide a meaningful opponent, but first it's essential that you understand how GameplayKit tackles the AI problem because it directly affects the code we'll write.

GameplayKit has three protocols we need to implement in various parts of our model:

- The **GKGameModel** protocol is used to represent the state of play, which means it needs to know where all the game pieces are, who the players are, what happens after each move is made, and what the score for a player is given any state.
- The **GKGameModelPlayer** protocol is used to represent one player in the game. This protocol is so simple we already implemented it: all you need to do is make sure your player class has a **playerId** integer. It's used to identify a player uniquely inside the AI.
- The **GKGameModelUpdate** protocol is used to represent one possible move in the game. For us, that means storing a column number to represent a piece being played there. This protocol requires that you also store a **value** integer, which is used to rank all possible results by quality to help GameplayKit make a good choice.

We have a sensible match for the first two in our **Board** and **Player** classes, but we have nothing suitable for **GKGameModelUpdate** so let's create that now. Like I said, this needs to track only how "good" a move is, where each move is represented by a column number to play.

This is easy to do, so please go ahead and create a new Cocoa Touch class in your project. Name it "Move", and make it subclass from "NSObject". Now replace its source code with

How GameplayKit AI works: GKGameModel, GKGameModelPlayer and GKGameModelUpdate

this:

```
import GameplayKit
import UIKit

class Move: NSObject, GKGameModelUpdate {
    var value: Int = 0
    var column: Int

    init(column: Int) {
        self.column = column
    }
}
```

That's it: the default for **value** is 0, and we create a **Move** object by passing in the column it represents. We're done with that class, and I already said we were finished with the **Player** class, which means we can focus our mental energies on what remains: **Board**.

GameplayKit's artificial intelligence works through brute force: it tries every possible move, then tries every possible follow-on move, then every possible follow-on follow-on move, etc. This runs up combinations extremely quickly, particularly when you consider that there are 4,531,985,219,092 unique positions for all the pieces on the board! So, you will inevitably limit the depth of the search to provide just enough intelligence to be interesting.

Now, this bit is really important, so read carefully. When you ask GameplayKit to find a move, it will examine all possible moves. To begin with, that is every column, because they all have space for moves in them. It then takes a copy of the game, and makes a virtual move on that copy. It then takes a copy of the game, and makes a different virtual move, and so on until all initial first moves have been made.

Next, it starts to re-use its copies to save on memory: it will take one of those copies and apply a game state to it, which means it will reset the board so that it matches the position after one of its virtual moves. It will then rinse and repeat: it will examine all possible moves, and make

Project 34: Four in a Row

one. It does this for all moves, and does so recursively until it has created a tree of all possible moves and outcomes, or at least as many as you ask it to scan.

Each time the AI has made a move, it will ask us what the player score is. For some games this will be as simple as returning a score variable, but for our 4IR game it's a bit trickier because there is no score, only a win or a loss. The original Apple source code provides a simple heuristic for this, and I've kept it here because it's quite fun – the AI can sometimes make dumb mistakes, or sometimes play like a genius, which makes the game interesting!

If you were wondering, a *heuristic* is the computer science term for a guesstimate – it's a function that tries to solve a problem quickly by taking shortcuts. For us, that means we'll tell the AI the player's score is 1000 if a move wins the game, -1000 if a move loses the game, or 0 otherwise.

All this information is important because I hope now you can see why we separate the game model from the game view – why we have a **slots** array inside the game board and a **placedChips** array inside the view controller. If you're still not sure, try to imagine how many moves the AI needs to simulate in order to decide what to do – our board has seven columns, so:

- The player goes first, and all seven columns are valid.
- The AI calculates its first move, which could be any of those seven columns. (7 moves in total.)
- The AI then calculates what the player might do, but the player's move depends on the previous AI move so it has to calculate one player move for every possible AI move. (49 more moves; 56 in total.)
- The AI then calculates what its second move might look like, which of course depends on the players first and second moves, and the AI's first move. So, for every one of those 49 moves, it has to calculate 7 more. (343 moves; 399 in total.)

...and so on. Eventually one column will become full so the multiplications will decrease, but you're still talking many thousands of copies of the board. Now imagine if the **Board** class kept track of all the **UIViews** used to draw the chips – suddenly we'd be copying far more than

How GameplayKit AI works: GKGameModel, GKGameModelPlayer and GKGameModelUpdate

intended, and doing it 5000 times!

So: if a couple of chapters ago you were thinking I was wasting your time by forcing you to separate your model from your view, I hope you can now see why. AI is slow enough without doing a huge stack of extra work for no reason!

That's enough theory, it's time for some code. If you remember nothing else, remember this: to simulate a move, GameplayKit takes copies of our board state, finds all possible moves that can happen, and applies them all on different copies.

Implementing GKGameModel: gameModelUpdates(for:) and apply()

Now you understand how GameplayKit approaches AI, it's time for some action. Open up `Board.swift`, then make your **Board** class conform to the **GKGameModel** protocol like this:

```
class Board: NSObject, GKGameModel {
```

As soon as you do that, your beautiful project will stop compiling and you'll see two errors: the **Board** class does not conform to **NSCopying** or **GKGameModel**. We covered **NSCoding** in previous projects but not **NSCopying**, so let's start there.

As you'll no doubt remember(!), **NSCoding** is used to encode and decode objects so that they can be archived, such as when you're writing to **User Defaults**. This is great for when you want to save or distribute your data, but it's not very efficient if you just want to copy it, and that's where **NSCopying** comes in: it's a protocol that lets iOS take a copy of your object in memory, with the copy being identical but separate to the original. As you saw in the last chapter, GameplayKit will be taking a lot of copies of our game board, so we definitely need to conform to **NSCopying**.

Implementing **NSCopying** is as simple as adding one new method, called **copy(with zone:)**. The "zone" part is an optimization hangover from many years ago, and has been ignored for years. In our particular case, we're going to take a little shortcut by merging two things together: taking a copy of the game board and applying a game state.

If you remember, GameplayKit takes multiple copies of our board so that it can evaluate various moves. It then re-uses those copies by setting their game state, which is where GameplayKit resets the board so that it matches the position after one of its moves. To remove some code duplication, we're going to make **copy(with:)** call the method used to apply a board state. That is, **copy(with:)** will make an empty **Board** object then call a new **setGameModel()**

Implementing GKGameModel: gameModelUpdates(for:) and apply()

method to actually copy across the slot data and set the active player.

This is helpful because **setGameModel()** is part of the **GKGameModel** protocol, so we needed to implement it anyway. This method needs to accept a **GKGameModel** object as its only parameter, but of course we know that's a **Board** object so we'll do an optional downcast before copying across the properties.

Here's the code – add this to the **Board** class:

```
func copy(with zone: NSZone? = nil) -> Any {
    let copy = Board()
    copy.setGameModel(self)
    return copy
}

func setGameModel(_ gameModel: GKGameModel) {
    if let board = gameModel as? Board {
        slots = board.slots
        currentPlayer = board.currentPlayer
    }
}
```

Next, GameplayKit will ask us to tell it all the possible moves that can be made, if any. This will be called on a copy of our game board that may already have had virtual moves applied to it, but that's OK because the copy has its own **slots** array that we can read from to find where moves are possible.

Because we're conforming to the **GKGameModel** protocol, this method needs to have a precise name, accept a precise parameter, and return a precise data type. Specifically, it needs to be called **gameModelUpdates(for:)**, it needs to accept a **GKGameModelPlayer** object, and return a **GKGameModelUpdate** object. In our game, the last two map to the **Player** and **Move** classes, both of which conform to those protocols.

Project 34: Four in a Row

We've already written several methods that make this code surprisingly easy: if `isWin(for:)` is true either for the player or their opponent we return `nil`, and we call `canMove(in:)` for every column to see if the AI can move in each column. If so, we create a new `Move` object to represent that column, and add it to an array of possible moves.

To make sure you understand all the code, here it is broken down:

1. We optionally downcast our `GKGameModelPlayer` parameter into a `Player` object.
2. If the player or their opponent has won, return `nil` to signal no moves are available.
3. Otherwise, create a new array that will hold `Move` objects.
4. Loop through every column in the board, asking whether the player can move in that column.
5. If so, create a new `Move` object for that column, and add it to the array.
6. Finally, return the array to tell the AI all the possible moves it can make.

Here's the code, with the number comments matching the list above:

```
func gameModelUpdates(for player: GKGameModelPlayer) ->
[GKGameModelUpdate]? {
    // 1
    if let playerObject = player as? Player {
        // 2
        if isWin(for: playerObject) || isWin(for:
playerObject.opponent) {
            return nil
        }

        // 3
        var moves = [Move]()
    }

    // 4
    for column in 0 ..< Board.width {
        if canMove(in: column) {
```

Implementing GKGameModel: gameModelUpdates(for:) and apply()

```
// 5
moves.append(Move(column: column))
}

}

// 6
return moves
}

return nil
}
```

The next step for the AI is to try all of those moves. GameplayKit will execute a method called **apply()** once for every move, and again this will get called on a copy of our game board that reflects the current state of play after its virtual moves. This method needs to accept a **GKGameModelUpdate** object as a parameter (that's a **Move** for us), then apply that move to its copy of the board.

Again, we've already written the methods required to make this happen. Our **Move** class contains a column number that represents an AI move, so we just need to downcast the **GKGameModelUpdate** to a **Move**, call **add(chip:)** for that move, then change players. Here's the code:

```
func apply(_ gameModelUpdate: GKGameModelUpdate) {
    if let move = gameModelUpdate as? Move {
        add(chip: currentPlayer.chip, in: move.column)
        currentPlayer = currentPlayer.opponent
    }
}
```

Once GameplayKit has made a move, it will want to know whether the move is good or not. Obviously this varies from game to game, so Apple's implementation is simple: it will ask us to provide a player score after each virtual move has been made, and that score affects the way

Project 34: Four in a Row

GameplayKit ranks each move.

The method name this time is **score(for:)**, and we'll get passed a **GKGameModelPlayer** object that we need to evaluate. This is a **Player** object in our game, so we'll optionally downcast it. Now, as I said already our game doesn't have a meaningful score that can be passed back as this method's return value, so we'll use a very lazy heuristic: if the player has won we'll return 1000, if their opponent has won we'll return -1000, otherwise we'll return 0.

Here's the code:

```
func score(for player: GKGameModelPlayer) -> Int {
    if let playerObject = player as? Player {
        if isWin(for: playerObject) {
            return 1000
        } else if isWin(for: playerObject.opponent) {
            return -1000
        }
    }

    return 0
}
```

There are only two further changes required to make our **Board** class conform fully to the **GKGameModel** protocol, both of which are easy and just do typecasting. You see, GameplayKit wants to see these two properties:

```
var players: [GKGameModelPlayer]?
var activePlayer: GKGameModelPlayer?
```

We don't have these right now, because we use our custom subclasses of **NSObject**. Rather than duplicate data, we're going to use computed properties to just return what we have – Swift will then correctly treat them as **GKGameModelPlayer** types. So, rather than adding those two lines of code above, use this code instead:

Implementing GKGameModel: gameModelUpdates(for:) and apply()

```
var players: [GKGameModelPlayer]? {
    return Player.allPlayers
}

var activePlayer: GKGameModelPlayer? {
    return currentPlayer
}
```

That's it: the **Board** class now conforms fully to the **GKGameModel** protocol, the **Player** class conforms fully to the **GKGameModelPlayer** protocol, and the **Move** class conforms fully to the **GKGameModelUpdate** protocol – we're finished with all these classes and those protocols, which means we can get onto the next task: configuring the AI player.

Creating a GameplayKit AI using GKMinmaxStrategist

If you've made it this far then you have built a Four in a Row game where two players can place chips in the game slots and either win or draw, and you've also prepared your model data to be run through the new GameplayKit AI routines. But we haven't created the AI just yet: we've just added some methods to our game models to enable an AI to make choices.

In this final step, we're going to use a new class called **GKMinmaxStrategist**, which is a gameplay strategy that tries to MINimize losses while MAXimizing gains – hence the name minmax, or minimax. When you create a **GKMinmaxStrategist** you tell it how many moves it should look ahead, and also what it should do to break ties, i.e. if it has two or more moves that are equally good.

Once you've created the strategist object, you need to provide it a game model to examine (that's our **Board** class), then ask it either to make the best move or make a random good move. If you ask for the best move, you'll get given back a **GKGameModelUpdate** object (that's a **Move** in our game) that represents the best move. If you ask for a random good move you'll need to tell it how many it should consider good (i.e., pick one from the top 5), and you'll get back a random **GKGameModelUpdate** from that list of good moves.

Now, one thing to be aware of up front: running AI takes a long time, particularly if you have a high look ahead depth. As a result, you should run the AI on a background thread so that your user interface doesn't lock up, and only push work back to the main thread when you have a move ready to make.

Let's go ahead and implement **GKMinmaxStrategist** now. Open `ViewController.swift` in your editor, then import `GameplayKit`. Now add this property to the **ViewController** class:

```
var strategist: GKMinmaxStrategist!
```

One strategist is capable of handling more than one game (i.e., if the player restarts the game)

Creating a GameplayKit AI using GKMinmaxStrategist

just by changing its game model, so we only need to create one **GKMinmaxStrategist** object. As it's needed straight away, we might as well put this into **viewDidLoad()** – anywhere before the call to **resetBoard()** is fine:

```
strategist = GKMinmaxStrategist()
strategist.maxLookAheadDepth = 7
strategist.randomSource = nil
```

Having a **maxLookAheadDepth** of 7 is a significant amount of work, because of those look aheads is one move being made by the player or AI – and each of those moves can be in any of seven columns. If you intend to alter this number upwards, be prepared for exponentially slower processing.

The **randomSource** property of **GKMinmaxStrategist** is there as a tie-breaker: if two moves result in the same advantage for the AI, which should it take? Setting it to **nil** as above means "just return the first best move," but if you wanted to have the AI take a random best move then you could try something like this:

```
strategist.randomSource = GKARC4RandomSource()
```

Now that the strategist is created, it wants to be fed some data. This is done by setting its **gameModel** property to an object that conforms to the **GKGameModel** protocol – which by now you should immediately recognize as our **Board** class. So, whenever we reset the board, we need to feed the new board into the strategist so it stands ready to look for moves.

We've done all the hard work to prepare for this, so all you need to do is change the start of your **resetBoard()** method to the following:

```
func resetBoard() {
    board = Board()
    strategist.gameModel = board

    updateUI()
```

Project 34: Four in a Row

At this point, the AI understands the state of play, and stands ready to look for good moves. With **GKMinmaxStrategist** this is done using the **bestMove(for:)** method, which accepts a **GKModelPlayer** as its parameter and returns a **GKModelUpdate** for the best move if it finds one.

Remember, however, that AI can take a long time to consider all options depending on the look ahead depth you specify, so we're going to wrap this call up in a new method: **columnForAIMove()**. This will return an optional integer: either the best column for a move, or nil to mean "no move found." We'll call this on a background thread so it can take as long as it needs.

Here's the code for **columnForAIMove()**:

```
func columnForAIMove() -> Int? {
    if let aiMove = strategist.bestMove(for:
        board.currentPlayer) as? Move {
        return aiMove.column
    }

    return nil
}
```

Once the AI has found a good move, we want to run that move on the main thread, because it will involve user interface changes. I've wrapped this up in another new method called **makeAIMove(in:)**: this takes the column to move on, then makes it happen. This method will find the next available slot for the selected column, then use **add(chip:)** to make the move on the model, and **addChip(inColumn:)** to make the move in the view.

Once the AI move has been made, we'll call **continueGame()** to check for a win or draw, then flip turns so the player is in control.

Here's the code for **makeAIMove(in:)**:

```

func makeAIMove(in column: Int) {
    if let row = board.nextEmptySlot(in: column) {
        board.add(chip: board.currentPlayer.chip, in: column)
        addChip(inColumn: column, row:row, color:
board.currentPlayer.color)

        continueGame()
    }
}

```

At this point our game is almost finished, but we still need to call those methods on the appropriate threads. All this will be done in one big method called **startAIMove()**, which is going to do a number of things:

1. Dispatch some work to the background thread.
2. Get the current time, then run **columnForAIMove()**.
3. Get the time again, compare the difference, and subtract that value from 1 second to form a delay value.
4. Run **makeAIMove(in:)** on the main thread after that delay, to execute the move.

The delay is there so that the AI always waits at least one second before making its move, otherwise it might confuse the user. If the AI takes half a second to find a move, we subtract that from our one second minimum to wait for a further half a second, equalling one second in total from before starting the AI to executing the move.

Here's the first draft of **startAIMove()**:

```

func startAIMove() {
    DispatchQueue.global().async { [unowned self] in
        let strategistTime = CFbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()
        guard let column = self.columnForAIMove() else { return }
        let delta = CFbsoluteTimeGetCurrent() - strategistTime

```

Project 34: Four in a Row

```
let aiTimeCeiling = 1.0
let delay = aiTimeCeiling - delta

DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() + delay) {
    self.makeAIMove(in: column)
}

}

}
```

Now only one thing more is required to finish the game: we need to call `startAIMove()` when it's black's turn. Change your `updateUI()` method to this:

```
func updateUI() {
    title = "\(board.currentPlayer.name)'s Turn"

    if board.currentPlayer.chip == .black {
        startAIMove()
    }
}
```

Now, the game works, and you could even ship it today if you really wanted, but before you hit Run I'd like to suggest two tiny changes that make the whole experience better.

First, what happens if a user starts tapping buttons while the AI is "thinking"? Well, the answer is "bad things" – our game lets them play as black, and gets confused very quickly. So, our first change will be to disable all the column buttons when the AI's move starts, then re-enable them when it's finished.

Second, if the AI takes a long time, how does the user know the app hasn't locked up? There's no indication the AI is thinking, but it's easy enough to add by showing a custom **UIBarButtonItem** containing a **UIActivityIndicatorView**. It's not much, but it's enough to show the app is alive and well.

We're going to make both of these changes at once. All the AI code lives in **startAIMove()** so we can disable the column buttons and show the thinking spinner in there too. Add these lines to the start of **startAIMove()**, before the call to **async()**:

```
columnButtons.forEach { $0.isEnabled = false }

let spinner = UIActivityIndicatorView(style: .gray)
spinner.startAnimating()

navigationItem.leftBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(customView:
    spinner)
```

If you haven't seen **forEach** before, it's a way of quickly looping through an array, executing some code on every item in that array. In our case, the **\$0** means "each button in the loop", and in this way all the buttons get disabled.

Once the AI has finished their move, **makeAIMove(in:)** will be called on the main thread, and that's our chance to undo these changes: we need to re-enable the column buttons, then destroy the thinking spinner. Add these two lines of code at the start of **makeAIMove(in:)**:

```
columnButtons.forEach { $0.isEnabled = true }
navigationItem.leftBarButtonItem = nil
```

These tiny changes stop users from accidentally screwing things up, and also stop them from worrying your app has got stuck in a loop somewhere. It's polish, yes, but polish is frequently what separates good games from great games.

That's it: the app is done! You can run it now and see how quickly you can beat the AI. It ought not to be too hard – our heuristic isn't very good, so sometimes the AI will miss obvious moves, just like a real player.

Wrap up

I don't know about you, but I certainly enjoyed this tutorial – not only does it involve some of the most impressive iOS features, but it's always fun to watch an artificial intelligence "think" its way through a problem and come to a solution. Plus, I got the chance to sneak in more **UIStackView** action, which is always a good thing!

If you're looking to extend this project, the first thing you're likely to target is the heuristic function. As I said at the beginning, this project is based on some less-than-perfect Apple sample code, which I went on to rewrite in Swift, then refactor to make it easier to understand. The heuristic code is what makes the AI smart, but it doesn't take into account how many moves it takes for a win to happen, and so it performs fairly poorly.

As for other improvements, you've seen how this game could work in one- or two-player modes, so you could easily add a user interface to let the player select what kind of game they wanted. Then, by adjusting the level of look ahead, you could implement Easy, Medium and Hard computer opponents.

For a much easier improvement to make, you could switch out our **UIImageView** chips for **UIImageViews**, then draw your own red and black chip graphics. There isn't much coding required to make this happen, but let's face it: you've just written a mountain of code, so you probably deserve a break!

Anyway, that's it for this project. Once again you've made a useful, real-world project that is now your own to extend in whichever direction you want. As a heavy user of iOS apps, I'm particularly looking forward to seeing how apps (not games!) will use AI – can it recommend songs with some real intelligence, for example? Have fun!

Project 35

Random Numbers

Let GameplayKit help you generate random numbers in ways you soon won't be able to live without.

Setting up

If you already read project 34 you'll know how much I love GameplayKit. In that project we used a new class called **GKMinmaxStrategist** to produce an AI that can win at Four in a Row games by looking ahead many moves in advance, but the truth is that we only scratched the surface of what GameplayKit can do.

In this technique project we're going to look at another aspect of GameplayKit that is hugely exciting: randomization. This will, I'm certain, strike you as a strange topic to choose: surely randomization is a solved problem – what makes it interesting enough to warrant discussion, never mind to dedicate a whole technique project?

It's true that generating random data – or at least the pseudo-random that most of us consider good enough – is old news, but the GameplayKit implementation goes a step further: Apple thought specifically about random needs for games, and has built a randomization system that I promise you're going to love, and going to use even when you're not making games.

Don't believe me? Fire up Xcode, create a new playground, and let's begin!

Generating random numbers without GameplayKit

Swift comes with built-in support for random number generation across a variety of types:

Int.random(in:), **Float.random(in:)**, **Double.random(in:)**, **CGFloat.random(in:)**, and even **Bool.random()** for flipping randomly between true or false.

These are all designed to be highly random – i.e., it’s hard to predict what future values will be generated – but they aren’t cryptographically secure. That means they are fine for everything except working with secure data such as password hashing.

All the random methods that take an **in** parameter accept a range to work with. For example:

```
let int1 = Int.random(in: 0...10)
let int2 = Int.random(in: 0..<10)
let double1 = Double.random(in: 1000...10000)
let float1 = Float.random(in: -100...100)
```

Swift’s random number generators are automatically seeded, which means they are given an initial value to make them unique each time they are run.

As for **Bool.random()**, it literally just returns true or false randomly – it’s effectively simulating a coin flip, but it does come in useful from time to time.

There are other ways to generate random numbers with Swift, and it’s quite common to see them around because the methods discussed above were introduced only in Swift 4.2 – four years after Swift was launched. So, many codebases use older methods that aren’t as good or as nice as the newer alternatives, but if you’re curious I’ll cover them below.

Note: The below really is just here for historical purposes – you’re likely to find them in the wild a *lot* because there’s so much Swift out there, but if you’re just interested in learning modern Swift you can skip this part.

Old-fashioned randomness

The classic way to generate random numbers is called **arc4random()**, which is able to generate large, seemingly random numbers with a single function call:

```
print(arc4random())
print(arc4random())
print(arc4random())
print(arc4random())
```

The **arc4random()** function generates numbers between 0 and 4,294,967,295, giving a range of 2 to the power of 32 - 1, i.e., a lot. But if you wanted to generate a random number within a specific range there's a better alternative. Let's look at them both, because you'll encounter them both in real code.

First, the widely used but problematic way of generating random numbers in a range:

```
print(arc4random() % 6)
```

That uses modulus to ensure that the result from **arc4random()** falls within a specific range. We already covered modulus in project 8 so skip back there if you need a refresher. Note that we need to specify 6 because the values range from 0 to 5 inclusive.

This method is very common, but also problematic because it produces something called **modulo bias**, which is a small but not insignificant problem that causes some numbers to be generated more frequently than others. You might know it as **the Pigeonhole Principle** if you prefer slightly catchier names!

So, here's a smarter way of generating random numbers in a range:

```
print(arc4random_uniform(6))
```

Yes, the ARC4 family of functions comes with a built-in way of generating random numbers in a range. No, it's not new. No, I don't know why it's not used by everyone – the world's a

funny place, huh?

Anyway, using **arc4random_uniform()** we can generate a range of numbers that don't have a modulo bias, don't require seeding, and are suitably random for all but cryptographic purposes.

But it's not perfect, because its range is 0 up to the maximum you specify – what if you want a number between 10 and 20, or 100 and 500? Then you need to write something thoroughly ugly indeed:

```
func RandomInt(min: Int, max: Int) -> Int {  
    if max < min { return min }  
    return Int(arc4random_uniform(UInt32((max - min) + 1))) +  
min  
}
```

That figures out the difference between the high and low ends of your range, uses that to calculate a random number, then re-adds the low end to get the full range. Because **arc4random_uniform()** works only with non-negative integers (**UInt32**) it has to do some typecasting to make the process seamless, and all those extra parentheses probably give you a headache.

Does it work? Yes, absolutely. Could you remember it if you closed this window now? No chance – Swift's newer **Int.random(in:)** is significantly better.

Anyway, now you've seen the modern way of generating numbers and the older way, so let's move on to looking at GameplayKit. Before I continue, it's worth making it doubly clear that GameplayKit is available only on Apple's platforms, so if you're using open source Swift on Linux then you'll need to stick with the other options shown above.

Generating random numbers with GameplayKit: GKRandomSource

Let's look at the most basic way of generating random numbers using GameplayKit, which is the **GKRandomSource** class and its **sharedRandom()** method. Of course, this means adding an import for GameplayKit into the playground, so please do that now.

A random source is a provider of an unfiltered stream of random numbers as you need them. As you'll see soon, GameplayKit has various options for your stream, but for now we're going to look at the simplest one: **sharedRandom()**.

Using **sharedRandom()** for a random number source returns the systems built-in random source that's used for a variety of other tasks, which means you can be pretty sure it's in a truly random state by the time it gets to you. It does, however, mean that it's useless for synchronizing network games, because everyone's device is in a different state.

To produce a truly random number you'd use the **nextInt()** method like this:

```
print(GKRandomSource.sharedRandom().nextInt())
```

That produces a number between -2,147,483,648 and 2,147,483,647 – yes, that's a negative number, which means it's not a drop-in replacement for **arc4random()**. Plus, even with GameplayKit's great new logic, Apple includes a warning that it's not guaranteed to be random for very specific situations, so for both these reasons it's not likely you'll want to use **nextInt()** much.

As an alternative, try using the **nextInt(upperBound:)** method, which works identically to **arc4random()**:

```
print(GKRandomSource.sharedRandom().nextInt(upperBound: 6))
```

That will return a random number from 0 to 5 using the system's built-in random number generator.

Generating random numbers with GameplayKit: GKRandomSource

As well as **nextInt()** and **nextInt(upperBound:)** are **nextBool()** for generating a random true/false value and **nextUniform()** for generating a random floating-point number between 0 and 1. Both of these are implemented using **nextInt(upperBound:)** so they output properly random numbers.

Note: If you're just generating simple random values, using Swift's **Int.random(in:)**, **Float.random(in:)**, **Double.random(in:)**, and **Bool.random()** are much easier than using GameplayKit. However, GameplayKit does have the advantage that you can shape its random output, as we'll look at next...

Choosing a random number source: GKARC4RandomSource and other GameplayKit options

Using the system's built-in random number source is exactly what you want when you just need something simple. But the system's random number generator is not deterministic, which means you can't predict what numbers it will output because it always starts in a different state – and that makes it useless for synchronizing network games.

Using the system's random number source is also useless to avoid cheating. If someone is playing a brilliant strategy game you made and loses a battle because a dice roll didn't go their way, they could quickly quit the app, relaunch, and try the battle again hoping that the random roll would go differently for them.

GameplayKit offers three custom sources of random numbers, all of which are deterministic, and all of which can be serialized – i.e., written out to disk using something like **NSCoding** that we looked at in project 12. This means network play can be synchronized and cheaters are unable to force their way around your game – a win all around!

The reason GameplayKit has three sources of random numbers is simple: generating random numbers is hard, so you get to choose whether you want something simple and fast, complex and slow, or somewhere in the middle. That is, if you know the result of your random number doesn't matter that much and you're going to need thousands quickly, you can use the faster-but-less-random option.

Alternatively, if you need one random number but it's got to be as random as they come, you can use the more intensive algorithm. In short, **you pays your money and you takes your choice.**

The three options are:

- **GKLinearCongruentialRandomSource**: has high performance but the lowest

Choosing a random number source: GKARC4RandomSource and other GameplayKit options

randomness

- **GKMersenneTwisterRandomSource**: has high randomness but the lowest performance
- **GKARC4RandomSource**: has good performance and good randomness – in the words of Apple, "it's going to be your Goldilocks random source."

Honestly, the performance difference between the three of these is all but insignificant unless you're generating vast quantities of random numbers.

So, to generate a random number between 0 and 19 using an ARC4 random source that you can save to disk, you'd use this:

```
let arc4 = GKARC4RandomSource()  
arc4.nextInt(upperBound: 20)
```

If you really want the maximum possible randomness for your app or game, try the Mersenne Twister source instead:

```
let mersenne = GKMersenneTwisterRandomSource()  
mersenne.nextInt(upperBound: 20)
```

As you can see, once you've created the random source the method calls on it are identical – all you've done is change the underlying random number generator.

Before continuing, you should know that Apple recommends you force flush its ARC4 random number generator before using it for anything important, otherwise it will generate sequences that can be guessed to begin with. Apple suggests dropping at least the first 769 values, so I suspect most coders will round up to the nearest pleasing value: 1024. To drop values, use this code:

```
arc4.dropValues(1024)
```

Regardless of which source you choose, Apple goes to great lengths to point out that none of them are recommended for cryptography purposes. Apps, yes, games, yes, but not

Project 35: Random Numbers

cryptography – sorry!

Shaping GameplayKit random numbers: GKRandomDistribution, GKShuffledDistribution and GKGaussianDistribution

Random sources are interesting enough, but chances are you're wondering why you've spent the last 20 minutes reading about GameplayKit and have yet to see anything interesting. Well, here's where good becomes great: GameplayKit lets you shape the random sources in various interesting ways using *random distributions*.

Let's start off with something simple: rolling a six-sided dice. This is effectively identical to generating a random number between 1 and 6, which before meant having to call our old friend: **Int.random(in: 1...6)**.

That's all gone in GameplayKit, because they have built six-sided dice right into their API. No, really. Try this:

```
let d6 = GKRandomDistribution.d6()
d6.nextInt()
```

Boom: you'll get a random number between 1 and 6. Want a 20-sided die? Great:

```
let d20 = GKRandomDistribution.d20()
d20.nextInt()
```

Oh, you want a 11,539-sided die? Done:

```
let crazy = GKRandomDistribution(lowestValue: 1, highestValue:
11539)
crazy.nextInt()
```

Project 35: Random Numbers

And right there you can immediately see how the concept of dice is just there to frame the random number generation: give it a lowest value of 100 and a highest of 200, and you'll get a number between those two, inclusive. This is very similar to Swift's **Int.random(in:)** method, but using GameplayKit means you can create the random distribution as a property then re-use it again and again without having to specify the range each time.

If you intend to specify lowest and highest values, you need to be careful if you intend also to use **nextInt(upperBound:)** – code like this will crash your app:

```
let distribution = GKRandomDistribution(lowestValue: 10,  
highestValue: 20)  
print(distribution.nextInt(upperBound: 9))
```

When you create a random distribution in this way, iOS automatically creates a random source for you using an unspecified algorithm. If you want one particular random source, there are special constructors for you:

```
let rand = GKMersenneTwisterRandomSource()  
let distribution = GKRandomDistribution(randomSource: rand,  
lowestValue: 10, highestValue: 20)  
print(distribution.nextInt())
```

So, GameplayKit makes it easy to generate truly random numbers within a specific range – no more hand-coded functions required. That alone is a huge win, but what if I said GameplayKit could also generate random numbers that *weren't* truly random?

Yes, I know that sounds pointless, but stick with me. If you roll a six-sided die twice, there's a one in six chance you'll get the same number twice in a row. Unless you're working with fixed dice, this is true randomness. But true randomness is sometimes unpleasant, because it's possible to roll a six five times in a row or even 50 times in a row. Sure, it's not *likely*, but it's possible, and players inevitably curse their "unlucky streak" and may even leave angry App Store reviews.

Shaping GameplayKit random numbers: GKRandomDistribution, GKShuffledDistribution and GKGaussianDistribution

But there's more: what if you want a spread of numbers, but really you want them to naturally cluster towards a middle ground? This would mean a tank in your strategy game normally fights like an average tank, but occasionally will do something spectacularly brave – or spectacularly stupid.

GameplayKit has solutions for both of these situations, and it's so simple you'll want to start using it straight away.

You just saw me using **GKRandomDistribution** to shape a random source, either created automatically or specified in its constructor. GameplayKit provides two other distributions: **GKShuffledDistribution** ensures that sequences repeat less frequently, and **GKGaussianDistribution** ensures that your results naturally form a bell curve where results near to the mean average occur more frequently.

Let's look at **GKShuffledDistribution** first. This is an anti-clustering distribution, which means it shapes the distribution of random numbers so that you are less likely to get repeats. This means it will go through every possible number before you see a repeat, which makes for a truly perfect distribution of numbers.

For example, the code below generates the numbers 1 to 6 in a random order:

```
let shuffled = GKShuffledDistribution.d6()
print(shuffled.nextInt())
print(shuffled.nextInt())
print(shuffled.nextInt())
print(shuffled.nextInt())
print(shuffled.nextInt())
print(shuffled.nextInt())
```

To be clear, that code literally will generate the number 1 once, the number 2 once, etc, up to 6, but the order is random. This makes **GKShuffleDistribution** a so-called "fair distribution" because every number will appear an equal number of times. You are, in theory at least, guaranteed that the first roll and the second roll will be different.

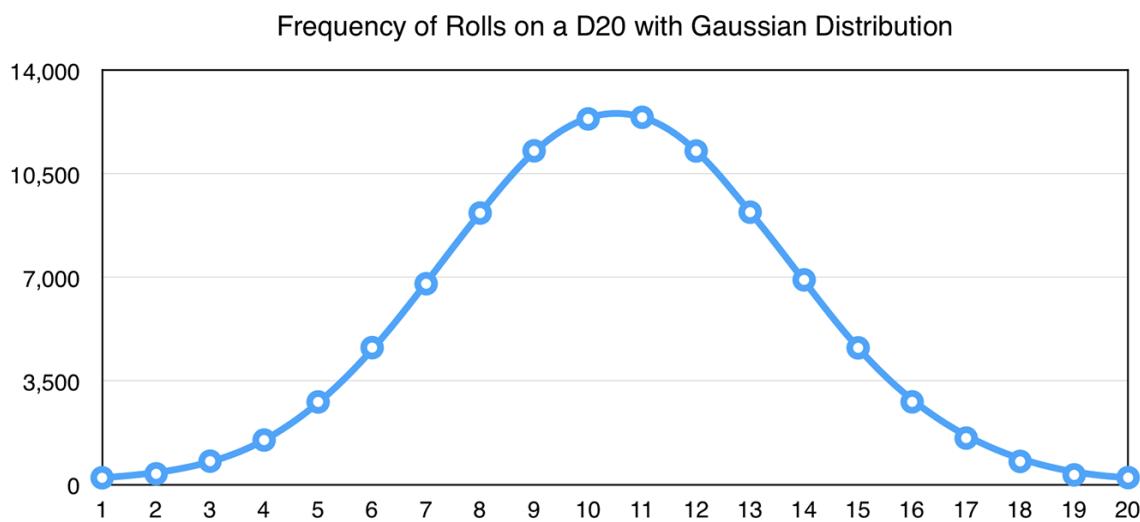
Project 35: Random Numbers

Obviously fair random has its own downside, which is that if a player rolls a six they can be know for sure they won't get a six in their next five rolls. This means you need to use it with caution: there's no point having random numbers if they are predictably random. It is, however, worth adding that **GKShuffledDistribution** is still random over time – the actual order of numbers can't be predicted.

The other distribution option is **GKGaussianDistribution** (tip: "Gauss" rhymes with "House"), which causes the random numbers to bias towards the mean average of the range. So if your range is from 0 to 20, you'll get more numbers like 10, 11 and 12, fewer numbers like 8, 9, 13 and 14, and decreasing amounts of any numbers outside that.

To give you an idea of the bell curve this distribution generates, I created 100,000 random numbers between 1 and 20, and only 228 were the number 1. That's way below the statistical average of 5000, particularly when you realize that the number 11 got rolled 12,488 times – more than 50 times as often.

You can see the actual output of my test below, visualized on a chart:



GKGaussianDistribution is perfect for when you want random things to happen, but you also want to steer that randomness so that has a degree of averageness to it.

Shuffling an array with GameplayKit: `arrayByShufflingObjects(in:)`

Many Swift game projects use this Fisher-Yates array shuffle algorithm implemented in Swift by Nate Cook:

```
extension Array {  
    mutating func shuffle() {  
        for i in 0..(count - 1) {  
            let j = Int(arc4random_uniform(UInt32(count - i))) + i  
            swapAt(i, j)  
        }  
    }  
}
```

With GameplayKit there's a specific method you can call that does a similar thing:

`arrayByShufflingObjects(in:)`. I say "similar thing" rather than "identical thing" because the GameplayKit returns a new array rather than modifying the original, whereas Nate's version shuffles in place.

For example, if you wanted to blithely ignore the inevitable legalities and set up a lottery in your neighborhood, you could create an array containing the numbers 1 to 49, randomize its order, then pick the first six balls:

```
let lotteryBalls = [Int](1...49)  
let shuffledBalls =  
    GKRandomSource.sharedRandom().arrayByShufflingObjects(in:  
lotteryBalls)  
print(shuffledBalls[0])  
print(shuffledBalls[1])
```

Project 35: Random Numbers

```
print(shuffledBalls[2])
print(shuffledBalls[3])
print(shuffledBalls[4])
print(shuffledBalls[5])
```

Note that I'm using the default system randomization because determinism is exactly what you *don't* want in a lottery. Actually, forget it: if you're going to ignore the law and set up your own lottery, you might as well fix it so you win, right?

One of the advantages of GameplayKit's randomization is that it is truly deterministic, even across devices. This means as long as you tell it where to start, it will produce the same series of random numbers in the future. This is perfect for our evil lottery plan, and it gives me the chance to show you one last thing: seeding GameplayKit's random sources.

When we created our random seeds earlier, we just used this:

```
let mersenne = GKMersenneTwisterRandomSource()
```

That creates a new Mersenne Twister random source with a random starting point. But if you want to force a starting point – either because you want to win your lottery or because you want players in a network game to be synchronized – you can create your random source with a specific *seed*, which is a fixed starting point.

When you use a seed value, your random number generator becomes predictable – you can always predict exactly what “random” numbers get generated. But that's OK, because you can generate the seeds using a separate random number generator, so you're guaranteed uniqueness.

Here's our lottery example rewritten using a fixed seed value of 1001:

```
let fixedLotteryBalls = [Int](1...49)
let fixedShuffledBalls = GKMersenneTwisterRandomSource(seed:
1001).arrayByShufflingObjects(in: fixedLotteryBalls)
print(fixedShuffledBalls[0])
```

Shuffling an array with GameplayKit: `arrayByShufflingObjects(in:)`

```
print(fixedShuffledBalls[1])
print(fixedShuffledBalls[2])
print(fixedShuffledBalls[3])
print(fixedShuffledBalls[4])
print(fixedShuffledBalls[5])
```

If you run that code now you'll see that the balls are shuffled identically every time. It's a random order, but *predictably* random if you know what I mean!

Wrap up

I realize technique projects can be a little dry, but I hope you can see some real advantages to using GameplayKit randomization over other solutions. Not only does it offer a wider range of functionality (shuffled and Gaussian distributions are awesome!) but it makes your code much simpler, and also has the guarantee of being provably random.

Of course, if you're stuck supporting prior versions of iOS, you'll need to mix and match GameplayKit randomization with calls to `arc4random_uniform()` and the like.

It bears repeating that this is only a small slice of what GameplayKit offers. If you haven't already read tutorial 34, you should check it out now - it's a tutorial for `GKMinmaxStrategist` from GameplayKit that shows you how to create an AI for Four in a Row.

Project 36

Crashy Plane

Ever wanted to make a Flappy Bird clone? Now you can do it in under an hour thanks to SpriteKit.

Setting up

In this project we're going to produce a Flappy Bird clone called Crashy Plane. Flappy Bird might seem like a remarkably simple game when you're playing it, but has a lot going on behind the scenes: there's physics, animation, infinite scrolling, and more – it's a worthy choice for a learning project.

Before you start, please download the assets for this project from <https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift> so you can follow along. If you haven't played Flappy Bird before, the concept is simple: tap the screen to keep your bird flying, and don't touch the floor or any pipes. In our game it'll be a plane with mountains as obstacles, but the idea is the same.

The assets you download are all licensed under CC0 / public domain, which means you can use them however you want without attribution. If you want to attribute the original authors, see the README.txt file in the zip. The game art comes from a designer called Kenney, who offers a huge selection of public domain game assets in return for a donation – if you're serious about making games you should definitely [visit his home page](#).

All set? Great! Launch Xcode and create a new project from the game template. Choose Swift for your language and SpriteKit for the game technology, then name it Project36 and click Next then Finish. Before we go any further, please change its project settings so that it supports only iPhone in portrait – that's the natural environment of Flappy Bird.

Creating a player: resizeFill vs aspectFill

The first thing we're going to do in this game is clear out what's there and get our player on the screen so we can be sure everything is working. This is an iPhone game which means we need to be able to handle various device sizes: iPhone 5s, iPhone 8, iPhone 8 Plus, and iPhone X sizes all need to be catered for.

So: start by performing *most* of the usual cleaning job for Xcode's SpriteKit template – delete Actions.sks and remove the majority of the source code from GameScene.swift, leaving only empty **didMove(to:)** and **touchesBegan()** methods.

This time, though, we need to modify GameScene.sks a little differently because we're targeting iPhone rather than iPad. Open it inside the scene editor, then delete the "Hello World" label, and change its anchor point to X:0 Y:0, but *don't* change its size.

OK, that's it for cleaning. The next step is to add the assets for the game into the right places in the project. So, in the assets you downloaded, look in the GFX folder and drag all the files from there into your asset catalog – you'll see I've provided 1x, 2x and 3x versions of each piece of art, which means you could expand this to support earlier devices if you wanted.

Now right-click on your project group in the Project Navigator pane – that's not the blue "Project36" at the top, but the yellow "Project36" directly beneath it. Choose New Group, then name it "Content" and hit Enter. Copy into there the remaining assets you downloaded – coin.wav, explosion.wav, music.m4a, PlayerExplosion.sks and spark.png.

That's all the assets configured for this game, so let's look at the first pieces of code. If you've done your cleaning job correctly it should look like this:

```
import SpriteKit

class GameScene: SKScene {
```

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
override func didMove(to view: SKView) {  
}  
  
override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {  
}  
}
```

To make sure our game is working OK, we're going to start by creating the player. I've provided three different player sprites for you that make it look like the propeller is spinning around. We're going to need to reference the player throughout the game, so create a property for it now by adding this to your **GameScene** class:

```
var player: SKSpriteNode!
```

By the time it's finished, our game is going to need to create lots of different elements, so rather than clutter up **didMove(to:)** to handle everything we're going to use a common programming methodology called Composed Methods, which essentially just means "make each method do one small thing, then combine them together as needed." In our case, that means we're going to have lots of methods to create things in our game, then call them individually in **didMove(to:)**.

For creating the player, we're going to create a sprite node out of the first frame in the player animation, "player-1". We're then going to position the player most of the way up the screen and most of the way to the left – this gives them enough time to respond when the game starts. To get the propeller animation we're going to pass an array of textures to the **animate(with:)** SpriteKit action, cycling through each frame every 0.01 seconds. That's actually faster than our game draws, so it essentially means "as fast as possible."

Here's the code - put this into GameScene.swift, below **touchesBegan()**:

```
func createPlayer() {
```

Creating a player: resizeFill vs aspectFill

```
let playerTexture = SKTexture(imageNamed: "player-1")
player = SKSpriteNode(texture: playerTexture)
player.zPosition = 10
player.position = CGPoint(x: frame.width / 6, y:
frame.height * 0.75)

addChild(player)

let frame2 = SKTexture(imageNamed: "player-2")
let frame3 = SKTexture(imageNamed: "player-3")
let animation = SKAction.animate(with: [playerTexture,
frame2, frame3, frame2], timePerFrame: 0.01)
let runForever = SKAction.repeatForever(animation)

player.run(runForever)
}
```

Now add this to **didMove(to:)**:

```
createPlayer()
```

Press Play in Xcode to build and run your app, and you should see the player – although there's a good chance it's tiny on the screen. The reason for this becomes clear if you open GameScene.sks (not GameScene.swift!) in Xcode. If you look in the Attributes inspector you'll see your game scene is configured to be 750x1334, which isn't much help for us here.

At the time of writing, there are several iPhone sizes: iPhone SE, iPhone 8, iPhone 8 Plus, iPhone XS, and iPhone XS Max. Sometimes you want your game to look the same on all devices, but other times you'll want slightly different layouts on each device.

This is all handled using the **scaleMode** property of your game scene, which gets – open GameViewController.swift and look for this line:

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
scene.scaleMode = .aspectFill
```

That means "scale the scene so that it fits the view, allowing to be cropped if needed." Because the scene is created for iPhone 8-sized devices, **.aspectFill** will cause everything to appear a little smaller on iPhone 5-sized devices, and appear a little bigger on Plus-sized devices.

If you wanted everything to appear about the same size, you could try this instead:

```
scene.scaleMode = .resizeFill
```

That now means "just make the game scene the same size as the view it is inside." The choice really depends on how you want to build your game, but in this project we'll stick with **.aspectFill**.

You *do* need to change the GameScene.sks size so that it's 375x667, though, otherwise everything will be unplayably small!

Sky, background and ground: parallax scrolling with SpriteKit

Lots of scrolling 2D games use multiple depth levels that scroll at various speeds and deliver a surprisingly nice effect. We'll be controlling the depth of our graphics by setting the **zPosition** property of sprites, starting with the sky: this is just two colored blocks that sit right at the very back of the game.

You can create **SKSpriteNodes** with nothing more than a color and a size, and that's what we'll use here. I've sampled the sky colors based on the other graphics that we'll be adding soon – the top and bottom parts of the sky are very, *very* similar, but just different enough to be visible.

To make things easier for my brain, I'm going to be setting the **anchorPoint** property of the sprite nodes. This means they calculate their positions differently from the default, which might not sound easy at all, but trust me: it is!

By default, nodes have the anchor point X:0.5, Y:0.5, which means they calculate their position from their horizontal and vertical center. We'll be modifying that to be X:0.5, Y:1 so that they measure from their center top instead – it makes it easier to position because one part of the sky will take up 67% of the screen and the other part will take up 33%.

Here's the **createSky()** method; add this just below **createPlayer()**:

```
func createSky() {
    let topSky = SKSpriteNode(color: UIColor(hue: 0.55,
saturation: 0.14, brightness: 0.97, alpha: 1), size:
CGSize(width: frame.width, height: frame.height * 0.67))
    topSky.anchorPoint = CGPoint(x: 0.5, y: 1)

    let bottomSky = SKSpriteNode(color: UIColor(hue: 0.55,
saturation: 0.16, brightness: 0.96, alpha: 1), size:
CGSize(width: frame.width, height: frame.height * 0.33))
```

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
bottomSky.anchorPoint = CGPoint(x: 0.5, y: 1)

topSky.position = CGPoint(x: frame.midX, y: frame.height)
bottomSky.position = CGPoint(x: frame.midX, y:
bottomSky.frame.height)

addChild(topSky)
addChild(bottomSky)

bottomSky.zPosition = -40
topSky.zPosition = -40
}
```

Add a call to `createSky()` inside `didMove(to:)` then press Play again – you should see some sky behind the player's plane now. Can you spot that it's two different colors?

Next up is the background. In the assets for this game it's a set of distant mountains and clouds with a faint blue color, but we can't just add this to the game using a sprite node. The reason is simple: while the sky is just two fixed (and very similar!) colors, the background mountains need to scroll.

Making the mountains scroll is easy enough, but what's harder is ensuring the mountains don't just scroll off the screen and leave nothing behind. What we really want to happen is to have mountains scroll to the left forever, looping infinitely. We're going to accomplish this with a little cheat: we're going to create two sets of mountains, both moving left. When one moves off the screen completely we're going to move it way over to the other side of the screen so that it can carry on moving. With two sets of mountains in place, this means there'll be a seamless, never-ending mountain range in the background.

First up, add this method to your class. It creates two sprite nodes from the background texture, positioning them side by side in your scene:

```
func createBackground() {
```

Sky, background and ground: parallax scrolling with SpriteKit

```
let backgroundTexture = SKTexture(imageNamed: "background")

for i in 0 ... 1 {
    let background = SKSpriteNode(texture: backgroundTexture)
    background.zPosition = -30
    background.anchorPoint = CGPoint.zero
    background.position = CGPoint(x:
        (backgroundTexture.size().width * CGFloat(i)) - CGFloat(1 * i),
        y: 100)
    addChild(background)
}
}
```

You'll notice that I set the anchor point to the value **CGPoint.zero**, which makes the background texture position itself from the left edge. This is helpful because it means we know exactly when each mountain is fully off the screen, because its X position will be equal to 0 minus its width. I also set the **zPosition** properties to be -30, which places them in front of the sky.

We're using **backgroundTexture.size().width * CGFloat(i) - CGFloat(1 * i)** to calculate the X position of each mountain, which might look hard but really it isn't. This is inside a loop that counts from 0 to 1, so the first time the loop goes around X will be 0, and the second time the loop goes around X will be the width of the texture minus 1 to avoid any tiny little gaps in the mountains.

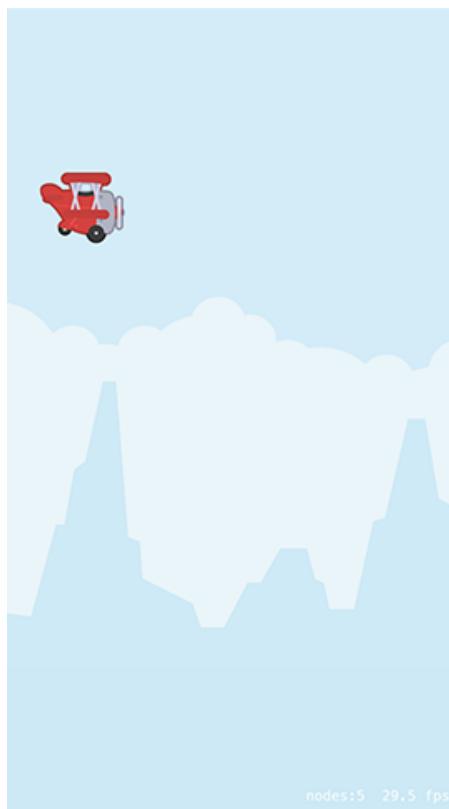
Add a call to **createBackground()** to **didMove(to:)** and hit Play to make sure it's working - you should see a static mountain range. There are two of them there, but you can't see the other one because it's way off screen. To bring that to life we need to make the mountains move: first to the left over 20 seconds, then way back over to the right over 0 seconds, i.e. immediately.

To make that work, add this code to **createBackground()** just after **addChild()**:

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
let moveLeft = SKAction.moveBy(x: -  
backgroundTexture.size().width, y: 0, duration: 20)  
let moveReset = SKAction.moveBy(x:  
backgroundTexture.size().width, y: 0, duration: 0)  
let moveLoop = SKAction.sequence([moveLeft, moveReset])  
let moveForever = SKAction.repeatForever(moveLoop)  
  
background.run(moveForever)
```

So, each mountain will move to the left a distance equal to its width, then jump back another distance equal to its width. This repeats in a sequence forever, so the mountains loop indefinitely – try running the app to see how it looks!



Next up we're going to create the ground. This needs to have a Z position of -10 (not -20; you'll see why later!) and have very similar movement logic to the mountains. That is, we need to create two lots of the ground texture and have it move back and forward in a loop to create

Sky, background and ground: parallax scrolling with SpriteKit

an infinite scrolling landscape.

This time, however, is a little different: we can't adjust the anchor point of the sprite because it causes problems with physics, so we need to do some maths juggling. We also need to make the ground move much faster than the mountains so you get a neat parallax scrolling effect.

Here's the code for the **createGround()** method:

```
func createGround() {
    let groundTexture = SKTexture(imageNamed: "ground")

    for i in 0 ... 1 {
        let ground = SKSpriteNode(texture: groundTexture)
        ground.zPosition = -10
        ground.position = CGPoint(x:
(groundTexture.size().width / 2.0 + (groundTexture.size().width
* CGFloat(i))), y: groundTexture.size().height / 2)

        addChild(ground)

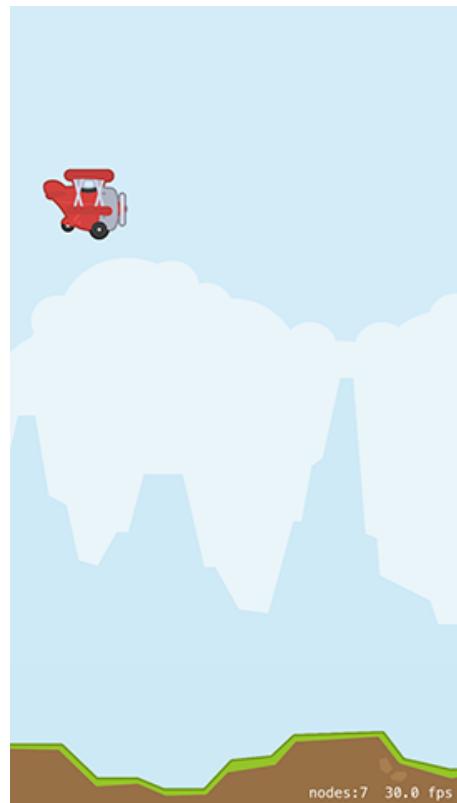
        let moveLeft = SKAction.moveBy(x: -
groundTexture.size().width, y: 0, duration: 5)
        let moveReset = SKAction.moveBy(x:
groundTexture.size().width, y: 0, duration: 0)
        let moveLoop = SKAction.sequence([moveLeft, moveReset])
        let moveForever = SKAction.repeatForever(moveLoop)

        ground.run(moveForever)
    }
}
```

Remember to add a call to **createGround()** inside **didMove(to:)**, then press Play to see how things look. You should see the player's plane animating, the sky, some moving mountains,

Project 36: Crashy Plane

plus a faster-moving ground. It's not a game yet because there aren't any controls, but I hope you can see things coming together!



Creating collisions

Part of the infuriating nature of Flappy Bird was that there were all sorts of collisions that could instantly kill you. In our game, these are massive rocks that will come out from the top and bottom of the screen – and if a player hits any rock, or the ground, they are history.

The player's job is to fly their plane safely through the rocks that come along. The difficult part is that the gap between rocks varies in position, and can be high, low or in the middle of the screen, so the player needs quick reactions to score anything over a few points.

We're going to make a `createRocks()` method in just a moment, but first here's what it needs to do:

1. Create top and bottom rock sprites. They are both the same graphic, but we're going to rotate the top one and flip it horizontally so that the two rocks form a spiky death for the player.
2. Create a third sprite that is a large red rectangle. This will be positioned just after the rocks and will be used to track when the player has passed through the rocks safely – if they touch that red rectangle, they should score a point. (Don't worry, we'll make it invisible later!)
3. Use Swift's random number generation to generate a number in a range. This will be used to determine where the safe gap in the rocks should be.
4. Position the rocks just off the right edge of the screen, then animate them across to the left edge. When they are safely off the left edge, remove them from the game.

Here's the `createRocks()` method, with numbered comments matching the numbers above:

```
func createRocks() {  
    // 1  
    let rockTexture = SKTexture(imageNamed: "rock")  
  
    let topRock = SKSpriteNode(texture: rockTexture)  
    topRock.zRotation = .pi
```

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
topRock.xScale = -1.0

let bottomRock = SKSpriteNode(texture: rockTexture)

topRock.zPosition = -20
bottomRock.zPosition = -20

// 2
let rockCollision = SKSpriteNode(color: UIColor.red, size:
CGSize(width: 32, height: frame.height))
rockCollision.name = "scoreDetect"

addChild(topRock)
addChild(bottomRock)
addChild(rockCollision)

// 3
let xPosition = frame.width + topRock.frame.width

let max = CGFloat(frame.height / 3)
let yPosition = CGFloat.random(in: -50...max)

// this next value affects the width of the gap between
rocks
// make it smaller to make your game harder – if you're
feeling evil!
let rockDistance: CGFloat = 70

// 4
topRock.position = CGPoint(x: xPosition, y: yPosition +
topRock.size.height + rockDistance)
bottomRock.position = CGPoint(x: xPosition, y: yPosition -
```

```

rockDistance)
    rockCollision.position = CGPoint(x: xPosition +
(rockCollision.size.width * 2), y: frame.midY)

let endPosition = frame.width + (topRock.frame.width * 2)

let moveAction = SKAction.moveBy(x: -endPosition, y: 0,
duration: 6.2)
let moveSequence = SKAction.sequence([moveAction,
SKAction.removeFromParent()])
topRock.run(moveSequence)
bottomRock.run(moveSequence)
rockCollision.run(moveSequence)
}

```

If you haven't seen it before, the **xScale** property lets you stretch sprites horizontally. Using -1.0 as the value is what causes the flip effect - it stretches the sprite by -100%, inverting it. I'm also using -20 for the **zPosition** because we want the rocks to appear behind the ground sprites to keep the illusion intact.

You'll notice we're adding the movement action to the top rock, the bottom rock and the collision sprite. If you wanted, you could create an extra **SKNode** that contains all three rock sections, then animate *that*, but it gives you the same result. You might also have noticed the curious duration I set: 6.2. I chose this through trial and error because the rocks move a different distance to the ground and yet need to move at about the same speed – a duration of 6.2 comes close enough.

Now, we're *not* going to add a call to **createRocks()** in **didMove(to:)**. You see, if we did that it would create just one pair of rocks, which isn't what we want. Instead, we want rocks to be created every few seconds continuously until the player dies, which means we need a second method: **startRocks()**. Add this now:

```
func startRocks() {
```

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
let create = SKAction.run { [unowned self] in
    self.createRocks()
}

let wait = SKAction.wait(forDuration: 3)
let sequence = SKAction.sequence([create, wait])
let repeatForever = SKAction.repeatForever(sequence)

run(repeatForever)
}
```

That new method calls `createRocks()`, waits three seconds, calls `createRocks()` again, waits again, and so on, forever. Add a call to `startRocks()` to your `didMove(to:)` method, and if you run the app you'll really start to see things looking good: rocks should appear at random heights, with the red scoring box straight after them. Yes, you can't crash into them yet, but we'll get there soon!

The last thing we're going to do in this chapter is add a score. As you should have completed the earlier game projects already, the only surprising thing here is that I'm not going to use Chalkduster as my font – and only then because it's not easy to read against moving rocks and mountains!

Add these two properties to your class. One is to hold the score as an integer, and the other is to draw the score to the screen using a `SKLabelNode`:

```
var scoreLabel: SKLabelNode!

var score = 0 {
    didSet {
        scoreLabel.text = "SCORE: \(score)"
    }
}
```

As per usual, we use a property observer to update the label whenever the score changes. Now add this `createScore()` method to your class:

```
func createScore() {
    scoreLabel = SKLabelNode(fontNamed: "Optima-ExtraBlack")
    scoreLabel.fontSize = 24

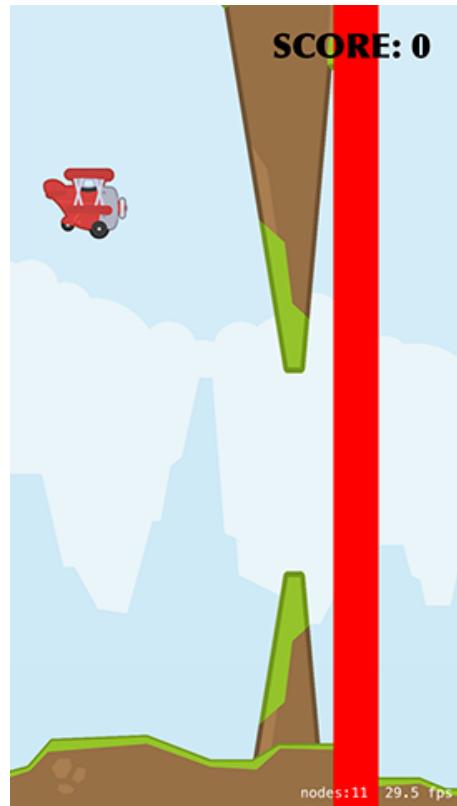
    scoreLabel.position = CGPoint(x: frame.midX, y: frame.maxY -
60)
    scoreLabel.text = "SCORE: 0"
    scoreLabel.fontColor = UIColor.black

    addChild(scoreLabel)
}
```

That positions the score in the top right of the screen, safely away from the player so as not to be too annoying.

Add a call to `createScore()` to `didMove(to:)` and you're done. Now all that's left is the important stuff: the game play!

Project 36: Crashy Plane



Pixel-perfect physics in SpriteKit, plus explosions and more

Everything in our game is configured to look good, but it's not actually playable yet.

Surprisingly, you're now only about 10 minutes away from a fully working game, because as soon as we add in a few physics calls the game is good to go.

As you might imagine, Flappy Bird is a game where physics really matters. The player's plane has physics, the rocks have physics, the ground has physics, and there's also gravity pulling the player inevitably downwards towards their doom. So, we need to make sure we are told when collisions happen, which means we need to conform to the **SKPhysicsContactDelegate** protocol. Change your **GameScene** class's definition to this:

```
class GameScene: SKScene, SKPhysicsContactDelegate {
```

Now in your **didMove(to:)** method you want to make the SpriteKit physics world report collisions to the game scene so they can be acted upon. We're also going to use this opportunity to adjust the gravity of the physics world – you can set this to any value you want, but be warned: the game is hard enough without massive amounts of gravity!

Add these two lines to **didMove(to:)**:

```
physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx: 0.0, dy: -5.0)
physicsWorld.contactDelegate = self
```

So: physics. Let's start by adding physics to the player. To make things fair, we're going to use pixel-perfect collision detection to maximize the player's chance of survival, and SpriteKit makes this really easy to do. In your **createPlayer()** method, just after the call to **addChild()**, add this:

```
player.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(texture: playerTexture,
size: playerTexture.size())
player.physicsBody!.contactTestBitMask =
```

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
player.physicsBody!.collisionBitMask  
player.physicsBody?.isDynamic = true  
  
// player.physicsBody?.collisionBitMask = 0
```

Those four lines of code pack in a lot of functionality, and might not make sense right away so let me break it down:

1. The first line sets up pixel-perfect physics using the sprite of the plane. This sprite animates, but the difference is so tiny it won't matter.
2. The second line makes SpriteKit tell us whenever the player collides with anything. This is wasteful in some games, but here the player dies if they touch anything so it's the right thing to do.
3. The third line makes the plane respond to physics. This is the default, but I'm including it here because we'll change it later.
4. The last line makes the plane bounce off nothing, or at least it would do if it weren't commented out. I've made it commented out just for a moment so you can see it's working – I'll tell you when to remove the comment.

You might think lines 2 and 4 contradict each other, but they don't and they are both needed. SpriteKit distinguishes between contact (two things touched) and collision (two things should bounce off each other in the physics world). We want our plane to notify us if it touches anything – any rock, the score counter red rectangles, or the ground. But we *don't* want it to bounce off them, because we don't want the player to lose any momentum when they touch the hidden score counters.

Don't bother running the game just yet, because all you'll see is the player falling off the screen! To make things interesting we need to make some more changes first.

In the **createGround()** method, just before the call to **addChild()**, add this:

```
ground.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(texture: ground.texture!,  
size: ground.texture!.size())
```

```
ground.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
```

That sets up pixel-perfect collision for the ground sprites, but makes them non-dynamic – that is, they will respond to physics in the game so that the plane hits the ground, but they won't get moved by the physics. Without this line the ground would drop off the screen thanks to gravity.

We can start to approach a playable game by making just two more changes. First, add these two lines to **touchesBegan()**:

```
player.physicsBody?.velocity = CGVector(dx: 0, dy: 0)
player.physicsBody?.applyImpulse(CGVector(dx: 0, dy: 20))
```

The second line means "give the player a push upwards every time the player taps the screen." The first line is there to make the physics a bit more realistic and it effectively neutralizes any existing upward velocity the player has before applying the new movement. Without that, the player could tap multiple times quickly and apply a huge upwards force to the plane, sending them miles off the top of the screen. With that line, the plane behaves much more like the "dodo" plane in the game *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City* – each upward thrust adds only a tiny bit of lift.

The second change is to make the player's movement more dramatic. It's going to take 1/1000th of the player's upward velocity (a tiny amount) and turn that into rotation. This means that when the player is moving upwards the plane tilts up a little, and when the player is falling the plane tilts down. It's a simple effect, but it really highlights the player's impending doom!

To make the effect nicer we'll add it as a **rotate(toAngle:)** action over a tenth of a second. This smooths out the rotation a little, but because it's happening more slowly than the game's frame rate it effectively means the rotation animation is always happening.

All this is going to happen in the **update()** method, which is called by SpriteKit once every frame so we can update our game world with any custom logic. You should have deleted that as part of the standard cleaning for Xcode's SpriteKit template, but it's easy to put back now:

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
override func update(_ currentTime: TimeInterval) {  
    let value = player.physicsBody!.velocity.dy * 0.001  
    let rotate = SKAction.rotate(toAngle: value, duration: 0.1)  
  
    player.run(rotate)  
}
```

If you run your game now you'll see it's almost playable: the player falls towards the ground, and tapping keeps them in flight just a little bit longer. You can't collide with the rocks, but you *can* collide with the ground because of that commented line that modified **collisionBitMask**. I made it commented because you should be able to fly your play around then crash into the ground in various interesting ways – it's the best (read: most fun!) way to make sure your physics are configured correctly.

Please uncomment that line of code now so that the player can no longer bounce off the ground.

Now for the interesting part: adding physics to the rocks. This is going to use pixel-perfect collisions for the rocks themselves, and rectangle physics for the red scoring rectangle. All three of them need to have their **isDynamic** property set to **false** so your rocks don't fall off the screen.

So, we're going to make three changes, all in the **createRocks()** method. The first is just after the **let topRock =** line – add these two lines of code:

```
topRock.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(texture: rockTexture, size:  
rockTexture.size())  
topRock.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
```

The second change is just after the **let bottomRock =** line – add these two lines of code:

```
bottomRock.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(texture: rockTexture,  
size: rockTexture.size())
```

```
bottomRock.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
```

Finally, add these two lines of code just after the **let rockCollision** = line:

```
rockCollision.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(rectangleOf:  
rockCollision.size)  
rockCollision.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
```

Again, we're using pixel-perfect collision for the rocks and simple rectangle physics for the score collision rectangle. It's worth me saying that per-pixel collision detection is substantially slower than rectangle- and circle-based detection, but in our simple game it's perfectly OK.

Before you run the game again, I'd like you to make one more change. Go to GameViewController.swift and you'll see these two lines of code:

```
view.showsFPS = true  
view.showsNodeCount = true
```

We've just added quite a lot of physics to our game, and physics can be annoying to debug because it's invisible. Or at least it's invisible *by default* – SpriteKit can actually draw faint blue lines around all our game physics, which really helps make sure everything is configured correctly. Add these new line below the previous two:

```
view.showsPhysics = true
```

If you run the game now and look closely you should be able to see the blue physics lines all around the rocks, ground and even the player. It's such a small thing, but trust me: it's a real time saver!

We still have one more thing to do before our game starts to be playable, and that's to add collisions between the player's plane and pretty much everything else in the game. We already configured the player to report back whenever it touches anything else that has physics, so we now need to implement the **didBegin()** method and take appropriate action.

Project 36: Crashy Plane

First: what happens when the player touches a red score rectangle? Well, we gave those rectangles a specific name – "scoreDetect" – which means we can check to see whether the collision involved a node named "scoreDetect" and, if so, it means the player passed through the rocks. When that happens we're going to remove the score rectangle from the game (so they can't somehow score double points by accident), play the "coin.wav" sound effect, and increment the score by one.

Here's the code – add this method to your **GameScene** class, just below **update()**:

```
func didBegin(_ contact: SKPhysicsContact) {
    if contact.bodyA.node?.name == "scoreDetect" ||
    contact.bodyB.node?.name == "scoreDetect" {
        if contact.bodyA.node == player {
            contact.bodyB.node?.removeFromParent()
        } else {
            contact.bodyA.node?.removeFromParent()
        }
    }

    let sound = SKAction.playSoundFileNamed("coin.wav",
    waitForCompletion: false)
    run(sound)

    score += 1

    return
}

guard contact.bodyA.node != nil && contact.bodyB.node != nil
else {
    return
}
}
```

There are five important things to note in that code:

1. It checks to see whether the contact's **bodyA** or **bodyB** property was a score detection rectangle. This is because we don't know whether the player collided with the rectangle or the rectangle collided with the player. That might sound weirdly philosophical, but trust me: it matters.
2. When you first play a sound in the simulator, expect your game to pause for half a second while the sound engine is initialized. This doesn't happen on devices, but it does make this game extremely hard – at least until we fix it in the next chapter.
3. Adding one to the **score** property triggers the **didSet** property observer we created earlier, which means the score label will be updated.
4. I added a **return** line to the end because if the player collides with anything else we want to destroy them. This just means, "you hit something safe; don't continue in this method."
5. The **guard** at the end avoids a common problem. When the player hits a "scoreDetect" node it's possible *two* collisions are triggered: "player hit score detect" and "score detect hit player". The first time our code works, but the second time the "scoreDetect" node has been removed so the game considers the player destroyed. The **guard** avoids that by skipping any collisions where either node has become nil.

And now for the really interesting bit: making the player die when they touch any rock or the ground. Because the player's physics are configured to report back contact with absolutely everything, and because we just made **didBegin()** exit if the player touches a scoring rectangle, we can be sure that any code coming after our previous additions will only be executed if the player hit a rock or the ground.

When this happens, we want the player to die and the game to end. So, if the collision is between the player and anything else, we're going to create a smoky particle effect using the PlayerExplosion.sks asset you copied in at the beginning, play "explosion.wav", remove the player from the game, then change the game's **speed** property to be 0.

Add this code just before the end of **didBegin()**:

```
if contact.bodyA.node == player || contact.bodyB.node == player
```

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
{  
    if let explosion = SKEmitterNode(fileNamed:  
"PlayerExplosion") {  
        explosion.position = player.position  
        addChild(explosion)  
    }  
  
    let sound = SKAction.playSoundFileNamed("explosion.wav",  
waitForCompletion: false)  
    run(sound)  
  
    player.removeFromParent()  
    speed = 0  
}
```

All that is old except for the last line: the **speed** property. All SpriteKit nodes can have actions attached to them, and by default they all run in real time – that is, one second in an action is equal to one second on a real clock.

This **speed** property is a time multiplier that lets you adjust how fast actions attached to a node should run. It's 1.0 by default (real time), but you could make it 2.0 to make actions happen twice as fast. That is, "fade out over 5 seconds" would actually become "fade out over 2.5 seconds."

We're adjusting the **speed** property to 0 for our game scene, which in turns get inherited by all children – i.e., everything in the game. This has the effect of halting all those move actions we added to make parallax scrolling work, effectively ending the game.

If you run the game now you'll see it's basically done: you can tap to fly high, stop tapping to fall, fly through rocks to score points, or crash into something else to die in an explosion. We could very easily stop here, but I'm going to go a bit further and add some extra polish. Partly because polish is fun, but mostly because it gives me a chance to introduce you to another useful SpriteKit feature...

Pixel-perfect physics in SpriteKit, plus explosions and more

Background music with SKAudioNode, an intro, plus game over

To make this a finished game – or at least as finished as it can be before getting into optimization – we're going to make four more changes: we're going to add background music, show an intro screen, show a game over screen, and let the player try again when they die. None of these things are difficult, but it's a chance to polish your skills while polishing the game so hopefully you won't skip this out!

First up: background music. SpriteKit has a special class called **SKAudioNode** that adds several useful features to audio in SpriteKit, such as the ability to pan your audio left and right. For our purposes, however, **SKAudioNode** is good because it lets us stop the audio whenever we want.

One of the neat features of **SKAudioNode** is that it loops its audio by default. This makes it perfect for background music: we create the music, add it directly to the game scene as a child, and it plays our background music forever. It also has the happy side effect of starting the iOS Simulator's sound system as soon as the game begins, which means you won't have your game freeze the first time the player touches a red scoring rectangle.

Add a property for the background music now:

```
var backgroundMusic: SKAudioNode!
```

Then add this to **didMove(to:)**:

```
if let musicURL = Bundle.main.url(forResource: "music",
withExtension: "m4a") {
    backgroundMusic = SKAudioNode(url: musicURL)
    addChild(backgroundMusic)
}
```

Background music with SKAudioNode, an intro, plus game over

Note: if you value your sanity, you'll probably want to run your game now to make sure the music works (yes, that code is all it takes!) then comment out those two lines so you don't have to listen to the music on repeat for the rest of the time you work on the game.

And yes, that's all it takes to add looping background music – hurray for **SKAudioNode**!

The next change we're going to make is to add an intro screen when the game starts. I'm just going to make mine show the game's logo – "Crashy Plane" – over the game screen, with the player's plane flying in the background. When the player taps the first time, the game will begin.

In a few minutes we're going to add a game over screen too, which means we have three possible game states: showing the logo, playing the game, and dead. We'll represent that with a dedicated enum, so add this just before the start of your **GameScene** class – i.e., just after the **import** lines:

```
enum GameState {
    case showingLogo
    case playing
    case dead
}
```

We need to create three more properties to make all this work: one to hold the logo sprite node, one to hold the game over sprite node, and one to keep track of the current game state. The game state will be **ShowingLogo** by default, which means the game won't start until the player is ready. Add these properties now:

```
var logo: SKSpriteNode!
var gameOver: SKSpriteNode!

var gameState = GameState.showingLogo
```

Project 36: Crashy Plane

Creating the logo and game over sprite nodes is nothing special: they are just simple pictures, and we can use the **midX** and **midY** properties to position them at the center of our game scene. As you might imagine, we need to set the **alpha** property of the game over sprite to be 0 to begin with otherwise it would be quite confusing!

Here's the **createLogos()** method:

```
func createLogos() {
    logo = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "logo")
    logo.position = CGPoint(x: frame.midX, y: frame.midY)
    addChild(logo)

    gameOver = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "gameover")
    gameOver.position = CGPoint(x: frame.midX, y: frame.midY)
    gameOver.alpha = 0
    addChild(gameOver)
}
```

That's not enough to make the game start in menu mode, though. First, add a call to **createLogos()** inside **didMove(to:)**. While you're there, *delete* the call to **startRocks()** because it's no longer needed – we don't want to start creating rocks before the game begins. Finally, do you remember this line of code in the **createPlayer()** method?

```
player.physicsBody?.isDynamic = true
```

When I was explaining what it did, I said it "makes the plane respond to physics. This is the default, but I'm including it here because we'll change it later." Well, now it's time to change it: by changing that **true** to be **false** the player will stop responding to physics. It will still have physics attached to it ready to be used, but it won't actually do anything.

This is perfect for our game, because we want everything set up ready to go, but we *don't* want the player to start moving until we're ready. So, change that line to this:

Background music with SKAudioNode, an intro, plus game over

```
player.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
```

If you run the game now you'll see it looks pretty good: the player no longer moves (even when you tap the screen) and the logo floats over the game nicely. Now we're going to rewrite **touchesBegan()** so that it distinguishes between a touch when in **showingLogo** mode and a touch when in **playing** mode.

The code for touches while playing hasn't changed, so I'm not going to discuss it further, but the code for **showingLogo** mode is new. This needs to change the game state to be **playing** (so that further touches move the plane), make the logo fade out and get removed from the game, wait a tiny amount, then activate the player. It also needs to call **startRocks()** so that rocks start being created at random intervals.

Because the **GameState** enum has three possible cases, and Swift likes all your switch/case statements to be exhaustive, we're going to add an empty case for **dead** that we'll fill in shortly. Here's the new code for **touchesBegan()**:

```
override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    switch gameState {
        case .showingLogo:
            gameState = .playing

            let fadeOut = SKAction.fadeOut(withDuration: 0.5)
            let remove = SKAction.removeFromParent()
            let wait = SKAction.wait(forDuration: 0.5)
            let activatePlayer = SKAction.run { [unowned self] in
                self.player.physicsBody?.isDynamic = true
                self.startRocks()
            }

            let sequence = SKAction.sequence([fadeOut, wait,
                activatePlayer, remove])
    }
}
```

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
logo.run(sequence)

case .playing:
    player.physicsBody?.velocity = CGVector(dx: 0, dy: 0)
    player.physicsBody?.applyImpulse(CGVector(dx: 0, dy: 20))

case .dead:
    break
}
```

You might think that removing the logo from the game is going to cause problems when we add the ability for the player to start again, but don't worry – it will all make sense soon!



So, that's our game start sequence in place: all that's needed now is to end the game when the player dies. This is going to do three things: change the **alpha** of the game over sprite to be 1

Background music with SKAudioNode, an intro, plus game over

(fully visible), change the game state to be **Dead** so we can respond to touches differently, and stop the background music to give an extra little sense of loss.

In **didBegin()**, add these three lines of code just before the call to **player.removeFromParent()**:

```
gameOver.alpha = 1
gameState = .dead
backgroundMusic.run(SKAction.stop())
```

Once the game state is **dead** the player's taps stop doing anything, which is lucky because the player is dead! However, what we really want is for player taps to start the game afresh, and the easiest way to do that is to present a whole new **GameScene** scene. This causes the whole game to be reset: a new score, a new player, a new logo sprite, no more rocks, etc, and it's significantly easier than trying to reset everything by hand.

Right now in **touchesBegan()** there is a simple **break** line for the **dead** game state. Change it to this:

```
if let scene = GameScene(fileNamed: "GameScene") {
    scene.scaleMode = .aspectFill
    let transition = SKTransition.moveIn(with:
        SKTransitionDirection.right, duration: 1)
    view?.presentScene(scene, transition: transition)
}
```

That creates a fresh **GameScene** scene, gives it the same **aspectFill** resizing as our original game scene, then makes it transition in with a simple animation.

But wait! Before you run the game – and I'm sure you're eager – there is one tiny further gameplay tweak to make. You see, we have an **update()** method that adjusts the rotation of the player every frame, but we also don't create the player until **didMove(to:)** is called. If the update method is called first (and it can be!) then Swift will try to adjust the rotation of a nil

Project 36: Crashy Plane

property because the player hasn't been created yet, which will make your game crash.

The solution is simple, thanks to the **guard** keyword – just add this line to the start of the **update()** method:

```
guard player != nil else { return }
```

Translated, that single line means "ensure that player is not nil, otherwise exit the method."

That's it! The main part of our game is done. I hope you agree it looks good, although I can't take any credit for that – it's the **marvelous art of Kenney** that should take all the credit, and I do encourage you again to check out his complete pack of public domain game assets.

As final touches, you should set the score rectangles to have the color **UIColor.clear** so they are invisible, then go to GameViewController.swift and turn off **showsFPS**, **showsNodeCount** and **showsPhysics**.

Optimizing SpriteKit physics

If you play our game on a real device, you'll notice a problem: whenever new rocks are created off-screen, the game freezes briefly. It's not a lot – maybe a tenth of a second depending on your device – but it's still enough to be noticeable. You might also notice there's a short delay the first time the player dies – try watching the particle system and you'll see it's far from smooth, at least the first time.

Both of these are optimization problems, and both can be fixed with a small amount of thinking. I know you might be tempted to move on to the next project, but trust me – spending a little time adding extra polish is good for you!

The reason our game pauses when rocks are created is because SpriteKit loads the rock texture and calculates pixel-perfect collisions for it. Although it's an implementation detail – i.e., something we shouldn't need to think about – SpriteKit will actually cache its textures for us, so although we can and should cache our rock texture it's not the big problem here.

Instead, it's that pesky pixel-perfect collision calculation: scanning the rock texture to see which pixels are transparent, so SpriteKit knows which parts we can crash into.

Now, if you think about it this pixel scanning doesn't need to take place every time we create a new rock. In fact, it only needs to be run *once*: figure out the shape of the rock, then use copies of that physics body for all new rocks in the future. As all the rocks have the same shape, this means we do the work once and every future rock creation is effectively free.

To make that happen we need to add two new properties to our game scene: one to store the rock texture, and one to store the rock physics body. Add these now:

```
let rockTexture = SKTexture(imageNamed: "rock")
var rockPhysics: SKPhysicsBody!
```

Next, in **didMove(to:)** we need to create an **SKPhysicsBody** from our rock texture and store it in that **rockPhysics** property for later on:

Project 36: Crashy Plane

```
rockPhysics = SKPhysicsBody(texture: rockTexture, size:  
rockTexture.size())
```

Now for the important part: now that we have our rock physics calculated, we should use *that* for the **topRock** and **bottomRock** physics bodies in the **createRocks()** method. Now, we can't just assign it directly, because SpriteKit needs all its physics bodies to be unique. However, we can call *copy()* on our original to create a new instance, then typecast that as an **SKPhysicsBody**.

So, please modify the physics code in **createRocks()** to this:

```
topRock.physicsBody = rockPhysics.copy() as? SKPhysicsBody  
bottomRock.physicsBody = rockPhysics.copy() as? SKPhysicsBody
```

That will remove the speed bump when creating new rocks, which means our game should stay nice and smooth while playing.

As for the other problem – the little speed bump when the player first dies – this is solved with another cache, this time for the player's explosion. Even though this won't be used in our game, this will force SpriteKit to preload the texture and keep it in memory, so it's already there when it's really needed.

So, please add this third property now:

```
let explosion = SKEmitterNode(fileNamed: "PlayerExplosion")
```

Done!

Wrap up

This wasn't a complicated project, but I hope it was a satisfying one. The addition of new techniques like **SKAudioNode** and parallax scrolling should have made it more interesting even for more experienced coders, and it was fun adding the extra bit of polish at the end to make the whole game feel more complete.

If you want to take this project further, you could start by having different kinds of obstacles – the repeating rocks do get a bit tiresome after a while! You could also make the game difficulty ramp up ever so slowly, either by decreasing the gap between the rocks or by increasing the world gravity.

To make the game much more challenging, how about introducing a secondary scoring mechanism: perhaps the player could get extra points if they fly through hoops in between the rocks? If you fancy a bigger challenge, how about making it a universal game, i.e. support both iPad and iPhone.

Project 37

Psychic Tester

Are you psychic? Of course not. But what if we could use our coding skills to make a game to fool your friends into thinking otherwise?

Setting up

Are you psychic? Of course not. But what if we could use our coding skills to make a game to fool your friends into thinking otherwise – while also learning some new techniques along the way?

In this project we're going to build a simple game that recreates the classic **Zener test** for extrasensory perception. Our game will show the user eight cards face down, and users need to tap the card that has a star on its flip side. Casual players will get it right 1 in 8 times, but you'll get it right every time. Magic!

Well, no. We'll be cheating, naturally, but even in this cheating I'm going to find new things to teach you. First, we're going to build a tiny watchOS app that silently taps your wrist when your finger moves over the star card. Then we're going to add 3D Touch support so that pressing hard on any card will automatically make it the star. Whichever technique you use is going to be enough to baffle your friends, although I hope you use your powers for good!

At the same time we'll also be learning about **CAEmitterLayer**, **CAGradientLayer**, **@IBDesignable** and **@IBInspectable**, as well as how to create a 3D card flip effect using the **transition(with:)** method.

I've left the Apple Watch and 3D Touch code until the end of the project, so at the very least you'll be able to work through the majority of the tutorial without needing special hardware. That being said, we'll be using one of Xcode's built-in iOS/watchOS templates to make the end result easier to reach.

Are you ready to take your first step into the Twilight Zone? Go ahead and launch Xcode, then create a new project. When Xcode asks you which template you want, please select watchOS then iOS App with WatchKit App. Set the target to be iPhone, the language to be Swift, then deselect Include Notification Scene. Finally, name it Project37 and click Next.

Once the project is created, please set it to support landscape left and right only; no portrait this time. You will also need to copy the image assets for this project into your project's asset catalog – you can find them all on GitHub at <https://github.com/twostraws/>

Project 37: Psychic Tester

HackingWithSwift. You'll also find a Content directory in that download; please add that to your project too, because it contains some music for later on.

Laying out the cards: addChildViewController()

The first step in our project will be to lay eight cards out on the screen so that the user can tap on one. We'll be doing most of this in code, but there is a small amount of storyboard work required.

Open up Main.storyboard in Interface Builder, then click “View As” to change it to landscape orientation. Draw out a large **UIView** inside the view controller that was made by the template. Set its size to be 480x320 using explicit width and height constraints, then make it centered inside its parent view. This explicit sizing makes it easy to support the full range of iPhones: we'll place the cards inside this container at exact positions, and the container will be moved depending on the size of the device.

We'll be placing something behind this view later on, so please set its background color to be Clear Color. Later on, we'll be hand-positioning views in there using code, so we don't want iOS to resize those child views for us – it will all be placed by hand. So, please uncheck the “Autoresizing Subviews” box for the view. Finally, using the Assistant Editor, please make an outlet connection between your new view and the ViewController class, naming it **cardContainer**.

That's it: we're done with Interface Builder for now; the rest of this chapter will all be done using code.

In the screenshot below you can see how your interface should look – note that I've temporarily colored my inner view gray so you can see it more clearly!

Project 37: Psychic Tester



To help isolate functionality, we'll be creating a special **UIViewController** subclass to handle each card. We'll then add this view controller to an array of all card view controllers, and add them all to our main view controller so the player can see them.

So, add a new file to the project and choose iOS > Source > Cocoa Touch Class then click Next. For "Subclass of" please enter "UIViewController" and for the class name enter "CardViewController".

To make things nice and easy, each card view controller will contain two child image views: one for its card back and one for its card front. We're also going to give them two extra properties: one to mark whether the card is correct (i.e. a star) and one to hold a weak reference to the main **ViewController** class so we can send messages back.

Add these four properties to the **CardViewController** class now:

```
weak var delegate: ViewController!
```

```
var front: UIImageView!
```

```
var back: UIImageView!  
  
var isCorrect = false
```

The basic Xcode class has a **viewDidLoad()** stub provided for us, but it doesn't do anything interesting. We need to upgrade this method to do the following:

1. Give the view a precise size of 100x140.
2. Add two image views, one for the card back and one for the front.
3. Set the front image view to be hidden by default.
4. Set the back image view to have an alpha value of 0 by default, fading up to 1 with an animation.

That last point isn't strictly needed, but it does make the whole application look nicer.

None of the code to accomplish this is difficult, but I'm going to draw on a particular feature of **UIImageView** to make things easier. The feature is this: if you create an image view using a **UIImage**, the image view gets set to the size of that image automatically. This is perfect, because all our card images are sized at 100x140, so our view and its card contents will all line up.

Here's the new **viewDidLoad()** method for the **CardViewController** class:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {  
    super.viewDidLoad()  
  
    view.bounds = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 100, height: 140)  
    front = UIImageView(image: UIImage(named: "cardFront"))  
    back = UIImageView(image: UIImage(named: "cardBack"))  
  
    view.addSubview(front)  
    view.addSubview(back)
```

Project 37: Psychic Tester

```
front.isHidden = true
back.alpha = 0

UIView.animate(withDuration: 0.2) {
    self.back.alpha = 1
}
}
```

You'll note that I'm using the "cardBack" for both the front and the back image views. This is just for sizing purposes: the actual front image will be assigned later. Helpfully, **UIImage** shares image data across image views very efficiently, so there's no extra cost to this approach.

That's all the code required to make each card work, but it doesn't actually display them in the view. To do that, we need to return to ViewController.swift and create a new property to hold all the card view controllers, plus a new method to create them all. This creation method will also be responsible for clearing any existing cards, so that with a single method call we can wipe the slate clean and start again.

First, the new property: please add this to the **ViewController** class:

```
var allCards = [CardViewController]()
```

Now for the new method, **loadCards()**. This needs to assemble an array of positions where cards can go (I've made some rough estimates, but you're welcome to be more precise in your own code if you want to), load the various Zener card shapes (one for each of the eight cards), then create one card view controller for each position.

So far, so easy. But this time there is going to be one extra step, because I want to introduce to you the concept of *view controller containment*. When you place one view controller inside another, it can cause problems with system events (think appearing, disappearing, rotating, etc.) because iOS wasn't originally designed to have multiple view controllers visible at the same time.

Laying out the cards: addChildViewController()

View controller containment is a simple solution where you use the methods **addChildViewController()** and **didMove(toParentViewController:)** to place one view controller inside another. It's extremely easy to do, and it means iOS can keep track of all the view controllers correctly, so it is very much recommended.

Please add the new method below to your **ViewController** class. I've added comments just in case you're not sure what everything does:

```
@objc func loadCards() {
    // create an array of card positions
    let positions = [
        CGPoint(x: 75, y: 85),
        CGPoint(x: 185, y: 85),
        CGPoint(x: 295, y: 85),
        CGPoint(x: 405, y: 85),
        CGPoint(x: 75, y: 235),
        CGPoint(x: 185, y: 235),
        CGPoint(x: 295, y: 235),
        CGPoint(x: 405, y: 235)
    ]

    // load and unwrap our Zener card images
    let circle = UIImage(named: "cardCircle")!
    let cross = UIImage(named: "cardCross")!
    let lines = UIImage(named: "cardLines")!
    let square = UIImage(named: "cardSquare")!
    let star = UIImage(named: "cardStar")!

    // create an array of the images, one for each card, then
    // shuffle it
    var images = [circle, circle, cross, cross, lines, lines,
    square, star]
    images.shuffle()
```

Project 37: Psychic Tester

```
for (index, position) in positions.enumerated() {
    // loop over each card position and create a new card
    view controller
        let card = CardViewController()
        card.delegate = self

        // use view controller containment and also add the
        card's view to our cardContainer view
        addChild(card)
        cardContainer.addSubview(card.view)
        card.didMove(toParent: self)

        // position the card appropriately, then give it an image
        from our array
        card.view.center = position
        card.front.image = images[index]

        // if we just gave the new card the star image, mark this
        as the correct answer
        if card.front.image == star {
            card.isCorrect = true
        }

        // add the new card view controller to our array for
        easier tracking
        allCards.append(card)
    }
}
```

Important: I've marked the `loadCards()` method using `@objc` because we'll be using it with `#selector` in the very next chapter.

Laying out the cards: addChildViewController()

Now you just need to add a call to that method inside **viewDidLoad()** like this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {  
    super.viewDidLoad()  
  
    loadCards()  
}
```

There's one last thing we need to add before we're done with card loading: we need to make **loadCards()** remove any existing cards. This will allow us to call **loadCards()** repeatedly and have it do the right thing.

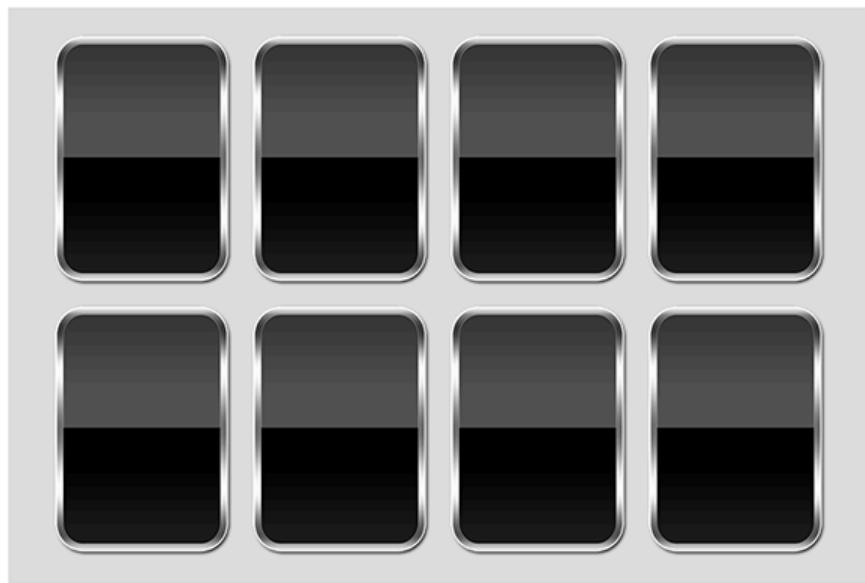
Please add this code at the start of **loadCards()**:

```
for card in allCards {  
    card.view.removeFromSuperview()  
    card.removeFromParent()  
}  
  
allCards.removeAll(keepingCapacity: true)
```

That just acts as an "undo" for the rest of the method: it loops through all the card view controllers we stored in the **allCards** array, removes the view then removes the view controller containment, then clears the whole array.

Go ahead and run your project now, and you should see eight cards neatly lined up in two rows like the screenshot below – albeit without the gray background. They don't do anything yet, but it's a good start.

Project 37: Psychic Tester



Animating a 3D flip effect using transition(with:)

There's a reason I've made you put the card functionality into a separate view controller, and it's because we're going to be adding some functionality to cards to handle them being flipped over. iOS makes this kind of animation really easy, but it's done in a slightly different way to our previous animations.

To handle tap detection we're going to use a **UITapGestureRecognizer** rather than something like **touchesBegan**. This will make more sense later on, but the TL;DR version is that part of the hoax effect will be you running your finger over the cards using your powers to "feel" for the star – something like **touchesBegan()** will just cause problems.

So, please add this gesture recognizer to the end of **viewDidLoad()** in the **CardViewController** class:

```
let tap = UITapGestureRecognizer(target: self, action:  
#selector(cardTapped))  
back.isUserInteractionEnabled = true  
back.addGestureRecognizer(tap)
```

We haven't written the **cardTapped()** method yet, but it's trivial because all it will do is pass the message on to the **ViewController** class to handle. This is important: we need each card to decide if it was tapped, but we need to pass control onto the **ViewController** class to act upon the tap, otherwise it's possible users might tap two cards at the same time and cause problems.

So, the **cardTapped()** method in the card view controller is simple:

```
@objc func cardTapped() {  
    delegate.cardTapped(self)  
}
```

Of course, that just pushes all the work to the **ViewController** class, where things get more

Project 37: Psychic Tester

complicated. The **cardTapped()** method there needs to:

- Ensure that only one card can be tapped at any time
- Loop through all the cards in the **allCards** array.
- When it finds the card that was tapped, animate it to flip over then fade away.
- For all other cards, animate them fading away.
- Reset the game after two seconds so that more cards appear.

We'll be doing the animation using methods inside **CardViewController**, and resetting the game is done just by calling **loadCards()**, so that's all straightforward. But what's the best way to ensure that only one card can be chosen by the player?

It turns out this is pretty easy: as soon as the user taps any card, we're going to disable user interaction for our main view. We can then check that property inside the **cardTapped()** method using the **guard** keyword, then set it back to true inside **loadCards()**.

To make things slightly more interesting, I want to introduce you to the **perform()** method family. These exist on objects that inherit from **NSObject**, which is both our view controllers, and allow us to call a method after a delay or in the background really easily.

Let's take this step by step. First, here's the **cardTapped()** method for the **ViewController** class:

```
func cardTapped(_ tapped: CardViewController) {  
    guard view.isUserInteractionEnabled == true else { return }  
    view.isUserInteractionEnabled = false  
  
    for card in allCards {  
        if card == tapped {  
            card.wasTapped()  
            card.perform(#selector(card.wasn'tTapped), with: nil,  
afterDelay: 1)  
        } else {  
    }
```

Animating a 3D flip effect using transition(with:)

```
    card.wasntTapped()
}
}

perform(#selector(loadCards), with: nil, afterDelay: 2)
}
```

You can see that calls **wasTapped()** and **wasntTapped()** methods in the card view controllers, each of which will perform some animation – we'll get onto that in a moment. Using the **afterDelay** variant of **perform()** will cause **wasntTapped()** to be called after 1 second, and **loadCards()** to be called after 2 seconds.

For now, focus on the first two lines of that method: that's what stops users tapping two cards at once. By disabling the user interaction (and also checking that it was enabled beforehand) we can be sure the user gets to make only one choice. But we do need to re-enable user interaction when we're done, otherwise our app will be useless.

So, add this line somewhere into the **loadCards()** method:

```
view.isUserInteractionEnabled = true
```

Now all we need to do is write the **wasTapped()** and **wasntTapped()** methods of the card view controller. We'll do **wasntTapped()** first because it uses code you already know, so re-open CardViewController.swift and add this:

```
@objc func wasntTapped() {
    UIView.animate(withDuration: 0.7) {
        self.view.transform = CGAffineTransform(scaleX: 0.00001,
y: 0.00001)
        self.view.alpha = 0
    }
}
```

Project 37: Psychic Tester

That tells the card to zoom down and fade away over 0.7 seconds. Things are more interesting in the **wasTapped()** method because it needs to animate a 3D flip effect from the card back to the card front. But if you were imagining this was going to be hard, you're wrong: this flip effect has been around since the earliest days of iOS, so Apple made it extremely easy.

Here is the **wasTapped()** method in its entirety:

```
func wasTapped() {
    UIView.transition(with: view, duration: 0.7, options:
        [.transitionFlipFromRight], animations: { [unowned self] in
        self.back.isHidden = true
        self.front.isHidden = false
    })
}
```

As you can see, all the work is done by the **transition(with:)** method. This takes a view to operate on as its first parameter, and all the animations you perform need to be done on subviews of this container view. We pass **.transitionFlipFromRight** to create the flip effect, but you should try using the code completion to explore other options.

Inside the animations block, we just adjust the **isHidden** properties of the front and back image views, but in the context of **.transitionFlipFromRight** that will cause iOS to animate this change as a flip – it really is that simple.

That's it! Run the project now and you'll find you can tap on any card to flip it over – a neat effect with hardly any code. Thanks, iOS!

Adding a CAGradientLayer with IBDesignable and IBInspectable

Magic is really the art of misdirection: making people focus their attention on one thing in order to stop them focusing on something else. In our case, we don't want users to suspect that your Apple Watch is helping you find the star, so we're going to overload them with misdirection so that they suspect everything else before they think of your watch.

The first thing we're going to do is add a background to our view. This is going to be a simple gradient, but we're going to make the gradient change color slowly between red and blue. This has no impact on your ability to find the star, but if it makes your friends suspect that the trick is to tap a card when the background is red then it has fulfilled its job of misdirection.

Making gradients in iOS isn't hard thanks to a special **CALayer** subclass called **CAGradientLayer**. That being said, working with layers directly isn't pleasant, because they can't take part in things like Auto Layout and they can't be used inside Interface Builder.

So, I'm going to teach you how to wrap a gradient inside a **UIView**, while also adding the benefits of letting you control the gradient right from within Interface Builder. What's more, you'll be amazed at how easy it is.

Add a new Cocoa Touch class to your project. Make it a subclass of **UIView** then name it **GradientView**. We need this class to have a top and bottom color for our gradient, but we also want those values to be visible (and editable) inside Interface Builder. This is done using two new keywords: **@IBDesignable** and **@IBInspectable**.

The first of those, **@IBDesignable**, means that Xcode should build the class and make it draw inside Interface Builder whenever changes are made. This means any custom drawing you do will be reflected inside Interface Builder, just like it would when your app runs for real.

The second new keyword, **@IBInspectable**, exposes a property from your class as an editable value inside Interface Builder. Xcode knows how to handle various data types in meaningful ways, so strings will have an editable text box, booleans will have a checkbox, and colors will

Project 37: Psychic Tester

have a color selection palette.

Other than defining properties for the top and bottom colors of the gradient, the **GradientView** class needs to do only two other things to be complete: when iOS asks it what kind of layer to use for drawing it should return **CAGradientLayer**, and when iOS tells the view to layout its subviews it should apply the colors to the gradient.

Using this approach means the entire class is just 12 lines of code, *including* whitespace and closing braces. Here's the code for the **GradientView** class:

```
@IBDesignable class GradientView: UIView {
    @IBInspectable var topColor: UIColor = UIColor.white
    @IBInspectable var bottomColor: UIColor = UIColor.black

    override class var layerClass: AnyClass {
        return CAGradientLayer.self
    }

    override func layoutSubviews() {
        (layer as! CAGradientLayer).colors = [topColor.cgColor,
    bottomColor.cgColor]
    }
}
```

With that new class in place, it's time to return to Interface Builder and add it to our layout. To do this, draw out another **UIView**, but make sure it stretches from edge to edge this time and add some Auto Layout rules to make sure it stays edge to edge. Finally, go to the Editor menu and choose Arrange > Send To Back to make sure the new view sits behind the card container.

For iPhones with rectangular screens, what we've done is good enough – that gradient view will now fill the screen. But the iPhone X has rounded screen edges, so the safe area insets will automatically kick in, pushing our gradient view away from the edges. This isn't what we want, and we need to fix this right here in IB.

Adding a CAGradientLayer with IBDesignable and IBInspectable

So, select the main view for the view controller – the one that contains the gradient view – and uncheck Safe Area Relative Margins and Safe Area Layout Guide in the size inspector. That should make the gradient view run edge to edge nicely!

We want this new view to be a **GradientView**, which is done by changing its class. Press Alt+Cmd+3 to bring up the identity inspector on the right, then look at the very top for a dropdown list of classes you can use for the new view. Look in there for "GradientView", and you'll see "Designables: Updating" appear.

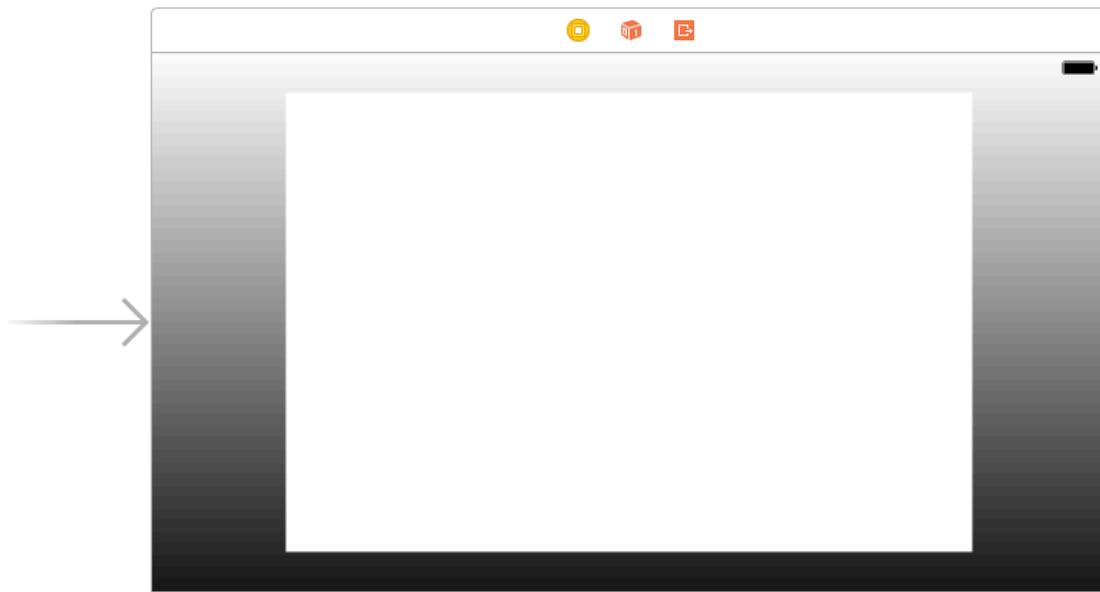
After a few seconds, you should see a white to black gradient appear in Interface Builder, which shows the default colors we set. But we made those colors inspectable, so if you press Alt+Cmd+4 to go to the Attributes Inspector you should see "Top Color" and "Bottom Color" ready for you to choose – yes, Xcode has correctly converted **topColor** into "Top Color" thanks to our property naming convention.

We'll be applying red and blue colors separately to the gradient, so please set "Top Color" to be "Dark Gray Color", and "Bottom Color" to be "Black Color". Finally, set the alpha value for the gradient view to be 0.9, so a little bit of the background view shows through.

Before we're done with Interface Builder (for real this time!) please use the Assistant Editor to create an outlet for this new gradient view called **gradientView**. We don't need this just now, but it's important in the next chapter.

If everything is correct, your interface should look like the screenshot below. As before, I've colored my container view so you can see it, but yours should have Clear Color for its background color.

Project 37: Psychic Tester



With all those interface changes in place, we can animate the background color of the main view in just a handful of lines of code. To make this work, we'll be using three animation options: **.allowUserInteraction** (so the user can tap cards), **.autoreverse** to make the view go back to its original color, and **.repeat** to make the animation loop back and forward forever.

Place this animation code somewhere in **viewDidLoad()**:

```
view.backgroundColor = UIColor.red

UIView.animate(withDuration: 20, delay: 0, options:
[.allowUserInteraction, .autoreverse, .repeat], animations: {
    self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.blue
})
```

Note that we need to give the view an initial red color to make the animation smooth, but you can put that in Interface Builder if you prefer.

Creating a particle system using CAEmitterLayer

Let's take our misdirection up a notch by adding some falling, spinning stars behind the cards. Again, these do nothing other than misdirect your friends while also giving me a chance to squeeze some new learning into you.

We first met particle systems **in project 11** when we covered **SKEmitterNode**. That's a fast and easy way to create particle systems in SpriteKit, but we're not in SpriteKit now so we need an alternative.

Fortunately, iOS has one, and in fact it even predates **SKEmitterNode**: **CAEmitterLayer**. From its name you should already be able to tell that it's a subclass of **CALayer**, which in turn means you need to use **CGColor** rather than **UIColor** and **CGImage** rather than **UIImage**. However, I should add that **CAEmitterLayer** isn't quite a beautifully polished as **SKEmitterNode** – it has no WYSIWYG editor, for example, so you need to do everything in code.

Each **CAEmitterLayer** defines the position, shape, size and rendering mode of a particle system, but it doesn't actually define any particles – that's handled by a separate class, called **CAEmitterCell**. You can create as many emitter cells as you want, then assign them to your emitter layer to have them all fire from the same position.

There are *lots* of properties you can set on emitter cells, and without a WYSIWYG editor you're basically stuck reading the documentation to find them all. To give you a jump start, I'm going to use quite a few to make our particle system:

- The **birthRate** property sets how many particles to create every second.
- The **lifetime** property sets how long each particle should live, in seconds.
- The **velocity** property sets the base movement speed for each particle.
- The **velocityRange** property sets how much velocity variation there can be.
- The **emissionLongitude** property sets the direction particles are fired.

Project 37: Psychic Tester

- The **spinRange** property sets how much spin variation there can be between particles.
- The **scale** property sets how large particles should be, where 1.0 is full size.
- The **scaleRange** property sets how much size variation there can be between particles.
- The **color** property sets the color to be applied to each particle.
- The **alphaSpeed** property sets how fast particles should be faded out (or in) over their lifetime.
- The **contents** property assigns a **CGImage** to be used as the image.

Broadly speaking, each property has "Speed" and "Range" counterparts, where "speed" dictates how much the value changes over time, and "range" dictates how much variation there is in the initial value. So, **scale** also has **scaleSpeed** and **scaleRange** alongside it.

Alongside those cell properties, we're also going to give the particle system some basic properties: we want to position it at the horizontal center of our view and just off the top, we want it to be shaped like a line so that particles are created across the width of the view, we want it to be as wide as the view but only one point high, and, as a bonus, we want it to use additive rendering so that overlapping particles get brighter.

Now that you know how it all works, please add this method to the **ViewController** class:

```
func createParticles() {  
    let particleEmitter = CAEmitterLayer()  
  
    particleEmitter.emitterPosition = CGPoint(x:  
view.frame.width / 2.0, y: -50)  
    particleEmitter.emitterShape = .line  
    particleEmitter.emitterSize = CGSize(width:  
view.frame.width, height: 1)  
    particleEmitter.renderMode = .additive  
  
    let cell = CAEmitterCell()  
    cell.birthRate = 2  
    cell.lifetime = 5.0
```

Creating a particle system using CAEmitterLayer

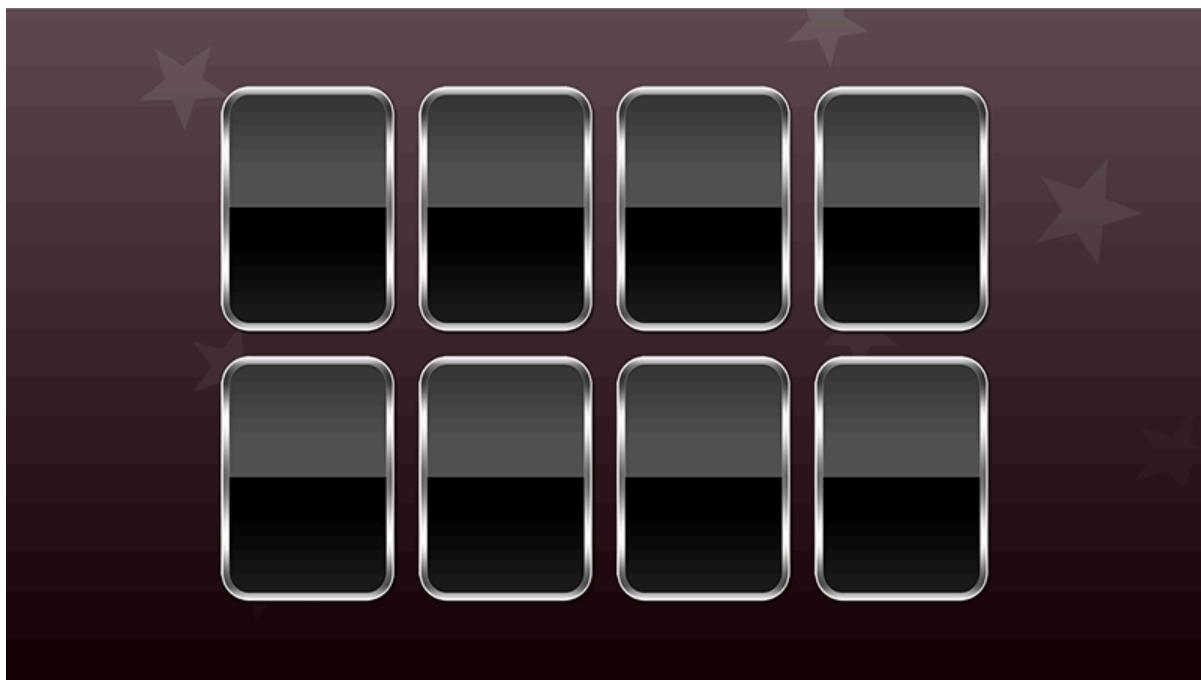
```
cell.velocity = 100
cell.velocityRange = 50
cell.emissionLongitude = .pi
cell.spinRange = 5
cell.scale = 0.5
cell.scaleRange = 0.25
cell.color = UIColor(white: 1, alpha: 0.1).cgColor
cell.alphaSpeed = -0.025
cell.contents = UIImage(named: "particle")?.cgImage
particleEmitter.emitterCells = [cell]

gradientView.layer.addSublayer(particleEmitter)
}
```

Note that I'm adding the particle emitter as a sublayer of the **gradientView** view. This is important, because it ensures the stars always go behind the cards. You will also need to a call to **createParticles()** to the view controller's **viewDidLoad()** method, just before the call to **loadCards()**.

Go ahead and run the project now and I think you'll find the effect quite pleasing – it's subtle, yes, but again it's just enough to distract users into thinking maybe, just maybe, the position of the stars tells you where the green star card is.

Project 37: Psychic Tester



Wiggling cards and background music with AVAudioPlayer

The last part of our misdirection is going to be truly evil. That being said, it is entirely optional because I won't be teaching any vital new techniques here – I just enjoy screwing with my friends' heads!

We're going to add two more simple distractions to our app. First, we're going to make random cards move ever so slightly on the screen. The movement has to be small so that people catch it in the corner of their eye, but then aren't 100% sure anything actually happened. Second, we're going to add some background music to make people wonder whether there's something in the sound effects that tells you where the star is.

Making the cards move just a bit is easy thanks to the method **perform(_:with:afterDelay:)** that I introduced earlier. We're going to write a new method that scales a card so that it's a mere 1% larger than normal, before dropping it down again. To make things more interesting, we want this animation to happen only occasionally, so the users aren't sure when it will happen again.

This misdirection is clever because human eyes are extremely sensitive to motion at the edges of vision, so your eye notices a card moves and jumps to it, but of course by then our animation has stopped so your user isn't sure whether anything happened. If you want to create a more pronounced effect, just increase the transform scale that gets applied.

Open CardViewController.swift for editing, then add this new method somewhere in the class:

```
@objc func wiggle() {
    if Int.random(in: 0...3) == 1 {
        UIView.animate(withDuration: 0.2, delay: 0,
options: .allowUserInteraction, animations: {
            self.back.transform = CGAffineTransform(scaleX: 1.01,
y: 1.01)
        }) { _ in
```

Project 37: Psychic Tester

```
    self.back.transform = CGAffineTransform.identity
}

    perform(#selector(wiggle), with: nil, afterDelay: 8)
} else {
    perform(#selector(wiggle), with: nil, afterDelay: 2)
}
}
```

There are two things of interest in that new method. First, I've used the `.allowUserInteraction` animation option so that users can tap a card even when it's animating. Second, the method calls itself so that the wiggle animation happens repeatedly, but, in a particularly evil twist, the delay is much longer after a card already moved. This means if someone's eye jumps to a card when they think it moved, they'll have to stare at it for a full eight seconds before it moves again.

Once the `wiggle()` method has been called once it will carry on calling itself, so we just need to make that initial call to get things moving. To do that, add this code to the end of `viewDidLoad()` for the card view controller:

```
perform(#selector(wiggle), with: nil, afterDelay: 1)
```

The very last piece of misdirection is an easy one: making some music play. Some mystic-sounding music was in the Content folder you should have downloaded from GitHub in the first chapter, and is a piece of music called "Phantom from Space" by Kevin MacLeod. It's licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 – see [this link](#) for more information.

You should already have added the Content folder to your project, so all that's left is to use it. This is done with four small changes in `ViewController.swift`, starting with this import to the top:

```
import AVFoundation
```

Wiggling cards and background music with AVAudioPlayer

Now create a property to hold our music audio:

```
var music: AVAudioPlayer!
```

Next we need to create a **playMusic()** method that loads in the music and plays it. This is almost identical to code we've covered before, but there is a small change because we need the music to loop. This is done by setting the audio player's **numberOfLoops** property to any negative number, such as -1. Here's the new method, again for ViewController.swift:

```
func playMusic() {
    if let musicURL = Bundle.main.url(forResource:
"PhantomFromSpace", withExtension: "mp3") {
        if let audioPlayer = try? AVAudioPlayer(contentsOf:
musicURL) {
            music = audioPlayer
            music.numberOfLoops = -1
            music.play()
        }
    }
}
```

The fourth and final change is just to call that new **playMusic()** method from within the view controller's **viewDidLoad()** method. So, add this to the end:

```
playMusic()
```

That completes our misdirections: we've added a shifting color gradient, we've added falling stars, we've made the cards move, and now we've added music too. With so many distractions in place hopefully your friends won't be able to guess the trick.

Speaking of tricks, that's our very next job: how to fix the app so you always guess correctly!

How to measure touch strength using 3D Touch

3D Touch is a new technology that was first trialled in Apple Watch as Force Touch, but introduced fully inside the iPhone 6s. In iOS it's responsible for multiple interesting technologies: peek and pop (to preview and jump into view controllers), application shortcuts (menus on the home screen for common actions) and also pressure-sensitive taps for **UITouch**.

All three of these are surprisingly simple to do, but in this project we're going to use only the last one, and I think you'll be impressed by how easy it is. This project is about producing a hoax, and we're going to make it so that if you press hard on any card it will automatically become a star. This allows you to be able to "guess" correctly even without an Apple Watch around, because any card is the right answer as long as you press correctly.

To accomplish this, we're going to use two new properties of **UITouch**: **force** and **maximumPossibleForce**. The first tells us how strongly the user is pressing for the current touch, and the second tells us the maximum recognizable strength for the current touch. For our purposes, we just need to make sure the two match: if the user is pressing as hard as the screen can recognize, we'll enable our cheat.

The cheat itself is really simple, because we just need to change the image on the front of the card and set its **isCorrect** property to be true.

There is one small problem here, but it's trivial to fix: devices older than the iPhone 6s devices don't support 3D Touch, and even 3D Touch devices can have the feature disabled on user request. So, we need to add a simple check to ensure 3D Touch is available and enabled on our current device.

That's how it all needs to work in theory, but now for the implementation. To keep things as straightforward as possible, we're going to add all this work to **touchesMoved()** in `ViewController.swift`, which will get called every time the user's finger moves on the screen. Inside this method, we'll find where the user's touch was, then loop through all the cards to find

How to measure touch strength using 3D Touch

which one (if any) they are over. Then, if they are over a card and are pressing hard enough, we'll enable the cheat.

Add this method to ViewController.swift now:

```
override func touchesMoved(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    super.touchesMoved(touches, with: event)

    guard let touch = touches.first else { return }
    let location = touch.location(in: cardContainer)

    for card in allCards {
        if card.view.frame.contains(location) {
            if view.traitCollection.forceTouchCapability
                == .available {
                if touch.force == touch.maximumPossibleForce {
                    card.front.image = UIImage(named: "cardStar")
                    card.isCorrect = true
                }
            }
        }
    }
}
```

That contains three pieces of code that we haven't looked at before. The first two are tiny but important, so I want to cover them briefly before moving on. The first is **location(in:)**, which is the UIKit version of the **location(in:)** method we've used in SpriteKit several times. The second is the **contains()** method of **CGRect**, which returns true if a point is inside the rectangle.

I told you it was tiny, but it's definitely important: our point is the location of the current touch, and our rectangle is the frame of each card. So, this method returns true if the user's finger is

Project 37: Psychic Tester

over a particular card.

The third piece of new code is the check whether 3D Touch is available, although as you can see the check is actually for "force touch" being available – presumably because Apple's marketing department got involved after development had completed! This is done by reading the current trait collection for the view and checking whether its **forceTouchCapability** is set to **.available**.

That's all the code it takes to enable our first cheat, but I'm afraid that you can test it only if you have a 3D Touch-capable device – Xcode's iOS simulator does not support 3D Touch, so either you test with a real device or just take my word for it!

Note: in case you were wondering, that code will indeed run every time the user moves their finger, but like I said earlier "**UIImage** shares image data across image views very efficiently, so there's no extra cost to this approach." The same is true here: this code will run very quickly.

Communicating between iOS and watchOS: WCSession

It's time for something new, and something I've held back from covering in Hacking with Swift because only a small proportion of people have an Apple Watch. So, I'm covering it here only briefly, and only at the very end of the project so that if you don't have an Apple Watch you can just skip on past.

Still here? OK: we're going to upgrade our project so that when your finger moves over the correct card your Apple Watch will gently tap your wrist. The haptic vibration of Apple Watches is so marvelously subtle that no one will have any idea what's happening – the effect is very impressive!

I have good news and bad news. First the good news: for our purposes, communicating between Apple Watch and iOS could not be any easier – it takes us maybe five minutes in total to complete the code. Now the bad news: even when the settings are adjusted, your Watch will go to sleep after 70 seconds of inactivity, so it's down to you to make sure the app stays awake.

That bad news will make more sense once you're using the finished product, so without further ado let's crack on with development. In ViewController.swift add this new import:

```
import WatchConnectivity
```

As you might imagine, the WatchConnectivity framework is responsible for connectivity between iOS apps and watchOS apps, and we'll be using it to send messages between our phone and a Watch. The messages are dictionaries of any data you want, so you can send strings, numbers, arrays and more – it's up to you.

In order to work with a session, we need to check whether it's supported on our current phone, then activate it. Put this code into the `viewDidLoad()` method of ViewController.swift:

```
if (WCSession.isSupported()) {
    let session = WCSession.default
```

Project 37: Psychic Tester

```
    session.delegate = self
    session.activate()
}
```

You'll get an error because the **ViewController** class doesn't conform to the **WCSessionDelegate** protocol, but that's easily fixed:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController, WCSessionDelegate {
```

You need to add a few methods to **ViewController** in order to satisfy this new protocol, but all of them can be empty because we don't actually care about them. Add these three at the end of the class:

```
func session(_ session: WCSession, activationDidCompleteWith
activationState: WCSessionActivationState, error: Error?) {

}

func sessionDidBecomeInactive(_ session: WCSession) {

}

func sessionDidDeactivate(_ session: WCSession) {
```

(Note: if you were wondering, you can't call **activate()** on a session without a delegate. We don't actually use any of the delegate methods, but we still need to assign a delegate!)

Sending a message from a phone to a watch is trivial, like I said, but there is one small piece of complexity: if we want the watch to buzz every time it receives a message (spoiler: that's exactly what we want), we need a way to rate limit those messages. That is, we don't want to send 100 messages a second when the user is touching the right card, because it would make

your watch go nuts.

To solve this problem, we're going to add a new property that tracks when the last watch message was sent. This way, we can avoid sending a message to the watch if there was one sent very recently – i.e., less than about half a second ago.

Add this property to the class:

```
var lastMessage: CFAbsoluteTime = 0
```

If you were wondering, **CFAbsoluteTime** is actually just a **Double** behind the scenes. We can get the current time using a function called **CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()**, which returns the number of seconds that have passed since midnight on January 1st 2001. Yes, that's a rather random date, but it doesn't matter: all we care about is the time since our previous call.

Sending a message from the app to the watch is done in two parts. First, we need to check whether the watch is reachable, which in practice means "is our Apple Watch app running and in the foreground?" Second, we need to use the **sendMessage()** method of **WCSession** to send a dictionary of data. It doesn't matter what data we send, because in our app *any* data will be interpreted as "please buzz."

Keeping in mind the need to rate limit these calls, here's a new method for the **ViewController** class:

```
func sendWatchMessage() {
    let currentTime = CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()

    // if less than half a second has passed, bail out
    if lastMessage + 0.5 > currentTime {
        return
    }

    // send a message to the watch if it's reachable
    if (WCSession.default.isReachable) {
```

Project 37: Psychic Tester

```
// this is a meaningless message, but it's enough for our
purposes
let message = ["Message": "Hello"]
WCSession.default.sendMessage(message, replyHandler: nil)
}

// update our rate limiting property
lastMessage = CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()
}
```

With that new method in place we can call it inside **touchesMoved()** by adding this code at the end of the **contains()** condition:

```
if card.isCorrect {
    sendWatchMessage()
}
```

Just in case you're not sure where I mean, here's how the complete **touchesMoved()** method should look:

```
override func touchesMoved(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event:
UIEvent?) {
    super.touchesMoved(touches, with: event)

    guard let touch = touches.first else { return }
    let location = touch.location(in: cardContainer)

    for card in allCards {
        if card.view.frame.contains(location) {
            if view.traitCollection.forceTouchCapability
== .available {
                if touch.force == touch.maximumPossibleForce {
                    card.front.image = UIImage(named: "cardStar")
                }
            }
        }
    }
}
```

Communicating between iOS and watchOS: WCSession

```
    card.isCorrect = true
}
}

// here's the new code!
if card.isCorrect {
    sendWatchMessage()
}
}

}
```

And that's it. Yes, that's all the code it takes to send data from our iOS app to an Apple Watch. Of course, the app won't do anything yet because sending data isn't enough: we need to write code to *receive* it and do something interesting.

Designing a simple watchOS app to receive data

So far we have a fully working iOS app that shows cards players can flip over, has a cheat in place for 3D Touch users so you can always guess correctly, and communication happening from iOS to watchOS. The next step is to write a simple watchOS app that is able to receive that data and make the device buzz gently.

We started our project with an Xcode watchOS template, so all this time you will have seen two watchOS folders in your Xcode project: WatchKit App and WatchKit Extension. Yes, cunningly they are two separate things. The *extension* contains all the code that gets run, and the *app* contains the user interface. Both run on the Apple Watch as of watchOS 2.0, but in watchOS 1.0 the extension used to run on your iPhone.

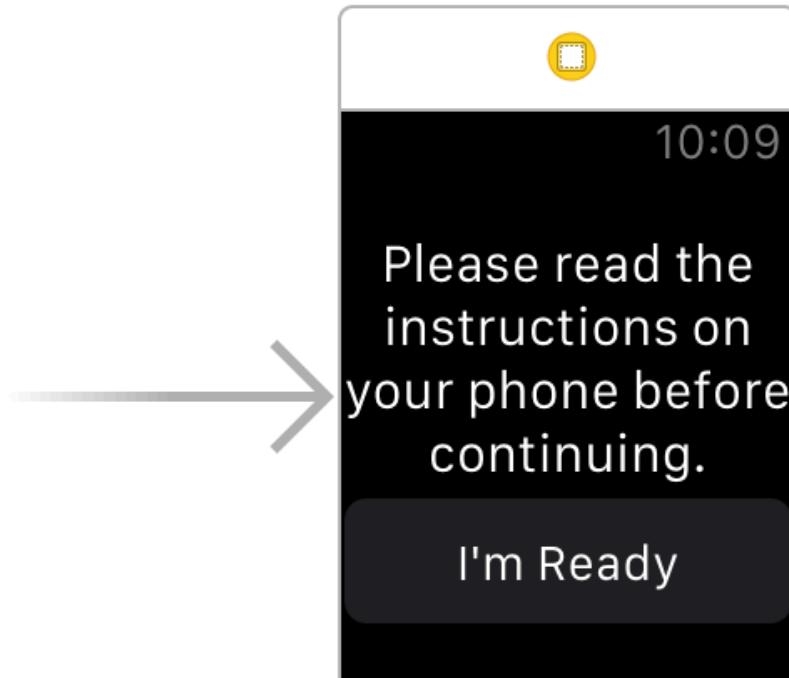
The first thing we're going to do is design a very simple interface using WatchKit, which is the watchOS equivalent of UIKit. This interface is going to contain only a label and a button, telling users to check their phone for instructions. We haven't written those instructions yet, but all in good time...

Look inside the WatchKit App folder for Interface.storyboard, and open that in Interface Builder. Using the Object Library, just like on iOS, drag a label then a button into the small black space of our app's user interface. You will see that WatchKit automatically stacks its views vertically so the interface doesn't get too cluttered.

Select the label, set its Lines property to be 0 so that it spans as many lines as necessary, then align its text center and give it the following content: "Please read the instructions on your phone before continuing." Now select the button and give it the text "I'm Ready". Finally, select both the label and button then change their Vertical and Horizontal alignment properties to be Center.

All being well, your WatchKit interface should look like the screenshot below. Don't worry that the views go right to the edge – the Watch's bezel blends seamlessly with the edge of the

Designing a simple watchOS app to receive data screen in its apps, so it will look fine on devices.



That's it: that's our entire interface. Before we continue with any further coding, we need to create outlets for the label and button by using the Assistant Editor and Ctrl-dragging. Name the label **welcomeText** and the button **hideButton** – you'll notice these have the types **WKInterfaceLabel** and **WKInterfaceButton** because we're in WatchKit now, not UIKit.

Finally, create an action for when the button is tapped, again by Ctrl-dragging in the Assistant Editor. Name this **hideWelcomeText()**. We're done with Interface Builder now, so please go back to the standard editor and open the `InterfaceController.swift` file from the WatchKit Extension.

The first thing we're going to do is identical to the code from iOS: set ourselves up as the delegate for the **WCSession** and activate it. So, start by adding this import:

```
import WatchConnectivity
```

Project 37: Psychic Tester

Now add this to the **willActivate()** method – for our purposes, that's the equivalent of **viewDidLoad()** in the iOS app:

```
if WCSession.isSupported() {  
    let session = WCSession.default  
    session.delegate = self  
    session.activate()  
}
```

The code is identical to iOS – I told you this was going to be easy!

You'll get an error when you try to assign the delegate to the Watch's view controller, so you'll need to tell iOS you conform to the **WCSessionDelegate** protocol like this:

```
class InterfaceController: WKInterfaceController,  
WCSessionDelegate {
```

With that, we're almost done with watchOS. In fact, we just need to do two more things, starting with implementing the **hideWelcomeText()** method. All this needs to do is hide the label and the button we created so that the watch's screen is blank apart from the time in the corner – we don't want any obvious UI in there that might alert people.

Hiding things in WatchKit is almost the same as iOS, so update the **hideWelcomeText()** to this:

```
@IBAction func hideWelcomeText() {  
    welcomeText.setHidden(true)  
    hideButton.setHidden(true)  
}
```

Note that you need to use **setHidden()** rather than just changing a **isHidden** property as you would in UIKit.

We also need to add an empty method in order to satisfy the **WCSessionDelegate** protocol.

Add this now:

```
func session(_ session: WCSession, activationDidCompleteWith  
activationState: WCSessionActivationState, error: Error?) {  
  
}
```

The last thing we need to do for our watchOS app is to make the device tap your wrist when it receives a message from iOS. To do this, we just need to implement the **didReceiveMessage** method for the **WCSession** so that it plays a haptic effect.

There are quite a few effects to choose from, but by far the most subtle is **WKHapticType.click**, which is so subtle that you can't help but marvel at the engineering of the Apple Watch. Add this code just beneath **hideWelcomeText()**:

```
func session(_ session: WCSession, didReceiveMessage message:  
[String : Any]) {  
    WKInterfaceDevice().play(.click)  
}
```

So, whenever the watch receives any message from the phone, it will tap your wrist. Perfect! But... we're not done yet. You see, we need to show some instructions on the iOS app so that everything functions correctly.

You see, not only does the Apple Watch go to sleep extremely quickly, but it also likes making noise to accompany haptic effects, which would rather spoil our hoax! So, to finish up we're going to add an alert to the iOS app reminding you to check your Apple Watch configuration every time it launches.

So, head back to `ViewController.swift` in your iOS app, then add this new method:

```
override func viewDidAppear(_ animated: Bool) {  
    super.viewDidAppear(animated)
```

Project 37: Psychic Tester

```
let instructions = "Please ensure your Apple Watch is  
configured correctly. On your iPhone, launch Apple's 'Watch'  
configuration app then choose General > Wake Screen. On that  
screen, please disable Wake Screen On Wrist Raise, then select  
Wake For 70 Seconds. On your Apple Watch, please swipe up on  
your watch face and enable Silent Mode. You're done!"  
  
let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Adjust your settings",  
message: instructions, preferredStyle: .alert)  
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "I'm Ready",  
style: .default))  
present(ac, animated: true)  
}
```

That shows instructions to users every time the app runs. Note that you need to put it inside `viewDidAppear()` rather than `viewDidLoad()` because it presents an alert view controller.

Wrap up

The app is finished, but really your work is about to begin: I've given you all the code you need, but it's down to you to provide some meaningful patter to convince your friends! See "Polishing your patter" below for some example patter to get you started, but first give the app a quick try to make sure it all works.

To get started, run the app on your phone, then run it on your Watch. Note that installing apps and launching apps are both quite slow on Apple Watch, so make sure you prepare ahead of time. Once the Watch app is running, remember that it will go to sleep in 70 seconds unless you stop it, and when the Watch sleeps you won't get any haptic taps. The easiest thing to do is very gently rotate the Digital Crown every 30 seconds or so, just to be sure.

So, the app is complete and you've learned all about **CAGradientLayer**, **CAEmitterLayer**, card flip effects, **perform()**, 3D Touch and more - good job! If you want to try taking the app further, try implementing the **sessionWatchStateDidChange()** method in ViewController.swift to detect when the Watch goes to sleep – if you make your phone play a brief but innocuous sound, it would alert you to wake your watch.

If you're looking for something more advanced, try adding a hidden button to the Watch user interface that enables "always win mode" – i.e., every card that gets tapped will be the star. Your patter can then be, "I promise it's not a trick, in fact I can even transfer my psychic power to you!" and watch as your friend suddenly finds the star every time.

And if you're keen to delve more into watchOS development, **I wrote a whole book teaching you how to make watchOS apps**: Hacking with watchOS.

Polishing your patter

Patter is verbal misdirection: what you say to your friends to confuse them while they are trying to figure out the trick. At the very least, you should explain to your friend how the cards work: there are eight cards with different shapes on, but only one has a green star. Let your friend try finding the card by hand, to prove the set up is real. Lucky people will guess the star

Project 37: Psychic Tester

correctly; very lucky people will guess twice in a row; but it's almost impossible that someone will get the answer right three times in a row - that's where you come in!

The easiest way to get started with the trick is by putting your finger down over one card, then dragging it slowly over the other cards. Note: don't tap the cards, because that will turn one of them over. Instead, slide your finger over them as if you're feeling for – *ahem* – psychic vibrations.

When you've done the trick correctly once or twice, your doubting friend will almost certainly think that there's some secret signal on the screen that is alerting you to the correct card, or perhaps you're performing some sort of gesture on the screen that triggers the star. In this situation, up the ante: tell them you can do the trick without even seeing the screen. In fact, you can do it without even *touching* the screen - they can do all the touching for you.

This works in just the same way, except now your friend is the one stroking their finger across the screen. Just wait for your Watch to tap your wrist, then say something like "go back to that card - I felt something there..."

Remember, misdirection is key. So, don't tap the right answer as soon as your phone vibrates. Say something like "hmm... this card feels really warm... let me try some others first." Or go to one of the cards nearby and say "this card feels warm, but not as warm as the previous one..."

Finally, once you've fooled everyone and had your fun, let them in on the joke - after all, if you can't have fun, why bother?

Project 38

GitHub Commits

Get started with Core Data by building an app to fetch and store GitHub commits for Swift.

Setting up

In this project you'll learn how to use Core Data while building an app that fetches GitHub commit data for the Swift project. Core Data is Apple's object graph and persistence framework, which is a fancy way of saying it reads, writes and queries collections of related objects while also being able to save them to disk.

Core Data is undoubtedly useful, which is why about 500,000 apps in the App Store build on top of it. But it's also rather complicated to learn, which is why I left it so late in this tutorial series – despite my repeated attempts to simplify the topic, this tutorial is still going to be the hardest one in the whole of Hacking with Swift, and indeed I might have missed it out altogether were it not by far the most requested topic from readers!

So, strap in, because you're going to learn a lot: we'll be covering Core Data, which will encompass **NSFetchRequest**, **NSManagedObject**, **NSPredicate**, **NSSortDescriptor**, and **NSFetchedResultsController**. We'll also touch on **ISO8601DateFormatter** for the first time, which is one of Apple's ways to convert **Date** objects to and from strings.

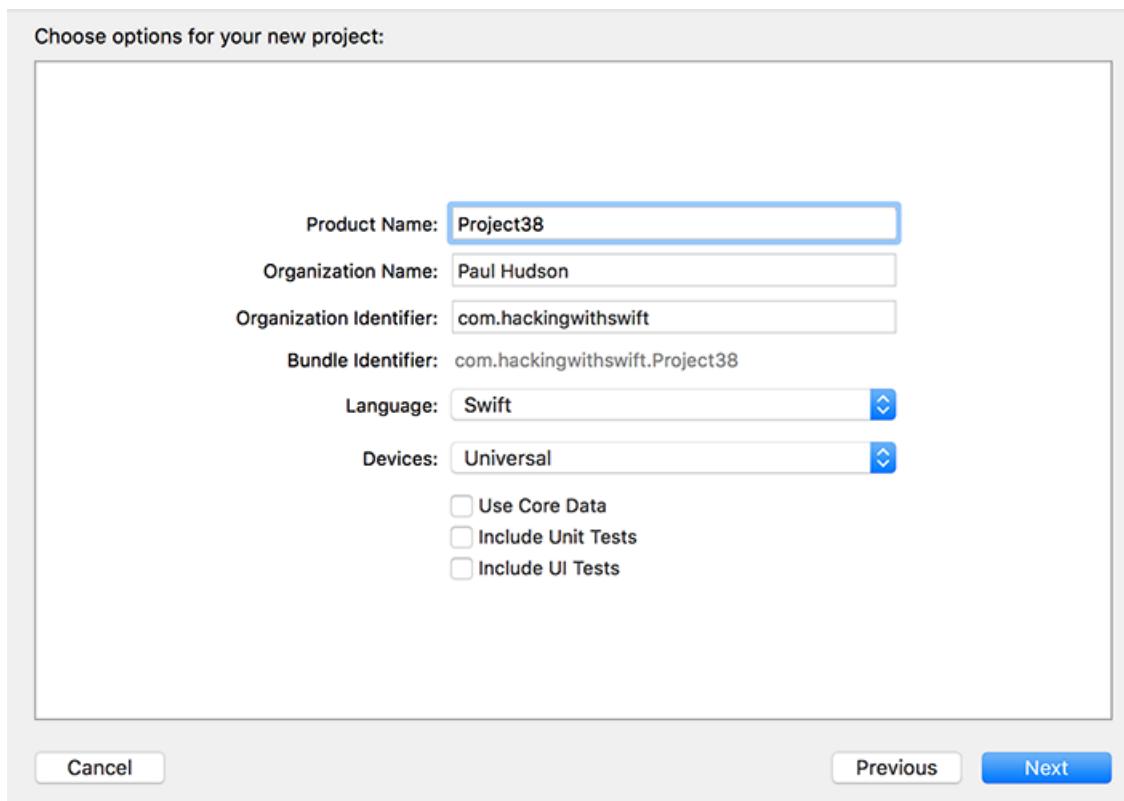
As always, I like to teach new topics while giving you a real-world project to work with, and in our case we're going to be using the GitHub API to fetch information about Apple's open-source Swift project. The GitHub API is simple, fast, and outputs JSON, but most importantly it's public. Be warned, though: you get to make only 60 requests an hour without an API key, so while you're testing your app make sure you don't refresh too often!

If you weren't sure, a "Git commit" is a set of changes a developer made to source code that is stored in a source control repository. For example, if you spot a bug in the Swift compiler and contribute your changes, those changes will form one commit. And before I get emails from random internet pedants, *yes I know* things are more complicated than that, but it's more than enough of an explanation for the purposes of this tutorial.

Before we start, it's important I reiterate that Core Data can be a bit overwhelming at first. It has a lot of unique terminology, so if you find yourself struggling to understand it all, that's perfectly normal – it's not you, it's just Core Data.

Over the next four chapters, we will implement the four pieces of Core Data boilerplate. We're going to use Xcode's built-in Single View App template, but we're not *not* going to have it generate Core Data code for us because I want you to understand it from the ground up.

So, please go ahead and create a new Single View App project named Project38. Select Swift for your language, then make sure you *uncheck* Core Data otherwise the rest of this tutorial will be very confusing indeed.



We need to parse the JSON coming from GitHub's API, and the easiest way to do that isn't using the **Codable** protocol that we've looked at before. You see, **Codable** is great at converting JSON into objects that we create and manage, but it's less great when working with Core Data because *Core Data* wants to manage the objects itself as you'll see.

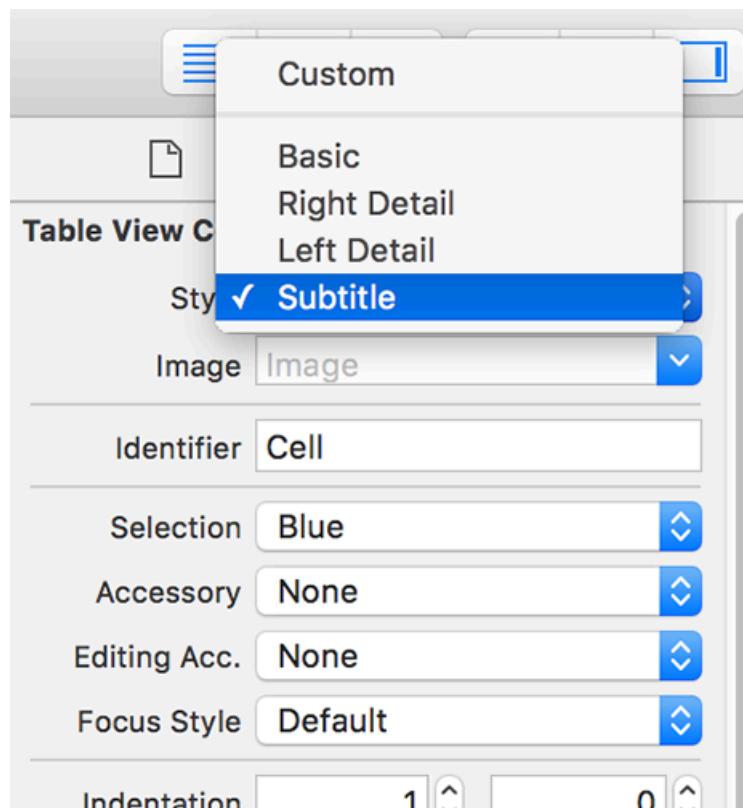
So, instead we're going to use a popular JSON parsing library called SwiftyJSON. If you haven't already downloaded the content for this project, please get it from GitHub now: <https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>. You'll see SwiftyJSON is there, so please

Project 38: GitHub Commits

drag that into your project now.

We're going to use a table view controller rather than a regular view controller, so we need to do the same conversion job we've done several times before. So:

1. Open ViewController.swift and make it inherit from **UITableViewController**.
2. Open Main.storyboard and delete the view controller that's there right now.
3. Drag in a new table view controller and set its class to be "ViewController".
4. Make it the initial view controller for the storyboard.
5. Embed it inside a navigation controller.
6. Select its prototype cell, give it the style Subtitle, the identifier "Commit", and a disclosure indicator for its accessory.



We also need a detail view controller, but it doesn't need to do much – it's just there to show that everything works correctly. So, drag out a new view controller from the object library, and give it the storyboard ID "Detail". Drag a label out onto it so that it fills the view controller,

then set Auto Layout rules so that it always stays edge to edge. Center its text, then give it 0 for its number of lines property.

The main table view controller class and interface are done for now, but we need to create a new class to handle the detail view controller. So, go to File > New > File and choose iOS > Source > Cocoa Touch Class. Name it “DetailViewController”, make it a subclass of “UIViewController”, then click Finish and Create.

Back in Main.storyboard, change the class of the detail view controller to be “DetailViewController”, then switch to the assistant editor and create an outlet for the label called “detailLabel”.

That's it: the project is cleaned up and ready for Core Data. Remember, there are four steps to implementing Core Data in your app, so let's start with the very first step: designing a Core Data model.

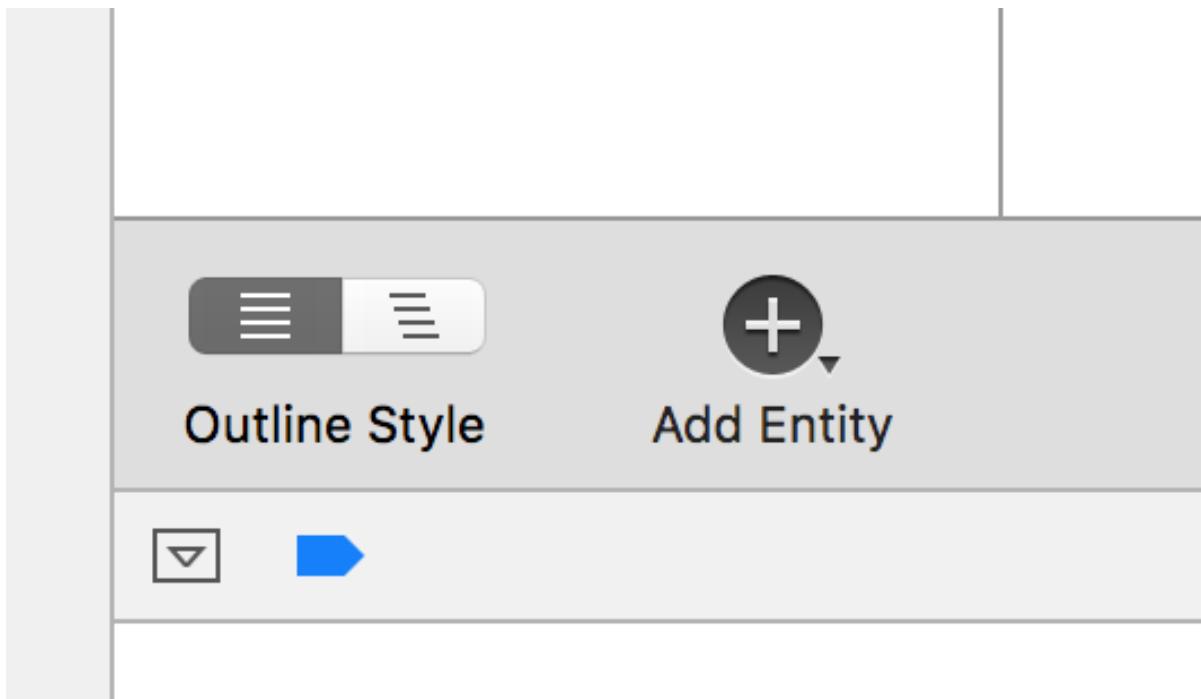
Designing a Core Data model

A data model is a description of the data you want Core Data to store, and is a bit like creating a class in Swift: you define entities (like classes) and give them attributes (like properties). But Core Data takes it a step further by allowing you to describe how its entities relate to other entities, as well as adding rules for validation and uniqueness.

We're going to create a data model for our app that will store a list of all the GitHub commits for the Swift library. Take a look at the raw GitHub JSON now by loading this URL in a web browser: https://api.github.com/repos/apple/swift/commits?per_page=100. You'll see that each commit has a "sha" identifier, committer details, a message describing what changed, and a lot more. In our initial data model, we're going to track the "date", "message", "sha", and "url" fields, but you're welcome to add more if you want to.

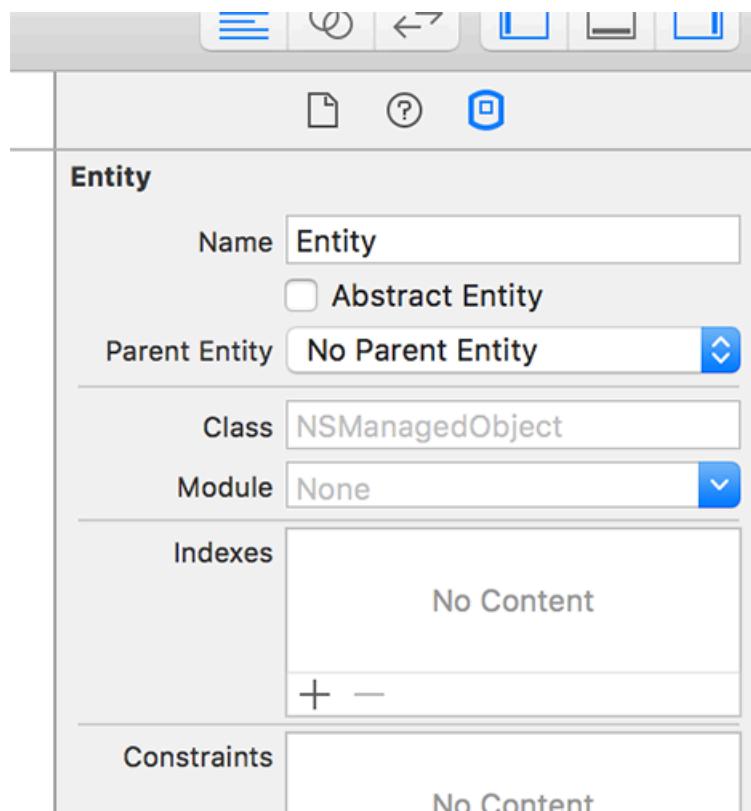
To create a data model, choose File > New > File and select iOS > Core Data > Data Model. Name it Project38, then make sure the "Group" option near the bottom of the screen has a yellow folder to it rather than a blue project icon.

This will create a new file called Project38.xcdatamodeld, and when you select that you'll see a new editing display: the Data Model Editor. At the bottom you'll see a button with the title "Add Entity": please click that now.



A Core Data "entity" is like a Swift class in that it is just a description of what an object is going to look like. By default, new entities are called "Entity", but you can change that in the Data Model inspector in the right-hand pane of Xcode – press Alt+Cmd+3 if it's not already visible. With your new entity selected, you should see a field named "Name", so please change "Entity" to be "Commit".

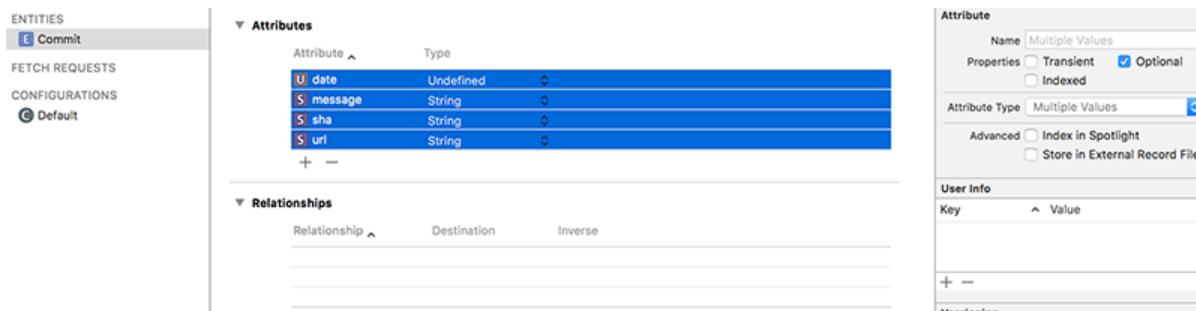
Project 38: GitHub Commits



To the right of the Add Entity button is another button, Add Attribute. Click that four times now to add four attributes, then name them "date", "message", "sha" and "url". These attributes are just like properties on a Swift class, including the need to have a data type. You'll see they each have "Undefined" for their type right now, but that's easily changed: set them all to have the String data type, except for "date", which should be Date.

The final change we're going to make is to mark each of these four property as non-optional. Click "date" then hold down Shift and click "url" to select all four attributes, then look in the Data Model inspector for the Optional checkbox and deselect it. **Note:** the Data Model inspector can be a bit buggy sometimes – if you find it's completely blank, you might need to try selecting one of the other files in your project and/or deselecting then re-selecting your entity to make things work.

Designing a Core Data model



Now, you might be forgiven for thinking, "at last! All that time spent mastering Swift optionals is paying off – I know what this checkbox does!" But I have some bad news for you. Or, more specifically, Core Data has some bad news for you: this Optional checkbox has nothing at all to do with Swift optionals, it just determines whether the objects that Core Data stores are required to have a value or not.

That's the first step of Core Data completed: the app now knows what kind of data we want to store. We'll be coming back to add to our model later, but first it's time for step two: adding the base Core Data functionality to our app so we can load the model we just defined and save any changes we make.

Warning: When you make *any* changes to the Core Data editor in Xcode, you should press Cmd+S to save your changes. At the time of writing – and indeed for some time now – Xcode has not saved Core Data model changes when you build your app, so if you don't save the changes yourself you'll find they haven't been applied and you'll spend hours investigating ghost bugs.

Adding Core Data to our project: **NSPersistentContainer**

A Core Data model defines what your data should look like, but it doesn't actually store the real data anywhere. To make our app work, we need to load that model, create a real working database from it, load that database, then prepare what's called a "managed object context" – an environment where we can create, read, update, and delete Core Data objects entirely in memory, before writing back to the database in one lump.

This all used to be a massive amount of work, to the point where it would put people off Core Data for life. But from iOS 10 onwards, Apple rolled all this work up into a single new class called **NSPersistentContainer**. This has removed almost all the tedium from setting up Core Data, and you can now get up and running in just a few lines of code.

So, in this second step we're going to write code to load the model we just defined, load a persistent store where saved objects can be stored, and also create a managed object context where our objects will live while they are active – all using the new **NSPersistentContainer** class. Once it finishes its work, we'll have a managed object context ready to work with, and any changes we make to Core Data objects won't be saved until we explicitly request it. It is significantly faster to manipulate objects inside your managed object context as much as you need to before saving rather than saving after every change.

When data is saved, it's nearly always written out to an SQLite database. There are other options, but take my word for it: almost everyone uses SQLite. SQLite is a very small, very fast, and very portable database engine, and what Core Data does is provide a wrapper around it: when you read, write and query a managed object context, Core Data translates that into Structured Query Language (SQL) for SQLite to parse.

If you were wondering, SQL is pronounced Ess Cue Ell, but many people pronounce it "sequel." The pronunciation of SQLite is more varied, but when I met its author I asked him how *he* pronounces it, so I feel fairly safe that the definitive answer is this: you pronounce SQLite as Ess-Cue-Ell-ite, as if it were a mineral like Kryponite or Carbonite depending on

Adding Core Data to our project: NSPersistentContainer

your preferred movie. Unless you plan to get into more advanced usage, you don't need to know anything about SQLite to use Core Data.

To get started, open ViewController.swift and add an import for Core Data:

```
import CoreData
```

We're going to create the **NSPersistentContainer** as a property, so we can load it once and share it elsewhere in our app. So, add this property now:

```
var container: NSPersistentContainer!
```

To set up the basic Core Data system, we need to write code that will do the following:

1. Load our data model we just created from the application bundle and create a **NSManagedObjectModel** object from it.
2. Create an **NSPersistentStoreCoordinator** object, which is responsible for reading from and writing to disk.
3. Set up a **URL** pointing to the database on disk where our actual saved objects live. This will be an SQLite database named Project38.sqlite.
4. Load that database into the **NSPersistentStoreCoordinator** so it knows where we want it to save. If it doesn't exist, it will be created automatically
5. Create an **NSManagedObjectContext** and point it at the persistent store coordinator.

Beautifully, brilliantly, all five of those steps are exactly what **NSPersistentContainer** does for us. So what used to be 15 to 20 lines of code is now summed up in just six – add this to **viewDidLoad()** now:

```
container = NSPersistentContainer(name: "Project38")  
  
container.loadPersistentStores { storeDescription, error in  
    if let error = error {  
        print("Unresolved error \(error)")  
    }  
}
```

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
    }
}
```

The first line creates the persistent container, and must be given the name of the Core Data model file we created earlier: “Project38”. The next line calls the **loadPersistentStores()** method, which loads the saved database if it exists, or creates it otherwise. If any errors come back here you’ll know something has gone fatally wrong, but if it succeeds then you can be guaranteed the data has loaded and you’re ready to continue.

There’s one small thing we do still need to do ourselves, and that’s to write a small method to save any changes from memory back to the database on disk. The persistent container gives us a property called **viewContext**, which is a managed object context: an environment where we can manipulate Core Data objects entirely in RAM.

Once you’ve finished your changes and want to write them permanently – i.e., save them to disk – you need to call the **save()** method on the **viewContext** property. However, this should only be done if there are any changes since the last save – there’s no point doing unnecessary work. So, before calling **save()** you should read the **hasChanges** property. We’re going to wrap this all up in a single method called **saveContext()** – add this new method just after **viewDidLoad()**:

```
func saveContext() {
    if container.viewContext.hasChanges {
        do {
            try container.viewContext.save()
        } catch {
            print("An error occurred while saving: \(error)")
        }
    }
}
```

We’ll be calling that whenever we’ve made changes that should be saved to disk.

Adding Core Data to our project: NSPersistentContainer

At this point, our app has a working data model as well as code to load it into a managed object context for reading and writing. That means step two is done and we're on to step three: creating objects inside Core Data and fetching data from GitHub.

Creating an NSManagedObject subclass with Xcode

In our app, Core Data is responsible for reading data from a persistent store (the SQLite database) and making it available for us to use as objects. After changing those objects, we can save them back to the persistent store, which is when Core Data converts them back from objects to database records.

All this is done using a special data type called **NSManagedObject**. This is a Core Data subclass of **NSObject** that uses a unique keyword, **@NSManaged**, to provide lots of functionality for its properties. For example, you already saw the **hasChanges** property of a managed object context – that automatically gets set to true when you make changes to your objects, because Core Data tracks when you change properties that are marked **@NSManaged**.

Behind the scenes, **@NSManaged** effectively means "extra code will automatically be provided when the program runs." It's a bit like functionality injection: when you say "this property is **@NSManaged**" then Core Data will add getters and setters to it when the app runs so that it handles things like change tracking.

If this sounds complicated, relax: Xcode can do quite a bit of work for us. It's not perfect, as you'll see shortly, but it's certainly a head start. So, it's time for step three: creating objects in Core Data so that we can fetch and store data from GitHub.

There are two ways Xcode can help, one of which isn't good enough for this project but is slowly getting better – maybe when I update this project next it will be update to scratch. Let's look at it briefly now: open Project38.xcdatamodeld, select the Commit entity again, then look in the data model inspector for the "Codegen" option. Change it to "Class Definition", press Cmd+S to save the change, then press Cmd+B to have Xcode build the project.

What just changed might look small, but it's remarkably smart. Open ViewController.swift and add this code at the end of **viewDidLoad()**:

```
let commit = Commit()
```

Creating an NSManagedObject subclass with Xcode

```
commit.message = "Woo"  
commit.url = "http://www.example.com"
```

Can you figure out what Xcode has done for us? The Codegen value is short for “code generation” – when you pressed Cmd+B to build your project, Xcode converted the Commit Core Data entity into a Commit Swift class. You can’t see it in the project – it’s dynamically generated when the Swift code is being built – but it’s there for you to use, as you just saw. You get access to its attributes as properties that you can read and write, and any changes you make will get written back to the database when you call our `saveContext()` method.

However, this feature is imperfect, at least right now – although that might change at any point in the future as Apple updates Xcode. First, try adding this line below the previous three:

```
commit.date = Date()
```

That means “set the `date` property to the current date.” But it won’t work – right now Xcode generates its classes using the old Swift 2.2 `NSDate` class rather than the shiny new Swift `Date` struct. This means you need to use `NSDate` in your own Swift code, or add conversions everywhere, neither of which are pleasant.

Xcode’s auto-generated class also has one more annoyance, and you’ll see it if you try using code completion to view its properties: all four of the properties it made for us are optional, so `name` is a `String?`, `date` is an `NSDate?` and so on. Yes, even though we marked all the attributes as non-optional in the Core Data editor, that just means they need to have values by the time they get saved – Xcode will quite happily let them be nil at other times.

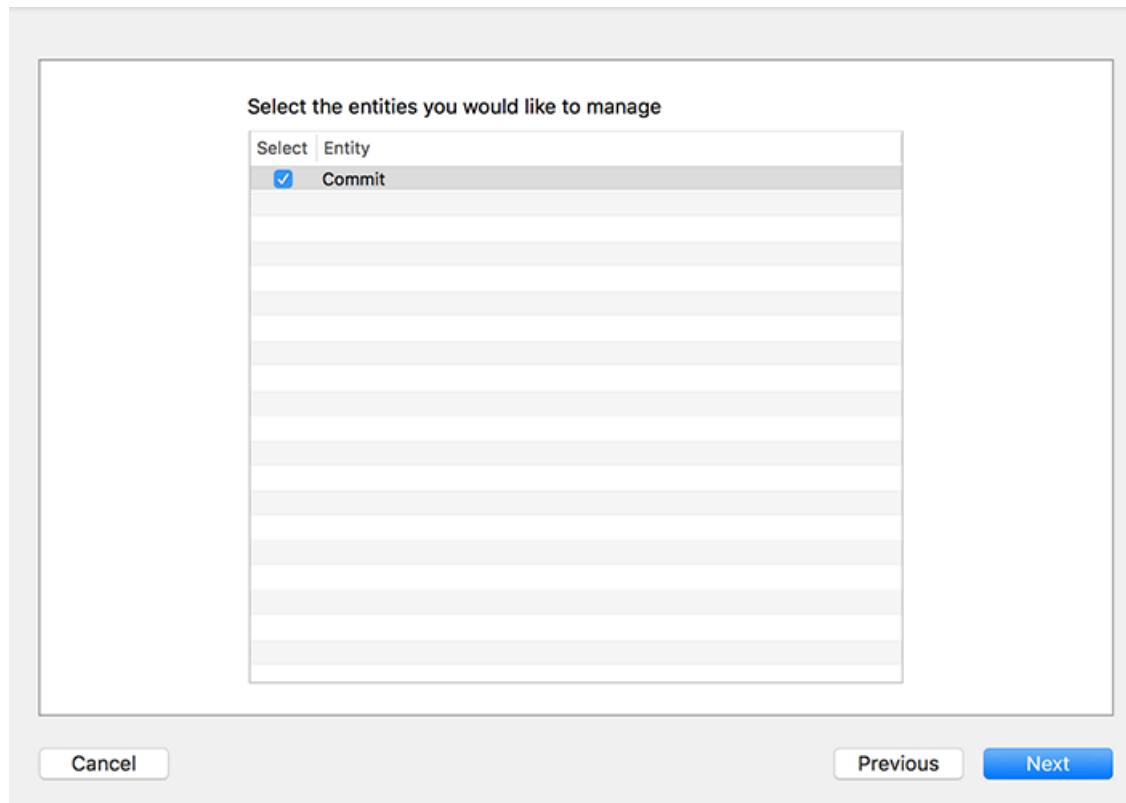
Sometimes that’s OK, but usually it’s not. So, let’s put the codegen feature to one side for now – go back to the Core Data editor, change Codegen back to “Manual/None”, then press Cmd+S to save and Cmd+B to rebuild your app. You’ll get compiler errors now because the `Commit` class no longer exists, but that’s OK.

You’ve seen codegen, which is the first way Xcode can help us create objects in Core Data. The *second* way is to create our own custom `NSManagedObject` subclass, which right now is

Project 38: GitHub Commits

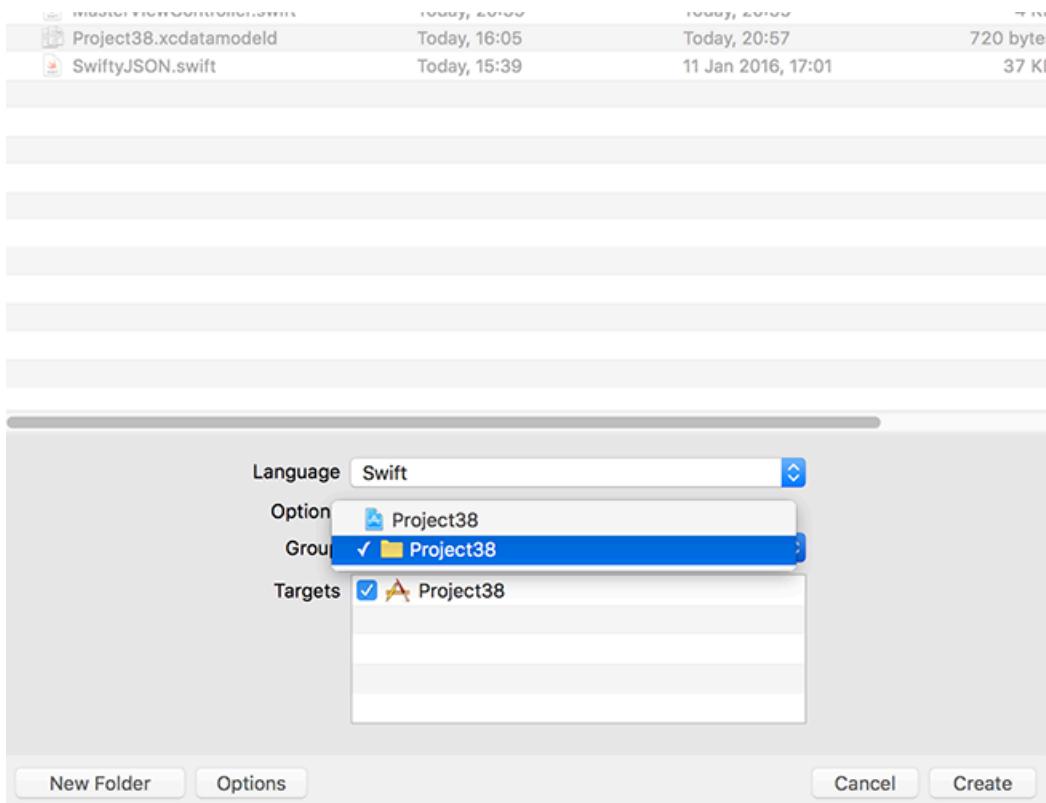
the preferred way forward because it lets us take the dynamically generated class and customize it.

Still inside the Core Data editor, go to the Editor menu and choose Create NSManagedObject Subclass. Make sure your data model is selected then click Next. Make sure the Commit entity is checked then click Next again.



Finally, look next to Group and make sure you see a yellow folder next to "Project 38" rather than a blue project icon, and click Create.

Creating an NSManagedObject subclass with Xcode



When this process completes, two new files are created: Commit+CoreDataClass.swift and Commit+CoreDataProperties.swift. If you examine them you'll see the first one is almost empty, whereas the second one looks something like this:

```
import Foundation
import CoreData

extension Commit {
    @nonobjc public class func fetchRequest() ->
        NSFetchedResultsController<Commit> {
        return NSFetchedResultsController<Commit>(entityName: "Commit")
    }

    @NSManaged public var date: NSDate?
    @NSManaged public var message: String?
    @NSManaged public var sha: String?
}
```

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
@NSManaged public var url: String?  
}
```

First, there's that **@NSManaged** keyword I mentioned to you. Second, notice that the code says **extension Commit** rather than **class Commit**, which is Xcode being clever: **Commit+CoreDataClass.swift** is an empty class that you can fill with your own functionality, and **Commit+CoreDataProperties.swift** is an *extension* to that class where Core Data writes *its* properties. This means if you ever add attributes to the Commit entity and regenerate the **NSManagedObject** subclass, Xcode will overwrite only **Commit+CoreDataProperties.swift**, leaving your own changes in **Commit+CoreDataClass.swift** untouched.

There's one more thing in there, which is a bit of syntactic sugar. It's this bit:

```
@nonobjc public class func fetchRequest() ->  
NSFetchRequest<Commit> {  
    return NSFetchRequest<Commit>(entityName: "Commit")  
}
```

We'll come on fetch requests later on, but to satisfy your curiosity that line means we can write this:

```
Commit.fetchRequest()
```

Rather than this:

```
NSFetchRequest<Commit>(entityName: "Commit")
```

Like I said, it's syntactic sugar – it's a piece of syntax that makes your code nicer.

This Core Data code generation is a head start, but not perfect: it has given us exactly what Xcode was dynamically generating before. Now, though, it's flattened to real Swift code, which means we can change it. You can see for yourself how Xcode is using **NSDate** for the **date** property, and how it's made everything optional.

Creating an NSManagedObject subclass with Xcode

Now that we have real Swift code to work with, we can go ahead and make changes. However, I should remind you that if you recreate the subclass using the Create NSManagedObject Subclass menu option, these changes will be lost and you will need to remove the optionality again. We'll be doing exactly this later on, so prepare yourself!

Working with optionals when they aren't needed adds an extra layer of annoyance, so I want you to go ahead and remove all the question marks from `Commit+CoreDataProperties.swift`. I also want you to change the old **NSDate** data type to the shiny new **Date** data type.

I'd also like you to change the **fetchRequest()** syntactic sugar because it has an annoying flaw right now: it uses the same name as a different method that comes from **NSManagedObject**, and Xcode can't tell which one you mean. So, I prefer to rename it to **createFetchRequest()** to avoid the ambiguity. So, change the method to this:

```
@nonobjc public class func createFetchRequest() ->
NSFetchRequest<Commit> {
    return NSFetchedResultsController<Commit>(entityName: "Commit")
}
```

When you're finished with these changes, it should look like this:

```
import Foundation
import CoreData

extension Commit {
    @nonobjc public class func createFetchRequest() ->
NSFetchRequest<Commit> {
    return NSFetchedResultsController<Commit>(entityName: "Commit")
}

@NSManaged public var date: Date
@NSManaged public var message: String
@NSManaged public var sha: String
```

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
@NSManaged public var url: String  
}
```

If you build your code now, it should work again because we have a **Commit** class again. Before we continue, delete the testing code we had in **viewDidLoad()** – it's time for real Core Data work!

Time for some useful code

Now that we have Core Data objects defined, we can start to write our very first useful Core Data code: we can fetch some data from GitHub and convert it into our **Commit** objects. To make things easier to follow, I want to split this up into smaller steps: fetching the JSON, and converting the JSON into Core Data objects.

First, fetching the JSON. This needs to be a background operation because network requests are slow and we don't want the user interface to freeze up when data is loading. This operation needs to go to the GitHub URL, https://api.github.com/repos/apple/swift/commits?per_page=100 and convert the result into a SwiftyJSON object ready for conversion.

To push all this into the background, we're going to use **performSelector(inBackground:)** to call **fetchCommits()** – a method we haven't written yet. Put this just before the end of **viewDidLoad()**:

```
performSelector(inBackground: #selector(fetchCommits), with:  
nil)
```

What the new **fetchCommits()** method will do is download the URL into a **String** object then pass it to SwiftyJSON to convert into an array of objects. In project 10 we looked at using GCD's **async()** method so that once the JSON was ready to be used we did the important work on the main thread.

We're not going to process the JSON just yet, but we can do everything else: download the data, create a SwiftyJSON object from it, then go back to the main thread to loop over the

Creating an NSManagedObject subclass with Xcode

array of GitHub commits and save the managed object context when we're done. To make things easier to debug, I've added a `print()` statement so you can see how many commits were received from GitHub each time.

Here's our first draft of the `fetchCommits()` method:

```
@objc func fetchCommits() {
    if let data = try? String(contentsOf: URL(string: "https://
api.github.com/repos/apple/swift/commits?per_page=100")!) {
        // give the data to SwiftyJSON to parse
        let jsonCommits = JSON(parseJSON: data)

        // read the commits back out
        let jsonCommitArray = jsonCommits.arrayValue

        print("Received \(jsonCommitArray.count) new commits.")

        DispatchQueue.main.async { [unowned self] in
            for jsonCommit in jsonCommitArray {
                // more code to go here!
            }

            self.saveContext()
        }
    }
}
```

There's nothing too surprising there – in fact right now it won't even do anything, because `saveContext()` will detect no Core Data changes have happened, so the `save()` call won't happen.

The second of our smaller steps is to replace `// more code to go here!` with, well, *actual code*. Here's the revised version, with a few extra lines either side so you can see where it should go:

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
DispatchQueue.main.async { [unowned self] in
    for jsonCommit in jsonCommitArray {
        // the following three lines are new
        let commit = Commit(context: self.container.viewContext)
        self.configure(commit: commit, usingJSON: jsonCommit)
    }

    self.saveContext()
}
```

So, there are three new lines of code, of which one is just a closing brace by itself. Of course, it's so short only because I've cheated a bit by calling another method that we haven't written yet, **configure(commit:)**, so to make your code build add this for now:

```
func configure(commit: Commit, usingJSON json: JSON) {
```

Now let's take a look at the two new lines of code above. First is **Commit(context: self.container.viewContext)**, which creates a **Commit** object inside the managed object context given to us by the **NSPersistentContainer** we created. This means its data will get saved back to the SQLite database when we call **saveContext()**. If you remember, in the introduction I said that Core Data likes to manage its objects, and here you can see that in action!

Once we have a new **Commit** object, we pass it onto the **configure(commit:)** method, along with the JSON data for the matching commit. That **Commit** object is our **NSManagedObject** subclass, so it has all sorts of magic behind the scenes, but to our Swift code is just a normal object with properties we can read and write. This would make the **configure(commit:)** method straightforward if it were not for dates.

Yes, dates. Not the sweet fruity kind, but the **Date** kind. Make sure you have the GitHub API URL open in a web browser window so you can see exactly what it returns, and you'll notice that dates are sent back like "2016-01-26T19:46:18Z". That format is known as ISO-8601

Creating an NSManagedObject subclass with Xcode

format, we need to parse that into an **Date** in order to put it inside our **Commit** object.

To convert "2016-01-26T19:46:18Z" into a **Date** we're going to use a new class called **ISO8601DateFormatter**. This is designed to convert **Date** objects to and from strings like "2016-01-26T19:46:18Z".

Before I show you the new **configure(commit:)** method, there are two more things you need to know.

First, one of the advantages of SwiftyJSON is that it makes parsing JSON really easy: you just write the names of the keys you want to read, such as `json["sha"]` or `json["commit"]` `["message"]`, then end with whatever kind of type you want, such as **stringValue**.

Second, getting a **Date** out of a string might fail, for example if the string isn't in ISO-8601 format. In this case, we'll get **nil** back, which isn't much good for our app, so I'm going to use the nil coalescing operator to use a new **Date** instance if the date failed to parse.

Here's the new **configure(commit:)** method:

```
func configure(commit: Commit, usingJSON json: JSON) {
    commit.sha = json["sha"].stringValue
    commit.message = json["commit"]["message"].stringValue
    commit.url = json["html_url"].stringValue

    let formatter = ISO8601DateFormatter()
    commit.date = formatter.date(from: json["commit"]
        ["committer"]["date"].stringValue) ?? Date()
}
```

I love how easy SwiftyJSON makes JSON parsing! It automatically ensures a safe value gets returned even if the data is missing or broken. For example, `json["commit"]` `["message"]`.**stringValue** will either return the commit message as a string or an empty string, regardless of what the JSON contains. So if "commit" or "message" don't exist, or if they do exist but actually contains an integer for some reason, we'll get back an empty string – it makes

Project 38: GitHub Commits

JSON parsing extremely safe while being easy to read and write.

That completes step three of our Core Data code: we now create lots of objects when we download data from GitHub, and the finishing collection gets saved back to SQLite. That just leaves one final step before we have the full complement of fundamental Core Data code: we need to be able to load and use all those **Commit** objects we just saved!

Loading Core Data objects using NSFetchRequest and NSSortDescriptor

This is where Core Data starts to become interesting and perhaps – gasp! – even fun. Yes, I know it's taken quite a lot of work to get this far, but I *did* warn you, remember?

Step four is where we finally get to put to use all three previous steps by showing data to users. After the huge amount of work you've put in, particularly in the previous step, I'm sure you'll be grateful to see everything pay off at last!

In our project, we know we're using **Commit** objects to represent individual GitHub commits, so we need to store those objects in an array property. Add this to the **ViewController** class now:

```
var commits = [Commit]()
```

We now need to write the usual table view methods, **numberOfRowsInSection** and **cellForRowAt**. The former will just return the size of the **commits** array, and the latter will place each commit's message and date into the cell's **textLabel** and **detailTextLabel**. There are lots of ways to convert dates to and from strings – you already saw **ISO8601DateFormatter**, for example – but here we're just going to use the simplest: every **Date** object has a **description** property that converts it to a human-readable string.

For a change, we're also going to write a third method that reports how many sections are in the table view. This returns 1 by default, and our new method will also return 1, but this will become useful later on.

Add these three methods now:

```
override func numberOfSections(in tableView: UITableView) ->
Int {
```

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
    return 1
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
    return commits.count
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt
indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:
"Commit", for: indexPath)

    let commit = commits[indexPath.row]
    cell.textLabel!.text = commit.message
    cell.detailTextLabel!.text = commit.date.description

    return cell
}
```

With that change made, we need to write one new method in order to make our entire app spring into life. But before we jump into the code, you need to learn about one of the most important classes in Core Data: **NSFetchRequest**. This is the class that performs a query on your data, and returns a list of objects that match.

We're going to use **NSFetchRequest** in a really basic form for now, then add more functionality later. In this first version, we're going to ask it to give us an array of all **Commit** objects that we have created, sorted by date descending so that the newest commits come first.

The way fetch requests work is very simple: you create one from the **NSManagedObject** subclass you're using for your entity, then pass it to managed object context's **fetch()** method. If the fetch request worked then you'll get back an array of objects matching the query; if not, an exception will be thrown that you need to catch.

Loading Core Data objects using NSFetchedRequest and NSSortDescriptor

The sorting is done through a special data type called **NSSortDescriptor**, which is a trivial wrapper around the name of what you want to sort (in our case "date"), then a boolean setting whether the sort should be ascending (oldest first for dates) or descending (newest first). You pass an array of these, so you can say "sort by date descending, then by message ascending," for example.

OK, time for some code, and I hope you'll be pleasantly surprised by how easy it is:

```
func loadSavedData() {
    let request = Commit.createFetchRequest()
    let sort = NSSortDescriptor(key: "date", ascending: false)
    request.sortDescriptors = [sort]

    do {
        commits = try container.viewContext.fetch(request)
        print("Got \(commits.count) commits")
        tableView.reloadData()
    } catch {
        print("Fetch failed")
    }
}
```

So, that creates the **NSFetchRequest**, gives it a sort descriptor to arrange the newest commits first, then uses the **fetch()** method to fetch the actual objects. That method returns an array of all **Commit** objects that exist in the data store. Once that's done, it's just a matter of calling **reloadData()** on the table to have the data appear.

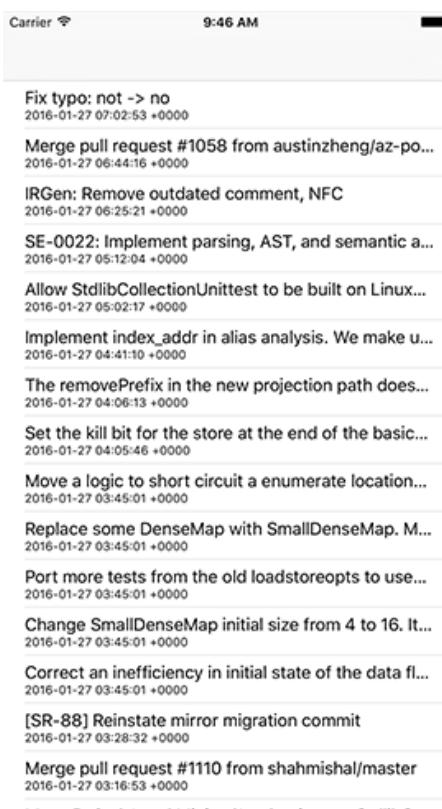
To make the app work, we need to call this new **loadSavedData()** method in two places. First, add a call at the end of the **viewDidLoad()** method. Second, add a call in the **fetchCommits()** method, just after where we have **self.saveContext()**. You will, of course, need to use **self.loadSavedData()** in that instance.

Again, I've written a simple **print()** statement when errors occur, but in your own production

Project 38: GitHub Commits

apps you will need to show something useful to your user.

Good news: that completes all four basic bootstrapping steps for Core Data. We have defined our model, loaded the data store and managed object context, fetched some example data and saved it, and loaded the resulting objects. You should now be able to run your project and see it all working!



How to make a Core Data attribute unique using constraints

After such a huge amount of work getting Core Data up and running, you'll probably run your app a few times to enjoy it all working. But it's not perfect, I'm afraid: first, you'll see GitHub commits get duplicated each time the app runs, and second you'll notice that tapping on a commit doesn't do anything.

We'll be fixing that second problem later, but for now let's focus on the first problem: duplicate GitHub commits. In fact, you probably have triplicate or quadruplicate by now, because each time you run the app the same commits are fetched and added to Core Data, so you end up with the same data being repeated time and time again.

No one wants repeated data, so we're going to fix this problem. And for once I'm pleased to say that Core Data makes this trivial thanks to a simple technology called "unique constraints." All we need to do is find some data that is guaranteed to uniquely identify a commit, tell Core Data that is a unique identifier, and it will make sure objects with that same value don't get repeated.

Even better, Core Data can intelligently merge updates to objects in situations where this is possible. It's not going to happen with us, but imagine a situation where a commit author could retrospectively change their commit message from "I fxed a bug with Swift" to "I fixed a bug with Swift." As long as the unique identifier didn't change, Core Data could recognize this was an update on the original commit, and merge the change intelligently.

In this app, we have the perfect unique attribute just waiting to be used: every commit has a "sha" attribute that is a long string of letters and numbers that identify that commit uniquely. SHA stands for "secure hash algorithm", and it's used in many places to generate unique identifiers from content.

A "hash" is a little bit like like one-way, truncated encryption: one piece of input like "Hello world" will always generate the same hash, but if you change it to be "Hello World" – just

Project 38: GitHub Commits

capitalizing a single letter – you get a completely different hash. It's "truncated" because no matter how much content you give it as input, the "sha" will always be 40 letters. It's "one way" because you can't somehow reverse the hash to discover the original content, which is where hashes are different to encryption: an encrypted message can be decrypted to its original content, whereas a hashed message cannot be "dehashed" back to its original.

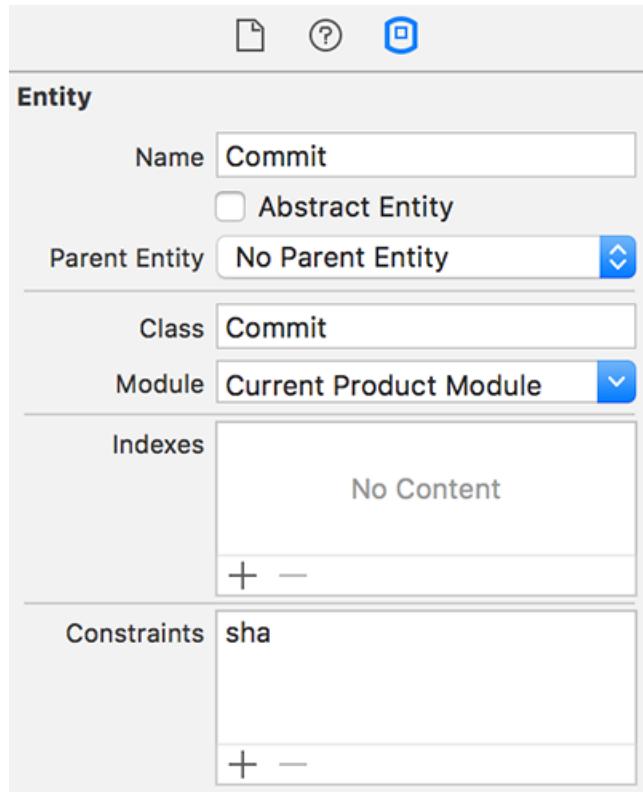
Hashes are frequently used as a checksum to verify that a file or data is correct: if you download a 10GB file and want to be sure it's exactly what the sender created, you can just compare your hash with theirs. Because hashes are truncated to a specific size, it is technically possible for two pieces of very different content to generate the same hash, known as a "collision", but this is extremely rare.

Enough theory. Please go ahead and run your app a few times to make sure there are a good number of duplicates so you can see the problem in action. We added some **print()** statements in there for debugging purposes, so you'll see a message like this:

```
Got 500 commits
Received 100 new commits.
Got 600 commits
```

Select the data model (Project38.xcdatamodeld) and make sure the Commit entity is selected rather than one of its attributes. If you look in the Data Model inspector you'll see a field marked "Constraints" – click the + button at the bottom of that field. A new row will appear saying "comma-separated,properties". Click on that, hit Enter to make it editable, then type "sha" and hit Enter again. Make sure you press Cmd+S to save your changes!

How to make a Core Data attribute unique using constraints



Now for the important part: go to the the iOS simulator, then choose the Hardware menu and Erase All Content And Settings. What you just did was completely reset the state of the iOS Simulator. The reason this is required is because you just made an important change to your model, which is generally a bad idea unless you know what you're doing.

Before you run your project again, I want you to make one tiny code change. In your `viewDidLoad()` method, modify the `loadPersistentStores()` method call to this:

```
container.loadPersistentStores { storeDescription, error in
    self.container.viewContext.mergePolicy =
    NSMergeByPropertyObjectTrumpMergePolicy

    if let error = error {
        print("Unresolved error \(error)")
    }
}
```

Project 38: GitHub Commits

This instructs Core Data to allow updates to objects: if an object exists in its data store with message A, and an object with the same unique constraint ("sha" attribute) exists in memory with message B, the in-memory version "trumps" (overwrites) the data store version.

Go ahead and run your project a few times now and you'll see this message in the Xcode log:

```
Got 100 commits
Received 100 new commits.
Got 100 commits
```

As you can see, 100 commits were loaded from the persistent store, 100 "new" commits were pulled in from GitHub, and after Core Data resolved unique attributes there were still only 100 commits in the persistent store. Perfect! If you run your project again after a few hours, the numbers will start to go up slowly as new commits appear on GitHub – Swift is a live project, after all!

Note: in a couple of chapters I'll be introducing you to something called **NSFetchedResultsController**. Using attribute constraints can cause problems with **NSFetchedResultsController**, but in this tutorial we're always doing a full save and load of our objects because it's an easy way to avoid problems later. Don't worry about it for now – I'll mention it again at the appropriate time.

Examples of using NSPredicate to filter NSFetchedRequest

Predicates are one of the most powerful features of Core Data, but they are actually useful in lots of other places too so if you master them here you'll learn a whole new skill that can be used elsewhere. For example, if you already completed project 33 you'll have seen how predicates let us find iCloud objects by reference.

Put simply, a predicate is a filter: you specify the criteria you want to match, and Core Data will ensure that only matching objects get returned. The best way to learn about predicates is by example, so I've created three examples below that demonstrate various different filters. We'll be adding a fourth one in the next chapter once you've learned a bit more.

First, add this new property to the **ViewController** class:

```
var commitPredicate: NSPredicate?
```

I've made that an optional **NSPredicate** because that's exactly what our fetch request takes: either a valid predicate that specifies a filter, or **nil** to mean "no filter."

Find your **loadSavedData()** method and add this line just below where the **sortDescriptors** property is set:

```
request.predicate = commitPredicate
```

With that property in place, all we need to do is set it to whatever predicate we want before calling **loadSavedData()** again to refresh the list of objects. The easiest way to do this is by adding a new method called **changeFilter()**, which we'll use to show an action sheet for the user to choose from.

First we need to add a button to the navigation bar that will call this method, so put this code into **viewDidLoad()**:

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:  
    "Filter", style: .plain, target: self, action:  
    #selector(changeFilter))
```

And here's an initial version of that new method for you to add to your view controller:

```
@objc func changeFilter() {  
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Filter commits...",  
        message: nil, preferredStyle: .actionSheet)  
  
    // 1  
    // 2  
    // 3  
    // 4  
  
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Cancel", style: .cancel))  
    present(ac, animated: true)  
}
```

We'll be replacing the four comments one by one as you learn about predicates.

Let's start with something easy: matching an exact string. If we wanted to find commits with the message "I fixed a bug in Swift" – the kind of commit message that is frowned upon because it's not very descriptive! – you would write a predicate like this:

```
commitPredicate = NSPredicate(format: "message == 'I fixed a  
bug in Swift'")
```

That means "make sure the message attribute is equal to this exact string." Typing an exact string like that is OK because you know what you're doing, but please don't ever use string interpolation to inject user values into a predicate. If you want to filter using a variable, use this syntax instead:

Examples of using NSPredicate to filter NSFetchedRequest

```
let filter = "I fixed a bug in Swift"
commitPredicate = NSPredicate(format: "message == %@", filter)
```

The %@ will be instantly recognizable to anyone who has used Objective-C before, and it means "place the contents of a variable here, whatever data type it is." In our case, the value of **filter** will go in there, and will do so safely regardless of its value.

Like I said, "I fixed a bug in Swift" isn't the kind of commit message you'll see in your data, so == isn't really a helpful operator for our app. So let's write a real predicate that will be useful: put this in place of the // 1 comment in the **changeFilter()** method:

```
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Show only fixes",
style: .default) { [unowned self] _ in
    self.commitPredicate = NSPredicate(format: "message
CONTAINS[c] 'fix'")
    self.loadSavedData()
})
```

The **CONTAINS[c]** part is an operator, just like ==, except it's much more useful for our app. The **CONTAINS** part will ensure this predicate matches only objects that contain a string somewhere in their message – in our case, that's the text "fix". The [c] part is predicate-speak for "case-insensitive", which means it will match "FIX", "Fix", "fix" and so on. Note that we need to use **self**. twice inside the closure to make capturing explicit.

Another useful string operator is **BEGINSWITH**, which works just like **CONTAINS** except the matching text must be at the start of a string. To make this second example more exciting, I'm also going to introduce the **NOT** keyword, which flips the match around: this action below will match only objects that *don't* begin with 'Merge pull request'. Put this in place of the // 2 comment:

```
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Ignore Pull Requests",
style: .default) { [unowned self] _ in
    self.commitPredicate = NSPredicate(format: "NOT message
```

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
BEGINSWITH 'Merge pull request' ")
    self.loadSavedData()
})
```

For a third and final predicate, let's try filtering on the "date" attribute. This is the **Date** data type, and Core Data is smart enough to let us compare that date to any other date inside a predicate. In this example, which should go in place of the // 3 comment, we're going to request only commits that took place 43,200 seconds ago, which is equivalent to half a day:

```
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Show only recent",
style: .default) { [unowned self] _ in
    let twelveHoursAgo = Date().addingTimeInterval(-43200)
    self.commitPredicate = NSPredicate(format: "date > %@", twelveHoursAgo as NSDate)
    self.loadSavedData()
})
```

As you can see, we've hit the **NSDate** vs **Date** problem again: Core Data wants to work with the old type, so we typecast using **as**. Once that's done, the magic **%@** will work with Core Data to ensure the **NSDate** is used correctly in the query.

For the final comment, // 4, we're just going to set **commitPredicate** to be **nil** so that all commits are shown again:

```
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Show all commits",
style: .default) { [unowned self] _ in
    self.commitPredicate = nil
    self.loadSavedData()
})
```

That's it! **NSPredicate** uses syntax that is new to you so you might find it a bit daunting at first, but it really isn't very hard once you have a few examples to work from, and it does offer a huge amount of power to your apps.

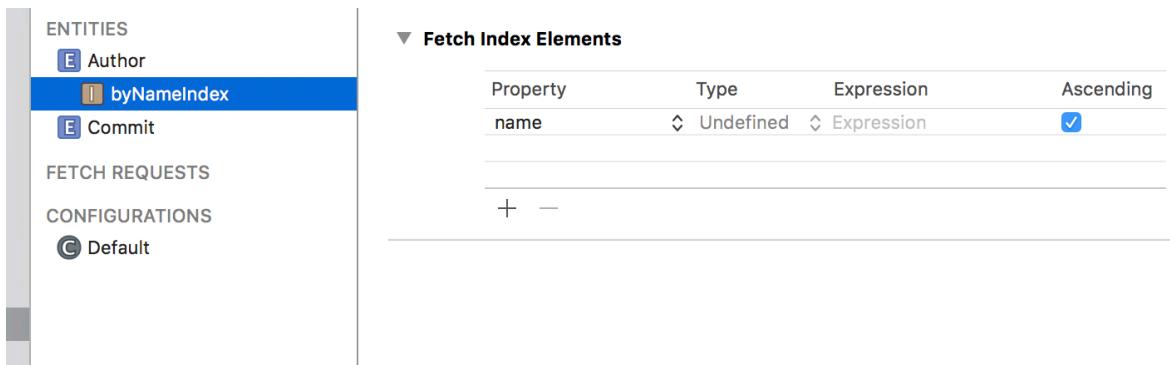
Examples of using NSPredicate to filter NSFetchedRequest

Adding Core Data entity relationships: lightweight vs heavyweight migration

It's time to take your Core Data skills up a notch: we're going to add a second entity called Author, and link that entity to our existing Commit entity. This will allow us to attach an author to every commit, but also to find all commits that belong to a specific author.

Open the data model (Project38.xcdatamodeld) for editing, then click the Add Entity button. Name the entity Author, then give it two attributes: "name" and "email". Please make both strings, and make sure both are not marked as optional. This time we're also going to make one further change: we're going to make "name" indexed.

To do that, long press on the Add Entity button and choose Add Fetch Index from the menu that appears. Name it "byNameIndex", because this indexes our items by name. You'll see a small + button under Fetch Index Elements in the main editor – click that to add a new index element, then change its property from "Expression" to "name".



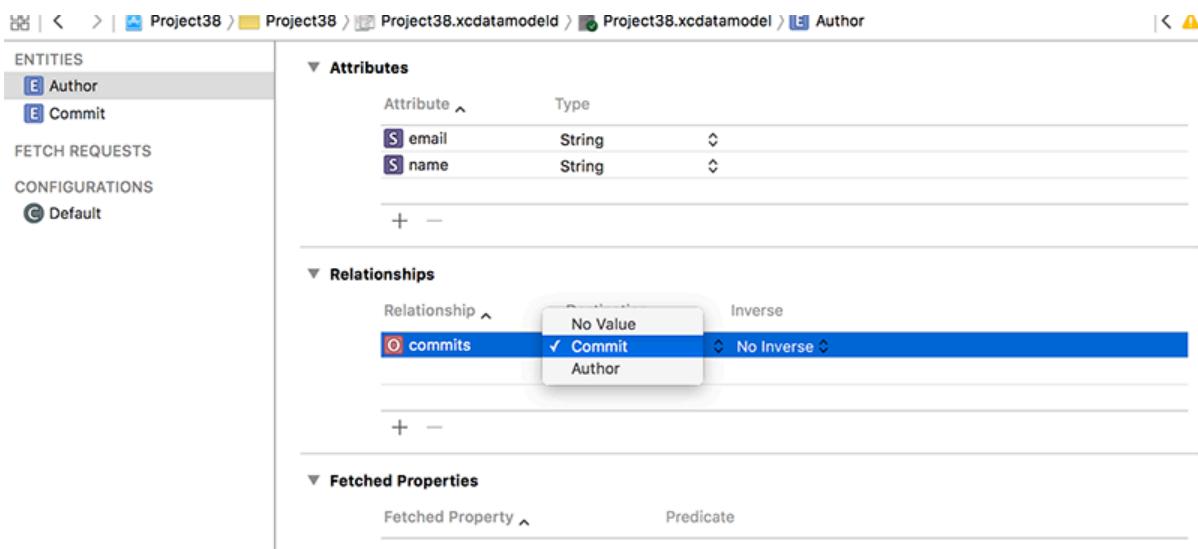
An indexed attribute is one that is optimized for fast searching. There is a cost to creating and maintaining each index, which means you need to choose carefully which attributes should be indexed. But when you find a particular fetch request is happening slowly, chances are it's because you need to index an attribute.

We want every Author to have a list of commits that belong to them, and every Commit to

Adding Core Data entity relationships: lightweight vs heavyweight migration

have the Author that created it. In Core Data, this is represented using relationships, which are a bit like calculated properties except Core Data adds extra functionality to handle the situation when part of a relationship gets deleted.

With the Author entity selected, click the + button under the Relationships section – it's just below the Attributes section. Name the new relationship "commits" and choose "commit" for its destination. In the Data Model inspector, change Type to be "To Many", which tells Core Data that each author has many Commits attached to it.



Now choose the Commit entity we created earlier and add a relationship named "author". Choose Author for the destination then change "No Inverse" to be "commits". In the Data Model inspector, change Type to be "To One", because each commit has exactly one author).

That's it for our model changes, so press Cmd+S to save then Cmd+R now to build and run the app. What you'll see is... well, exactly what you saw before: the same list of commits. What changed?

You've already seen how **NSPersistentContainer** does a huge amount of set up work on your behalf. Well, it's also doing something remarkably clever here too because we just changed our data model. By default Core Data doesn't know how to handle that – it considers any variation in its data model an unwelcome surprise, so we need to tell Core Data how to handle the changed model or we need to tell it to figure out the differences itself.

Project 38: GitHub Commits

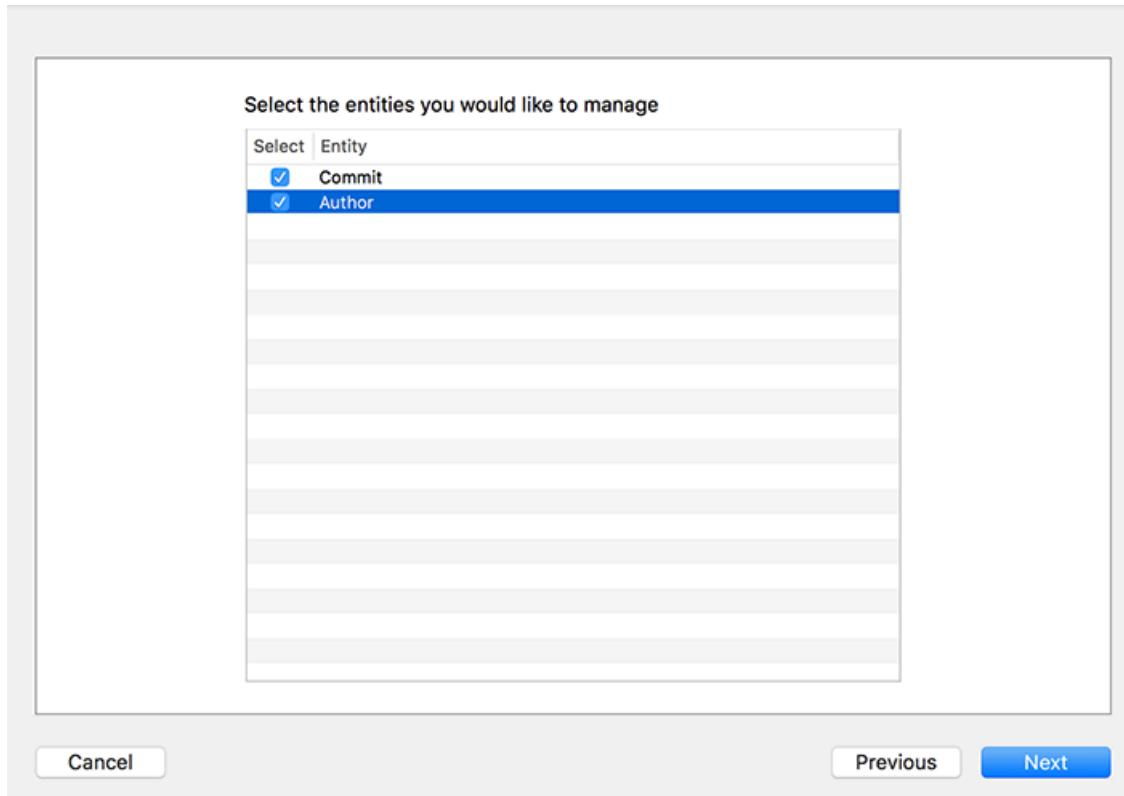
These two options are called "heavyweight migrations" and "lightweight migrations." The latter is usually preferable, and is what we'll be doing here, but it's only possible when your changes are small enough that Core Data can perform the conversion correctly. We added a new "authors" relationship, so if we tell Core Data to perform a lightweight migration it will simply set that value to be empty.

The magic of **NSPersistentContainer** is that it automatically configures Core Data to perform a lightweight migration if it's needed and if it's possible – that is, if the changes are small enough to be figured out by the system. So, as long as your changes are strictly additive, **NSPersistentContainer** will take care of all the work. Awesome, right?

Of course, all this cleverness doesn't actually use our new Author entity. To do *that* we first need to do something rather tedious: we need to re-use the NSManagedObject generator, which, if you remember, also means having to re-add our custom changes such as removing optionality from its properties.

So, go back to the data model, and choose Editor > Create NSManagedObject Subclass again. This time I want you to choose both Author and Commit, but don't forget to change Group from the blue project icon to the yellow folder icon – Xcode does love to keep resetting that particular option.

Adding Core Data entity relationships: lightweight vs heavyweight migration



Once the files are generated you'll now have four files: two each for Author and Commit. We need to make a few changes to clean them up for use, starting with `Commit+CoreDataProperties.swift`:

1. Remove optionality from all five properties.
2. Change **NSDate** to **Date**.
3. Change **fetchRequest()** to **createFetchRequest()**.

Now in `Author+CoreDataProperties.swift`:

1. Remove optionality from all three properties.
2. Change **fetchRequest()** to **createFetchRequest()**.

Notice that `Author+CoreDataProperties.swift` includes some extra methods for adding and removing commits.

Project 38: GitHub Commits

In order to attach authors to commits, I want to show you how to look for a specific named author, or create it if they don't exist already. Remember, we made the "name" attribute indexed, which makes it lightning fast for search. This needs to set up and execute a new **NSFetchRequest** (using an **== NSPredicate** to match the name), then use the result if there is one. If no matching author is found we'll create and configure a new author, and use that instead.

Put this new code just before the end of the **configure(commit:)** method:

```
var commitAuthor: Author!

// see if this author exists already
let authorRequest = Author.createFetchRequest()
authorRequest.predicate = NSPredicate(format: "name == %@", json["commit"]["committer"]["name"].stringValue)

if let authors = try?
    container.viewContext.fetch(authorRequest) {
    if authors.count > 0 {
        // we have this author already
        commitAuthor = authors[0]
    }
}

if commitAuthor == nil {
    // we didn't find a saved author - create a new one!
    let author = Author(context: container.viewContext)
    author.name = json["commit"]["committer"]
    ["name"].stringValue
    author.email = json["commit"]["committer"]
    ["email"].stringValue
    commitAuthor = author
}
```

```
// use the author, either saved or new
commit.author = commitAuthor
```

You'll note that I used **try?** for **fetch()** this time, because we don't really care if the request failed: it will still fall through and get caught by the **if commitAuthor == nil** check later on.

To show that this worked, change your **cellForRowAt** method so that the detail text label contains the author name as well as the commit date, like this:

```
cell.detailTextLabel!.text = "By \(commit.author.name) on \
(commit.date.description)"
```

You should be able to run the app now and see the author name appear after a moment, as Core Data merges the new data with the old.

Broadly speaking you don't want to make these kinds of model changes while you're still learning Core Data, so once you've verified that it works I would suggest you use "Erase All Content and Settings" again in the simulator to make sure you have a clean foundation again.

We can also show that the inverse relationship works, so it's time to make the detail view controller do something. Open **DetailViewController.swift** and give it this property:

```
var detailItem: Commit?
```

Now change its **viewDidLoad()** method to this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    if let detail = self.detailItem {
        detailLabel.text = detail.message
        // navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
        UIBarButtonItem(title: "Commit 1/\\"
```

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
(detail.author.commits.count)", style: .plain, target: self,
action: #selector(showAuthorCommits))
    }
}
```

I commented out one of the lines that will make a tappable button in the top-right corner showing how many other commits we have stored from this author. We haven't written a `showAuthorCommits()` method yet, but don't worry: that will be your homework later on!

Now that every commit has an author attached to it, I want to add one last filter to our `changeFilter()` method to show you just how clever `NSPredicate` is. Add this just before the "Show all commits" action:

```
ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Show only Durian commits",
style: .default) { [unowned self] _ in
    self.commitPredicate = NSPredicate(format: "author.name == "
'Joe Groff')
    self.loadSavedData()
})
```

There are three things that bear explaining in that code:

- By using `author.name` the predicate will perform two steps: it will find the "author" relation for our commit, then look up the "name" attribute of the matching object.
- Joe is one of Apple's Swift engineers. Although it's fairly likely you'll see commits by him, it can't be guaranteed – I'm pretty sure that Apple give him a couple of days vacation each year. Maybe.
- Durian is a fruit that's very popular in south-east Asia, particularly Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. Although most locals are big fans, the majority of foreigners find that it really, really stinks, so I'm sure there's some psychological reason why Joe Groff chose it for his website: duriansoftware.com.

Run your app now and the new filter should work. Remember, it might not return any objects,

Adding Core Data entity relationships: lightweight vs heavyweight migration

depending on just how many commits Joe has done recently. No pressure, Joe! In those changes, I also modified the detail view controller so that it shows the commit message in full, or at least as full as it can given the limited space.

To test out that change, we need to write the **didSelectRowAt** method so that it loads a detail view controller from the storyboard, assigns it the selected commit, then pushes it onto the navigation stack. Add this method to **ViewController**:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
didSelectRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) {  
    if let vc =  
        storyboard?.instantiateViewController(withIdentifier: "Detail")  
    as? DetailViewController {  
        vc.detailItem = commits[indexPath.row]  
        navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated:  
true)  
    }  
}
```

You should be able to run the app now and see it start to come together!

How to delete a Core Data object

Table views have a built-in swipe to delete mechanic that we can draw upon to let users delete commits in our app. Helpfully, managed object context has a matching `delete()` method that will delete any object regardless of its type or location in the object graph. Once an object has been deleted from the context, we can then call `saveContext()` to write that change back to the persistent store so that the change is permanent.

All this is easy to do by adding three new lines of code to the table view's `commit` method. Here's the new method:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, commit  
editingStyle: UITableViewCellEditingStyle, forRowAt indexPath:  
IndexPath) {  
    if editingStyle == .delete {  
        let commit = commits[indexPath.row]  
        container.viewContext.delete(commit)  
        commits.remove(at: indexPath.row)  
        tableView.deleteRows(at: [indexPath], with: .fade)  
  
        saveContext()  
    }  
}
```

So, it 1) pulls out the **Commit** object that the user selected to delete, 2) removes it from the managed object context, 3) removes it from the `commits` array, 4) deletes it from the table view, then 5) saves the context. Remember: you must call `saveContext()` whenever you want your changes to persist.

Try running the app now, then swipe to delete a few rows. As you'll see you can delete as many commits as you want, and everything seems to work great. Now try running the app once again, and you'll get a nasty shock: the deleted commits reappear! What's going on?

Well, if you think about it, the app is doing exactly what we told it to do: every time it runs it re-fetches the list of commits from GitHub, and merges it with the commits in its data store. This means any commits we try to delete just get redownloaded again – they really are being deleted, but then they get recreated as soon as the app is relaunched.

This problem is not a hard one to fix, and it gives me a chance to show you another part of **NSFetchRequest**: the **fetchLimit** property. This tells Core Data how many items you want it to return. What we're going to do is find the newest commit in our data store, then use the date from that to ask GitHub to provide only newer commits.

First, go to the **fetchCommits()** method and modify the start of it to this:

```
@objc func fetchCommits() {
    let newestCommitDate = getNewestCommitDate()

    if let data = try? String(contentsOf: URL(string: "https://
api.github.com/repos/apple/swift/commits?per_page=100&since=\
(newestCommitDate)")!) {
        let jsonCommits = JSON(parseJSON: data)
```

We'll be adding the **getNewestCommitDate()** method shortly, but what it will return is a date formatted as an ISO-8601 string. This date will be set to one second after our most recent commit, and we can send that to the GitHub API using its "since" parameter to receive back only newer commits.

Here is the **getNewestCommitDate()** method – only three pieces of it are new, and I'll explain them momentarily.

```
func getNewestCommitDate() -> String {
    let formatter = ISO8601DateFormatter()

    let newest = Commit.createFetchRequest()
    let sort = NSSortDescriptor(key: "date", ascending: false)
```

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
newest.sortDescriptors = [sort]
newest.fetchLimit = 1

if let commits = try? container.viewContext.fetch(newest) {
    if commits.count > 0 {
        return formatter.string(from:
commits[0].date.addingTimeInterval(1))
    }
}

return formatter.string(from: Date(timeIntervalSince1970:
0))
}
```

The first of the new pieces of code is the **fetchLimit** property for the fetch request. As you might imagine, it's always more efficient to fetch as few objects as needed, so if you can set a fetch limit you should do so.

Second, the **string(from:)** method is the inverse of the **date(from:)** method we used when parsing the commit JSON. We use the same date format that was defined earlier, because GitHub's "since" parameter is specified in an identical way. Finally, **addingTimeInterval()** is used to add one second to the time from the previous commit, otherwise GitHub will return the newest commit again.

If no valid date is found, the method returns a date from the 1st of January 1970, which will reproduce the same behavior we had before introducing this date change.

This solution is a good start, but it has a small flaw – see if you can spot it! If not, don't worry: I'll be setting it as homework for you. Regardless, it gave me the chance to show you the **fetchLimit** property, and you know how much I love squeezing new knowledge in...

Optimizing Core Data Performance using NSFetchedResultsController

You've already seen how Core Data takes a huge amount of work away from you, which is great because it means you can focus on writing the interesting parts of your app rather than data management. But, while our current project certainly works, it's not going to scale well. To find out why open the Commit+CoreDataClass.swift file and modify its class to this:

```
public class Commit: NSManagedObject {
    override init(entity: NSEntityDescription, insertInto
context: NSManagedObjectContext?) {
        super.init(entity: entity, insertInto: context)
        print("Init called!")
    }
}
```

When you run the program now you'll see "Init called!" in the Xcode log at least a hundred times - once for every **Commit** object that gets pulled out in our **loadSavedData()** method. So what if there are 1000 objects? Or 10,000? Clearly it's inefficient to create a new object for everything in our object graph just to load the app, particularly when our table view can only show a handful at a time.

Core Data has a brilliant solution to this problem, and it's called **NSFetchedResultsController**. It takes over our existing **NSFetchRequest** to load data, replaces our **commits** array with its own storage, and even works to ensure the user interface stays in sync with changes to the data by controlling the way objects are inserted and deleted.

No tutorial on Core Data would be complete without teaching **NSFetchedResultsController**, so that's the last thing we'll be doing in this project. I left it until the end because, although it's very clever and certainly very efficient, **NSFetchedResultsController** is entirely optional: if

Project 38: GitHub Commits

you're happy with the project as it is, you're welcome to skip over this last chapter.

First, add a new property to **ViewController** that will hold the fetched results controller for commits:

```
var fetchedResultsController:  
NSFetchedResultsController<Commit>!
```

We now need to rewrite our **loadSavedData()** method so that the existing **NSFetchRequest** is wrapped inside a **NSFetchedResultsController**. We want to create that fetched results controller only once, but retain the ability to change the predicate when the method is called again.

Before I show you the code, there are three new things to learn. First, we're going to be using the **fetchBatchSize** property of our fetch request so that only 20 objects are loaded at a time. Second, we'll be setting the view controller as the delegate for the fetched results controller – you'll see why soon. Third, we need to use the **performFetch()** method on our fetched results controller to make it load its data.

Here's the revised **loadSavedData()** method:

```
func loadSavedData() {  
    if fetchedResultsController == nil {  
        let request = Commit.createFetchRequest()  
        let sort = NSSortDescriptor(key: "date", ascending:  
false)  
        request.sortDescriptors = [sort]  
        request.fetchBatchSize = 20  
  
        fetchedResultsController =  
NSFetchedResultsController(fetchRequest: request,  
managedObjectContext: container.viewContext,  
sectionNameKeyPath: nil, cacheName: nil)  
        fetchedResultsController.delegate = self  
    }  
}
```

Optimizing Core Data Performance using NSFetchedResultsController

```
}

    fetchedResultsController.fetchRequest.predicate = commitPredicate

    do {
        try fetchedResultsController.performFetch()
        tableView.reloadData()
    } catch {
        print("Fetch failed")
    }
}
```

Because we're setting **delegate**, you'll also need to make **ViewController** conform to the **NSFetchedResultsControllerDelegate** protocol, like this:

```
class ViewController: UITableViewController,
NSFetchedResultsControllerDelegate {
```

That was the easy part. However, when you use **NSFetchedResultsController**, you need to use it everywhere: that means it tells you how many sections and rows you have, it keeps track of all the objects, and it is the single source of truth when it comes to inserting or deleting objects.

You can get an idea of what work needs to be done by deleting the **commits** property: we don't need it any more, because the fetched results controller stores our results. Immediately you'll see five errors appear wherever that property was being touched, and we need to rewrite all those instances to use the fetched results controller.

Second, replace the **numberOfSections(in:)** and **numberOfRowsInSection** methods with these two new implementations:

```
override func numberOfSections(in tableView: UITableView) ->
```

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
Int {
    return fetchedResultsController.sections?.count ?? 0
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
    numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
    let sectionInfo = fetchedResultsController.sections!
    [section]
    return sectionInfo.numberOfObjects
}
```

As you can see, we can read the **sections** array, each of which contains an array of **NSFetchedResultsSectionInfo** objects describing the items in that section. For now, we're just going to use that for the number of objects in the section.

Third, find this line inside the **cellForRowAt** method:

```
let commit = commits[indexPath.row]
```

And replace it with this instead:

```
let commit = fetchedResultsController.object(at: indexPath)
```

As you can see, fetched results controllers use index paths (i.e., sections as well as rows) rather than just a flat array; more on that soon!

You'll get another error inside the **didSelectRowAt** method, because that was reading from the **commits** array. Replace the offending line with this:

```
vc.detailItem = fetchedResultsController.object(at: indexPath)
```

The final two errors are in the **commit** method, where deleting items happens. And this is where things get more complicated: we can't just delete items from the fetched results

Optimizing Core Data Performance using NSFetchedResultsController

controller, and neither can we use **deleteRows(at:)** on the table view. Instead, Core Data is much more clever: we just delete the object from the managed object context directly.

You see, when we created our **NSFetchedResultsController**, we hooked it up to our existing managed object context, and we also made our current view controller its delegate. So when the managed object context detects an object being deleted, it will inform our fetched results controller, which will in turn automatically notify our view controller if needed.

So, to delete objects using fetched results controllers you need to rewrite the **commit** method to this:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, commit
editingStyle: UITableViewCellEditingStyle, forRowAt indexPath:
IndexPath) {
    if editingStyle == .delete {
        let commit = fetchedResultsController.object(at:
indexPath)
        container.viewContext.delete(commit)
        saveContext()
    }
}
```

As you can see, that code pulls the object to delete out from the fetched results controller, deletes it, then saves the changes – we no longer touch the table view here.

That being said, we do need to add one new method that gets called by the fetched results controller when an object changes. We'll get told the index path of the object that got changed, and all we need to do is pass that on to the **deleteRows(at:)** method of our table view:

```
func controller(_ controller:
NSFetchedResultsController<NSFetchRequestResult>, didChange
anObject: Any, at indexPath: IndexPath?, for type:
NSFetchedResultsChangeType, newIndexPath: IndexPath?) {
    switch type {
```

Project 38: GitHub Commits

```
    case .delete:  
        tableView.deleteRows(at: [indexPath!], with: .automatic)  
  
    default:  
        break  
    }  
}
```

Now, you might wonder why this approach is an improvement – haven't we just basically written the same code only in a different place? Well, no. That new delegate method we just wrote could be called from anywhere: if we delete an object in any other way, for example in the detail view, that method will now automatically get called and the table will update. In short, it means our data is driving our user interface, rather than our user interface trying to control our data.

Previously, I said "Using attribute constraints can cause problems with **NSFetchedResultsController**, but in this tutorial we're always doing a full save and load of our objects because it's an easy way to avoid problems later." It's time for me to explain the problem: attribute constraints are only enforced as unique when a save happens, which means if you're inserting data then an NSFetchedResultsController may contain duplicates until a save takes place. This won't happen for us because I've made the project perform a save before a load to make things easier, but it's something you need to watch out for in your own code.

If you run the app now, you'll see "Init called!" appears far less frequently because the fetched results controller lazy loads its data – a significant performance optimization.

Before we're done with **NSFetchedResultsController**, I want to show you one more piece of its magic. You've seen how it has sections as well as rows, right? Well, try changing its constructor in **loadSavedData()** to be this:

```
fetchedResultsController =  
    NSFetchedResultsController(fetchRequest: request,  
    managedObjectContext: container.viewContext,
```

Optimizing Core Data Performance using NSFetchedResultsController

```
sectionNameKeyPath: "author.name", cacheName: nil)
```

The only change there is that I've provided a value for **sectionNameKeyPath** rather than **nil**.

Now try adding this new method to **ViewController**:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
titleForHeaderInSection section: Int) -> String? {  
    return fetchedResultsController.sections![section].name  
}
```

If you run the app now, you'll see the table view has sections as well as rows, although the commits inside each section won't match the author name you can see. The reason for this discrepancy is that we're still sorting by date – go to **loadSavedData()** and change its sort descriptor to this:

```
let sort = NSSortDescriptor(key: "author.name", ascending:  
true)
```

Much better!

So, **NSFetchedResultsController** is not only faster, but it even adds powerful functionality with a tiny amount of code – what's not to like?

Project 38: GitHub Commits

[Filter](#)

Adrian Prantl

Prevent definite initialization from inserting spurious variable deb... >
By Adrian Prantl on 2016-08-30 22:25:04 +0000

Andrew Trick

Refine the doc comments on UnsafeRawPointer.initialize.... >
By Andrew Trick on 2016-08-30 19:52:02 +0000

Arsen Gasparyan

Add tests for SetAlgebra protocol >
By Arsen Gasparyan on 2016-08-24 07:46:18 +0000

Ben Langmuir

[codecomplete] Handle null type in AbstractClosureExpr context >
By Ben Langmuir on 2016-08-23 21:58:44 +0000

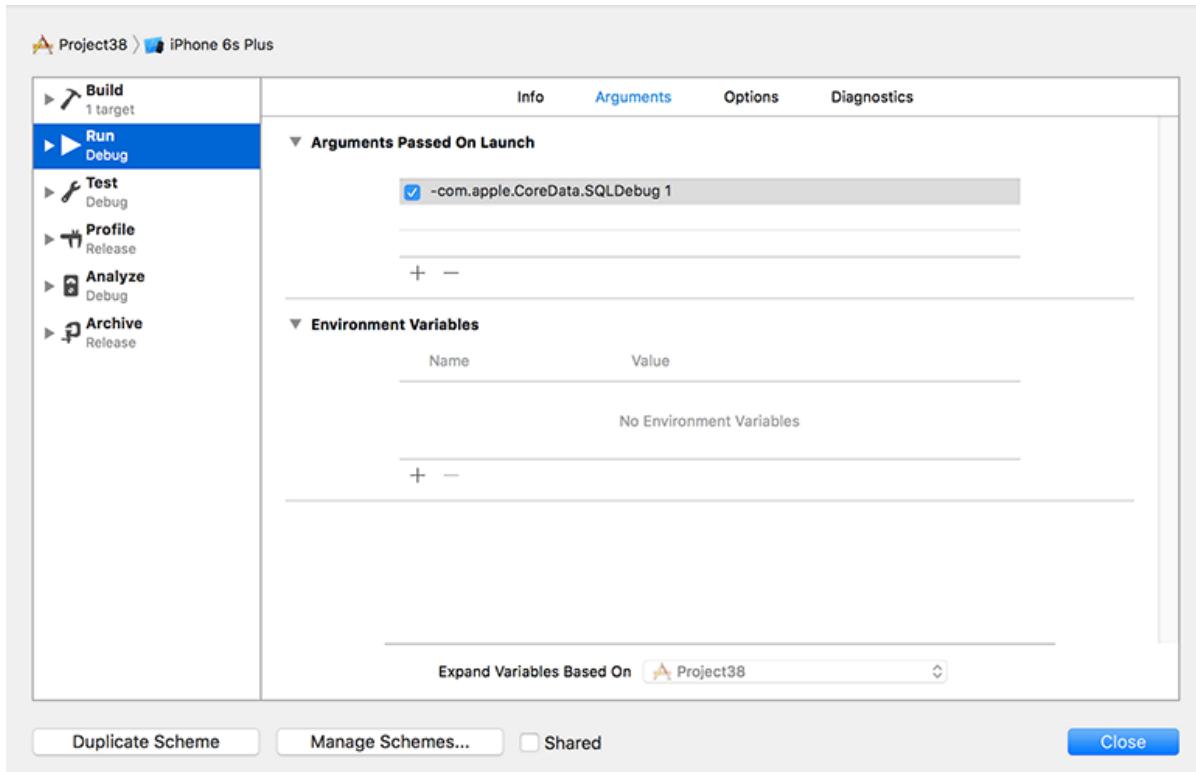
Wrap up

Core Data is *complicated*. It really is. So if you've made it this far, you deserve a pat on the back because you've learned a huge amount in this one project – good job! You've learned about model design, relationships, predicates, sort descriptors, persistent stores, managed object contexts, fetch requests, fetched results controllers, indexes, hashes and more, and I hope you're pleased with the final project.

But I'm afraid I have some bad news: even with everything you've learned, there's still a lot more to go if you really want to master Core Data. Migrating data models, multiple managed object contexts, delete rules, query generations, and thread safety should be top of that list, but at the very least I hope I've managed to give you a firm foundation on the technology – and perhaps even get you a bit excited about what it can do for you!

Before you're done, I have two small tips for you. First, go to the Product menu and choose Scheme > Edit Scheme. In the window that appears, choose your Run target and select the Arguments tab. Now click + and enter the text **-com.apple.CoreData.SQLDebug 1**. Once that's done, running your app will print debug SQL into the Xcode log pane, allowing you to see what Core Data is up to behind the scenes.

Project 38: GitHub Commits



Warning: when this option is enabled, you will see scary language like "fault fulfilled from database." No, there isn't really a fault in your code – it's Core Data's way of saying that the objects it lazy loaded need to be loaded for real, so it's going back to the database to read them. You'll get into this more when you explore Core Data further, but for now relax: it's just a poor choice of phrasing from Apple.

Second, if you make changes to your model, watch out for the message "The model used to open the store is incompatible with the one used to create the store." If you intend to turn this into a production app, you should ensure that you handle such errors gracefully – just printing something to the log isn't good enough, because users won't see it. While you're testing, don't be afraid to reset the iOS simulator as often as you need to in order to clean out old models.

If you want to take the app further, here are some suggestions for homework:

- **Fun:** Try creating a new Xcode project using the Master-Detail Application template, but enable the Core Data checkbox. You should be able to read through most of the code and understand how it works.

- **Tricky:** Use the "url" attribute of Commit in the detail view controller to show the GitHub page in a **WKWebView** rather than just a label.
- **Taxing:** Rewrite the **getNewestCommitDate()** method so that it uses **User Defaults** rather than a fetch request in order to fix the bug in the current implementation. (Didn't spot the bug? If users delete the most recent commit message, we also lose our most recent date!)
- **Mayhem:** Complete the **showAuthorCommits()** method in the detail view controller. This should show a new table view controller listing other commits by the same author. To make your life easier, you might want to try going to the Author entity, choosing its "commits" relationship, then checking the "Ordered" box and recreating the **NSManagedObject** subclass. Don't forget to remove the optionality from the properties that get generated!

For extra credit: what happens when you delete the last row from a particular section? See if you can experiment with using **deleteSections()** rather than **deleteRows()** to fix that!

Project 39

Unit testing with XCTest

Learn how to write unit tests and user interface tests using Xcode's built-in testing framework.

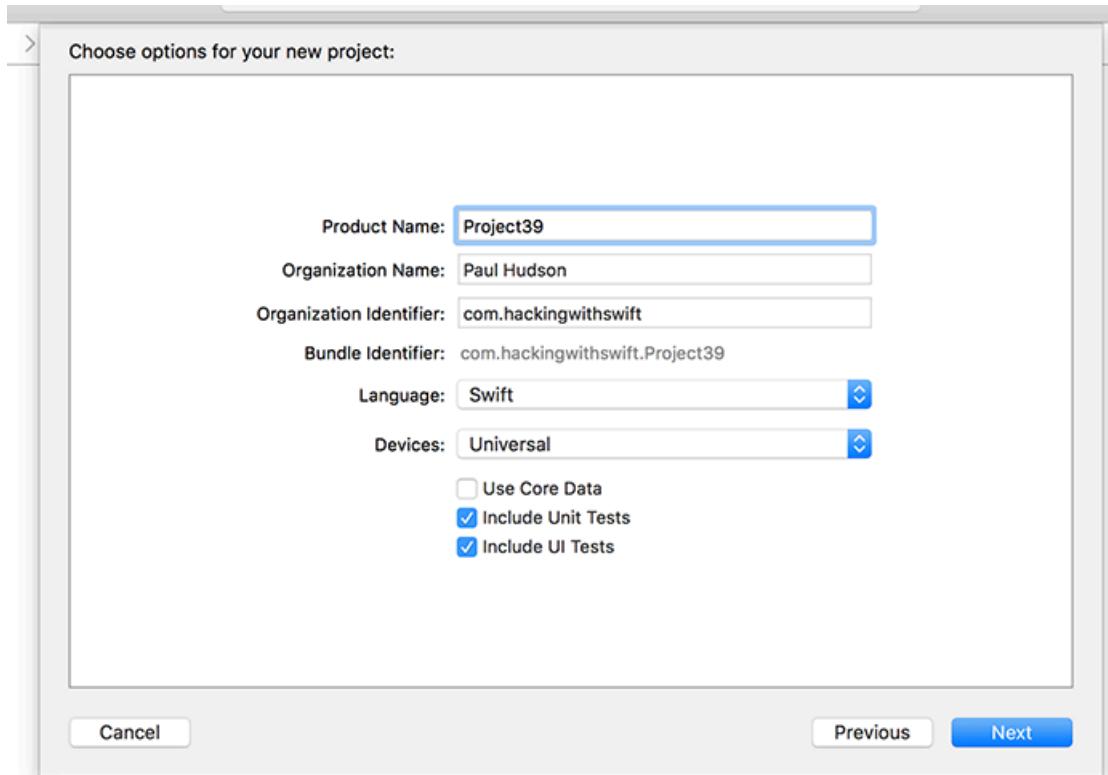
Setting up

Although this is a technique project, it's a technique project with a difference because you're going to make an app from scratch. It's not a complicated app, don't worry: it will load a large file containing the text of all of Shakespeare's comedies, then have a table view showing how often each word is used.

Easy, right? Right. But here's why it's a technique project: while building this app you'll be learning all about XCTest, which is Xcode's testing framework. Although this isn't a tutorial on test-driven development, I will at least walk you through the concepts and apply them with you. Even better, I'll also be introducing you to some functional programming using `filter()`, so there's a lot to learn.

All set? Let's do this! Launch Xcode, then create a new Single View App named Project39. For the first time, please check both Include Unit Tests and Include UI Tests. Click Create, then save the project somewhere safe.

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest



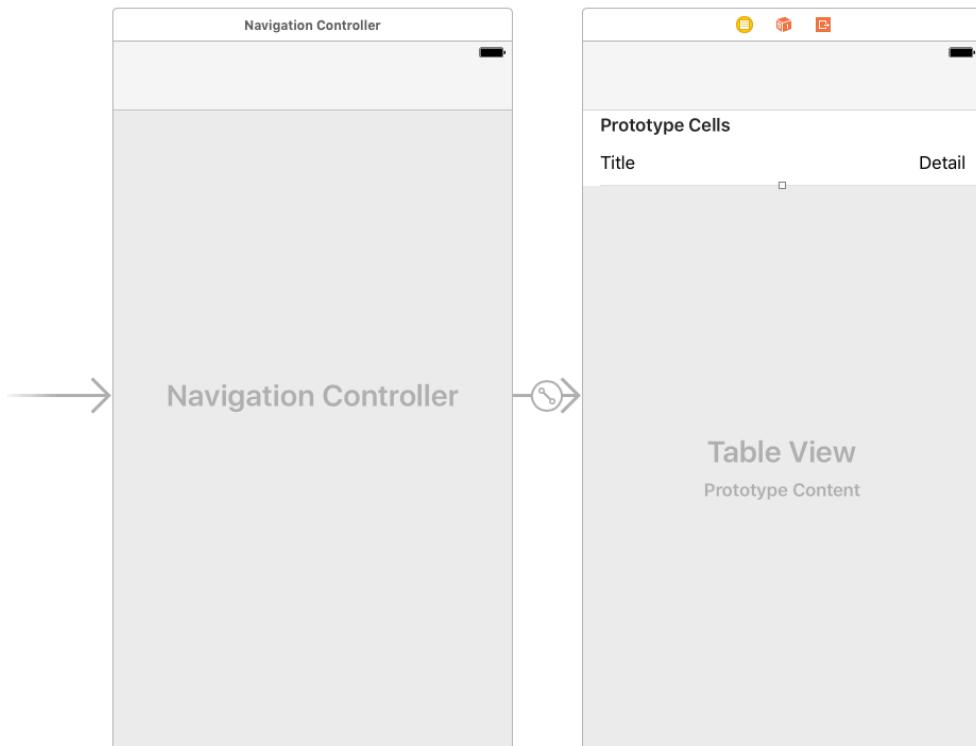
This project draws upon a text file containing the comedies of Shakespeare. The Hacking with Swift GitHub repository (<https://github.com/twostraws/HackingWithSwift>) contains all the resources for these projects, and you'll find `plays.txt` inside the `project39-files` folder. Please drag that into your Xcode project before continuing.

As usual, we started with a Single View App template but we want to have a table view controller instead, so we need to make a few changes:

1. Open `ViewController.swift`, then change `class ViewController: UIViewController {` to
`class ViewController: UITableViewController {`
2. Open `Main.storyboard` and delete its view controller.
3. Look in the object library for a table view controller, then drag that out to where the previous view controller was.
4. Select the new table view controller, then change its class to be `ViewController`. This is done in the identity inspector (Alt+Cmd+3) by setting the Class field.
5. In the attributes inspector (Alt+Cmd+4) please check the box marked "Is Initial View"

Controller".

6. Go to the Editor menu and choose Embed In > Navigation Controller.
7. Select the prototype cell of your table view and change its style to be "Right Detail" and its reuse identifier to be "Cell".
8. If you want to, give your navigation bar a title, but this isn't required. Just double-click in the navigation bar space at the top of your table view controller and type some text.



At this point in your coding career, that should all come as second nature. You're welcome to try running the app now, but I'm afraid there isn't much to see yet – in fact, it should be almost blank!

Creating our first unit test using XCTest

At the core of test-driven development lies the concept that you should begin by writing a test that succeeds only when your code works the way you want it to. It might seem strange at first, but it makes a lot of sense: your new test will fail at first because your program doesn't do the right thing, then it's your job to write just enough code (but no more!) to make that test pass.

We're going to follow this approach here, but we need to do a little bit of setup work first so that we're able to write a failing test. So: go to the File menu and choose New > File. From the list of options, choose iOS > Source > Swift File. Click Next, then name it PlayData. We'll be using this to store all the words in the plays.

The goal right now is to write just enough code for us to return to testing, so for now just put this text into the file:

```
class PlayData {  
    var allWords = [String]()  
}
```

That's it: there's a class called **PlayData**, and we've given it a property called **allWords** that will hold an array of strings. We're not going to fill that array with data yet, though: first we need to write a test to check that **allWords** has been populated with the words from the plays.txt file. For now, just to make sure you understand how an XCTest works, we're going to write a test that checks **allWords** has exactly 0 strings inside it.

Look in the "Project39Tests" for Project39Tests.swift and open it for editing. You'll see it contains four methods: **setUp()**, **tearDown()**, as well as two example test methods, all wrapped up in a class that inherits from **XCTestCase**.

Please delete the two test methods, so your file is left like this:

```
import XCTest
```

Creating our first unit test using XCTest

```
@testable import Project39

class Project39Tests: XCTestCase {
    override func setUp() {
        super.setUp()
        // Put setup code here. This method is called before the
        invocation of each test method in the class.
    }

    override func tearDown() {
        // Put teardown code here. This method is called after
        the invocation of each test method in the class.
        super.tearDown()
    }
}
```

We're going to write a very basic test that checks **allWords** has 0 items inside. Please add this method just below **tearDown()**:

```
func testAllWordsLoaded() {
    let playData = PlayData()
    XCTAssertEqual(playData.allWords.count, 0, "allWords must be
0")
}
```

If we include the method name and the closing brace, that's only four lines of code, none of which look that difficult. However, it masks quite a lot of functionality, so I want to walk through exactly what it does and why.

First, the method has a very specific name: it starts with "test" all in lowercase, it accepts no parameters and returns nothing. When you create a method like this inside an **XCTestCase** subclass, Xcode automatically considers it to be a test that should run on your code. When Xcode recognizes a test, you'll see an empty gray diamond appear in the left-hand gutter, next

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

to the line numbers. If you hover over that – but don't click it just yet! – it will turn into a play button, which will run the test.

```
11 ◇12 class Project39Tests: XCTestCase {
13     override func setUp() {
14         super.setUp()
15         // Put setup code here. This method is called before the invoca
16     }
17
18     override func tearDown() {
19         // Put teardown code here. This method is called after the invo
20         super.tearDown()
21     }
22
23     func testAllWordsLoaded() {
24         let playData = PlayData()
25         XCTAssertEqual(playData.allWords.count, 0, "allWords must be 0"
26     }
27 }
28 }
```

The first line of our **testAllWordsLoaded()** method does nothing surprising: it just creates a new **PlayData** object so we have something to test with. The second line is new, though, and uses a function called **XCTAssertEqual()**. This checks that its first parameter (**playData.allWords.count**) equals its second parameter (**0**). If it doesn't, the test will fail and print the message given in parameter three ("allWords must be 0").

XCTAssertEqual() lies at the center of XCTest: if all the calls to **XCTAssertEqual()** in a test return true, the test is considered a pass, otherwise it will fail. There are other assert functions you can use (**XCTAssertGreaterThan()**, **XCTAssertNotNil()**, etc), but you can do almost everything with **XCTAssertEqual()** just by using the correct parameters.

Now that you understand how the test works, hover over the gray diamond next to the test and click its play button. Xcode will run this single test, which means launching the app in the iOS Simulator and verifying that the **allWords** array contains 0 items. Because we haven't written any loading code yet, this test will succeed and the diamond will turn into a green checkmark. You'll also see a green checkmark next to the class name at the top, which means that all tests in this class passed last time they were run.

Creating our first unit test using XCTest

```
11
12 class Project39Tests: XCTestCase {
13     override func setUp() {
14         super.setUp()
15         // Put setup code here. This method is called before the invoca
16     }
17
18     override func tearDown() {
19         // Put teardown code here. This method is called after the invo
20         super.tearDown()
21     }
22
23     func testAllWordsLoaded() {
24         let playData = PlayData()
25         XCTAssertEqual(playData.allWords.count, 0, "allWords must be 0")
26     }
27 }
28 }
```

Loading our data and splitting up words: filter()

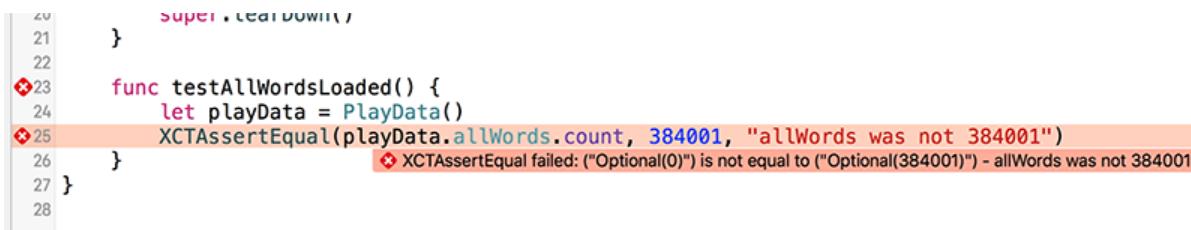
The next step in our project is to get our app working a little bit, which means writing a method that loads the input text and splits it up into words. Sticking with TDD for now, this means we first need to write a test that fails before updating our code to fix it.

Right now we're checking **allWords** contains 0 items, which needs to change: there are in fact 384,001 words in the input text (based on the character splitting criteria we'll get to shortly), so please update your **testAllWordsLoaded()** method to this:

```
XCTAssertEqual(playData.allWords.count, 384001, "allWords was  
not 384001")
```

This number, 384,001, is of course entirely arbitrary because it depends on the input data. But that's not the point: we need to tell XCTest what "correct" looks like, because it has no way of knowing what constitutes a pass or a fail unless we give it specific criteria.

If you click the green checkmark next to the test now, it will be run again and will fail this time because we haven't written the loading code – XCTest expects **allWords** to contain 384,001 strings, but it contains 0. This is good, honest!



```
20      super.viewDidLoad()
21  }
22
23  func testAllWordsLoaded() {
24      let playData = PlayData()
25      XCTAssumeEqual(playData.allWords.count, 384001, "allWords was not 384001")
26  }
27 }
28 }
```

Let's put testing to one side for now and fill in some of our program – we'll be back with the testing soon enough, don't worry.

Add this to `PlayData.swift`:

```
init() {
```

Loading our data and splitting up words: filter()

```
if let path = Bundle.main.path(forResource: "plays", ofType: "txt") {
    if let plays = try? String(contentsOfFile: path) {
        allWords = plays.components(separatedBy: CharacterSet.alphanumerics.inverted)
    }
}
```

The only new line there is the one that sets **allWords**, which uses two new things at once. Previously we used **components(separatedBy:)** to convert a string into an array, but this time the method is different because we pass in a character set rather than string. This new method splits a string by any number of characters rather than a single string, which is important because we want to split on periods, question marks, exclamation marks, quote marks and more.

There are a number of ways of specifying character sets, including a helpful **CharacterSet(charactersIn:)** initializer that we could have used to specify the full list of characters we want to break on. But the simplest approach is to split on anything that isn't a letter or number, which can be achieved by inverting the alphanumeric character set as seen in the code.

That's all it takes to load enough data for us to move on with, but we can't tell that it works unless we also update the user interface to show our data. So, open ViewController.swift and add this property:

```
var playData = PlayData()
```

That gives the **ViewController** class its own **PlayData** object to work with. That one line also creates the object immediately, which in turn will call the **init()** method we just wrote to load the word data – not bad for a single line of code!

All that's left in this step is to add the basic table view code to show some cells. Please add

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

these two methods to **ViewController**:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
    return playData.allWords.count
}

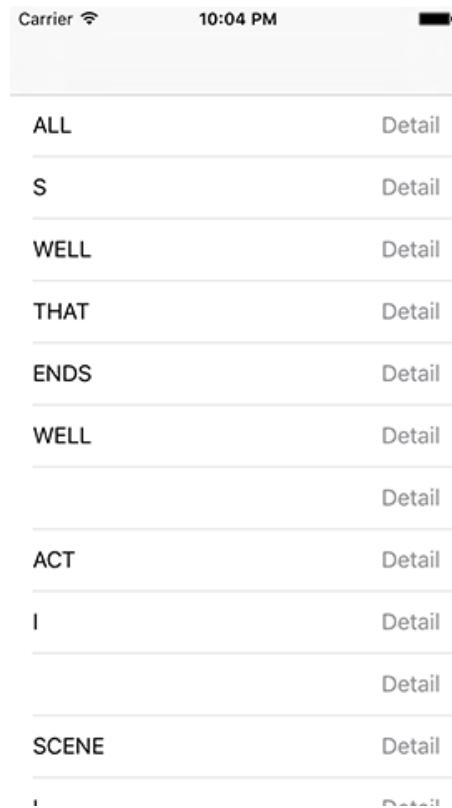
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:
"Cell", for: indexPath)

    let word = playData.allWords[indexPath.row]
    cell.textLabel!.text = word
    return cell
}
```

There is nothing new there, so I hope it posed no challenge for you.

Press Cmd+R to run the app and you'll see a long table full of words – it works! It's a long way from perfect, though: it's breaking on apostrophes (so ALL and S are on different lines), there are blank lines, there are duplicate words (the I after ACT and SCENE is repeated), and the detail text label just says "Detail" again and again.

Loading our data and splitting up words: filter()



A screenshot of an iPhone displaying a list of words from a story. The screen shows the status bar with 'Carrier' and signal strength, the time '10:04 PM', and battery level. Below the status bar is a table with two columns: 'Word' and 'Detail'. The words listed are: ALL, S, WELL, THAT, ENDS, WELL, Detail, ACT, I, Detail, SCENE. Each word has a 'Detail' link next to it.

Word	Detail
ALL	Detail
S	Detail
WELL	Detail
THAT	Detail
ENDS	Detail
WELL	Detail
	Detail
ACT	Detail
I	Detail
	Detail
SCENE	Detail
	Detail

We're going to fix all those except the first one, which is a text issue rather than a coding issue. In fact, we need to fix the second one straight away because my calculation of 384,001 words excludes empty strings – we need to modify our **init()** method so that empty strings are removed if we want our test to pass.

As promised, I'm going to use this project to teach you a little bit of functional programming, in particular the **filter()** method. This creates a new array from an existing one, selecting from it only items that match a function you provide. Stick with me for a moment, because this is important: a function that accepts a function as a parameter, like **filter()**, is called a *higher-order function*, and allows you to write extremely concise, expressive code that is efficient to run.

Let's take a look at **filter()** now. Please add this to **init()**, just after the call to **components(separatedBy:)**:

```
allWords = allWords.filter { $0 != "" }
```

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

That one line is all it takes to remove empty lines from the `allWords` array. However, this syntax can look like line noise if you're new to Swift, so I want to deconstruct what it does by first rewriting that code in a way you're more familiar with. I don't want you to put any of this into your code – this is just to help you understand what's going on.

Here is that one line written out more verbosely:

```
allWords = allWords.filter({ (testString: String) -> Bool in
    if testString != "" {
        return true
    } else {
        return false
    }
})
```

In that form, you can see that `filter()` is a method that takes a single parameter, which is a closure. That closure must accept a string, named `testString`, and return a `Bool`. The code then checks whether `testString` is empty or not, and returns either true or false.

Swift lives up to its name not only in that Swift code executes quickly, but it's also quick to write. So, there are a few shortcuts it offers to help reduce that long code down in size. For example, all that `(testString: String) -> Bool` definition isn't really needed: Swift can see that `filter()` wants a closure that accepts a string and returns true or false, so we don't need to repeat ourselves. So, let's take it out:

```
allWords = allWords.filter({ testString in
    if testString != "" {
        return true
    } else {
        return false
    }
})
```

Loading our data and splitting up words: filter()

Next, we can collapse that **if/else** block into one line of code: **return testString != ""**.

When Swift runs **testString != ""** it will either find that statement to be true (yes, **testString** is not empty) or false (no, **testString** is empty), and pass that straight to **return**. So, this will return true if **testString** has any text, which is exactly what we want.

With that change, here's the code now:

```
allWords = allWords.filter({ testString in
    return testString != ""
})
```

Moving on, we can take advantage of Swift's trailing closure syntax, because **filter()**'s only parameter is a closure. If you remember, that means the parentheses aren't needed. So, the code can become this:

```
allWords = allWords.filter { testString in
    return testString != ""
}
```

Next, if your closure has only one expression – which ours does – and the closure must return a value, Swift lets you omit the **return** keyword entirely. This is because it knows the closure must return a value, and it can see you're only providing one line of code, so that must be the one that returns something. So, you can write this:

```
allWords = allWords.filter { testString in
    testString != ""
}
```

And now for the bit that usually confuses people: shorthand parameter names. When you use a closure like this, Swift automatically creates anonymous parameter names that start with a dollar sign then have a number: **\$0, \$1, \$2, \$3** and so on. This unique naming really helps them

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

stand out, so if you see them in code you immediately know they are shorthand parameter names – you literally cannot use names like this yourself, so they only have one meaning.

Swift gives you one of these shorthand parameters for every parameter that your closure accepts. In this case, our filter closure accepts exactly one parameter, which is **testString**. If we want to use Swift's shorthand parameter names instead, we don't need **testString** any more because **testString** and **\$0**, so that whole **testString in** part can go away:

```
allWords = allWords.filter {  
    $0 != ""  
}
```

Now all that's left is to put that on a single line, and we're done:

```
allWords = allWords.filter { $0 != "" }
```

Now, even though I've explained the thinning process that goes from long code to tiny code, you might still look at that one line and find it confusing. That's OK: you should write code however you want to write code. But in this instance, I hope you'll agree that having one simple, clutter-free line of code is easier to read, understand, and maintain than five or six lines.

Now that empty lines are being stripped out, you should be able to return back to **testAllWordsLoaded()** and have it pass.

Loading our data and splitting up words: filter()

Carrier	10:04 PM	Detail
ALL		Detail
S		Detail
WELL		Detail
THAT		Detail
ENDS		Detail
WELL		Detail
ACT		Detail
I		Detail
SCENE		Detail
I		Detail
Rousillon		Detail
THE		Detail

Counting unique strings in an array

Running the **allWords** array through **filter()** solved the problem of empty lines in the array, but there are still two more problems we need to address: duplicate words, and that pesky "Detail" text in the detail text label.

Well, we're going to fix two of them right now, at the same time. And, for the first time in this series, I'm going to have you write some bad code. Trust me: this will all become clear shortly, and it will be corrected.

Our app is going to show the number of times each word is used inside Shakespeare's comedies. To do that, we need to calculate how often each word appears, so we're going to add a new property to **PlayData** to store that calculation. Please add this now:

```
var wordCounts = [String: Int]()
```

That dictionary will hold a string as its key (e.g. "yonder") and a number as its value (e.g. 14), so that we can check the frequency of any word whenever we need to.

Our **init()** method already splits all the text up into words, but we need to add some new code to add the counting. This is fairly straightforward to write: loop through every word in the **allWords** array, add one to its **wordCounts** count if we have it, or set its count to 1 if we don't have it.

Modify the **init()** method in **PlayData.swift** so that this code appears after the call to **filter()**:

```
for word in allWords {
    wordCounts[word, default: 0] += 1
}
```

That uses an important dictionary subscript method that provides the default value of 0 if the key doesn't exist. When reading keys it's common to use nil coalescing instead – e.g. **let count**

`= wordCount[word] ?? 0` – but when *modifying* like we're doing here having that default value is useful.

Once that loop completes, **wordCounts** will contain every word that is used in the plays, as well as its frequency. Because we're using words as the dictionary keys, each word can appear only once in the dictionary. This means we can instantly remove duplicates from **wordCounts** by creating a new array from its keys.

Add this code just after the previous loop:

```
allWords = Array(wordCounts.keys)
```

Our app has taken a leap towards its end goal, but we also just broke our test: now that we show each word only once, our **testAllWordsLoaded()** test will fail because there are substantially fewer strings in the **allWords**. So, please go to Project39Tests.swift and amend it one last time:

```
XCTAssertEqual(playData.allWords.count, 18440, "allWords was not 18440")
```

That's the first of two problems down: every word now appears only once in the table, and you can run the app now to verify that.

The last problem is to fix the detail text label so that it says how many times a word is used rather than just "Detail". With our new **wordCounts** dictionary we can fix this in just one line of code in ViewController.swift – add this line to **cellForRowAt** just before the return line:

```
cell.detailTextLabel!.text = "\(playData.wordCounts[word]!)"
```

If you run the app now you'll see every word now has its count next to it – that wasn't so hard, was it?

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

Carrier		10:06 PM
crept		5
gaskins		1
militarist		1
bend		15
message		13
thornier		1
prophesied		1
Banished		1
beheld		15
tart		1
imprinted		1

Before we're done, let's add another test to make sure our word counting code doesn't break in the future. Have a look through the table to find some words that interest you, and note down their frequencies. I chose "home" (174 times), "fun" (4 times), and "mortal" (41 times), but you're welcome to choose any words that interest you. Switch to Project39Tests.swift and add a new test:

```
func testWordCountsAreCorrect() {
    let playData = PlayData()
    XCTAssertEqual(playData.wordCounts["home"], 174, "Home does
not appear 174 times")
    XCTAssertEqual(playData.wordCounts["fun"], 4, "Fun does not
appear 4 times")
    XCTAssertEqual(playData.wordCounts["mortal"], 41, "Mortal
does not appear 41 times")
}
```

Counting unique strings in an array

That test should pass, which is great. But more importantly it provides a fail-safe for future work: in the next chapter we're going to rewrite our word counting code, and this test will ensure we don't break anything while we work.

measure(): How to optimize our slow code and adjust the baseline

You might have noticed there's a pre-written method called `setup()` in our unit tests, which contains this comment: "Put setup code here. This method is called before the invocation of each test method in the class." Why, then, do we have `let playData = PlayData()` in both our tests – couldn't that go into `setup()` to avoid repetition?

Well, no, and you're about to see why. You will probably have noticed that our new word frequency code has slowed down our app quite a bit. Even when running in the iOS Simulator, using the full power of your Mac, this code now takes about two seconds to run – try to imagine how much slower it would be on a real device!

Of course, this is all a clever ruse to teach you more things, and here I want to teach you how to use XCTest to check performance. Our new word counting code is slow, but the only reliable way to ensure it gets faster when we make changes is to create a new test that times how long it takes for our `PlayData` object to be created. This is why we can't create it inside the `setup()` method: we need to create it as part of a measurement in this next test, as you'll see.

XCTest makes performance testing extraordinarily easy: you give it a closure to run, and it will execute that code 10 times in a row. You'll then get a report back of how long the call took on average, what the standard deviation was (how much variance there was between runs), and even how fast each of those 10 runs performed if you want the details.

Let's write a performance test now – please add this to `Project39Tests.swift`:

```
func testWordsLoadQuickly() {
    measure {
        _ = PlayData()
    }
}
```

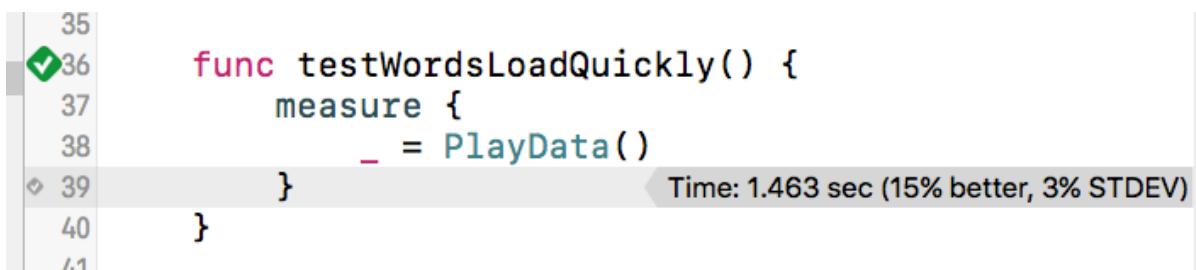
Were you expecting something more complicated? I told you it was easy and I meant it! That

`measure()`: How to optimize our slow code and adjust the baseline

tiny amount of code is all it takes: assigning a new **PlayData** object to `_` will load the file, split it up by lines and count the unique words, so our test couldn't be any simpler.

Click the diamond in the gutter to run this performance test now, but be warned: it will take a little while because that closure is run 10 times. For me, each run took about 2 seconds, so the whole thing took about 20 seconds. If you have a slower computer, you might need to wait for a minute or two.

Once the test finishes you'll see a green arrow to show it succeeded, but that doesn't mean much right now because the test can't ever fail. But you'll also see something new: a gray line that tells you the results. On the right of the line it will say something like "Time: 2.060 sec (3% STDDEV)" so you can see the mean average time it took to run the code and also the standard deviation.



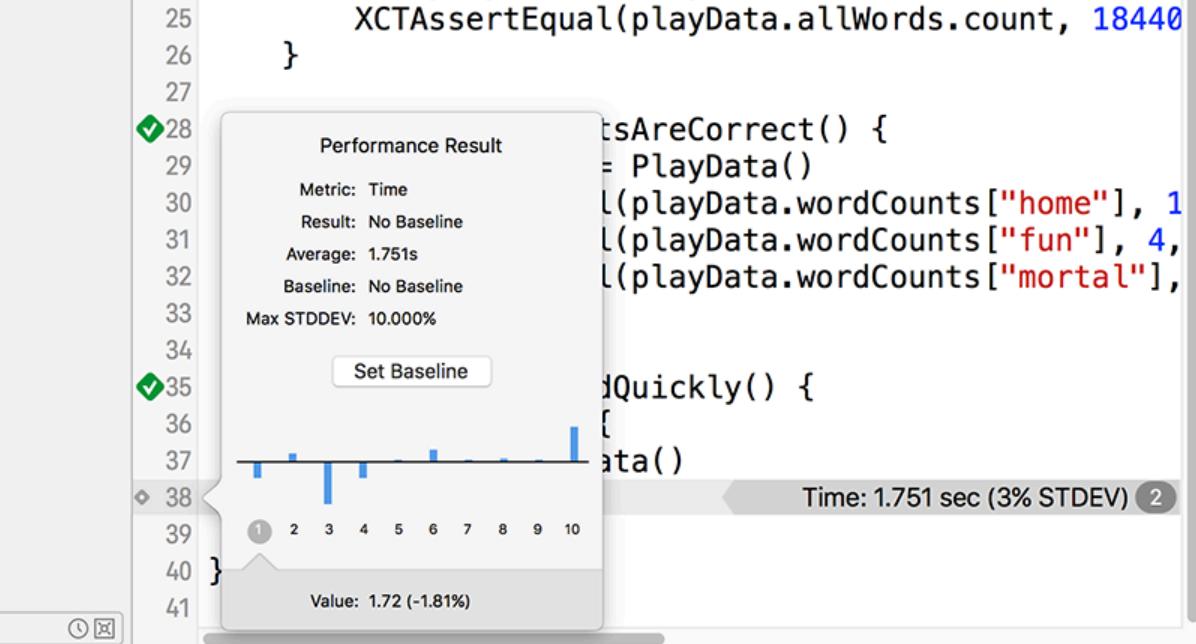
A screenshot of Xcode showing a Swift file with a single test function. The code is:

```
35
36 func testWordsLoadQuickly() {
37     measure {
38         _ = PlayData()
39     }
40 }
```

The line number 36 has a small green diamond icon in the gutter. A tooltip window is open at the bottom right of the code editor, displaying the text "Time: 1.463 sec (15% better, 3% STDEV)".

On the left of the line, in the gutter next to the line number, is a small gray diamond – clicking that will show you pop up information about all 10 runs. Also in that pop up is an important button that I want you to click now: Set Baseline. That marks your previous test run as the baseline against which future test runs should be compared to see whether performance has improved or worsened.

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest



```
25     XCTAssertEqual(playData.allWords.count, 18440)
26 }
27
28 ✓ 28     func testPerformance() {
29         let playData = PlayData()
30         let wordCounts = playData.wordCounts
31         XCTAssertEqual(wordCounts["home"], 1)
32         XCTAssertEqual(wordCounts["fun"], 4)
33         XCTAssertEqual(wordCounts["mortal"], 1)
34
35 ✓ 35     measure {
36         let playData = PlayData()
37         playData.load()
38     }
39 }
40
41 }
```

Performance Result
Metric: Time
Result: No Baseline
Average: 1.751s
Baseline: No Baseline
Max STDEV: 10.000%

Set Baseline

Value: 1.72 (-1.81%)

Time: 1.751 sec (3% STDEV)

Now that you've set a baseline, run the test again and wait for it to complete. When it finishes, you should see another green checkmark and you might also see a slight natural variance in the performance results. But now the checkmark *means* something: it means your code executed within a reasonable variance of the baseline, which in Xcode's eyes means that the deviation from the baseline was under 10%. If your code becomes a great deal slower, Xcode will warn you because it means something major has changed.

I promised earlier that I was going to make you write some bad code, and that it was going to be fixed. I hope you can see why: even though our loading code is very simple, it takes an extremely long time to load and we need to make it faster. In doing so you'll also get to see how XCTest helps you identify major performance changes and adjust your baseline as needed.

As a reminder, here's the slow code:

```
for word in allWords {
    wordCounts[word, default: 0] += 1
}
```

measure(): How to optimize our slow code and adjust the baseline

```
allWords = Array(wordCounts.keys)
```

You might wonder how we could optimize something so trivial, but it turns out we can take out most of the code while also making it run significantly faster. This is possible thanks to one of my favorite iOS classes: **NSCountedSet**. This is a set data type, which means that items can only be added once. But it's a *specialized* set object: it keeps track of how many times items you tried to add and remove each item, which means it can handle de-duplicating our words while storing how often they are used. Did I also mention it's fast?

To use **NSCountedSet** we need to make a few changes. First, change the `wordCounts` property of `PlayData` to this:

```
var wordCounts: NSCountedSet!
```

Now remove all the slow code (the nine lines I showed you above) and put these two in their place:

```
wordCounts = NSCountedSet(array: allWords)
allWords = wordCounts.allObjects as! [String]
```

The first line creates a counted set from all the words, which immediately de-duplicates and counts them all. The second line updates the `allWords` array to be the words from the counted set, thus ensuring they are unique.

Two more changes. First, in the `cellForRowAt` method of `ViewController.swift` we need to use the `count(for:)` method to find out how often a word was used:

```
cell.detailTextLabel!.text = "\(playData.wordCounts.count(for: word))"
```

Then we need to make the same change in the `testWordCountsAreCorrect()` method of `Project39Tests.swift`:

```
func testWordCountsAreCorrect() {
```

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

```
let playData = PlayData()
XCTAssertEqual(playData.wordCounts.count(for: "home"), 174,
"Home does not appear 174 times")
XCTAssertEqual(playData.wordCounts.count(for: "fun"), 4,
"Fun does not appear 4 times")
XCTAssertEqual(playData.wordCounts.count(for: "mortal"), 41,
"Mortal does not appear 41 times")
}
```

That's it: click the green checkmark next to **testWordsLoadQuickly()** to re-run the performance test, and you'll see it now runs two or even three times faster. Xcode won't mark this test as a failure, though: Xcode only considers a test to be failed if it performs at least 10% *slower* than the baseline.

Our new code is significantly faster, and works just as well, so we're going to update our measurement baseline so it's used in the future. To do that, click the small gray diamond in the gutter at the end of **testWordsLoadQuickly()**, then click its Edit button. An Accept button will appear, which you should click to transfer the latest result to the baseline, then finally click Save.

If you were wondering, Xcode does two neat things with these benchmarks. First, they are checked into source control, which means they are shared with other team members. Second, they are stored against specific device configurations, which means Xcode won't warn you when your iPhone 5s performs slower than an iPhone 8.

Before we're done with this chapter, there's one more thing I want to do: sort the array so that the most frequent words appear at the top of the table. This can be done with the **sort()** method, which takes a closure describing how objects should be sorted. Swift will call this closure with a pair of words, and the closure should return true if the first word is sorted before the second. Using all the shorthand techniques you learned earlier, this means returning true if **\$0** should be sorted before **\$1**.

Replace these two lines:

`measure()`: How to optimize our slow code and adjust the baseline

```
wordCounts = NSCountedSet(array: allWords)
allWords = wordCounts.allObjects as! [String]
```

...with these:

```
wordCounts = NSCountedSet(array: allWords)
let sorted = wordCounts.allObjects.sorted
{ wordCounts.count(for: $0) > wordCounts.count(for: $1) }
allWords = sorted as! [String]
```

Remember, that closure needs to accept two strings (`$0` and `$1`) and needs to return true if the first string comes before the second. We call `count(for:)` on each of those strings, so this code will return true ("sort before") if the count for `$0` is higher than the code for `$1` – perfect.

If you run the app now you'll see the most frequently used words appear at the top – good job! Note, though, that running this sort takes a little time, so make sure you update the baseline for `testWordsLoadQuickly()` to reflect that change.

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

Carrier	10:12 PM
I	10740
the	9859
and	7683
to	6990
you	6434
a	6122
of	6072
my	4527
in	4230
is	3972
that	3699
---	2627

Filtering using functions as parameters

We're going to add the ability for users to filter the word list in one of two ways: by showing only words that occur at or greater than a certain frequency, or by showing words that contain a specific string. This will work by giving **PlayData** a new array, **filteredWords**, that will store all words that matches the user's filter. This will also be used for the table view's data source.

As before, we're going to be writing the tests first so we can be sure the code we write is correct, but first we must create some skeleton code in **PlayData** that the test will work. Start by adding this **filteredWords** property to **PlayData**:

```
var filteredWords = [String]()
```

Now add this empty method, just below the existing **init()** method:

```
func applyUserFilter(_ input: String) {  
}
```

That's just enough functionality for us to start writing tests: an **applyUserFilter()** method that accepts a single string parameter, such as "home" or "100". What it needs to do is decide whether that parameter contains a number ("100") or not ("home"), then either show words with that frequency or words that match that substring.

I've done some number crunching for you, and have found that 495 words appear at least 100 times, whereas only one word appears more than 10,000 times. I've also found that "test" appears 56 times, "Swift" appears 7 times, and "Objective-C" doesn't appear once – conclusive proof, I think, that Shakespeare prefers Swift.

Using these numbers, as well as some more, we can write the following test in **Project39Tests.swift**:

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

```
func testUserFilterWorks() {
    let playData = PlayData()

    playData.applyUserFilter("100")
    XCTAssertEqual(playData.filteredWords.count, 495)

    playData.applyUserFilter("1000")
    XCTAssertEqual(playData.filteredWords.count, 55)

    playData.applyUserFilter("10000")
    XCTAssertEqual(playData.filteredWords.count, 1)

    playData.applyUserFilter("test")
    XCTAssertEqual(playData.filteredWords.count, 56)

    playData.applyUserFilter("swift")
    XCTAssertEqual(playData.filteredWords.count, 7)

    playData.applyUserFilter("objective-c")
    XCTAssertEqual(playData.filteredWords.count, 0)
}
```

I haven't included any messages to print when the tests fail, but I'm sure you can fill those in yourself!

Finding the numbers for this wasn't hard, so you're welcome to try it yourself once you've written the real **applyUserFilter()** later on: just pass anything you want into **applyUserFilter()** then assert that it's equal to 0. When you run the test, Xcode will check all the assertions you've made, and tell you what the actual answer was. You can then update your number with Xcode's number, and you're done.

If you run that new test now it will fail – after all, **filteredWords** is never actually being set in the **PlayData** class, so it will always contain 0. This is a feature of test-driven development:

write tests that fail, then write just enough code to make those tests pass. For us, that means filling in **applyUserFilter()** so that it does something useful.

To make this test pass is surprisingly easy, although I'm going to make your life more difficult by squeezing some extra knowledge into you.

Let's start with identifying what the user is trying to do. They will enter a string into a **UIAlertController**, which could be "100", "556", "dog" or even "objective-c". Our code needs to decide whether the string they entered was an integer (in which case it is used to filter by frequency) or not (in which case it's used to filter by substring).

Swift has a built-in way to find out whether a string contains an integer, because it comes with a special **Int** failable initializer that accepts a string. A failable initializer is just like that **init()** method we wrote for **PlayData**, but instead of **init()** it's **init?()** because it can fail – it can return **nil**. In this situation, we'll get **nil** back if Swift was unable to convert the string we gave it into an integer.

Using this approach, we can begin to fill in **applyUserFilter()**:

```
func applyUserFilter(_ input: String) {
    if let userNumber = Int(input) {
        // we got a number!
    } else {
        // we got a string!
    }
}
```

You've already seen how to use **filter()** and the **count(for:)** method of **NSCountedSet**, plus we used **range(of:)** way back in project 4, so you should know everything you need to be able to write some filtering code to replace those two comments.

If you're not sure, have a think for a moment. My solution is below:

```
if let userNumber = Int(input) {
```

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

```
    filteredWords = allWords.filter { self.wordCounts.count(for:  
$0) >= userNumber }  
} else {  
    filteredWords = allWords.filter { $0.range(of: input,  
options: .caseInsensitive) != nil }  
}
```

The first filter creates an array out of words with a count great or equal to the number the user entered, which is used when their text input was parsed as an integer. The second filter creates an array out of words that contain the user's text as a substring, which is used when their text input was not a number.

But I already said I want to squeeze some more knowledge into you, and in this case I want to extend our app so that rather than apply a filter directly, **applyUserFilter()** just calls a different method, **applyFilter()**, telling it what the filter function should be. This will allow you to add your own filters later on from inside `ViewController.swift`, without having to manipulate the contents of the **PlayData** object directly.

To make this work, we're going to create a new method called **applyFilter()**, which will accept a function as its only parameter. This function needs to accept a single string parameter, and return true or false depending on whether that string should be included in the **filteredWords** array. That's the exact format required by the **filter()** method, so we can just pass it straight in.

Accepting a function as a parameter has syntax that can hurt your eyes at first, but the important thing to remember is that Swift considers functions to be a data type, just like strings, integers and others. This means they have a parameter name, just like strings and other data types.

First, here's what the **applyFilter()** method would look like if our filter was a regular string:

```
func applyFilter(_ filter: String) { }
```

Now, I'll modify that so that the **filter** parameter is actually a function that accepts a string and

returns a boolean:

```
func applyFilter(_ filter: (String) -> Bool) { }
```

Let's break that down. First, the parameter is still called **filter**, which means that's how we can refer to it inside **applyFilter()**. Then we have **(String)**, which means this parameter is a function that accepts a single string parameter. Finally, we have **-> Bool**, which means the function should return a boolean.

It's possible to have as many of these as you want, so we could have written a method that accepts three filters if we wanted to:

```
func applyFilter(_ filter1: (String) -> Bool, filter2: (Int) -> String, filter3: (Double)) { }
```

In that code, **filter2** must be a function that accepts an integer parameter and returns a string, and **filter3** must be a function that accepts a double and returns nothing. We don't need anything that complicated here, but I hope you can see the syntax isn't that scary once you're used to it!

Here's the definition of **applyFilter()** again:

```
func applyFilter(_ filter: (String) -> Bool) { }
```

It accepts a single parameter, which must be a function that takes a string and returns a boolean. This is exactly what **filter()** wants, so we can just pass that parameter straight on. Here's the final code for **applyFilter()**:

```
func applyFilter(_ filter: (String) -> Bool) {
    filteredWords = allWords.filter(filter)
}
```

With that method written, we can now update **applyUserFilter()** so that it calls **applyFilter()** rather than modifying **filteredWords** directly, like this:

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

```
func applyUserFilter(_ input: String) {
    if let userNumber = Int(input) {
        applyFilter { self.wordCounts.count(for: $0) >=
userNumber }
    } else {
        applyFilter { $0.range(of: input,
options: .caseInsensitive) != nil }
    }
}
```

Does this code work? Well, there's only one way to find out: re-run the **testUserFilterWorks()** test and see what it returns. This test was failing before because we weren't even modifying **filteredWords**, but hopefully now all six assertions will evaluate to true, and the test will pass.

Having two methods rather than one might seem pointless to you, but it's actually smart forward-thinking. Modifying the **filteredWords** property in only one place means that if we add more code to **applyFilter()** later on, it will immediately be used everywhere the method is called. If we had modified **filteredWords** directly, we'd need to remember all the places it was changed and copy-paste code there every time a change was made.

This two-method approach also gives us encapsulation, which means that functionality is encapsulated inside an object rather than exposed for others to manipulate. If you want to adjust filters directly from `ViewController.swift` – which is a perfectly valid thing to want to do – you really wouldn't want to change the **filteredWords** property directly. Instead, it's much nicer to call a method, and trust that **PlayData** will do the right thing.

There is a catch with this approach: what's stopping you from (unwisely!) trying to change the **filteredWords** property from `ViewController.swift`? The answer is "nothing" - you could put something like this in **viewDidLoad()** if you really wanted to:

```
playData.filteredWords = ["Neener!"]
```

Doing that would unpick all the work we did to avoid accessing **filteredWords**. Fortunately,

Swift comes to the rescue: we can specify that everyone can *read* from the **filteredWords** property, but only the **PlayData** class can *write* to it. This restores our safety, and forces everyone to use the **applyUserFilter()** and **applyFilter()** methods.

To make this change, adjust the **filteredWords** property in **PlayData** to this:

```
private(set) var filteredWords = [String]()
```

That marks the setter of **filteredWords** – the code that handles writing – as private, which means only code inside the **PlayData** class can use it. The getter – the code that handles reading – is unaffected.

You might think I engineered all this just to teach you even more Swift, but I couldn't possibly comment...

Updating the user interface with filtering

We've written the tests to prove that filtering works, but those filters don't do anything in the user interface just yet. We're going to make a few small changes so that our view controller uses **filteredWords** rather than **allWords**, then we'll add an alert controller so that users can enter a filter by hand.

First: using **filteredWords**. This is done in three changes, two of which are trivial: open `ViewController.swift`, and replace the two instances of **allWords** with **filteredWords**. If you run the app now you'll see no text in the table view, which is where we need to make the third change.

By default, **filteredWords** contains nothing, which is why the table is empty. It's only when a filter is applied that words are added, so our fix is just a matter of adding one line of code immediately before the end of **init()** in **PlayData**:

```
applyUserFilter("swift")
```

That will run an initial filter looking for the word "swift". If you want to show all words when the app first runs, use this code instead:

```
filteredWords = allWords
```

For now, though, please stick with `applyUserFilter("swift")` – the reason for this will become clear soon.

Now onto the interesting stuff: letting the user enter a filter value. This needs to show a **UIAlertController** with a text field and two buttons, Filter and Cancel. When the user taps Filter, whatever they entered in the text field needs to be sent to the **applyUserFilter()** method of **PlayData**, and the table reloaded to reflect their changes.

We've covered how to do all this before, but I'll give you a few reminders once you've read the

Updating the user interface with filtering

code. Please add this new method to ViewController.swift:

```
@objc func searchTapped() {
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Filter...", message: nil,
preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addTextField()

    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Filter", style: .default)
{ [unowned self] _ in
    let userInput = ac.textFields?[0].text ?? "0"
    self.playData.applyUserFilter(userInput)
    self.tableView.reloadData()
} )

    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Cancel", style: .cancel))

    present(ac, animated: true)
}
```

The one line your brain might have stalled on is this one:

```
let userInput = ac.textFields?[0].text ?? "0"
```

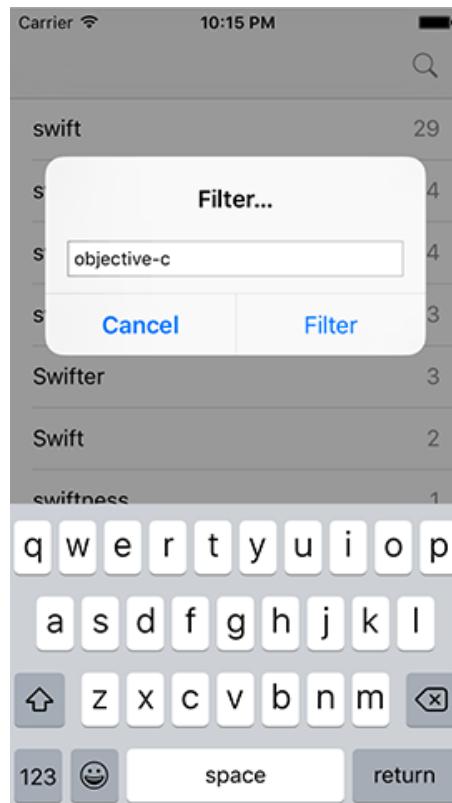
That contains two optionals: the **textFields** property might be **nil** (i.e., if there aren't any text fields) and even if we pull out the first text field from the array it might not have any text. Rather than try to fight our way through the maze of optionals, this code takes an easier approach: if either of the two optionals return **nil**, the nil coalescing operator (**??**) kicks in, and ensures that "0" is returned instead. This means **userInput** will always be a **String** and not a **String?**: it will either be something the user entered, or "0".

To finish up the user interface, we need to add a right bar button item to the navigation bar that will trigger the **searchTapped()** method – add this line to **viewDidLoad()**:

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

```
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =  
    UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .search, target: self,  
action: #selector(searchTapped))
```

With that new line of code in place, please run the app now and try using the search button in the top-right corner. Thanks to us having a clear separation of our data model and our view controller, doing all the user interface work was pretty quick!



User interface testing with XCTest

There's one more trick XCTest has up its sleeve, and if you're not already impressed then I think this will finally win you over.

We've written tests for our data model: are the words loaded correctly? Are the word counts correct? Did the words get counted in an appropriate time? Does our user filtering work? These are all useful tests, and help make sure our code works now and in the future when further changes are made.

But none of those tests tell us whether our user interface is working as expected, so it's possible that the app could still be broken even though our model is in perfect condition.

XCTest has a solution, and it's a beautiful one: integrated user interface tests that manipulate your app as if there were a real user in control. XCTest is smart enough to understand how the system works, so it will automatically wait for things like animations to complete before trying to check your assertions.

When we created our project we added both unit tests (`Project39Tests.swift`) and also UI tests (`Project39UITests.swift`), and we'll be working with the latter now so please open `Project39UITests.swift` for editing.

You'll see Xcode has written `setUp()` and `tearDown()` methods again, although this time the `setUp()` method actually has some code in to get things started. You'll also see a `testExample()` method, but please just delete that – we'll be writing our own.

We're going to start with a very simple test: when the view controller loads, does it show the correct number of words? If you remember, our app applies an immediate filter for the word "swift", which appears 7 times in Shakespeare's comedies. So, to test that our initial app state is correct, we need to write this test:

```
func testInitialStateIsCorrect() {
    let table = XCUIApplication().tables
    XCTAssertEqual(table.cells.count, 7, "There should be 7 rows")
```

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

```
initially")  
}
```

Please go ahead and run that test now to make sure it works correctly.

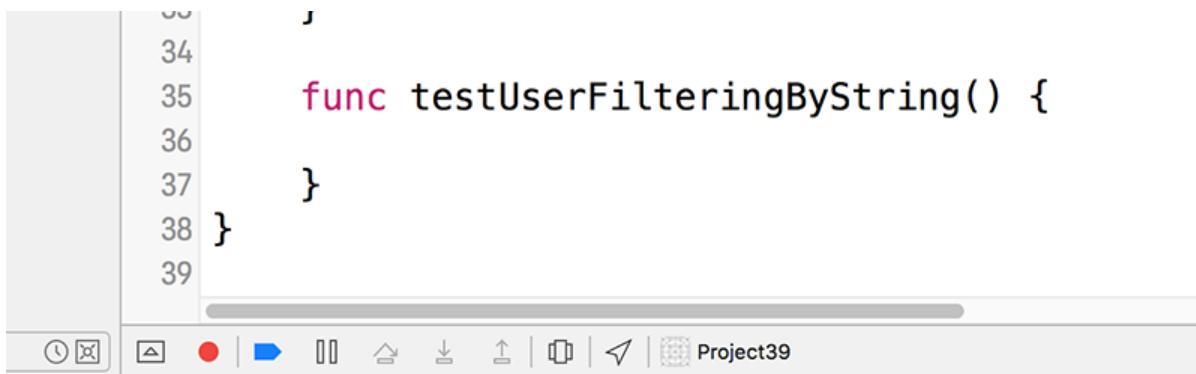
OK, so how does that code work? There are only two lines, but it masks a whole lot of complexity:

- Calling **XCUICApplication()** gets you access to the test harness for your running application. This lets you query its user interface and perform actions as if you were a user.
- Calling **.tables** will return an **XCUIElementQuery**, which in our situation would point to our table.
- If there were more than one table visible, this would point to an array of tables, and we'd need to query them further to narrow it down to one table before acting on it. Trying to manipulate a query that points to more than one thing will crash your test.
- This is the really mind-bending bit: the results of queries aren't fixed. So in our code the **let table** will point to a single table, but if the app adds two more tables for whatever reason, that **table** constant will now point to three tables – trying to manipulate it will crash your test.
- Xcode uses the iOS accessibility system to navigate around these user interface tests. This is good because it means any application that is accessibility aware is ready for UI testing, but also because it encourages developers to add accessibility to their apps – which makes the world a better place for everyone. However, it's *bad* because the accessibility system has to read things from the screen rather than making API calls.
- In our app, we start by applying a filter for the word "swift", which was for a reason: without this filter there are 18,000+ rows in our table, and the accessibility system seems to try to scan them all to perform our test. This is so slow that it simply wouldn't work, which is why the initial filter is applied.

So: user interface testing might look simple, but it's actually surprisingly hard. Fortunately, Xcode has a smart, simple and *almost* magical solution: test recording. Let's try it now – please create this empty method in your user interface tests:

```
func testUserFilteringByString() {  
}
```

Click inside that method, so that if you were to type you would be typing inside the method. Now click the red circle button just below your editing window: this will build and launch your app, but place it in record mode. It's a small button, but you can see it in the screenshot below.

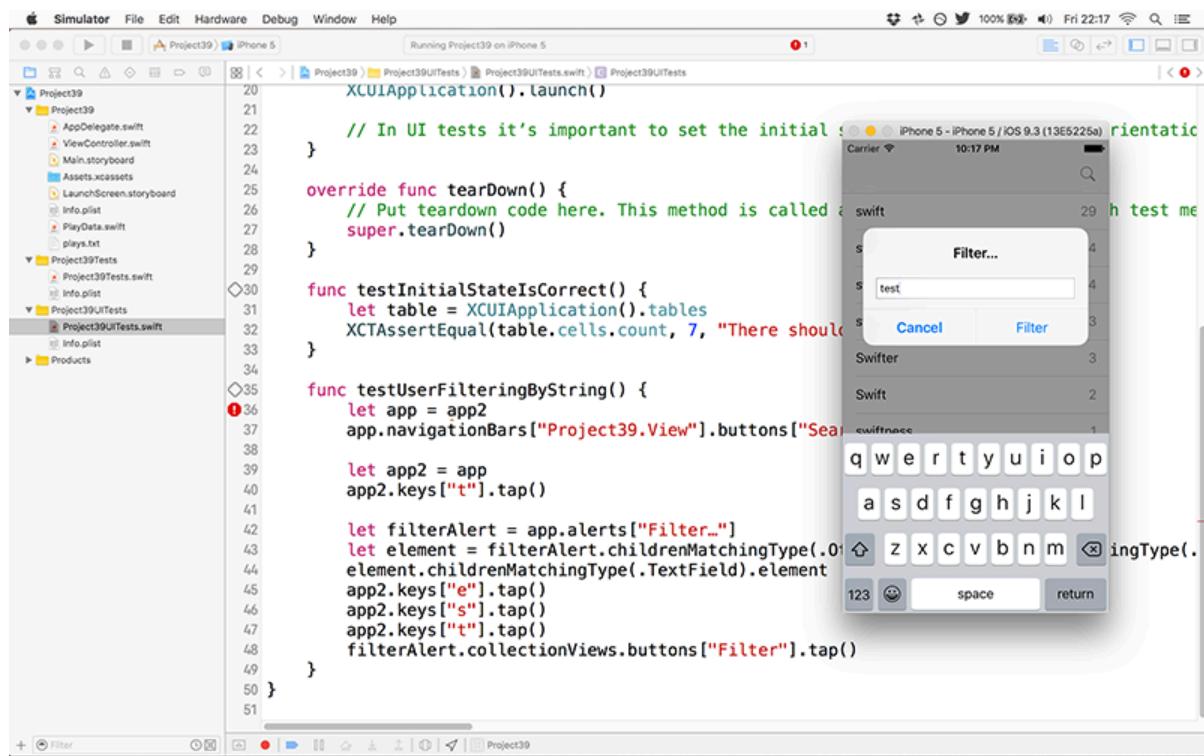


When your app is recording a UI test, any taps, swipes, or other actions you perform in the app will automatically be converted to code inside your test – Xcode will literally write your test for you. However, there are three catches: first, it will usually write some fairly unpleasant code, and certainly rarely writes what a trained developer would do; second, it still doesn't know what a pass or fail looks like, so you need to add your own assertions at the end; third, sometimes it won't even write valid code, although recent Xcode versions have reduced the chance of that happening.

So, it's a long way from perfect, but it does at least give you something to start with that you can easily rewrite. Your app is already in record mode, because you clicked the red circle to start it off. I want you to switch to the simulator, click the search button, then use the on-screen keyboard to type "test". Finally, click the Filter button to dismiss the alert view, then go back to Xcode and click the red circle button again to end recording.

Note: Xcode sometimes fails to work with the iOS Simulator's hardware keyboard option – you may need to use the on-screen keyboard.

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest



If everything worked correctly, Xcode will have written some code for you. Here's what I got:

```
func testUserFilteringByString() {
    let app = XCUIApplication()
    app.navigationBars[ "Project39.View" ].buttons[ "Search" ].tap()

    let filterAlert = app.alerts[ "Filter..." ]

    filterAlert.collectionViews.children(matching: .other).element.
        children(matching: .other).element.children(matching: .other).e
        lement.children(matching: .other).element.children(matching: .o
        ther).element(boundBy:
    1).children(matching: .textField).element.typeText( "test" )
    filterAlert.buttons[ "Filter" ].tap()
}
```

Even though this is a very simple test, Xcode's record feature managed to write some complex

code. It doesn't *need* to be complex, but at least Xcode's attempt does give us something to build on:

- The line `app.navigationBars["Project39.View"].buttons["Search"].tap()` can be simplified to `app.buttons["Search"].tap()` because there's only one search button in view.
- The line `let filterAlert = app.alerts["Filter..."]` can be simplified to `let filterAlert = app.alerts`, again because there's only one of them.
- The massive long line that starts with `filterAlert.collectionViews.children` can be collapsed down into `let textField = filterAlert.textFields.element`, which is significantly shorter.
- To finish things off, we need to tell Xcode what a passing test looks like, so we'll add `XCTAssertEqual(app.tables.cells.count, 56, "There should be 56 words matching 'test'")` to match the "test" string that was entered.

With all that in mind, here's a vastly improved version of the test:

```
func testUserFilteringString() {  
    let app = XCUIApplication()  
    app.buttons[ "Search" ].tap()  
  
    let filterAlert = app.alerts  
    let textField = filterAlert.textFields.element  
    textField.typeText("test")  
  
    filterAlert.buttons[ "Filter" ].tap()  
  
    XCTAssertEqual(app.tables.cells.count, 56, "There should be  
56 words matching 'test'")  
}
```

Now, you might wonder why it's worth using Xcode's UI recording system only to rewrite literally everything it produced. And I'll be honest: once you understand how Xcode UI testing

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

works you'll probably write all your tests by hand, and you'll even add things like comments and shared code to make them a valuable part of your project.

However, Xcode's UI recordings *are* useful when you're learning because it becomes significantly easier to get started when Xcode gives you something basic to work with.

Go ahead and run the test now, and you should see Xcode behaving like a real user. All being well, the assertion will prove true, and you'll get a green checkmark for your hard work – well done!

Wrap up

This has been the longest technique project by a long way, but I think you've learned a lot about the importance of good unit testing. We also managed to cover some functional programming techniques, discussed private setters, used functions as parameters, and even tried **NSCountedSet**, so I hope you're happy with the result!

Now that the full suite of tests are complete, you have three options ahead of you. First, you can run all the tests in a file by clicking the diamond (or green checkmark) next to the name of the test class. So, in Project39UITests.swift look in the gutter next to **class Project39UITests: XCTestCase** and click that. Second, you can run all the tests in your entire project by pressing Cmd+U. Give it a few moments to run, then you'll get a complete report.

Third, and most impressively, you can run all your tests on Xcode Server, which is the beginning of continuous integration: every time you commit a code change to source control, Xcode Server can pull down those changes, build the app, and run the full suite of tests. If you're working in a team, Xcode can produce a visual display of tests that are passing and failing, which is either motivational or depressing depending on your workplace!

If you'd like to take this app further, you should concentrate on testing. Can you write a test that verifies there are 55 table rows when the user filters by words that appear 1000 or more times? Can you write a test that ensures something sensible happens if the cancel button is pressed? Can you write a performance test to ensure **applyUserFilter()** doesn't get any slower?

There's also a bug in the code that you ought to be able to fix easily: if the user enters nothing into the filter text box, **applyUserFilter()** gets called with an empty string as its parameter and no results will be shown. It's down to you to think up a better solution: is it better to pretend Cancel was tapped instead? Or perhaps consider an empty string to mean "show all words"? It's your project now, so please choose what you think best.

Keep in mind that testing is only part of a sensible code review process. Yes, Xcode Server can check out your code and automatically validate that tests pass, but it is not a substitute for actual human interaction – looking through each other's code, and providing constructive

Project 39: Unit testing with XCTest

criticism. Taking the time to read someone else's code, then encouraging and supporting them as they improve it, is a key developer skill – remember, code review is where mistakes get rubbed *out*, not rubbed *in*.

Location

Adding places to MKMapView using MKPlacemark

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

You can add places to any map view using the **MKPlacemark** class, and it's different from adding regular annotations – the map view shows the whole address on the map, even from far away, so users can see important points easily.

Your address needs to be specified as a series of keys from the Contacts framework, so start by adding this import:

```
import Contacts
```

Now add the GPS coordinate and address for the placemark you want. This creates a coordinate and address for Fortnum & Mason in London:

```
let coords = CLLocationCoordinate2DMake(51.5083, -0.1384)

let address = [CNPostalAddressStreetKey: "181 Piccadilly, St.
James's", CNPostalAddressCityKey: "London",
CNPostalAddressPostalCodeKey: "W1A 1ER",
CNPostalAddressISOCountryCodeKey: "GB"]
```

You can then wrap that up inside an **MKPlacemark** instance like this:

```
let place = MKPlacemark(coordinate: coords, addressDictionary:
address)
```

Finally, add that to your map view. **MKPlacemark** conforms to the **MKAnnotation** protocol, so you use **addAnnotation()**:

```
mapView.addAnnotation(place)
```

How to add a button to an MKMapView annotation

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

The built-in **MKPinAnnotationView** annotation view has a **rightCalloutAccessoryView** property that can be set to any kind of **UIView**, including buttons. The button doesn't need to have an action attached to it, because there's a separate method that gets called when it's tapped.

First up, here's how you'd create a button inside an annotation view:

```
let btn = UIButton(type: .detailDisclosure)
annotationView.rightCalloutAccessoryView = btn
```

For context, here's a complete implementation of **viewForAnnotation** that uses a button. This is taken from project 19 of Hacking with Swift, where I created a class called **Capital** that implemented the **MKAnnotation** protocol – you'll need to adjust this for your own annotation type:

```
func mapView(_ mapView: MKMapView, viewFor annotation:
MKAnnotation) -> MKAnnotationView? {
    let identifier = "Capital"

    if annotation is Capital {
        if let annotationView =
mapView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:
identifier) {
            annotationView.annotation = annotation
            return annotationView
        } else {
            let annotationView =
MKPinAnnotationView(annotation:annotation,
reuseIdentifier:identifier)
```

```

        annotationView.isEnabled = true
        annotationView.canShowCallout = true

        let btn = UIButton(type: .detailDisclosure)
        annotationView.rightCalloutAccessoryView = btn
        return annotationView
    }
}

return nil
}

```

When it comes to detecting taps on your button, implement the **calloutAccessoryControlTapped** method. This tells you the annotation view that was tapped (from which you can pull out the annotation), the control that was tapped (in our case it's a button), and also the map view the whole thing belongs to. Here's an example:

```

func mapView(_ mapView: MKMapView, annotationView view:
MKAnnotationView, calloutAccessoryControlTapped control:
UIControl) {
    let capital = view.annotation as! Capital
    let placeName = capital.title
    let placeInfo = capital.info

    let ac = UIAlertController(title: placeName, message:
placeInfo, preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
    present(ac, animated: true)
}

```

How to add an MKMapView using MapKit

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Map views are pretty easy in iOS, largely because they are baked right into Interface Builder. That's right: open your storyboard, drag a map view into your view, and you're already most of the way there!

But there is one further thing to do, which is where people get confused: by default, the map framework won't actually be loaded when your app is run, which will make your app crash when it tries to show the map view.

The solution is simple: go to your project navigation, choose the Capabilities tab, then look for the "Maps" item and set it to be On. That's it!

How to add annotations to MKMapView using MKPointAnnotation and MKPinAnnotationView

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

Once you have an **MKMapView** up and running, it only takes a few lines of code more to drop pins containing placemarks.

Start by making your view controller the delegate of your map view, so that we can receive events. You should also make your view controller conform to **MKMapViewDelegate** in code.

Adding pins to the map takes two code changes. First you need to create an annotation describing where the pin is and what its name is – put this in your **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
let london = MKPointAnnotation()
london.title = "London"
london.coordinate = CLLocationCoordinate2D(latitude: 51.507222,
                                             longitude: -0.1275)
yourMapView.addAnnotation(london)
```

Second, you need to implement a **viewFor** method that converts your annotation into a view that can be displayed on the map. iOS comes with a built-in view type called **MKPinAnnotationView** that provides the familiar pin layout, so we can use that here.

Note: For performance reasons, dropping pins onto a map works using re-use identifiers, just like loading table view cells. The code below tries to re-use pins, and you should do the same.

Add this to your view controller:

```
func mapView(_ mapView: MKMapView, viewFor annotation:  
MKAnnotation) -> MKAnnotationView? {  
    guard annotation is MKPointAnnotation else { return nil }  
  
    let identifier = "Annotation"  
    var annotationView =  
mapView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:  
identifier)  
  
    if annotationView == nil {  
        annotationView = MKPinAnnotationView(annotation:  
annotation, reuseIdentifier: identifier)  
        annotationView!.canShowCallout = true  
    } else {  
        annotationView!.annotation = annotation  
    }  
  
    return annotationView  
}
```

That's all the code you need!

How to detect iBeacons

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Detecting iBeacons requires a number of steps, but before we can start writing any code we first need to add some privacy descriptions to your Info.plist file. These are shown to users when you request location access, and it's your chance to explain to users why you need location access.

The two keys we need to add are “Privacy - Location Always and When In Use Usage Description” and “Privacy - Location When In Use Usage Description”. So, please go to your Info.plist now, and give them both a string describing why you want access.

With that done, we can start to scan for beacons. Open your class in Xcode (it could be a view controller, but it doesn't have to be), add an import for CoreLocation to the top, then tell Swift that your class conforms to the **CLLocationManagerDelegate** protocol so that you can start to receive location updates.

iBeacon tracking is done using the **CLLocationManager** class, which is also responsible for requesting location permission from users. You need to create a property for this in your class so that you can store the active location manager, so add this:

```
var locationManager: CLLocationManager!
```

If you're using a view controller, you'll probably want to initialize this property in **viewDidLoad()**, like this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    locationManager = CLLocationManager()
    locationManager.delegate = self
    locationManager.requestAlwaysAuthorization()
}
```

If you're using another type of class, you should amend that appropriately.

Once you request permission to use your user's location, they'll see an alert with the message

you wrote earlier. When they make a choice you'll get a delegate callback called **didChangeAuthorization**, at which point you can check whether they are authorized you or not:

```
func locationManager(_ manager: CLLocationManager,  
didChangeAuthorization status: CLAuthorizationStatus) {  
    if status == .authorizedAlways {  
        if CLLocationManager.isMonitoringAvailable(for:  
CLBeaconRegion.self) {  
            if CLLocationManager.isRangingAvailable() {  
                startScanning()  
            }  
        }  
    }  
}
```

Don't worry, we haven't written the **startScanning()** method yet.

Once you've been authorized to scan for iBeacons, you can create **CLBeaconRegion** objects and pass them to the location manager. Each **CLBeaconRegion** is uniquely identified by a long number (it's UUID), and optionally also major and minor numbers. As well as monitoring for a beacon's existence, we're also going to ask iOS to range the beacon for us – i.e., tell us how close it thinks we are.

Here's the code:

```
func startScanning() {  
    let uuid = UUID(uuidString: "5A4BCFCE-174E-4BAC-  
A814-092E77F6B7E5")!  
    let beaconRegion = CLBeaconRegion(proximityUUID: uuid,  
major: 123, minor: 456, identifier: "MyBeacon")  
  
    locationManager.startMonitoring(for: beaconRegion)  
    locationManager.startRangingBeacons(in: beaconRegion)  
}
```

Once you're ranging for beacons, you'll get a delegate callback called **didRangeBeacons** every second or so, at which point you can read a beacon's distance using its **proximity** value and take appropriate action.

For example, we can make our view change color depending on how far away an iBeacon is with this code:

```
func locationManager(_ manager: CLLocationManager,  
didRangeBeacons beacons: [CLBeacon], in region: CLBeaconRegion)  
{  
    if beacons.count > 0 {  
        updateDistance(beacons[0].proximity)  
    } else {  
        updateDistance(.unknown)  
    }  
}  
  
func updateDistance(_ distance: CLProximity) {  
    UIView.animate(withDuration: 0.8) {  
        switch distance {  
            case .unknown:  
                self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.gray  
  
            case .far:  
                self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.blue  
  
            case .near:  
                self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.orange  
  
            case .immediate:  
                self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.red  
        }  
    }  
}
```

```
}
```

How to find directions using MKMapView and MKDirections.Request

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

MapKit is great for letting users navigate from place to place, but also makes it easy for you to plot directions from one place to another. You just tell iOS where you're starting from, where you're going, as well as how you're traveling (by car, foot, or mass transit), and it will find routes for you.

First, make sure you have a map view in your app, and have the Maps entitlement enabled.

Now add this code:

```
import MapKit
import UIKit

class ViewController: UIViewController, MKMapViewDelegate {
    @IBOutlet var mapView: MKMapView!

    override func viewDidLoad() {
        super.viewDidLoad()

        let request = MKDirections.Request()
        request.source = MKMapItem(placemark:
            MKPlacemark(coordinate: CLLocationCoordinate2D(latitude:
                40.7127, longitude: -74.0059), addressDictionary: nil))
        request.destination = MKMapItem(placemark:
            MKPlacemark(coordinate: CLLocationCoordinate2D(latitude:
                37.783333, longitude: -122.416667), addressDictionary: nil))
        request.requestsAlternateRoutes = true
        request.transportType = .automobile
    }
}
```

```

let directions = MKDirections(request: request)

directions.calculate { [unowned self] response, error in
    guard let unwrappedResponse = response else { return }

    for route in unwrappedResponse.routes {
        self.mapView.addOverlay(route.polyline)

        self.mapView.setVisibleMapRect(route.polyline.boundingMapRect,
                                       animated: true)
    }
}

func mapView(_ mapView: MKMapView, rendererFor overlay:
MKOverlay) -> MKOverlayRenderer {
    let renderer = MKPolylineRenderer(polyline: overlay as!
MKPolyline)
    renderer.strokeColor = UIColor.blue
    return renderer
}
}

```

That example requests driving directions between New York and San Francisco. It asks for alternate routes if they exist (spoiler: they do), then sets up a closure to run when the directions come back that adds them as overlays to the map. To make the overlays draw, you need to implement the **rendererFor** method, but that's just three lines as you can see.

Note: because I request alternative routes if they exist, I loop through the array of returned routes to add them all to the map. The **setVisibleMapRect()** method is called once for each route, but fortunately that isn't a problem as all routes have the same start and end location!

How to make an iPhone transmit an iBeacon

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

iOS 7.0 introduced not only the ability to detect iBeacons, but also the ability to create iBeacons – for iPhones and iPads to broadcast their own beacon signal that can then be detected by other devices. To make this work, you add these two imports:

```
import CoreBluetooth  
import CoreLocation
```

Now you need to make your view controller (or other class) conform to the **CBPeripheralManagerDelegate** protocol so that it's capable of handling Bluetooth state changes. You also need to create three properties: the beacon itself, plus two Bluetooth properties that store configuration and management information.

Once that's done, there are three methods you need to include. The first one creates the beacon and starts broadcasting, the second one stops the beacon, and the third one acts as an intermediary between your app and the iOS Bluetooth stack.

Here's a working example to get you started:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController,  
CBPeripheralManagerDelegate {  
  
    var localBeacon: CLBeaconRegion!  
    var beaconPeripheralData: NSDictionary!  
    var peripheralManager: CBPeripheralManager!  
  
    func initLocalBeacon() {  
        if localBeacon != nil {  
            stopLocalBeacon()  
        }  
  
        let localBeaconUUID = "5A4BCFCE-174E-4BAC-  
A814-092E77F6B7E5"  
        let localBeaconMajor: CLBeaconMajorValue = 123
```

```

let localBeaconMinor: CLBeaconMinorValue = 456

let uuid = UUID(uuidString: localBeaconUUID)!
localBeacon = CLBeaconRegion(proximityUUID: uuid, major: localBeaconMajor, minor: localBeaconMinor, identifier: "Your
private identifier here")

beaconPeripheralData =
localBeacon.peripheralData(withMeasuredPower: nil)
peripheralManager = CBPeripheralManager(delegate: self,
queue: nil, options: nil)
}

func stopLocalBeacon() {
    peripheralManager.stopAdvertising()
    peripheralManager = nil
    beaconPeripheralData = nil
    localBeacon = nil
}

func peripheralManagerDidUpdateState(_ peripheral:
CBPeripheralManager) {
    if peripheral.state == .poweredOn {
        peripheralManager.startAdvertising(beaconPeripheralData as?
[String: Any])
    } else if peripheral.state == .poweredOff {
        peripheralManager.stopAdvertising()
    }
}
}

```

How to read the user's location while your app is in the background

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

iOS has had the ability to track locations in the background for some time, but the permission system changed in iOS 8 then again in iOS 11 as Apple has tried to stop unscrupulous apps abusing private information.

Reading the user's location in the background takes a few steps. First, open your Info.plist file, add key called "Privacy - Location Always and When In Use Usage Description" and "Privacy - Location When In Use Usage Description", then give both of them whatever text you want to show to users when you ask for their location. They are both required, because iOS always allows user to restrict location access to when your app is in use.

Now open whichever controller you want to use to look for the user's location, and add this import:

```
import CoreLocation
```

You need to tell Swift that your class conforms to the **CLLocationManagerDelegate** protocol so that you can start to receive location updates.

Location tracking is done using the **CLLocationManager** class, which is also responsible for requesting location permission from users. You need to create a property for this in your class so that you can store the active location manager, so add this:

```
var locationManager: CLLocationManager?
```

If you're using a view controller, you'll probably want to initialize this property in **viewDidLoad()**, like this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    locationManager = CLLocationManager()
    locationManager?.delegate = self
```

```
    locationManager?.requestAlwaysAuthorization()
}
```

Once you request permission to use your user's location, they'll see an alert with the message you wrote earlier. When they make a choice you'll get a delegate callback called **didChangeAuthorization**, at which point you can check whether they are authorized you or not:

```
func locationManager(_ manager: CLLocationManager,
didChangeAuthorization status: CLAuthorizationStatus) {
    if status == .authorizedAlways {
        // You're good to go!
    }
}
```

If you're able to fall back to using location only when your app is in use, you should add a second check to the code above just in case the user didn't select the option you wanted.

The final step is to tell Xcode that we want location updates to continue being delivered while the app is in the background. Select your project using the project navigator, then find your app's target and choose the Capabilities tab. You need to enable Background Modes, then check the box marked "Location updates".

That's all the code done now, so you can go ahead and implement the **didUpdateLocations** method and wait for it to be called. Something like this ought to get you started:

```
func locationManager(_ manager: CLLocationManager,
didUpdateLocations locations: [CLLocation]) {
    if let location = locations.last {
        print("New location is \(location)")
    }
}
```

How to request a user's location only once using `requestLocation()`

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

iOS has a simple way to request a user's location just once, and it's called `requestLocation()`. Calling this method returns immediately (meaning that your code carries on executing) but when iOS has managed (or failed) to get a fix on the user's location you will be told. Below is a complete example:

```
import CoreLocation
import UIKit

class ViewController: UIViewController,
CLLocationManagerDelegate {
    let manager = CLLocationManager()

    override func viewDidLoad() {
        manager.delegate = self
        manager.requestLocation()
    }

    func locationManager(_ manager: CLLocationManager,
didUpdateLocations locations: [CLLocation]) {
        if let location = locations.first {
            print("Found user's location: \(location)")
        }
    }

    func locationManager(_ manager: CLLocationManager,
didFailWithError error: Error) {
        print("Failed to find user's location: \
(error.localizedDescription)")
    }
}
```

Language

Check whether all items in an array match a condition

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift has built-in way of checking whether all items in an array match a condition: the `allSatisfy()` method. Give this thing a condition to check, and it will apply that condition on all items until it finds one that fails, at which point it will return false. If it reaches the end of the array and all have passed the condition, it will return true.

For example, you can check whether all items in an array of numbers are under 10:

```
[1, 2, 3, 4, 5].allSatisfy { $0 < 10 }
```

Checking all array elements match a condition: `allSatisfy()`

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you have a collection of objects and want to check that all of them match a specific condition, you should use the `allSatisfy()` method.

For example, if we had an array of words and wanted to make sure they all start with the letter “S”, we could write code like this:

```
let sWords = ["Swift", "Seahorse", "Solar"]
let allMatch = sWords.allSatisfy { $0.hasPrefix("S") }
```

Alternatively, if we had an array of exam results like this:

```
let scores = [85, 88, 95, 92]
```

We could decide whether that student passed their course by checking whether all their exam results were 85 or higher:

```
let passed = scores.allSatisfy { $0 >= 85 }
```

Fixing "Ambiguous reference to member when using ceil or round"

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you've ever come across the error message "No 'ceil' candidates produce the expected contextual result type 'Int'" – which can happen with calls to **ceil()**, **floor()**, and **round()** – it's usually down to Swift being unable to satisfy type requirements you have asked for.

Put simply, you might think calling **ceil()** rounds a floating-point number up to its nearest integer, but actually it doesn't return an integer at all: if you give it a **Float** it returns a **Float**, and if you give it a **Double** it returns a **Double**.

So, this code works because **c** ends up being a **Double**:

```
let a = 0.5
let c = ceil(a)
```

...whereas this code causes your exact issue because it tries to force a **Double** into an **Int** without a typecast:

```
let c: Int = ceil(a)
```

If you need **c** to be an integer, the solution is to convert the return value of **ceil()** to be an integer, like this:

```
let c = Int(ceil(a))
```

The same is true of the **floor()** and **round()** functions, so you'd need the same solution.

Fixing "Class ViewController has no initializers"

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

This is a common error, and one you can fix in just a few seconds. Swift has very strict rules about property initialization: if you give a class any properties without a default value, you *must* create an initializer that sets those default values.

There are two ways to solve this problem: either provide a default value for your property when you define the property, or create a custom `init()` method to set the value.

First, identify the problematic property. Look for things like this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {  
    var username: String  
}
```

That defines a new property but doesn't give it an initial value, so Swift will refuse to build the app.

The simple solution is just to give your property a sensible initial value when it's defined, like this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {  
    var username: String = "Anonymous"  
}
```

The slightly more complicated solution is to create a custom initializer that gives properties default values in one place, then calls `super.init()`. When working with `UIViewController` and storyboards, the initializer you will want to override should look like this:

```
required init?(coder aDecoder: NSCoder) {  
    self.username = "Anonymous"  
    super.init(coder: aDecoder)
```

```
}
```

Remember: you must initialize all your own properties before calling `super.init()` or any other methods.

How to add Markdown comments to your code

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift has special syntax that lets you embed Markdown-formatted text into your source code, which gets parsed by Xcode and displayed in the Quick Help system pane. Using specially formatted code comments, you can document what parameters should be passed in, what the return value will contain, any errors that can be thrown, and more.

This documentation is *not* the same as the regular inline comments you add to particular code. These special comments are placed before your functions and classes and are used to show information in the Quick Help pane, as well as in the autocomplete popup, and are formatted so that both humans and Xcode can read them.

Markdown comments start with `/**` and end with `*/`, like this:

```
/**
Call this function to grok some globs.
*/
func myGreatFunction() {
    // do stuff
}
```

In this text you can use a selection of Markdown formatting, as shown below:

```
Place text in `backticks` to mark code; on your keyboard these
usually share a key with tilde, ~.
* You can write bullets by starting with an asterisk then a
space.
```

```
* Indent your asterisks to create sublists
1. You can write numbered listed by starting with 1.
1. Subsequent items can also be numbered 1. and Xcode will
renumber them automatically.
```

```
If you want to write a link, [place your text in brackets](and
your link in parentheses)
# Headings start with a # symbol
## Subheadings start with ##
### Sub-subheadings start with ### and are the most common
heading style you'll come across
Write a *single asterisk* around words to make them italic
Write **two asterisks** around words to make them bold
```

Documentation keywords

Beyond using text to describe your functions, Swift lets you add special keywords that get displayed in the Quick Help pane. First, the **Returns** keyword lets you specify what value the caller can expect back when the function runs successfully.

- **Returns**: A string containing a date formatted as RFC-822

Next is the **Parameter** keyword. This lets you specify the name of a parameter and describe what it contains. You can include as many **Parameter** lines as you have parameters.

- **Parameter** album: The name of a Taylor Swift album
- **Parameter** track: The track number to load

Third is the **Throws** keyword, which lets you specify a comma-separated list of the error types that can be thrown by the function:

- **Throws**: LoadError.networkFailed, LoadError.writeFailed

There are others, but those three are the most useful when you're just starting out. If you

include more freeform text between the documentation keywords, it will just be flowed into the correct position in Quick Help.

How to add a custom initializer to a struct without losing its memberwise initializer

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

All structs in Swift come with a default memberwise initializer, which is an initializer that accepts values for all the properties in the struct. However, as soon as you add your *own* initializer to the struct that memberwise initializer goes away, because it's possible you're doing special work that the default initializer isn't aware of.

If you want to keep both the default initializer and your own custom ones, there's a simple trick: create your initializers inside an extension rather than as part of the main struct definition.

For example:

```
struct Person {
    var firstName: String
    var lastName: String
}

extension Person {
    init(name: String) {
        let split = name.components(separatedBy: " ")
        firstName = split.first ?? ""
        lastName = split.last ?? ""
    }
}
```

Because my custom initializer is inside an extension, you can create instances of **Person** in two

ways:

```
let taylor1 = Person(firstName: "Taylor", lastName: "Swift")
let taylor2 = Person(name: "Taylor Swift")
```

How to add associated values to enums

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Enums with associated values let you associate extra data with an enum case. This helps make them significantly more useful, because we can create gradations of cases rather than have them be absolute.

For example, we could create a **Weather** enum that can store various weather types: sunny, cloudy, windy, and rainy. However, that doesn't really describe those conditions very well – how cloudy is it? Is it gale force winds or just a breeze? Is the rain definitely going to happen, or is it a fairly remote chance?

With enum associated values we can describe these situations more accurately. For example:

```
enum Weather {
    case sunny
    case cloudy(coverage: Int)
    case windy(speed: Int)
    case rainy(chance: Int)
}
```

That leaves “sunny” as a simple value, but the other three all have associated values – how cloudy it is, what the speed of the wind is, and how likely the rain is.

Using those values we can now create instances of those enums:

```
let london = Weather.cloudy(coverage: 90)
let gusty = Weather.windy(speed: 10)
```

```
let guaranteedRain = Weather.rainy(chance: 100)
```

How to add raw values to enums

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Raw values for enums are primitive values that sit behind each case. For example, you might create an enum for the planets in our solar system, and want to refer to each planet by a number as well as its name:

```
enum Planets: Int {
    case mercury
    case venus
    case earth
    case mars
}
```

Swift will assign each case a raw integer value, starting from 0 and counting up. You can then use this to load and save the enum, or perhaps transfer it over the network.

You can provide custom raw values for any or all of your cases, and Swift will fill in the rest. For example, if we wanted **mercury** to be planet number 1, **venus** to be number 2, and so on, we could do this:

```
enum Planets: Int {
    case mercury = 1
    case venus
    case earth
    case mars
}
```

That will cause Swift to count upwards from 1.

If your raw value type is **String**, Swift will automatically create strings from each case name.

So, this:

```
enum Planets: String {
    case mercury
    case venus
    case earth
    case mars
}
```

Is equivalent to this:

```
enum Planets: String {
    case mercury = "mercury"
    case venus = "venus"
    case earth = "earth"
    case mars = "mars"
}
```

Finally, you can create enums from their raw value, but you get back an *optional* enum because your raw value might not match any of the available cases. For example, given our original **Planets** enum with integer raw values starting from 0, this would create an optional **Planet** pointing at Venus:

```
let venus = Planets(rawValue: 1)
```

How to add warnings and errors to your code using #warning and #error

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Sometimes it's important to add warnings and even errors to your code. For example, you

might want to mark code as needing to be fixed, or mark placeholder values that must be filled in by whoever is using your code.

Swift has compiler directives that help us mark such issues in our code: **#warning** and **#error**. The former will force Xcode to issue a warning when building your code, and the latter will issue a compile error so your code won't build at all.

Both of these work in the same way: **#warning("Some message")** and **#error("Some message")**. For example:

```
func encrypt(_ string: String, with password: String) -> String {
    #warning("This is bad method of encryption")
    return password + String(string.reversed()) + password
}

struct Configuration {
    var apiKey: String {
        // if you uncomment the below it will stop your code from
        // building
        // #error("Please add your API key below then delete this
        // line.")
        return "Enter your API key here"
    }
}
```

Both **#warning** and **#error** work alongside the existing **#if** compiler directive, only being triggered if the condition being evaluated is true. For example:

```
#if os(macOS)
#error("MyLibrary is not supported on macOS.")
#endif
```

Both **#warning** and **#error** are useful for different reasons:

- **#warning** is mainly useful as a reminder to yourself or others that some work is incomplete. Xcode templates often use **#warning** to mark method stubs that you should replace with your own code. Think of **#warning** as being like a **FIXME** comment that automatically shows up in your build output.
- **#error** is mainly useful if you ship a library that requires other developers to provide some data. For example, an authentication key for a web API – you want users to include their own key, so using **#error** will force them to change that code before continuing.

How to append one array to another array

Availability: iOS or later.

There are three ways of adding one array to another, and you can use whichever syntax you prefer.

First, make a couple of test arrays to work with:

```
var first = ["John", "Paul"]
let second = ["George", "Ringo"]
```

I made the **first** array mutable so we can join the second array to it.

One option for joining arrays is the **append(contentsOf:)** method, used like this:

```
first.append(contentsOf: second)
```

Another option is using the **+ =** operator, which is overloaded for arrays to combine elements:

```
first += second
```

The third option is to use a regular **+** to create a new array by combining two others:

```
let third = first + second
```

How to break out of multiple loop levels using labeled statements

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift has a built-in **break** keyword that escapes the current loop you're in, but what happens if you're in two loops or more and want to break out of them all?

Swift's labeled statements are designed to solve this problem: they let you exit any number of loops or conditions, so execution picks up directly after the block you labeled.

For example, consider this pair of loops that will find the first number that, when squared, makes 144:

```
let numbers = 1...100

for number1 in numbers {
    for number2 in numbers {
        if number1 == number2 && number1 * number2 == 144 {
            print("Square found: \(number1)")
        }
    }
}
```

As soon as we've found that square, we can stop looking. The problem is, a regular **break** won't work here because it will exit only the inner loop – the outer loop will keep counting 13, 14, 15, and so on up to 100. However, if we add a label to the outer loop we can break out of both loops at once, like this:

```
outerLoop: for number1 in numbers {
    for number2 in numbers {
        if number1 == number2 && number1 * number2 == 144 {
            print("Square found: \(number1)")
        }
    }
}
```

```
        break outerLoop
    }
}
}
```

Notice the **outerLoop**: before the **for number1** loop, and also the matching **break outerLoop** – that will cause both loops to exit as soon as the correct number is found.

How to calculate division remainder using modulo

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift has a dedicated remainder operator in the form of **%**, and it's used to return the remainder after dividing one number wholly into another. For example, **14 % 3** is 2, because you can fit four 3s into 14, and afterwards you have the remainder 2.

The remainder operator is helpful for calculating things like odd and even numbers – if you want alternate rows of your table to be a slightly different color, for example, you might write this:

```
for i in 1...10 {
    if i % 2 == 0 {
        print("Number is even")
    } else {
        print("Number is odd")
    }
}
```

You can also use the **isMultiple(of:)** method, which does more or less the same thing while being more readable:

```
for i in 1...10 {
    if i.isMultiple(of: 2) {
```

```
    print("Number is even")
} else {
    print("Number is odd")
}
}
```

How to check for valid method input using the guard keyword

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The **guard** keyword was introduced in Swift to signal early returns, which is a coding technique that effectively means "make sure all these things are set up before I start doing the real work in my function, others bail out."

For example, if you want to ensure a **submit()** is only ever run if an existing **name** property has a value, you would do this:

```
func submit() {
    guard name != nil else { return }

    doImportantWork(name)
}
```

This might seem like a job for a regular **if** statement, and to be fair that's correct – the two are very similar. The advantage with **guard**, however, is that it makes your intention clear: these values need to be set up correctly before continuing.

The **guard** keyword is also helpful because it can be used to check and unwrap optionals that remain unwrapped until the end of the method. For example:

```
func betterSubmit() {
    guard let unwrappedName = name else { return }
```

```
    doImportantWork(unwrappedName)  
}
```

So, if **name** is **nil** the method will return; otherwise, it will be safely unwrapped into **unwrappedName**.

How to check the Swift version at compile time

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift gives us the **#if swift** build configuration option, which lets you compile certain code only if a specific version of the Swift compiler is detected. This is particularly useful for libraries that need to support multiple incompatible versions of Swift at the same time, because only one version of their code will ever be compiled.

In the example below, the **print()** code will display one of two messages depending on whether you're using an old version of Swift:

```
#if swift(>=5.0)  
print("Running Swift 5.0 or later")  
#else  
print("Running old Swift")  
#endif
```

How to check whether a date is inside a date range

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Everyone knows you can create ranges from two integers such as **1...5**, but few people realize the same applies to dates. This means you can create a date range using the same closed-range operator (...) and half-open range operator (..**<**) you already know, allowing you to check whether one date lies inside a range.

For example, we could create three **Date** objects like this:

```
let now = Date()
let soon = Date().addingTimeInterval(5000)
let later = Date().addingTimeInterval(10000)
```

We can then compare **now** and **later** into a single range like this:

```
let range = now...later
```

Finally, we can check whether that range contains the **soon** date using the **contains()** method of ranges, like this:

```
if range.contains(soon) {
    print("The date is inside the range")
} else {
    print("The date is outside the range")
}
```

How to check whether a module is available using **canImport()**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Writing multi-platform code has its own challenges, but if you use the **canImport()** compiler test then one big challenge is solved for you: you can write one chunk code to run if a specific module is available, and another chunk otherwise.

For example, this code will check for UIKit, AppKit, and all other possibilities so that you can pick whichever color type is best for the current platform:

```
#if canImport/UIKit
// iOS, tvOS, and watchOS – use UIColor
#elseif canImport/AppKit)
```

```
// macOS – use NSColor  
#else  
// all other platforms – use a custom color object  
#endif
```

Before **canImport()** was available we need to use **#if os(macOS)** instead, like this:

```
#if os(iOS) || os(tvOS) || os(watchOS)  
// use UIColor  
#else  
// use NSColor  
#endif
```

Using **canImport()** is an improvement because it lets you focus on what *functionality* you want rather than what operating system. So, if UIKit became available on macOS tomorrow you wouldn't need to change your code to use it.

How to check whether an integer lies inside a range

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

All Swift's ranges come with a built-in **contains()** method that lets us check whether one value lies inside or outside the range. For example, given this range:

```
let passRange = 85...100
```

And this integer:

```
let score = 88
```

We can check whether **score** lies inside **passRange** using **contains()**, like this:

```
if passRange.contains(score) {  
    print("You passed the test!")
```

```
    } else {
        print("Better luck next time.")
    }
}
```

How to check your program state using precondition()

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

You should already know that the **assert()** function lets you check the state of your program at runtime, and crash if things aren't how they should be. One of the neat features of **assert()** is that it automatically gets removed when you build your app in release mode, but if you don't want that to happen – if you want your app to crash if something is seriously wrong – then you should use the **precondition()** function instead.

precondition() works identically to **assert()**: give it a condition to check along with an optional message to print if the check fails. At runtime – even in release mode – Swift will run the check for you and crash if the check fails.

For example:

```
precondition(users.count > 0, "There must be at least one user.")
```

Whereas **assert()** should be used liberally to make sure your program is always in a sane state, **precondition()** should be used much more infrequently because it will still crash your app in release mode. That's not always a bad thing, particularly if bad state means something is seriously corrupted, but you should definitely use it more carefully.

How to compare dates

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift's **Date** struct conforms to both **Equatable** and **Comparable**, which means you check two dates for equality and compare them to see which is earlier.

In practice, this means you can use `<`, `>`, and `==` to compare them just like you would do with strings and integers. Try this in a playground:

```
let now = Date()
let soon = Date().addingTimeInterval(5000)

now == soon
now != soon
now < soon
now > soon
```

How to compare two tuples for equality

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift 2.2 introduced the ability to compare two tuples up to arity six, which means the tuples can contain no more than six elements. To compare tuples, just use the `==` operator, like this:

```
let singer = ("Taylor", "Swift")
let alien = ("Justin", "Bieber")

if singer == alien {
    print("Matching tuples!")
} else {
    print("Non-matching tuples!")
}
```

Warning: if you use labels, these are not evaluated when comparing two tuples. So, the code below will print "Matching tuples!" even though the labels are different:

```
let taylor = (first: "Taylor", last: "Swift")
```

```

let bird = (name: "Taylor", type: "Swift")

if taylor == bird {
    print("Matching tuples!")
} else {
    print("Non-matching tuples!")
}

```

How to conform to the Comparable protocol

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **Comparable** protocol allows use to use the `<`, `>`, `<=`, and `>=` operators with conforming data types, which in turn means that Swift knows how to sort arrays of those types. Most of Swift's built-in types support **Comparable** out of the box, but if you want your own type to conform to them then you need to implement `<` – from that Swift can provide default implementations of the other three operators.

The `<` function needs to accept two instances of your type, one of the left-hand side and one on the right, and return true if the left-hand object should be ordered before the right-hand object.

As an example, consider this simple **Person** struct:

```

struct Person {
    var name: String
}

```

That has one property called **name**, and we're going to make **Person** conform to the **Comparable** protocol based on that property. This means writing a static method called `<` that takes two instances of **Person** and internally compares the **name** properties of each of them:

```

struct Person: Comparable {
    var name: String
}

```

```
    static func <(lhs: Person, rhs: Person) -> Bool {
        return lhs.name < rhs.name
    }
}
```

With that in place you can now use `<` to compare two instances of **Person** like this:

```
let taylor = Person(name: "Taylor Swift")
let justin = Person(name: "Justin Bieber")
print(taylor < justin)
```

How to conform to the Equatable protocol

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **Equatable** protocol is what allows two objects to be compared using `==`, and it's surprisingly easy to implement because Swift does most of the work for you by default.

First, here's a struct we can work with:

```
struct Person {
    var name: String
    var age: String
}
```

To make that **Equatable** you need to add the **Equatable** conformance like this:

```
struct Person: Equatable {
    var name: String
    var age: String
}
```

If you don't want to check all properties for equality, or if any of your properties are not also

Equatable, then you need to write your own `==` function like this:

```
static func ==(lhs: Person, rhs: Person) -> Bool {  
    return lhs.name == rhs.name && lhs.age == rhs.age  
}
```

Put that *inside* the **Person** struct. Because that's your own function you can make it do any comparisons you like. Swift's default **Equatable** implementation will check all properties for equality, so if you have one property that is guaranteed to be unique adding your own **Equatable** implementation is a good idea.

How to conform to the **Hashable** protocol

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

In Swift, conforming to the **Hashable** protocol is often just as easy as adding **Hashable** to your conformance list. However, if you have custom requirements, or use properties that don't all conform to **Hashable**, it takes a little more work.

Here's an example struct we can work with:

```
struct iPad: Hashable {  
    var serialNumber: String  
    var capacity: Int  
}
```

Because that conforms to the **Hashable** protocol and both its properties also conform to the **Hashable** protocol, Swift will generate a **hash(into:)** method automatically.

However, in this case we can see that **serialNumber** is enough to identify each iPad uniquely so hashing **capacity** isn't needed. So, we can write our own implementation of **hash(into:)** that hashes just that one property:

```
func hash(into hasher: inout Hasher) {
```

```
    hasher.combine(serialNumber)
}
```

You can add more properties to your hash by calling `combine()` repeatedly, and the order in which you add properties affects the finished hash value.

Swift uses a random seed every time it hashes an object, which means the hash value for any object is effectively guaranteed to be different between runs of your app.

This in turn means that elements you add to a set or a dictionary are highly likely to have a different order each time you run your app.

How to constrain a protocol associated type

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Protocol associated types let you add a huge amount of flexibility to your protocols, but sometimes you want a little *less* flexibility. For example, you might say that all types conforming to a protocol must specify the `id` of their object and also what type that ID must be:

```
protocol Identifiable1 {
    associatedtype ID
    var id: ID { get set }
}
```

With that code, `ID` could be anything – a `String`, an `Int`, a `UILabel`, and so on. However, you might find you need to apply some constraints to that type: perhaps you need to use it as a dictionary key (`Hashable`), or sort it in an array (`Comparable`).

To make this work, Swift lets us apply constraints to associated types: “it can be any type, as long as that type conforms to...”. For example, this forces `ID` to conform to `Hashable`:

```
protocol Identifiable2 {
    associatedtype ID: Hashable
```

```
var id: ID { get set }
}
```

Because **Hashable** inherits from **Equatable** we can now be sure that any types used for **ID** can be compared using `==` and also used as keys in dictionaries.

How to convert Data to a String

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you know an instance of **Data** contains a **String** and you want to convert it, you should use the **String(decoding:as:)** initializer, like this:

```
let str = String(decoding: data, as: UTF8.self)
```

If the **Data** instance can't be converted to a UTF-8 string, you'll get sent back an empty string. This means you do need to know which format is used to store the string, but UTF-8 is usually the best to go with.

How to convert JSON into Swift objects using Codable

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift's **Codable** protocol makes it easy to convert JSON to native Swift structs and classes – just design data types that hold the same keys and values as your JSON, then use **JSONDecoder** to convert.

Here's some example JSON we can work with:

```
let jsonString = """
[
```

```

        "name": "Taylor Swift",
        "age": 26
    },
    {
        "name": "Justin Bieber",
        "age": 25
    }
]
"""
let jsonData = Data(jsonString.utf8)

```

That stores two people in an array, each with a name and an age.

We need to make a matching Swift struct that can hold those fields. The only requirement **Codable** has is that all the properties inside the struct also conform to **Codable** – in our case that's a string and an integer, so we're all set.

Start by adding this type:

```

struct Person: Codable {
    var name: String
    var age: Int
}

```

Now we can go ahead and decide the JSON data into an array of that **Person** struct. This is a throwing operation, so you need to use **try**. Here's some example code:

```

let decoder = JSONDecoder()

do {
    let people = try decoder.decode([Person].self, from:
jsonData)
    print(people)
} catch {

```

```
    print(error.localizedDescription)
}
```

That will result in **people** storing the two items from the JSON, except now they are parsed into Swift types so we can refer to them in a type-safe way.

How to convert a String to Data

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Many APIs, such as **Codable**, rely on their text input being provided as a **Data** rather than a **String**, but fortunately it only takes one line of code to make that conversion:

```
let data = Data(someString.utf8)
```

How to convert a Substring to a String

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift has a dedicated **Substring** type (**String.SubSequence**) that is designed to hold slices of strings, which is a performance optimization: when you store part of a string in a different variable, Swift can simply point the substring at the parent string rather than copy all the data.

However, while substrings can be used in many of the same ways as regular strings, they aren't the same – if you have a function that accepts a **String** as a parameter, you simply cannot send it a **Substring**.

To fix this, you can wrap your substring in a **String** initializer like this:

```
let quote = "The revolution will be Swift"
let substring = quote.dropFirst(23)
let realString = String(substring)
```

How to convert a float to a CGFloat

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The **Float** and **CGFloat** data types sound so similar you might think they were identical, but they aren't: **CGFloat** is flexible in that its precision adapts to the type of device it's running on, whereas **Float** is always a fixed precision. Thus, you never lose precision converting from **Float** to **CGFloat**, whereas you might going the other way.

To convert, just use the **CGFloat** constructor, like this:

```
let myCGFloat = CGFloat(myFloat)
```

How to convert a float to an int

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

You can convert between a **Float** and an **Int** just by using the integer's constructor, like this:

```
let myFloat: Float = 10.756
let myInt = Int(myFloat)
```

Note that when you do this, your number will automatically be rounded downwards. In the example above, the integer will be 10, not 11.

How to convert a string to a double

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift strings don't have a built-in way to convert to a **Double**, but their **NSString** counterparts

do. To convert between strings and doubles, just do this:

```
let myString = "556"  
let myFloat = (myString as NSString).doubleValue
```

How to convert a string to a float

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

There are several ways to convert between a string and a **Float**, but the easiest way is to use **NSString** as an intermediate because that comes with several helpers built right in:

```
let myString = "556"  
let myFloat = (myString as NSString).floatValue
```

How to convert a string to an NSString

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

When Swift originally launched, **NSString** (older iOS strings) and native Swift strings were completely interchangeable, as were **NSArray** and Swift arrays, plus **NSDictionary** and Swift dictionaries. This got changed in Swift 1.2 so that you need to explicitly cast between these data types, and this remains the same in Swift today.

So, to cast between Swift strings and **NSString**, you need to do a simple typecast like this:

```
let str = "Hello"  
let otherStr = str as NSString
```

Note that you don't need to force the typecast because the two data types are still interoperable.

How to convert a string to an int

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you have an integer hiding inside a string, you can convert between the two just by using the integer's constructor, like this:

```
let myString1 = "556"  
let myInt1 = Int(myString1)
```

Because strings might contain something that isn't a number – e.g. “Fish” rather than “556” – the **Int** initializer will return an optional integer, so if you want to force a value you should use nil coalescing like this:

```
let myInt2 = Int(myString) ?? 0
```

As with other data types (**Float** and **Double**) it's also possible to convert by using **NSString** if you're desperate:

```
let myInt3 = (myString1 as NSString).integerValue
```

Ideally, though, that shouldn't needed.

How to convert an NSRange to a Swift string index

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift strings have changed in every release since the language was first announced, but even after so much change its older counterpart, **NSRange**, still appears in many UIKit APIs.

Fortunately, Swift 4 introduced a simple way to convert any **NSRange** into a regular Swift **Range**. For example, say you had the following string and range:

```
let input = "Hello, world"
```

```
let range = NSMakeRange(0, 10)
```

To make that into a Swift **Range** instance you just need this single line of code:

```
let swiftRange = Range(range, in: input)
```

How to convert an int to a float

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift's **Float** data type has a built-in constructor that can convert from integers with no extra work from you. For example, to convert the integer 556 into its **Float** equivalent, you'd use this:

```
let myInt = 556
let myFloat = Float(myInt)
```

How to convert an int to a string

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift's string interpolation means you can convert all sorts of data – including integers – to a string in just one line of code:

```
let str1 = "\(myInt)"
```

However, the more common way is just to use the string initializer, like this:

```
let str2 = String(myInt)
```

How to convert degrees to radians

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Most users think about angles in terms of degrees from 0 to 360, but internally most of iOS works in radians so you'll need to do some conversion. The equation to convert between the two is simple enough: multiply the number by Pi, then divide the result by 180.

To make things easier, drop in this function:

```
func deg2rad(_ number: Double) -> Double {  
    return number * .pi / 180  
}
```

You can now use **deg2rad(90)** to find 90 degrees in radians.

How to convert radians to degrees

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Most angles in iOS are measured using radians rather than degrees, but the majority of users prefer to see degrees so you'll need to do some conversion. The equation to convert between the two is simple enough: multiply the number by 180, then divide the result by Pi.

To make things easier, drop in this function:

```
func rad2deg(_ number: Double) -> Double {  
    return number * 180 / .pi  
}
```

You can now use **rad2deg(5)** to find 5 radians in degrees.

How to count element frequencies in an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you have an array containing various elements and you want to count how often each item appears, you can do so by combining the **map()** method with a **Dictionary** initializer.

First, create an array of items:

```
let items = ["a", "b", "a", "c"]
```

Second, convert that to an array of key-value pairs using tuples, where each value is the number 1:

```
let mappedItems = items.map { ($0, 1) }
```

Finally, create a **Dictionary** from that tuple array, asking it to add the 1s together every time it finds a duplicate key:

```
let counts = Dictionary(mappedItems, uniquingKeysWith: +)
```

That will create the dictionary `["b": 1, "a": 2, "c": 1]` because dictionaries are not stored in order – as you can see, it tells us that “a” appeared twice, while the other two appeared once.

How to count matching items in an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you want to count how many items in an array (or any collection) match a test you specify, the easiest thing to do is run the collection through a call to **filter()** then count the remainder.

For example, if you had an array of numbers and wanted to count how many were odd, you would write this:

```
let count1 = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5].filter { $0 % 2 == 1 }.count
```

Because this is something that all collections might want to do, you should consider wrapping it in an extension on **Collection**, like this:

```
extension Collection {
    func count(where test: (Element) throws -> Bool) rethrows ->
        Int {
        return try self.filter(test).count
    }
}
```

With that change, counting the odd numbers becomes this:

```
let count2 = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5].count { $0 % 2 == 1 }
```

How to create a custom OptionSet

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Option sets are similar to enums, but they are designed to work as a set so you can use more than one at a time. For example, when using the **range(of:)** method of a string, you can specify **.caseInsensitive** to have the search ignore case, you can specify **.backwards** to have the search start from the end of the string, or you can combine the two:

```
let string = "The rain in Spain"
let range = string.range(of: "rain", options:
    [.caseInsensitive, .backwards])
```

That searches through the string backwards and ignoring case – we provided both options at the same time. This functionality looks like an enum, but it can also be treated as an array; Swift figures it out for you.

You can write your own by making a custom struct that conforms to the **OptionSet** protocol, and it doesn't take much:

1. Create a constant describing what the underlying value is – it's normally an integer, but you need to be specific.
2. Make static instances of your struct for each option you want to represent.
3. Each of those should have a unique raw value, so it's common to use bit-shifting to avoid mistakes.
4. Add any groups of those instances as new statics.

To demonstrate this, let's create a **UserRoles** struct that defines roles a user might have in a GitHub account: they can create things, destroy things, and get the status of things.

All three of those roles need unique raw values, so we're going to use bit shifting – `1 << 0`, `1 << 1`, and so on – to make that clear.

Here's how it looks in Swift:

```
struct UserRoles: OptionSet {
    let rawValue: Int

    static let status = UserRoles(rawValue: 1 << 0)
    static let create = UserRoles(rawValue: 1 << 1)
    static let destroy = UserRoles(rawValue: 1 << 2)
    static let all: UserRoles = [.status, .create, .destroy]
}
```

You can now use any of those roles by themselves or in an array:

```
let roles1: UserRoles = [.create]
let roles2: UserRoles = [.create, .destroy]
let roles3: UserRoles = [.create, .destroy, .status]
let roles4 = UserRoles.all
```

How to create a custom debug description

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift lets you print all types of data, but some data is more useful than others thanks to the **CustomDebugStringConvertible** protocol. If you write a type conforming to that protocol, you must include a **debugDescription** string property that describes how instances of this type should be represented while debugging.

To test this out, we're going to create a **Player** struct that stores a player's name. When we try to debug an instance of this struct – i.e., print it out, or hover over it in the debugger – we just want the player's name to come back, for easier debugging.

Try adding this struct to a playground:

```
struct Player: CustomDebugStringConvertible {
    var name: String = "@twostraws"

    var debugDescription: String {
        return name
    }
}
```

You can now create instances of that struct and print them out to see the player name:

```
let player = Player()
print(player)
```

How to create an Objective-C bridging header to use code in Swift

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you want to use Objective-C code in your Swift app – and let's face it, that's going to happen quite a lot! – then you need to create a bridging header that allows your Swift code to work with your Objective-C code.

To create an Objective-C bridging header file, all you need to do is drag some Objective-C code into your Swift project – Xcode should prompt you with the message "Would you like to configure an Objective-C bridging header?" Click "Creating Bridging Header" and you'll see a file called **YourProjectName-Bridging-Header.h** appear in your project.

But that's only half the problem: Xcode has created the bridging header and modified your build settings so that it gets used, but it hasn't actually put anything into it. If you want to start using your Objective-C code in Swift, you need to add import lines to that bridging header file, like this:

```
#import "YourFile.h"
```

You can add as many of these as you want, and indeed you'll want to import all the Objective-C code you want to use in Swift.

How to create an array by repeating an item

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you need to create an array of a specific size holding some default values, Swift has a built-in initializer called **repeating:count:**. You tell it what to repeat, and how often, and Swift will generate an array of that size.

For example, this creates an array of 100 items, all containing 0:

```
let numbers1 = [Int](repeating: 0, count: 100)
```

You can even use this initializer to create multi-dimensional arrays, for example an array of arrays of numbers:

```
let numbers2 = [[Int]](repeating: [Int](repeating: 0, count: 100), count: 100)
```

You can use this when creating a game board: mark all rows and columns as being 0 for a

100x100 board, then fill in squares as the game proceeds.

How to create hash values from objects using Hasher

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Hash values are an invaluable way of identifying data uniquely, and any type that conforms to the **Hashable** protocol can be used to create all or part of a hash value by using the **Hasher** struct.

To use this, create an instance of **Hasher**, provide it with whatever objects you want to hash, then call **finalize()** to generate the final value as an integer. For example:

```
struct iPad: Hashable {
    var serialNumber: String
    var capacity: Int
}

let first = iPad(serialNumber: "12345", capacity: 128)
let second = iPad(serialNumber: "abcde", capacity: 512)

var hasher = Hasher()
hasher.combine(first)
hasher.combine(second)
let hash = hasher.finalize()
```

How to create multi-line string literals

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

By default Swift strings can't span more than one line. One simple way around this is to use the new line character **\n**, but that only works for strings that are displayed – if you're just

trying to format your string nicely, you should use multi-line strings instead.

Multi-line strings work similarly to regular strings in that they support things like string interpolation, but they have the added benefit that they can be spread over as many lines as you need.

To start a string literal, you need to write three double quotation marks, """"", then press return. You can then go ahead and write a string as long as you want, including variables and line breaks, before ending your string by pressing return then writing three more double quotation marks.

I've been specific about pressing return because string literals have two important rules: when you open a string using """" the content of your string must begin on a new line, and when you end a multi-line string using """" that must also begin on a new line.

Here it is in action:

```
let longString = """
When you write a string that spans multiple
lines make sure you start its content on a
line all of its own, and end it with three
quotes also on a line of their own.
Multi-line strings also let you write "quote marks"
freely inside your strings, which is great!
"""

```

That creates a new string with several line breaks right there in the definition – much easier to read and write.

How to delay execution of code using the defer keyword

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The **defer** keyword is new in Swift 2 and lets you schedule some code to be run at a later date.

That later date is when your code exits its current scope, which might be when a function returns or at the end of a loop, for example.

If you've used other programming languages, **defer** will seem similar to **try/finally**. Any code you defer will run no matter what, even if you throw an exception.

In the example code below, the **closeFile()** function will get called no matter how the **writeLog()** function ends:

```
func writeLog() {
    let file = openFile()
    defer { closeFile(file) }

    let hardwareStatus = fetchHardwareStatus()
    guard hardwareStatus != "disaster" else { return }
    file.write(hardwareStatus)

    let softwareStatus = fetchSoftwareStatus()
    guard softwareStatus != "disaster" else { return }
    file.write(softwareStatus)

    let networkStatus = fetchNetworkStatus()
    guard networkStatus != "disaster" else { return }
    file.write(networkStatus)
}
```

How to detect when the system is under pressure and you should reduce your work

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

You can – and should – read the thermal state of your device before doing any intensive work, because if the system is already under pressure you might find your app becomes

unresponsive, even with basic things like animations.

You can read the current thermal state using `ProcessInfo.processInfo.thermalState`, which has four values:

- When it's `.nominal` you can proceed as normal and do all the work you want.
- When it's `.fair` you should consider delaying any work that isn't visible to users.
- When it's `.serious` the system is working at high capacity and you should scale back the CPU, GPU, and I/O work you do.
- When it's `.critical` the system is unable to keep up with all the work that is being done, so your user interface is likely to stutter – now is a bad time to do any sort of animation.

The latter two of those are important to monitor, because users *will* notice – at `.critical` level you can expect their device to be hot to the touch, so hopefully your app isn't the cause of that!

How to filter a loop using a where clause

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

A regular **for-in** loop goes over all the items in an array, allowing you to manipulate them as you need. However, sometimes you don't need *all* items and instead only want a subset, and in those circumstances the **where** keyword is useful.

For example, consider this array:

```
let names = ["Michael Jackson", "Taylor Swift", "Michael Caine", "Adele Adkins", "Michael Jordan"]
```

A regular **for-in** loop could print out all those names, but by adding a **where** clause we could restrict the loop so it operates only on people named Michael:

```
for name in names where name.hasPrefix("Michael") {  
    print(name)
```

```
}
```

If you need multiple conditions in your **where** clause, join them using **&&**.

How to find the difference between two arrays

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you have two arrays that contain similar items and want to find out their differences – i.e., which items exist in one or the other, but not both – the easiest thing to do is use a **Set**. Sets have a **symmetricDifference()** method that does exactly this, so you just need to convert both arrays to a set, then convert the result back into an array.

Here's an extension to make it easier:

```
extension Array where Element: Hashable {
    func difference(from other: [Element]) -> [Element] {
        let thisSet = Set(self)
        let otherSet = Set(other)
        return Array(thisSet.symmetricDifference(otherSet))
    }
}
```

And here's some example code you can use to try it out:

```
let names1 = ["John", "Paul", "Ringo"]
let names2 = ["Ringo", "Paul", "George"]
let difference = names1.difference(from: names2)
```

That will set **difference** to be **["George", "John"]**, because those are the two names that only appear once in either array.

How to find the first matching element in an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **first()** method exists on all sequences, and returns the first item in a sequence that passes a test you specify.

For example, given the following array:

```
let scores = [80, 100, 80, 85]
```

We could write code to find the first score that was over 85:

```
let firstHigh = scores.first { $0 > 85 }
```

How to find the highest value in an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

All arrays have a built-in method called **max()**, which returns the highest item in the array.

This comes with a default implementation if the elements of the array conform to

Comparable: it will simply compare all items until it finds the one that compares highest.

For example, this code puts 5 into the **max** constant:

```
let numbers = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
let max = numbers.max()
```

Note: because **max()** can be called on an empty array, it returns an *optional* – you need to check and unwrap it yourself.

How to find the index of the first matching array element

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you have an array of items and want to find the first item that matches a specific condition, you should use the **index(where:)** method. This accepts a closure of code to use as a test, applies that test to all elements in an array, then returns the index of the first item to match it. If no item matches you'll get back nil, so be prepared to unwrap the optional you get sent back.

For example, if we had an array of numbers:

```
let numbers = [2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10]
```

We could find the first odd number like this:

```
let firstOdd = numbers.index { $0 % 2 == 1 }
```

That will send back 4 as an optional integer, because the first odd number (9) is at index four.

How to find the longest initial sequence in an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

One of Swift's lesser-known functions is **prefix(while:)**: call this on an array along with a test to apply, and it will return as many items from the start of the array as it can, stopping only when it reaches the first element that fails your test.

For example, if we had an array of test scores:

```
let scores = [89, 86, 96, 78, 92, 100]
```

We could use **prefix(while:)** to return all scores over 85 that occurred before the first score below 85 – i.e., find me all the passing scores that took place before the first person failed.

Here's that in Swift:

```
let initialPasses1 = scores.prefix { $0 > 85 }
```

You can apply any test you want, and sometimes you'll get back an empty array if the very first element fails your test. For example, this will return an empty array:

```
let initialPasses2 = scores.prefix { $0 < 85 }
```

How to find the maximum of three numbers

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

The easiest way to find the maximum of three numbers is to use the **max()** function twice: once with your first two numbers, and again with your third number and the result of the first call. Here's an example:

```
let first = 10
let second = 15
let third = 18

let largest = max(max(first, second), third)
```

How to find the maximum of two numbers

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

To find the largest of any two integers, use the **max()** function like this:

```
let first = 10
let second = 15

let largest = max(first, second)
```

This also works with floating-point numbers, as long as both numbers are floats – you can't

mix data types.

How to find the minimum of three numbers

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You can find the minimum of three numbers by using the **min()** function twice. This function takes either two integers or two floating-point numbers, but can't accept mixed types. Here's an example:

```
let first = 10
let second = 15
let third = 18

let smallest = min(min(first, second), third)
```

How to find the minimum of two numbers

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

To find the minimum of two numbers, either both integer or both floating point (not mixed!), use the **min()** function. For example:

```
let first = 10
let second = 15

let smallest = min(first, second)
```

How to fix the error “Expression was too complex to be solved in

reasonable time”

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift’s use of type inference makes our code shorter and easier to read, but it also chews up a lot of CPU time. Sometimes a value could be one of several types, and if it gets used with another things that could be one of several types then the amount of work Swift has to do multiplies. If Swift encounters something with so many possibilities that it simply can’t figure it out after about 15 seconds, it throws an error instead: “Expression was too complex to be solved in reasonable time; consider breaking up the expression into distinct sub-expressions.”

This is something the Swift team are working to improve with every new version of Swift, and there’s no real fixed cut-off for when the compiler will throw this error. Fortunately, this error message tells you exactly what you need to do to fix the problem: break up the expression into multiple subexpressions.

For example, this kind of code takes almost 2 seconds to compile on a modern Mac:

```
let sum = [1, 2, 3].map { String($0) }.compactMap  
{ Int($0) }.reduce(0, +)
```

On older Macs Swift would really struggle, so you’d be wise to break it up into multiple subexpressions like this:

```
let numbers = [1, 2, 3]  
let stringNumbers = numbers.map { String($0) }  
let intNumbers = stringNumbers.flatMap { Int($0) }  
let sum = intNumbers.reduce(0, +)
```

How to fix the error “protocol can only be used as a generic constraint because it has Self or associated type requirements”

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Protocols with associated types are a powerful, if somewhat treacherous, feature of Swift.

Sometimes it's fair to say that the only winning move is not to play – i.e., to avoid them entirely – but if that isn't the case you are sometimes likely to find yourself facing a difficult error: “protocol can only be used as a generic constraint because it has Self or associated type requirements.”

As an example, here's a protocol with an associated type:

```
protocol Identifiable {
    associatedtype ID
    var id: ID { get set }
}
```

So, whatever type wants to conform to **Identifiable** must state which type they use to identify themselves. We could create two instances of such types like this:

```
struct Person: Identifiable {
    var id: String
}

struct Website: Identifiable {
    var id: URL
}
```

That is, people identify themselves using a **String**, and websites use a **URL**. So far, so easy. However, if you want to write a function using **Identifiable** as parameters you'll hit a problem. For example, you might try to write a function that compares two instances of **Identifiable** like this:

```
func compareThing1(_ thing1: Identifiable, against thing2: Identifiable) -> Bool {
    return true
}
```

That will issue the error “protocol 'Identifiable' can only be used as a generic constraint because it has Self or associated type requirements.”

The reason for the error is simple enough: although **thing1** and **thing2** being passed into the function both conform to **Identifiable** that doesn't make them usable in the same way – the **id** of a person and the **id** of a website are completely different types, so there's no meaningful way you can use them together.

As the error says, this protocol can be used only as a generic constraint. That's actually pointing us to the solution here: if we use **Identifiable** as a generic constraint then we can tell Swift not only that **thing1** and **thing2** conform to the protocol but also that they are actually the same type.

```
func compareThing1<T: Identifiable>(_ thing1: T, against
thing2: T) -> Bool {
    return true
}
```

That code fixes the problem, because Swift has enough information to know how you plan to use **thing1** and **thing2**.

How to fix “argument of #selector refers to instance method that is not exposed to Objective-C”

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Swift 4 changed the way Swift interacts with Objective-C in a way that will impact the code of most developers. Fortunately, there are a couple of fixes available, neither of which take too long to implement.

First, let's take a look at what's changed and why. In Swift 3 all methods from a class were automatically compiled so that they were available both to Swift code and to Objective-C code, which maximized compatibility.

However, that had a cost. Here's what Doug Gregor wrote when proposing the change for Swift 4:

There is a cost for each Objective-C entry point, because the Swift compiler must create a "thunk" method that maps from the Objective-C calling convention to the Swift calling convention and is recorded within Objective-C metadata. This increases the size of the binary (preliminary tests on some Cocoa[Touch] apps found that 6-8% of binary size was in these thunks alone, some of which are undoubtedly unused), and can have some impact on load time (the dynamic linker has to sort through the Objective-C metadata for these thunks).

So, all these thunk methods had to be generated whether or not they were used, which wasn't ideal. As of Swift 4, this has been dramatically scaled down so that these thunks are generated only when absolutely required, which means any time you write Swift code that needs to be called from Objective-C you will need to tell Swift what to do.

If you don't think this happens often, here are some examples:

```
navigationItem.leftBarButtonItem =
UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target: self,
action: #selector(addSong))

let tap = UITapGestureRecognizer(target: self, action:
#selector(userDoubleTapped))

let timer = Timer.scheduledTimer(timeInterval: 10, target:
self, selector: #selector(chooseNewSong), userInfo: nil,
repeats: true)

performSelector(inBackground: #selector(checkWikipedia), with:
nil)

NotificationCenter.default.addObserver(self, selector:
#selector(userLeavingApp), name:
UIApplication.willResignActiveNotification, object: nil)

let lookup = UIBarButtonItem(title: "Applause", action:
#selector(applaudGreatMusic))
```

```
undoManager?.registerUndo(withTarget: self, selector:  
#selector(undoPlaying), object: nil)
```

All seven of those examples ask some Objective-C code (e.g. **NotificationCenter** or **Timer**) to call our Swift code, which means all seven of those will stop working in Swift 4 unless you take action.

The error you'll see looks like this: "Argument of '#selector' refers to instance method 'addSong()' that is not exposed to Objective-C," and your code will refuse to build until you choose a solution. The key there is the **#selector** part: that's the giveaway that you'll need to use **@objc** with whatever method is being called.

So, that's the problem and why it even exists. Let's turn to the solutions, and there are two to choose from.

First, you can mark individual methods using the **@objc** attribute, like this:

```
class Printer {  
    @objc func print() {  
        // code  
    }  
}
```

That instructs the Swift compiler to make an Objective-C thunk for that one method. This means you retain nearly all the performance benefits of the new Swift 4 approach – the thunk is generated only when needed.

The second option is to use the **@objcMembers** attribute on your whole class or struct, like this:

```
@objcMembers class ViewController: UIViewController {  
    // code  
}
```

That tells Swift to automatically generate Objective-C thunks for all methods in the class, so

you don't need to mark them individually using `@objc`.

Now, there are two important times when `@objc` isn't needed:

1. When you're using `@IBAction` to connect an event from a storyboard. The `@IBAction` attribute automatically implies `@objc`, so you don't need both.
2. When you're implementing a method from an Objective-C protocol, that automatically implies `@objc` because it doesn't make sense otherwise.

Remember, if `@objc` is required but not present, Xcode will refuse to build your code – it's not the kind of thing you can just forget.

Honestly, I think it's sad that one of the world's most progressive languages is having to look backwards like this, but it looks like we're stuck with this change.

How to force a crash using `fatalError()`

Availability: iOS or later.

Swift has a built-in function called `fatalError()`, which forces your application to crash. This might sound useful, but bear with me – this is an indispensable function for anyone serious about writing good Swift.

The `fatalError()` function has a special return type called `Never`, which Swift understands as meaning execution will never continue after this function has been called. As a result, you can use `fatalError()` in methods that return a value but you have nothing sensible to return.

For example, the `cellForRowAt` method must return a `UITableViewCell`, but what happens if you dequeue a reusable cell and try to conditionally typecast it to your custom cell type, only for that to fail?

Normally you might try to return an empty, unconfigured cell, but that doesn't really make much sense – if you got a bad cell back you have a bug, and trying to limp along will just cause issues.

Fortunately, **fatalError()** can fix that: if your typecast fails you can call **fatalError()** with a message explaining what happened, and if the typecast fails your app will terminate.

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    guard let cell =
        tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Cell", for: indexPath) as? MyCustomCell else {
            fatalError("Failed to load a MyCustomCell from the table.")
    }

    return cell
}
```

Obviously you never want that code to get hit in production, but using **fatalError()** helps stop that from happening – you will now get a very obvious problem in development if things aren't going well.

How to force your program to crash with **assert()**

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

This might seem like a strange topic – after all, why would anyone want their program to crash? Well, the answer is two-fold.

First, if something has gone wrong that leaves your program in an unsafe state, continuing might mean corrupting user data.

Second, if you're debugging your app (i.e., it's still in development), having your app refuse to continue if a serious problem is found is a huge advantage and a very common way to spot problems.

Swift lets you force an app crash using the **assert()** function. This takes two parameters: a

condition to check, and a message to print if the assertion fails. Helpfully, any calls to **assert()** are ignored when your app is compiled in release mode (i.e., for the App Store), which means these checks have no impact on your code's final performance.

Here are two examples of **assert()** being used:

```
assert(1 == 1, "Maths failure!")
assert(1 == 2, "Maths failure!")
```

The first one asserts that 1 is equal to 1, which is clearly true, so nothing will happen. The second one asserts that 1 is equal to 2, which is clearly false, so that assertion will fail: your app will halt, and the message "Maths failure!" will be printed out to help you identify the problem.

Because assertions are ignored in release builds, you don't need to worry about running expensive checks in your assertions. For example:

```
assert(myReallySlowMethod() == false, "The slow method returned
false, which is a bad thing!")
```

In release builds, that code will never be run, so you won't see any performance impact.

How to format JSON using **Codable** and pretty printing

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

When you use **JSONEncoder** and **Codable** to create JSON from your Swift data, it comes out in a compressed format by default – it has all its excess whitespace removed. This makes it efficient for transferring over the network, but hard to debug because it's just a big jumble of words.

For debugging purposes, it's a good idea to enable pretty printing for your encoded JSON, which will tell **JSONEncoder** to separate everything using line breaks and spaces so you can read it more easily.

To make this happen, set the **outputFormatting** property of your JSON encoder to be **.prettyPrinted**, like this:

```
let encoder = JSONEncoder()
encoder.outputFormatting = .prettyPrinted
```

How to generate a random number

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

You can generate random numbers by calling the **random()** method on whatever numeric type you’re using, providing the range you want to work with. For example, this generates a random number in the range 1 through 5, inclusive on both sides:

```
let randomInt = Int.random(in: 1...5)
```

Similar methods exist for **Double**, **Float**, and **CGFloat**:

```
let randomDouble = Double.random(in: 1...100)
let randomFloat = Float.random(in: 1..<10)
let randomCGFloat = CGFloat.random(in: 1...1000)
```

There’s also one for booleans, generating true or false randomly:

```
let randomBool = Bool.random()
```

Checking a random boolean is effectively the same as checking **Int.random(in: 0...1) == 1**, but it helps clarify your intent.

How to get a random element from an array using randomElement()

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift's arrays, sets, and dictionaries have a **randomElement()** method that returns one random item from the collection. Because your collection might be empty, the return type will be *optional* and you'll get back **nil** if the collection had nothing in it.

For example:

```
let numbers = [100, 80, 85]

if let winner = numbers.randomElement() {
    print("The winning number is \(winner).")
}
```

How to group arrays using dictionaries

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you have an array of items and want to group them according to some criteria, Swift has a special dictionary initializer just for you.

Here's an example sequence we can work with:

```
let singers = ["Ed Sheeran", "Ariana Grande", "Taylor Swift",
"Adele Adkins"]
```

We can now create a dictionary that groups those singers together by the length of their names:

```
let groupedByLength = Dictionary(grouping: singers)
{ $0.count }
```

That will put Taylor and Adele into an array under the “12” key, Ariana under 13, and Ed under 10.

Alternatively, we could group them by the first letters of each of their names:

```
let groupedByFirst = Dictionary(grouping: singers)
{ $0.first! }
```

How to handle unknown properties and methods using @dynamicMemberLookup

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift has always had strong focus on type safety, but sometimes you need to be able to work with data where the structure isn't known ahead of time.

To handle this situation, Swift has an attribute called **@dynamicMemberLookup**, which instructs Swift to call a subscript method when accessing properties. This subscript method, **subscript(dynamicMember:)**, is *required* when using the **@dynamicMemberLookup** attribute – you'll get passed the string name of the property that was requested, and can return any value you like.

To help you understand the basics, here's an example that creates a **Person** struct that reads its values from a dictionary:

```
@dynamicMemberLookup
struct Person {
    subscript(dynamicMember member: String) -> String {
        let properties = ["name": "Taylor Swift", "city":
"Nashville"]
        return properties[member, default: ""]
    }
}
```

The **@dynamicMemberLookup** attribute requires the type to implement a **subscript(dynamicMember:)** method to handle the work of dynamic member lookup. As you can see, I've written one that accepts the member name as string and returns a string, and internally it just looks up the member name in a dictionary and returns its value.

That struct allows us to write code like this:

```
let person = Person()
print(person.name)
print(person.city)
print(person.nameOfPet)
```

That will compile cleanly and run, even though **name**, **city**, and **nameOfPet** do not exist as properties on the **Person** type. Instead, they are all looked up at runtime: that code will print “Taylor Swift” and “Nashville” for the first two calls to **print()**, then an empty string for the final one because our dictionary doesn’t store anything for **nameOfPet**.

This **subscript(dynamicMember:)** method *must* return a string, which is what enforces Swift’s type safety – even though you’re still dealing with dynamic data, Swift will ensure you get back what you expected.

If you want multiple different types, just implement different **subscript(dynamicMember:)** methods:

```
@dynamicMemberLookup
struct Employee {
    subscript(dynamicMember member: String) -> String {
        let properties = ["name": "Taylor Swift", "city": "Nashville"]
        return properties[member, default: ""]
    }

    subscript(dynamicMember member: String) -> Int {
        let properties = ["age": 26, "height": 178]
        return properties[member, default: 0]
    }
}
```

Now that any property can be accessed in more than one way, it’s important that you are clear which one should be used. That might be implicit, for example if you send the return value into

a function that accepts only strings, or it might be explicit, like this:

```
let employee = Employee()  
let age: Int = employee.age
```

Either way, Swift must know for sure which subscript will be called.

You can also overload **subscript** to return closures:

```
@dynamicMemberLookup  
struct User {  
    subscript(dynamicMember member: String) -> (_ input: String)  
-> Void {  
    return {  
        print("Hello! I live at the address \(member).")  
    }  
}  
}  
  
let user = User()  
user.printAddress("123 Swift Street")
```

When that's run, `user.printAddress` returns a closure that prints out a string, and the ("123 Swift Street") part immediately calls it with that input.

Using dynamic member subscripting in a type that has also regular properties and methods will result in those properties and methods always being used in place of the dynamic member. For example, we could define a **Singer** struct with a built-in **name** property alongside a dynamic member subscript:

```
struct Singer {  
    public var name = "Ed Sheeran"  
  
    subscript(dynamicMember member: String) -> String {  
        return "Taylor Swift"
```

```
    }
}

let singer = Singer()
print(singer.name)
```

That code prints “Ed Sheeran”, because the **name** property will always be used rather than the dynamic member subscript.

How to ignore return values using **@discardableResult**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Many functions return values, but sometimes you don’t care what the return value is – you might want to ignore it sometimes, and use it other times.

As an example, Swift’s dictionaries have an **updateValue()** method that lets you change the value for a given key. If the key was found you’ll be sent back the previous value, but if the key wasn’t found you’ll get back nil. This makes it a nice way to update and check at the same time, if you need it:

```
var scores = [ "Sophie": 5, "James": 2 ]
scores.updateValue(3, forKey: "James")
```

That code will return 2, because it was the previous score for James:

The **updateValue()** method is marked with **@discardableResult** because it’s the kind of thing you might want to use for a while then stop using, or vice versa. Without that attribute in place you’d need to assign the result to underscore to silence the warning, like this:

```
_ = scores.updateValue(3, forKey: "James")
```

You can use **@discardableResult** in your own functions. For example, you might write a logging function that accepts a string and optionally also a log level. This function will

internally assemble a complete log line out of the message, log level, and current date, but it will also return that log message in case it needs to be used elsewhere.

In code it would look something like this:

```
enum LogLevel: String {
    case trace, debug, info, warn, error, fatal
}

func log(_ message: String, level: LogLevel = .info) -> String
{
    let logLine = "[\u{level}] \u{Date()}: \u{message}"
    print(logLine)
    return logLine
}

log("Hello, world!")
```

Although the result from `log()` is interesting and might be useful sometimes, most of the time users aren't going to care so this is a sensible place to use `@discardableResult`:

```
@discardableResult func discardableLog(_ message: String,  
level: LogLevel = .info) -> String {  
    let logLine = "[\u{1d64}(\u{1d64}level\u{1d64})] \u{1d64}(Date()\u{1d64}): \u{1d64}(message\u{1d64})"  
    print(logLine)  
    return logLine  
}
```

If you expect folks to use the result most or nearly all of the time, it's probably better to leave off `@discardableResult` and make them use `_` to silence the warning instead.

How to install a beta version of Swift

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Xcode ships with a fixed version of Swift, but that doesn't mean you need to *use* that version. In fact, it's possible to install multiple versions of the Swift toolchain, and switch between them as often as you need. At the time of writing, that means you can use Swift 5.0 with Xcode 10, and try out Swift development releases alongside.

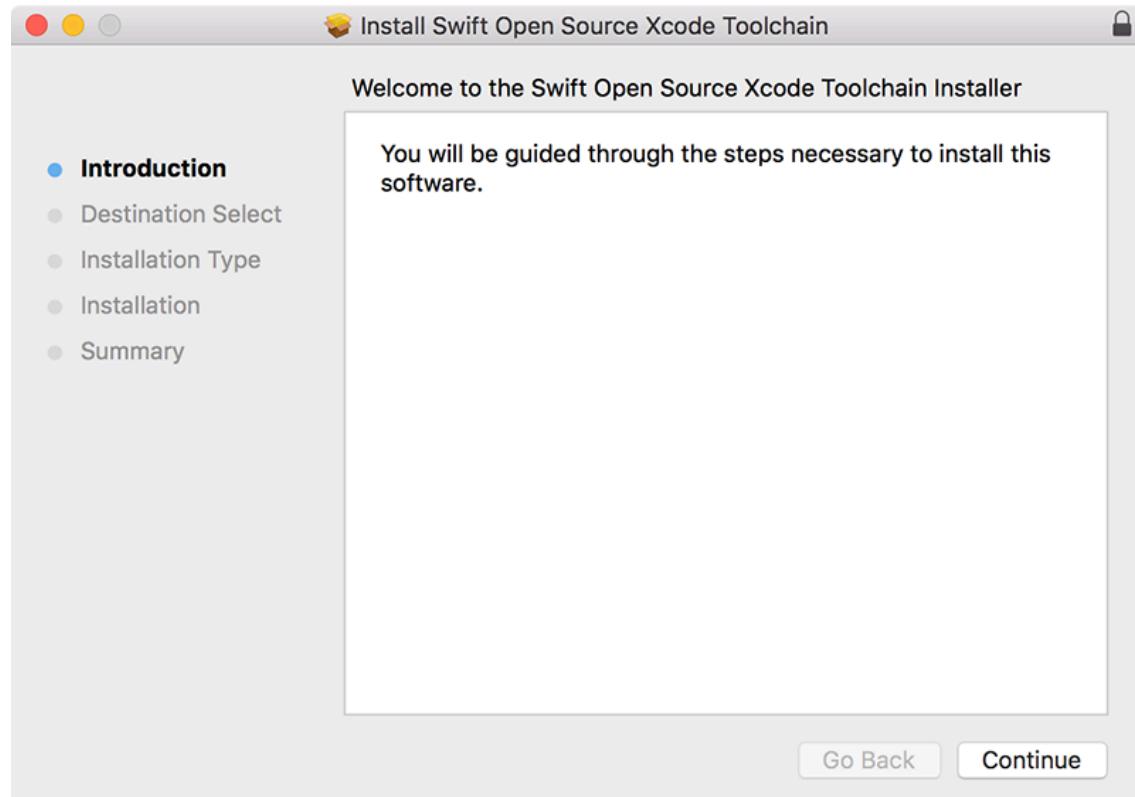
All set? Start by going to <https://swift.org/download/#snapshots> and looking for the latest Swift snapshot. If you're on macOS you'll see a link for "Xcode", but there are also Linux downloads available. Don't click "Debugging Symbols" or "Signature" – either click Xcode or an Ubuntu version.

Trunk Development (master)

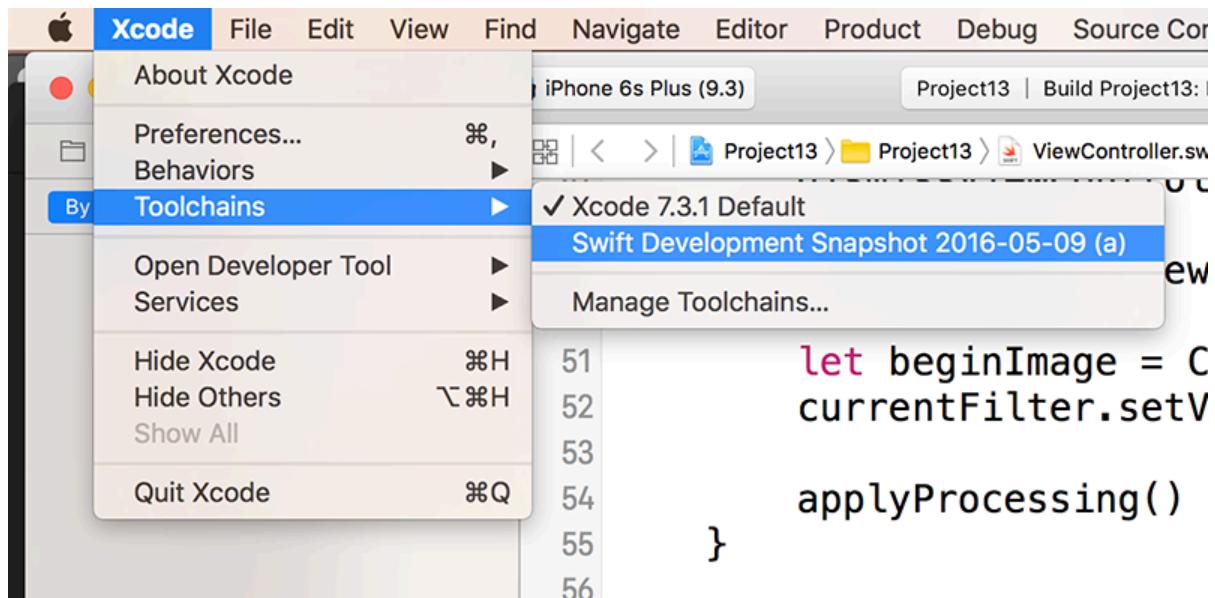
Development Snapshots are prebuilt binaries that are automatically created from mainline development branches. These snapshots are not official releases. They have gone through automated unit testing, but they have not gone through the full testing that is performed for official releases.

Download	Date
Xcode (Debugging Symbols)	May 9, 2016
Ubuntu 15.10 (Signature)	May 9, 2016
Ubuntu 14.04 (Signature)	May 9, 2016

This downloads a file named something like swift-DEVELOPMENT-SNAPSHOT-2016-05-09-a-osx.pkg, which contains the most recently snapshot of Swift created from the mainline development branch. Double-click to launch the installer, then follow the on-screen instructions. Expect a full install to take up about 900MB.



Once the installer has finished, launch Xcode as normal. When it loads, go to the Xcode menu in the top-left corner, and choose Toolchains > Swift Development Snapshot YOUR-DATE-HERE (a).



You'll be prompted to restart Xcode, but when it relaunches it should say "Xcode 10.0"

(10A255)" then beneath that "Swift Development Snapshot YOUR-DATE-HERE (a) Toolchain", signaling that you have installed and activated the snapshot.

x



Welcome to Xcode

No Rec...

Version 7.3.1 (7D1014)

Swift Development Snapshot 2016-05-09 (a) Toolchain ⓘ



Get started with a playground

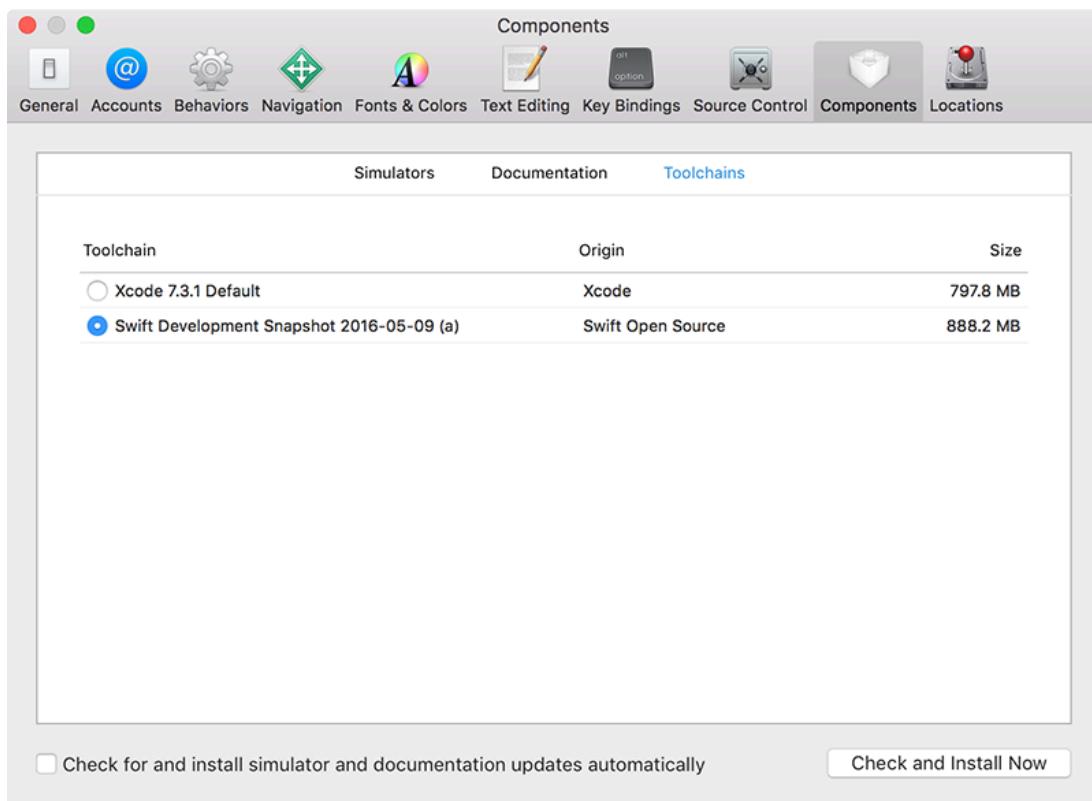
Explore new ideas quickly and easily.



Create a new Xcode project

That's it, now brace yourself: open any of your Swift projects, and press Cmd+B to build. You *might* get one or two (or fifty) compile errors.

When you're done admiring the latest and greatest Swift snapshot, you can switch back to your previous Swift version returning to the Toolchains menu item. When you revert back to the default Swift version, you can delete any snapshot you don't want by going to Xcode > Settings > Components, then hovering over it and clicking the small settings icon.



How to list all cases in an enum using CaseIterable

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift has a **CaseIterable** protocol that automatically generates an array property of all cases in an enum. To enable it, all you need to do is make your enum conform to the **CaseIterable** protocol and at compile time Swift will automatically generate an **allCases** property that is an array of all your enum's cases, in the order you defined them.

For example, this creates an enum of colors and asks Swift to automatically generate an **allCases** array for it:

```
enum Color: CaseIterable {
    case red, green, blue
}
```

You can then use that property as a regular array – it will be a **[Color]** given the code above, so we could print each case like this:

```
for color in Color.allCases {
    print("My favorite color is \(color).")
}
```

This automatic synthesis of **allCases** will only take place for enums that do not have associated values. Adding those automatically wouldn't make sense, however if you want you can add it yourself:

```
enum Car: CaseIterable {
    static var allCases: [Car] {
        return [.ford, .toyota, .jaguar, .bmw, .porsche(convertible:
false), .porsche(convertible: true)]
    }

    case ford, toyota, jaguar, bmw
    case porsche(convertible: Bool)
}
```

Swift can't synthesize an **allCases** property if any enum cases are marked unavailable. So, if you need **allCases** then you'll need to add it yourself, like this:

```
enum Direction: CaseIterable {
    static var allCases: [Direction] {
        return [.north, .south, .east, .west]
    }

    case north, south, east, west

    @available(*, unavailable)
    case all
}
```

Note: You must add **CaseIterable** to the original declaration of your enum rather than an extension in order for the **allCases** array to be synthesized – you can't use extensions to retroactively make existing enums conform to the protocol.

How to loop over non-nil items in an array

Availability: iOS or later.

Consider an array of items containing some optionals, like this one:

```
let numbers: [Int?] = [1, nil, 3, nil, 5]
```

If you want to loop over all the items and print them out, you'd write something like this:

```
for number in numbers {
    print(number)
}
```

However, that prints out all items in their current state: optionally wrapped integers for some, nil for others.

With a small change to that loop, you can have Swift unwrap all the optionals then only enter the loop for any that contain a value – any **nil** items are ignored. This is done using **for case let** syntax, like this:

```
for case let number? in numbers {
    print(number)
}
```

That will print the numbers 1, 3, and 5.

How to make a custom sequence

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

When you use a **for-in** loop, Swift maps that code to a **while** loop that generates an iterator for your data. Swift then calls **next()** on that iterator repeatedly until it gets back **nil** to signal that the loop has ended.

This functionality is all handled through two protocols: **Sequence** describes something that can be looped over, and **IteratorProtocol** describes something that iterates over a sequence. If you combine them both into a single type, all you need to do is implement a **next()** method returning whatever value comes next in your sequence.

Let's walk through a simple sequence that counts doubles up from 1, so it will count 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, and so on until we run out of integers that can be stored in **Int**.

In code this means creating a new **DoubleGenerator** struct that conforms to both **Sequence** and **IteratorProtocol**. Because this type conforms to both protocols, we only need to implement one method: **next()**. This should double the current number then return it, however we need to do that doubling inside a **defer** block so that we only double *after* we've returned.

Here's the code:

```
struct DoubleGenerator: Sequence, IteratorProtocol {
    var current = 1

    mutating func next() -> Int? {
        defer {
            current *= 2
        }

        return current
    }
}
```

As that's an infinite sequence you should be careful using it. For example, this code increments a counter each time its loop goes around and exits the loop when the counter reaches 10.

```
var i = 0

let numbers = DoubleGenerator()
for number in numbers {
    i += 1
    if i == 10 { break }

    print(number)
}
```

That will print doubles of 1 through to 256.

If you want your iterator and sequences to be *different* types, you'll need to add a **makeIterator()** method to your sequence.

How to make a number positive using **abs()**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **abs()** function returns the absolute value of a number, which is a way of describing how far away from zero it is without thinking about whether it's positive or negative. It's most commonly used if you have a number that you need to be positive, because whether you pass 30 or -30 to **abs()** you get back 30.

In code it's just this:

```
let number = -15
let absolute = abs(number)
```

That will set **absolute** to 15.

How to make a variadic function

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Variadic functions are functions that accept any number of parameters. The most common one in Swift is **print()** – most people use it to print a single value, but you can actually pass as many as you want, like this:

```
print(1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
```

To make a variadic function of your own, just add ... after any parameter. For example, we could write a **sum()** function that accepts any number of integers and adds them together, like this:

```
func sum1(_ numbers: Int...) -> Int {
    var total = 0

    for number in numbers {
        total += number
    }

    return total
}
```

Or if you wanted to write that functionally, you would use **reduce()**:

```
func sum2(_ numbers: Int...) -> Int {
    return numbers.reduce(0, +)
}
```

Notice how we specify **Int...** rather than **Int** – that means this function can be called using no integers, one integer, or even a hundred integers, and Swift will automatically convert them to be an array of integers inside the function.

So, it would be called like this:

```
let total = sum2(1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
```

How to make array access safer using a custom subscript

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift likes to be safe, but one problematic area can be reading from arrays and dictionaries. In the case of dictionaries, reading a missing key will return **nil** rather than the value you might have expected, but in the case of *arrays* it's worse: your app will crash.

Dictionaries have a special subscript method that can send back a default value if you request a missing key, but arrays don't. Fortunately, we can fix that using Swift's extensions:

```
extension Array {
    public subscript(index: Int, default defaultValue:
@autoclosure () -> Element) -> Element {
        guard index >= 0, index < endIndex else {
            return defaultValue()
        }

        return self[index]
    }
}
```

That uses **@autoclosure()** so your default value can be calculated however you need without incurring a performance hit in times when you use a valid array index.

With that extension in place you can now create and use arrays as usual:

```
var names = ["Paul"]
let paul = names[0]
```

But if you want, you can now also read any index using the new subscript and be sure to get back a safe value:

```
let anon1 = names[-1, default: "Anonymous"]
let anon2 = names[1, default: "Anonymous"]
let anon3 = names[556, default: "Anonymous"]
```

Alternatively, you could write a **safeIndex** subscript that returns an optional value – **nil** if the index is out of bounds, or the value in question otherwise:

```
extension Array {
    public subscript(safeIndex index: Int) -> Element? {
        guard index >= 0, index < endIndex else {
            return nil
        }

        return self[index]
    }
}
```

Both solutions have their uses, so try experimenting and see which works best for you.

How to make custom types from strings using ExpressibleByStringLiteral

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift's **ExpressibleByStringLiteral** protocol lets us create any type directly from a string – as long as Swift understands what type you mean, you can create whatever you want.

For example, if you regularly hard-code URLs and are tired of force unwrapping them when you know they are definitely correct, you can make **URL** conform to

ExpressibleByStringLiteral so that URLs can be created directly from strings:

```
extension URL: ExpressibleByStringLiteral {
    public init(stringLiteral value: String) {
        self = URL(string: value)!
    }
}
```

With that extension in place you can now write code like this:

```
let url: URL = "https://www.hackingwithswift.com"
print(url.absoluteString)
```

Notice that I've clearly marked **url** as being of type **URL** so that Swift doesn't think it's a regular string.

How to make optional protocol methods

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

By default, all methods listed in a Swift protocol must be implemented in a conforming type. However, there are two ways you can work around this restriction depending on your need.

The first option is to mark your protocol using the **@objc** attribute. While this means it can be adopted only by classes, it *does* mean you mark individual methods as being **optional** like this:

```
@objc protocol ObjcPrintable {
    @objc optional func canPrint() -> Bool
}
```

If possible, the second option is usually better: write default implementations of the optional methods that do nothing, like this:

```
protocol Printable {
```

```

func canPrint() -> Bool
}

extension Printable {
    func canPrint() -> Bool {
        return true
    }
}

```

Remember, optional methods exist because you can provide sensible default behavior without them. In the above example it seems fair to make **Printable** things return true from **canPrint()** by default, because if someone wants to write an authentication layer for specific things they can implement their own version.

How to multiply an int and a double

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift's type safety means code to multiply an integer and a double won't compile:

```

let a = 4
let b = 5.0
let c = a * b

```

You can either fix this by forcing your integer to be a double:

```

let d: Double = 4
let e = 5.0
let f = a * b

```

Alternatively you can convert your integer to a double as needed:

```

let g = 4
let h = 5.0

```

```
let i = Double(a) * b
```

If this situation really annoys you and you want it solved fully, add this custom `*` function:

```
func *(lhs: Int, rhs: Double) -> Double {
    return Double(lhs) * rhs
}
```

That will multiply an integer on the left with a double on the right, returning a double containing the result.

How to pass the Fizz Buzz test

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The Fizz Buzz test is a simple coding test used in some coding interviews. It's not designed to be hard, in fact quite the opposite – it's designed to be easy enough that most folks can solve it without feeling too pressured.

To pass the test you must write a function that accepts an integer and returns a string. Which string to return depends on the input number:

- If the integer is evenly divisible by three, it should return “Fizz”.
- If the integer is evenly divisible by five, it should return “Buzz”.
- If the integer is evenly divisible by three *and* five, it should return “Fizz Buzz”.
- Otherwise it should return the string form of the input number.

There are lots of ways this can be solved in Swift, but I think one of the most interesting is to use tuples like this:

```
func fizzbuzz(number: Int) -> String {
    switch (number % 3 == 0, number % 5 == 0) {
        case (true, false):
            return "Fizz"
```

```

    case (false, true):
        return "Buzz"
    case (true, true):
        return "FizzBuzz"
    case (false, false):
        return String(number)
}
}

print(fizzbuzz(number: 15))

```

This approach breaks down a large input space – any number – into simple combinations of true and false, and we then use tuple pattern matching in the case statements to select the correct output.

How to print debug text in Swift

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

You can write text to the Xcode debug console using the `print()` function in Swift, like this:

```
print("Hello, world!")
```

The `print()` function is actually variadic, so you can pass it more than one parameter and it will print them all, like this:

```
print(1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
```

How to remove duplicate items from an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

There are several ways of removing duplicate items from an array, but one of the easiest is with the following extension on **Array**:

```
extension Array where Element: Hashable {
    func removingDuplicates() -> [Element] {
        var addedDict = [Element: Bool]()
        
        return filter {
            addedDict.updateValue(true, forKey: $0) == nil
        }
    }

    mutating func removeDuplicates() {
        self = self.removingDuplicates()
    }
}
```

That provides two methods: one called **removingDuplicates()** that returns an array with duplicates removed, and one called **removeDuplicates()** that changes the array in place.

The method works using **filter()** and a dictionary: when you call **updateValue()** on a dictionary it returns nil if the key is new, so we can use that to figure out which items are unique.

For example:

```
let numbers = [1, 5, 3, 4, 5, 1, 3]
let unique = numbers.removingDuplicates()
```

How to remove items from an array using **filter()**

Availability: iOS or later.

The **filter()** method goes over all the items in an array (or indeed any kind of collection), and returns a new array containing items that pass a test you specify.

For example, given the following array:

```
let numbers = [1, 2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 13]
```

We could use **filter()** to create an array of all the numbers that are greater than or equal to 5:

```
let over5 = numbers.filter { $0 >= 5 }
```

Alternatively, you could use **filter()** to find odd numbers using modulus:

```
let odd = numbers.filter { $0 % 2 == 1 }
```

How to remove the first or last item from an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Arrays have built-in methods for removing the first or last items, but there's a subtle difference between them.

First, there are two ways of removing the last item: **popLast()** and **removeLast()**. Both remove the last item from the array, but **popLast()** returns an optional – if the array was empty, you get back nil. If you call **removeLast()** on an empty array, your app crashes.

So, in this example **last1** will contain 5 and **last2** will contain 4:

```
var numbers = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
let last1 = numbers.popLast()
let last2 = numbers.removeLast()
```

As for removing items from the start of the array, there's only *one* method: **removeFirst()**. This, like **removeLast()**, will crash your app if called when the array is empty.

So, continuing the above example, this will put 1 into **first1**:

```
let first1 = numbers.removeFirst()
```

There is no **popFirst()** because it's an expensive operation and the developers want you to think twice – each time you remove an item from the front the rest of the items have to move down, so trying to use **popFirst()** in a loop would be inefficient.

How to restrict a protocol to classes

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

There are some occasions when your protocol relies on reference semantics to work, which in practice means it can be adopted only by classes. For example, you might want to use the identity operator (`==`) to compare two instances of a conforming type, or you might want to change properties inside the type without relying on mutating methods.

To restrict your protocol in this way, make it inherit from **AnyObject** like this:

```
protocol Authenticatable: AnyObject {
    func authenticate() -> Bool
}
```

Note: Some older Swift code uses **class** for this restriction, but **AnyObject** is correct for modern Swift.

How to reverse sort an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Regular sorting on comparable data is as easy as calling the **sort()** method, but if you want a *reverse* sort – e.g. highest to lowest numbers, or Z-A alphabetically – there are two options.

The first is to run a regular sort, reverse that sort, then convert the result to an array. For example:

```
let numbers = [100, 5, 53, 98, 29]
let reversed1 = Array(numbers.sorted().reversed())
```

The second option is to provide a custom closure to the `sorted()` method that sorts the opposite way to the default, like this:

```
let reversed2 = numbers.sorted { $0 > $1 }
```

Both of those will result in the array 100, 98, 53, 29, 5.

How to run code when an object is destroyed

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

All structs and classes can have initializers, which are special methods that run when those types are created. However, classes can also have *deinitializers* – code that gets run when an instance of the class is destroyed. This isn't possible with structs because they only ever have one owner.

Deinitializers never take any parameters, so they are written just as `deinit`. For example, we could create a simple **Person** class with an initializer and a deinitializer:

```
class Person {
    init() {
        print("I'm alive!")
    }

    deinit {
        print("I'm dying!")
    }
}
```

If you want to try that in a playground, run this code:

```
do {
    let person = Person()
}
```

Putting the **Person** instance inside a **do** block ensures it will be destroyed before the playground finishes, so you should see “I’m alive!” and “I’m dying!”

Deinitializers are extremely important when handling memory that isn’t managed by Swift. For example, if you’re using an external C library and it has allocated RAM, you should free that RAM inside your deinitializer.

How to safely use reference types inside value types with `isKnownUniquelyReferenced()`

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Working with value types like structs and enums makes your code easier to write, easier to test, and easier to reason about. However, they aren’t always possible: classes and closures are both reference types, and are used extensively in Swift for the handful of times when sharing data is important, or perhaps because you’re using them through someone else’s Swift code.

This can cause a variety of side effects with your code: if you use reference types inside value types, they still behave like reference types. The solution to this is to wrap those reference types in value semantics, meaning that they behave more like value types.

To demonstrate the problem, consider this **ChatHistory** class:

```
class ChatHistory: NSCopying {
    var messages: String = "Anonymous"

    func copy(with zone: NSZone? = nil) -> Any {
```

```

    let copy = ChatHistory()
    copy.messages = messages
    return copy
}
}

```

It doesn't hold much data, but it's enough for us to work with.

If you wanted to use that inside a struct your first attempt might look like this:

```

struct User {
    var chats = ChatHistory()
}

let twostraws = User()
twostraws.chats.messages = "Hello!"

```

Although that's a value type – meaning that it may have only one owner at a time – it doesn't really *behave* like one. You can see we're modifying the struct directly, even though it's marked as a constant. We could also create a different struct and make it re-use the same **chats** property:

```

var taylor = User()
taylor.chats = twostraws.chats

```

Because we made **taylor.chats** point to the same object as **twostraws.chats** – a reference type – then changing one will also change the other. So, this will print “Goodbye!” twice:

```

twostraws.chats.messages = "Goodbye!"
print(twostraws.chats.messages)
print(taylor.chats.messages)

```

To fix this we're going to change the implementation of **User** so that **messages** becomes a private property called **_messages**, and expose a custom getter/setter called **messages** that will act in its place. The setter part will just change **_messages** directly, but the getter will take a

copy of `_messages` before returning it so that our properties are always unique.

To do this we're going to use Swift's mutating getters, which are enabled using the **mutating get** keyword. This allows us to change the struct inside the getter, and Swift will back this up by refusing to allow it when used with constants.

Here's how that looks:

```
struct User {
    var _chats = ChatHistory()

    var chats: ChatHistory {
        mutating get {
            _chats = _chats.copy() as! ChatHistory
            return _chats
        }

        set {
            _chats = newValue
        }
    }
}
```

This is an improvement, because now Swift will force us to make **twostraws** a variable, like this:

```
var twostraws = User()
```

This makes sense, because we *are* changing it. However, it introduces a new problem: all that copying is quite wasteful if you do repeated work when the messages object was unique all along.

To fix this new problem you need the **isKnownUniquelyReferenced()** function, which returns true when called on an instance of a Swift class that has only one owner.**isKnownUniquelyReferenced()**. This means we can return `_chats` if it is uniquely

referenced (no one else has a reference to it), otherwise we'll take a copy. This reduces copying down to the bare minimum, which is much more efficient.

```
struct User {
    private var _chats = ChatHistory()

    var chats: ChatHistory {
        mutating get {
            if !isKnownUniquelyReferenced(&_chats) {
                _chats = _chats.copy() as! ChatHistory
            }
            return _chats
        }

        set {
            _chats = newValue
        }
    }
}
```

If you run the program again, you'll see that the two users now have their own chat logs – using `twostraws.chats.messages = "Goodbye!"` inherently means reading `chats`, which will notice the object isn't uniquely referenced and take a copy before continuing.

You could still abuse that if you really wanted to, but it's getting increasingly hard – Swift is protecting us from a wider variety of mistakes.

Ideally your goal is to copy as infrequently as possible, so it's common to make copies only when something is definitely changing rather than simply being read. In practice, this would mean marking methods in your struct as `mutating`, then funneling access through there so you copy only as needed. At WWDC 2015, [Apple gave a demonstration of using two different properties (one reading, one writing) to accomplish this – see <https://developer.apple.com/videos/play/wwdc2015/414> for more information.

Warning: Don't try using `isKnownUniquelyReferenced()` on Objective-C objects, because it will not behave as you expect – it's designed only for Swift classes.

How to sort the keys of your JSON using Codable

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

When you use **JSONEncoder** and **Codable** to create JSON from your Swift data, your properties get written out in the order they appear inside your class. This is nearly always fine, because relying on key ordering in your JSON is almost certainly a bad idea.

However, if you're debugging a large type and it's hard to dig through keys to find what you want, **JSONEncoder** has the perfect option for you: you can sort your JSON keys alphabetically.

To make it happen, change the **outputFormatting** property of your **JSONEncoder** object to be `.sortedKeys`, like this:

```
let encoder = JSONEncoder()
encoder.outputFormatting = .sortedKeys
```

Now any JSON you produce will use alphabetical order for your keys rather than using their natural order inside your type.

How to specify default values for dictionary keys

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Reading a dictionary key returns an optional value by default, because the key you asked for might not exist. However, there's a slightly different subscript you can call that eliminates optionality: when you read a key, you can also provide a default value to use if the key doesn't exist.

For example, here's a dictionary representing the high scores in a game:

```
var scores = [ "Taylor Swift": 25, "Ed Sheeran": 20 ]
```

If we wanted to read the score of Adele Adkins, we'd get back **nil** because she doesn't have a score. And if we tried to read any of the values that *do* have keys we'd still get back an optional integer.

Fortunately, if you provide a default value while reading a key you can be guaranteed you'll always get a value back, so the return value for our **scores** dictionary will always be a real integer rather than an optional.

So, here we can read Adele's score from the dictionary, or give it a default value of 0 if the key doesn't exist:

```
var adeleScore = scores["Adele Adkins", default: 0]
```

How to specify your own date format with Codable and JSONEncoder

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

When using **JSONEncoder** to encode dates, there are a handful of built-in date formats you can choose from. If none of them fit your needs, why not make your own? You can configure a **DateFormatter** using whatever date and time format you want, then pass that to the **JSONEncoder** as its **dateEncodingStrategy** property, like this:

```
let encoder = JSONEncoder()
let formatter = DateFormatter()
formatter.dateStyle = .full
formatter.timeStyle = .full
encoder.dateEncodingStrategy = .formatted(formatter)
```

That converts any **Date** properties to be the fullest possible string for your locale, e.g.

"Monday, February 5, 2018 at 9:28:10 PM Greenwich Mean Time".

How to split an array into chunks

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you have an array of elements and you want to split them into chunks of a size you specify, here's a useful extension you can add to your code:

```
extension Array {  
    func chunked(into size: Int) -> [[Element]] {  
        return stride(from: 0, to: count, by: size).map {  
            Array(self[$0 ..< Swift.min($0 + size, count)])  
        }  
    }  
}
```

That converts an array into an array of arrays, using whatever size you specify. For example, if you have the numbers 1 to 100 in an array and you want to split it so that there are many arrays containing five numbers each, you'd write this:

```
let numbers = Array(1...100)  
let result = numbers.chunked(into: 5)
```

How to split an integer into an array of its digits

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

You can take any integer number and convert it to array of integer digits using this extension:

```
extension BinaryInteger {  
    var digits: [Int] {
```

```
        return String(describing: self).compactMap
{ Int(String($0)) }
}
}
```

That's a protocol extension, so you should be able to call it using **Int**, **UInt64**, **Int8**, and so on.

How to store **NSCoding** data using **Codable**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Broadly speaking, **NSCoding** is the Objective-C way of archiving data and **Codable** is the Swift way. However, that doesn't mean the two can't work together – with a little work you can save any **NSCoding** data right inside **Codable**, which is helpful because many Apple types such as **UIColor** and **UIImage** conform to **NSCoding** but not **Codable**.

Here's a simple struct as an example:

```
struct Person {
    var name: String
    var favoriteColor: UIColor
}
```

That stores one **Codable** type (the string) and one **NSCoding** type (the color), and we're going to make them all work through **Codable** using **JSONEncoder**.

This takes four steps:

1. Creating an extension on **Person** where we'll put our **Codable** functionality.
2. Creating custom coding keys to describe what data is saved.
3. Creating an **init(from:)** method that converts raw data back into a **UIColor**.
4. Creating an **encode(to:)** method that converts a **UIColor** into raw data, which **Codable** can then base-64 encode.

Start by adding the extension to **Person**:

```
extension Person: Codable {  
}  
}
```

That will stop your code from compiling because Swift knows **UIColor** isn't compatible with **Codable**. So, let's move on to step two: adding custom coding keys. Put this inside the extension:

```
enum CodingKeys: String, CodingKey {  
    case name  
    case favoriteColor  
}
```

Those are just the same coding keys we'd get by default, but because we're going to be encoding and decoding things by hand we need to declare them explicitly.

Step three is to create an **init(from:)** method that can read raw data and convert it to a **UIColor**. This will used **NSKeyedUnarchiver** just like regular **NSCoding** code. Add this to the extension:

```
init(from decoder: Decoder) throws {  
    let container = try decoder.container(keyedBy:  
CodingKeys.self)  
  
    name = try container.decode(String.self, forKey: .name)  
  
    let colorData = try container.decode(Data.self,  
forKey: .favoriteColor)  
    favoriteColor = try  
NSKeyedUnarchiver.unarchiveTopLevelObjectWithData(colorData)  
as? UIColor ?? UIColor.black  
}
```

The last step is to create an `encode(to:)` method that does the opposite – it takes a **UIColor** and converts it to data using **NSKeyedArchiver**. Put this inside the extension:

```
func encode(to encoder: Encoder) throws {
    var container = encoder.container(keyedBy: CodingKeys.self)
    try container.encode(name, forKey: .name)

    let colorData = try
        NSKeyedArchiver.archivedData(withRootObject: favoriteColor,
        requiringSecureCoding: false)
    try container.encode(colorData, forKey: .favoriteColor)
}
```

That's all the work done – by converting our **UIColor** into a **Data**, **Codable** can take care of the rest.

If you want to try it out, here's some sample code:

```
let taylor = Person(name: "Taylor Swift", favoriteColor: .blue)
let encoder = JSONEncoder()

do {
    let encoded = try encoder.encode(taylor)
    let str = String(decoding: encoded, as: UTF8.self)
    print(str)
} catch {
    print(error.localizedDescription)
}
```

How to sum an array of numbers using reduce()

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **reduce()** method is designed to convert a sequence into a single value, which makes it perfect for calculating the total of an array of numbers.

For example, given the following number array:

```
let numbers = [1, 12, 2, 9, 27]
```

We could calculate the total of all those numbers like this:

```
let total = numbers.reduce(0, +)
```

The first parameter passed to **reduce()** is the value it should start with, in this case 0. The second parameter is how it should combine that 0 with each item in your array, which means it will do $0 + 1$ to make 1, then $1 + 12$ to make 13, and so on.

How to swap two items in an array using **swapAt()**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you need to have two items in an array change places, the **swapAt()** method is exactly what you want: provide it two indexes inside your array, and the items at those positions will be swapped.

For example, consider this array:

```
var names = ["Paul", "John", "George", "Ringo"]
```

If I wanted John and Paul to swap places, I'd swap positions 0 and 1, like this:

```
names.swapAt(0, 1)
```

Note: **swapAt()** will trigger a fatal error if you try to swap beyond the length of the array.

How to throw errors using strings

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Throwing functions in Swift are the main way we have of signaling that an operation failed, but sometimes it can be annoying to define a whole new error enum just to report a simple failure.

With a small extension to **String** you can make the whole process easier:

```
extension String: LocalizedError {  
    public var errorDescription: String? { return self }  
}
```

With that change you can now throw strings as errors, and they work just like regular errors. For example, you can create a throwing function like this one:

```
func doDangerousThing() throws {  
    throw "I'm sorry, Dave, I can't do that."  
}
```

Then attempt to run it and print any errors that are thrown, like this:

```
do {  
    try doDangerousThing()  
} catch {  
    print(error.localizedDescription)  
}
```

This only really works for errors that have one case, because you can't match specific string errors.

How to toggle a boolean value

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift's booleans have a **toggle()** method that flip them between true and false. That might sound simple, but the end result makes for much more natural Swift code:

```
var loggedIn = false  
loggedIn.toggle()
```

This is particularly useful in more complex data structures:

`myVar.prop1.prop2.enabled.toggle()` avoids the potential typing errors that could be caused using manual negation.

How to transform a dictionary using **mapValues()**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Although dictionaries have a general **map()** method, they also have a specialized form of **map()** called **mapValues()** – it transforms just the *values* of the dictionary, leaving the keys untouched.

This extra method is useful because dictionaries can't have duplicate keys, but if you're only transforming the *values* from a dictionary then this is not a problem.

Let's try it out on a dictionary containing the height in centimeters of various people:

```
let peopleMetric = [ "Taylor": 178.0, "Justin": 175.0, "Ed":  
173.0 ]
```

If we want to convert those heights to inches without changing the keys, we can use **mapValues()** like this:

```
let peopleImperial = peopleMetric.mapValues { $0 / 2.54 }
```

How to unwrap an optional in Swift

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Optional values are a central concept in Swift, although admittedly they can be a little hard to understand at first. Put simply, an optional value is one that may or may not exist, which means Swift won't let you use it by accident – you need to either check whether it has a value and unwrap it, or force unwrap. Of the two options the first is definitely preferable, because it's significantly safer.

To check whether an optional has a value then unwrap it all in one, you should use **if let** syntax, like this:

```
// fetch an example optional string
let optionalString = fetchOptionalString()

// now unwrap it
if let unwrapped = optionalString {
    print(unwrapped)
}
```

In that example, the **print(unwrapped)** line will only be executed if **optionalString** has a value. If that line is reached, you can know for sure that **unwrapped** has a value that you can use, which makes that code safe.

How to use `#available` to check for API availability

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

One of my favorite Xcode features is the ability to have Xcode automatically check API availability for you, which means it will refuse to run code that is not available on the minimum iOS version you support.

Of course, there are times when you really do need to use a newer feature, for example if you

want to use **UIStackView** where it's available but otherwise show a message to users asking them to upgrade. For this, Swift has **#available**, which lets you state that a certain block of code should only execute on specific versions of iOS.

To use the previous example, this code checks whether the user has iOS 9.0 or later on their device:

```
if #available(iOS 9, *) {
    // use UIStackView
} else {
    // show sad face emoji
}
```

Any code inside the `// use UIStackView` block can be executed as if your deployment target were iOS 9.0.

If you want, you can mark whole functions or classes as requiring a specific iOS version by using **@available**, like this:

```
@available(iOS 9, *)
func useStackView() {
    // use UIStackView
}
```

How to use **@available** to deprecate old APIs

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift availability checking is most commonly used to mark sections of code that should target specific versions of iOS or other platforms. However, it's also useful when you make Swift APIs for others to use, because you can use it to mark certain calls as deprecated or even obsoleted as needed.

Let's start with a simple example: if you have a function that used to parse some data, but now

you want users to stop calling it. To do that, use `@available` with the **deprecated** flag, passing in the message you want to show:

```
@available(*, deprecated, message: "Parse your data by hand instead")
func parseData() { }
```

If you are *renaming* the API – for example the way one usage of **flatMap()** became **compactMap()** in Swift 4.1 – you can pass the new function name to the **renamed** flag like this:

```
@available(*, deprecated, renamed: "loadData")
func fetchData() { }
```

This will cause Xcode to generate a fix-it automatically – users can click Fix to have Xcode perform the rename for them.

Deprecated APIs generate warnings but can still be called. If you want to *obsolete* an API – stop it from being called entirely – you should use the **obsoleted** flag instead, specifying the minimum Swift version where it is no longer available:

```
@available(swift, obsoleted: 4.1, renamed: "attemptConnection")
func testConnection() { }
```

You can even combine **deprecated** and **obsoleted** together if you want:

```
@available(swift, deprecated: 4.0, obsoleted: 5.0, message:
"This will be removed in v5.0; please migrate to a different
API.")
```

Finally, there's an **introduced** flag that lets you control when specific API was introduced, like this:

```
@available(swift, introduced: 4.2)
func loadUsers() { }
```

Using `@available` in this way lets your APIs behave just like Apple's own – Xcode will draw red lines through deprecated methods, issue compile warnings and errors, and even automatically generate fix-its as needed.

How to use Codable to load and save custom data types

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift 4 introduced a new way to load and save data, replacing the old `NSCoding` protocol with something that's more flexible, safer, and easier to write: **Codable**.

Unless you want a custom implementation, just making your data type conform to **Codable** is all it takes to allow it to be saved to property list XML or JSON.

For example, here's a custom struct that conforms to **Codable**, along with a few instances of it:

```
struct Language: Codable {
    var name: String
    var version: Int
}

let swift = Language(name: "Swift", version: 4)
let php = Language(name: "PHP", version: 7)
let perl = Language(name: "Perl", version: 6)
```

You can see I've marked the `Language` struct as conforming to the **Codable** protocol – there's no need to add custom loading and saving code like we had with `NSCoding`.

With that one tiny conformance, we can convert it to a **Data** representation of JSON like this:

```
let encoder = JSONEncoder()
if let encoded = try? encoder.encode(swift) {
    // save `encoded` somewhere
```

```
}
```

Swift will automatically encode all properties inside your data type – you don't need to do anything.

To prove that everything is working well, we can try converting that **Data** object into a string so we can print it out, then decode it back into a new **Language** instance that we can read from:

```
if let encoded = try? encoder.encode(swift) {
    if let json = String(data: encoded, encoding: .utf8) {
        print(json)
    }

    let decoder = JSONDecoder()
    if let decoded = try? decoder.decode(Language.self, from:
encoded) {
        print(decoded.name)
    }
}
```

Notice how decoding doesn't require a typecast – you provide the data type name as its first parameter, so Swift infers the return type from there.

How to use ISO-8601 dates with JSONDecoder and Codable

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Encoding and decoding dates using the **Codable** protocol isn't hard to do, but it does produce some unexpected data by default: **Date** stores its information as a floating-point number counting the number of seconds since January 1st 2001, rather than something standard involved days, months, and years.

ISO-8601 is the web's standard way of referring to dates and times, and looks like this:

2018-12-25T17:30:00Z – in English that's December 25th 2018, at 5:30pm UTC. Both **JSONEncoder** and **JSONDecoder** are able to use this date format rather than the floating-point default – all you have to do is set their **dateEncodingStrategy** and **dateDecodingStrategy** properties.

If you're decoding dates, use this:

```
let decoder = JSONDecoder()
decoder.dateDecodingStrategy = .iso8601
```

And if you're *encoding* dates you should use this:

```
let encoder = JSONEncoder()
encoder.dateEncodingStrategy = .iso8601
```

How to use compactMap() to transform an array

Availability: iOS or later.

The **compactMap()** method lets us transform the elements of an array just like **map()** does, except once the transformation completes an extra step happens: all optionals get unwrapped, and any nil values get discarded.

This is useful whenever you have an array of things you need to convert, but the conversion process might fail.

For example, consider this array of strings:

```
let numbers = ["1", "2", "Fish"]
```

Two of those hold a number, but one does not. We can use **compactMap()** to convert those to integers, because creating an **Int** from a **String** is a failable initializer – it returns an **Int?** because you might have passed an invalid number.

compactMap() will read those optional integers, unwrap all the optionals for us, then discard any items that returned **nil**, all in one line of code:

```
let integers = numbers.compactMap { Int($0) }
```

When that code runs, **integers** will hold an array of **Int** rather than an array of **Int?**.

How to use compiler directives to detect the iOS Simulator

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift makes it easy to write special code that should be executed only in the iOS Simulator. This is helpful to test situations where the simulator and devices don't match, for example testing the accelerometer or camera.

If you want certain code to be run only in the iOS simulator, you should use this:

```
#if targetEnvironment(simulator)
// your code
#endif
```

Any code between the **#if** and **#endif** won't even exist when the app is run on devices, so it has zero performance impact. If you want to specify alternate code that should only be run on devices (and never on the simulator) you should use **#else**, like this:

```
func updateMotion() {
#if targetEnvironment(simulator)
    // we're on the simulator - calculate pretend movement
    if let currentTouch = lastTouchPosition {
        let diff = CGPoint(x: currentTouch.x - player.position.x,
                           y: currentTouch.y - player.position.y)
        physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx: diff.x / 100, dy:
                                         diff.y / 100)
    }
}
```

```

#else
    // we're on a device – use the accelerometer
    if let accelerometerData = motionManager.accelerometerData {
        physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx:
accelerometerData.acceleration.y * -50, dy:
accelerometerData.acceleration.x * 50)
    }
#endif
}

```

How to use conditional conformance in Swift

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Conditional conformances were introduced in **Swift 4.1**, and refined in **Swift 4.2** to allow you to query them at runtime. They allow types to conform to a protocol only when certain conditions are met – hence “conditional conformance”.

For example, if we had a **Purchaseable** protocol:

```

protocol Purchaseable {
    func buy()
}

```

And a simple type that conforms to that protocol:

```

struct Book: Purchaseable {
    func buy() {
        print("You bought a book")
    }
}

```

Then we could make **Array** conform to **Purchaseable** if all the elements inside the array were

also **Purchasable**:

```
extension Array: Purchaseable where Element: Purchaseable {  
    func buy() {  
        for item in self {  
            item.buy()  
        }  
    }  
}
```

You can add conditional conformances to new types, and you can use any protocol you want – it doesn't need to be one you define.

For example, you might a generic **Box** class that is able to wrap a value so it can be passed by reference:

```
final class Box<T> {  
    var value: T  
  
    init(value: T) {  
        self.value = value  
    }  
}
```

We could use that box to store **User** structs, like this:

```
struct User: Equatable {  
    var username: String  
}  
  
let user = User(username: "twostraws")  
let box1 = Box(value: user)  
let box2 = Box(value: user)
```

We've made the **User** struct **Equatable**, which means we can compare two instances of it to

see if they are equal. What conditional conformance let us do is make **Box** equatable if its content is also equatable, like this:

```
extension Box: Equatable where T: Equatable {
    static func == (lhs: Box<T>, rhs: Box<T>) -> Bool {
        return lhs.value == rhs.value
    }
}
```

With that in place, we can now check two boxes for equality directly, like this:

```
box1 == box2
```

Conditional conformance was enhanced in Swift 4.2, giving the ability to query a conditional conformance at runtime. Although this compiled in Swift 4.1, it would crash at runtime – a result no one wanted.

Well, that's now fixed, so if you receive data of one type and want to check if it can be converted to a conditionally conformed protocol, it works great.

For example:

```
let items: Any = [ Book() , Book() , Book() ]

if let books = items as? Purchaseable {
    books.buy()
}
```

How to use flatMap() with an optional value

Availability: iOS or later.

The **flatMap()** method of optionals allows you to transform the optional if it has a value, or do nothing if it is empty. This makes for shorter and more expressive code than doing a regular

unwrap, and doesn't require you to change your data type.

Using **flatMap()** with optionals is similar to using **map()**, with one important difference: if your transformation closure returns an optional, **flatMap()** will combine that optional with the existing optional, whereas **map()** will keep them both.

Here's a practical example so you can see the difference:

```
let stringNumber: String? = "5"  
let intNumber = stringNumber.map { Int($0) }
```

When that code runs, **intNumber** will be an **Int??** – an optional optional integer. This is because we already have optionality from **stringNumber**, and the **Int** initializer from a string also returns an optional, so **map()** just puts them together.

In comparison, **flatMap()** acts differently:

```
let flatMapNumber = stringNumber.flatMap { Int($0) }
```

That will return a regular **Int?**, meaning that either the whole thing exists or nothing exists – it's easier to work with.

How to use local variable observers

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

You should already be familiar with the concept of property observers in Swift – those **willSet** and **didSet** blocks you can attach to property on classes and structs. Well, those same blocks can be attached to local and global variables as well, allowing you to respond to changes easily.

The syntax is identical: create your variable, give it an initial value, then provide **willSet** and/or **didSet** closures inside braces, like this:

```
var name = "Taylor Swift" {
```

```
didSet {
    print("Name changed to \(name)!")
}
}

name = "Justin Bieber"
```

That will print “Name changed to Justin Bieber!” when run.

How to use **map()** to transform an array

Availability: iOS or later.

The **map()** method allows us to transform arrays (and indeed any kind of collection) using a transformation closure we specify. The return value will be an array of the same size, containing your transformed elements.

For example, given the following array:

```
let numbers = [1, 2, 3, 4]
```

We could use **map()** to transform those numbers so they are doubled, like this:

```
let doubled = numbers.map { $0 * 2 }
```

You can map whatever you want. For example, you could convert an array of strings to be uppercase:

```
let strings = ["John", "Paul", "George", "Ringo"]
let uppercased = strings.map { $0.uppercased() }
```

How to use map() with an optional value

Availability: iOS or later.

The **map()** method of optionals allows you to transform the optional if it has a value, or do nothing if it is empty. This makes for shorter and more expressive code than doing a regular unwrap, and doesn't require you to change your data type.

For example, if you had an optional string like this one:

```
let name: String? = "twostraws"
```

You could use the **map()** method to transform it safely, without having to check and unwrap it – if it were nil, the **map()** call would do nothing.

For example:

```
let twitterName = name.map { "@\($0)" }
print(twitterName)
```

That will print **@twostraws**.

How to use one-sided ranges

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

One-sided ranges allow us to skip either the start or end of a range to have Swift infer the starting point for us. As an example, consider this array:

```
let characters = ["Dr Horrible", "Captain Hammer", "Penny",
"Bad Horse", "Moist"]
```

If we wanted to read only the first three items from that array, we could use **characters[..<3]** – we skipped the start point, so Swift will automatically infer the start of the array:

```
let bigParts = characters[..<3]
```

That will create an array containing **["Dr Horrible", "Captain Hammer", "Penny"]**.

Similarly, we could skip the end of the range to have Swift infer the end of the array, like this:

```
let smallParts = characters[3...]
```

That will create an array containing **["Bad Horse", "Moist"]**.

How to use operator overloading

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Operator overloading is the practice of adding new operators and modifying existing ones to do different things. Operators are those little symbols like +, *, and /, and Swift uses them in a variety of ways depending on context – a string plus another string equals a combined string, for example, whereas an integer plus another integer equals a summed integer.

To create your own operator you need to tell Swift whether it should be *prefix* (before its operand; the values used with it), *postfix* (after its operand), or *infix*. The most common is infix: +, -, *, and more are all infix.

To create a new operator, try adding this to a playground:

```
infix operator **
```

That's the exponentiation operator, designed to raise one number to the power of another.

Normally we'd use the **pow()** function for that job, but with operator overloading we can make ****** work instead.

Now you need to tell Swift what to do when it sees that operator. For example, when we write something like **2 ** 4** what does that *mean*?

What Swift wants is a function called ******, the name of our operator, where the left-hand side is one type and the right-hand side is another type. Which type is down to us, but ****** is normally

used with a **Double** on either side, so we’re going to write a function that accepts two doubles and returns a double:

```
func **(lhs: Double, rhs: Double) -> Double {  
    return pow(lhs, rhs)  
}
```

As you can see, the function itself is a cinch thanks to **pow()** – we literally just pass on the numbers. Now this code should work in your playground:

```
let result = 2 ** 4
```

For more advanced uses, you also need to specify associativity and a precedence group, but what we have is fine to start with.

How to use **reduce()** to condense an array into a single value

Availability: iOS or later.

The **reduce()** method iterates over all items in array, combining them together somehow until you end up with a single value. The “somehow” is specified by a closure you provide, for example you might want to count how many characters are provided in an array of names, which looks like this:

```
let names = ["Taylor", "Paul", "Adele"]  
let count = names.reduce(0) { $0 + $1.count }  
print(count)
```

That starts with a total of 0 (the parameter passed in to **reduce()**), then adds that to the count of each string in the array. So, it starts by adding 6 for Taylor (so the running total is 6), then adds 4 for Paul (so the running total is 10), then adds 5 more for Adele (so the running total is 15.)

How to use reflection to inspect type data

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift has a built-in **Mirror** struct that lets us query any kind of data in our code. It's most commonly used to read through the list of properties that are available, but it's also used in playgrounds to print out user-readable values inside types.

To get started, first create a custom type then an instance of that type:

```
struct Person {  
    var name = "Taylor Swift"  
    var age = 26  
}  
  
var taylor = Person()
```

You can now instantiate a **Mirror** object from **taylor**, like this:

```
var mirror = Mirror(reflecting: taylor)
```

That mirror isn't a copy of **taylor**, a *reflection* of it – something you can inspect. For example, you can loop over all the properties inside **taylor** and print out their names and values like this:

```
for case let (label?, value) in mirror.children {  
    print (label, value)  
}
```

How to use the forEach method to loop over an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

In Swift we normally loop over arrays like this:

```
let numbers = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

for number in numbers {
    print(number)
}
```

However, Swift provides us an alternative: a dedicated array method called **forEach()**, that loops over each item in the array and does something with it. For example, the above loop would be written like this:

```
numbers.forEach {
    print($0)
}
```

The difference is that **forEach()** can't skip over any items – you can't exit the loop part way, without processing the rest of the items. This helps people reading your code to figure out your intent: you want to act on all items, and won't stop in the middle.

How to use the **rethrows** keyword

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **rethrows** keyword is used when you write a function (let's call it A) that accepts a throwing function as a parameter (let's call it B). If function B throws errors, then the function A becomes a throwing function too, but if function B doesn't throw errors then neither does function A.

First, here's a simple function that accepts a username and always throws an error because biometric authentication isn't available:

```
extension String: Error { }

func authenticateBiometrically(_ user: String) throws -> Bool {
```

```
    throw "Failed"
}
```

That little **String** extension allows us to throw strings as errors, which saves a little time.

Now here's a second function that doesn't throw:

```
func authenticateByPassword(_ user: String) -> Bool {
    return true
}
```

So, biometric authentication (Touch ID, Face ID) always throws an error, and password authentication always works.

Now we want to write an authentication function that can either run biometric authentication or password authentication depending on what its given. Because one of the two possibilities can throw, we mark its parameter as throwing, like this: **method: (String) throws -> Bool**.

What we're saying is that this function *might* be able to throw, not that it *must* throw.

Try adding this function now:

```
func authenticateUser(method: (String) throws -> Bool) throws {
    try method("twostraws")
    print("Success!")
}
```

We can now call that function like this:

```
do {
    try authenticateUser(method: authenticateByPassword)
} catch {
    print("D'oh!")
}
```

Now for the important part: we both know that **authenticateByPassword()** doesn't throw

errors, and Swift can see that too, so if we change the definition of **authenticateUser** from *throws* to *rethrows* Swift will no longer require us to use **do/catch** when passing it a non-throwing parameter.

Change the function to this:

```
func authenticateUser(method: (String) throws -> Bool) rethrows
{
    try method("twostraws")
    print("Success!")
}
```

Now Xcode will give you a warning: the **catch** block later on is unreachable because **authenticateUser** will never throw errors. But if you were to call it using **authenticateBiometrically** then you *would* need the **do/catch** blocks – Swift is able to evaluate the flow of our code much better, which means we need to write less code.

How to use the **zip()** function to join two arrays

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **zip()** function is designed to merge two sequences into a single sequence of tuples. For example, here is an array of wizards:

```
let wizards1 = ["Harry", "Ron", "Hermione"]
```

And here's a matching array of the animals owned by those wizards:

```
let animals1 = ["Hedwig", "Scabbers", "Crookshanks"]
```

Using **zip()** we can combine them together:

```
let combined1 = zip(wizards1, animals1)
```

That will produce a single sequence combining the earlier two. To avoid doing extra work, Swift actually creates a special type called **Zip2Sequence** that stores both sequences internally – this is more efficient than doing the actual joining, but it does make the output harder to read if you’re using a playground. So, if you *are* using a playground you should wrap the output from **zip()** into a new array to make its output easier to read:

```
let combined2 = Array(zip(wizards1, animals1))
```

If you print **combined** you’ll see it contains this array:

```
[("Harry", "Hedwig"), ("Ron", "Scabbers"), ("Hermione",  
"Crookshanks")]
```

One of the helpful features of **zip()** is that if your two arrays differ in size it will automatically choose the shorter of the two. This avoids trying to read two arrays at the same time and accidentally going out of bounds when one is shorter.

For example, this code will print out the animals belonging to the first three wizards, but nothing for Draco because he doesn’t have a matching animal:

```
let wizards2 = ["Harry", "Ron", "Hermione", "Draco"]  
let animals2 = ["Hedwig", "Scabbers", "Crookshanks"]  
  
for (wizard, animal) in zip(wizards2, animals2) {  
    print("\(wizard) has \(animal)")  
}
```

How to use try/catch in Swift to handle exceptions

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The try/catch syntax was added in Swift 2.0 to make exception handling clearer and safer. It’s made up of three parts: **do** starts a block of code that might fail, **catch** is where execution gets

transferred if any errors occur, and any function calls that might fail need to be called using `try`.

Here's a working example that loads an `input.txt` file from the app bundle into a string:

```
if let filename = Bundle.main.path(forResource: "input",
ofType: "txt") {
    do {
        let str = try String(contentsOfFile: filename)
        print(str)
    } catch {
        print("The file could not be loaded")
    }
}
```

There are two other ways of using `try`, but neither are really recommended. The first is like this:

```
let filename = "somefile.txt"
let str = try! String(contentsOfFile: filename)
```

Note the exclamation mark: `try!`. This means "I realize this call might throw an exception, but trust me: it never, ever will." This is useful only if you're 100% sure the call is safe. In our example we're loading a file from the app bundle, and if that file isn't there it means our app is corrupted, so it's OK to use here. You don't need `do/catch` when you use `try!`.

The second option is `try?` which means "if this call throws an exception, just return `nil` instead." This is closer to the Objective-C way of handling errors, which was a bit scruffy. If this is your preferred way of handling errors, then go for it! You don't need `do/catch` when use `try?`, but you should check and unwrap the result carefully.

How to use typealias to make it easier to use complex types

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Although it's generally a good idea to use structs or classes for defining your types, sometimes you'll find yourself using tuples. If this happens to you, it's quite tedious having to type the full definition of your tuple whenever you want to use it, so the **typealias** lets you create a specific name for it:

```
typealias Name = (first: String, last: String)
```

Type aliases are also useful when you might want to change the underlying type used for data. For example, you might store a value as a **Float** today, but you want to leave open the option to switch to a **Double** later on. In this situation, you'd use **typealias** like this:

```
typealias MyValue = Float
```

You can then go ahead and use **MyValue** everywhere in your code, and if you ever choose to change to **Double** you can just change the type alias and all your code will update.

How to write a closure that returns a value

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Like regular functions, closures can accept values and return values of your choosing: just write them out at the start of your closure, followed by the word **in**.

For example, we could write a **greeting** closure that accepts the name of a person to greet and returns a string using that name:

```
let greeting = { (name: String) -> String in
    return "Hello, \(name)!"}
```

You can now call that just like any other function, passing in someone's name as its only parameter:

```
let message = greeting("Taylor")
```

Optional vs implicitly unwrapped optional: what's the difference?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

When you're just learning Swift, the difference between an optional (**String?**), an implicitly unwrapped optional (**String!**), and a regular type (**String**) can seem awfully confusing. Here's a quick summary that should explain the difference:

When you use **String** you're saying this will always have a string inside, and can never have nothing inside. It might be an empty string (""), but even an empty string is still a string.

When you use **String?** you're saying this might have a string inside, but it might have nothing at all inside – not even an empty string. Swift won't let you use these without unwrapping them, which is usually done using **if let**.

When you use **String!** you're saying this might have a string inside, but it might have nothing at all inside – not even an empty string. However, Swift lets you use these as if they were a **String**, as if they always *do* have a value, but if you try to use a nil value by accident your code will crash. This effectively lets you say "I know this *might* be nil, but I'm so sure it has a value that I'm willing for my program to crash if I'm wrong."

So: **String** is definitely a string, **String?** might be nil or might be a string, and **String!** might be nil but when you use it you're absolutely sure it has a string.

Private vs fileprivate: what's the difference?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

These two forms of access control are similar, but there are two differences.

If you mark something **fileprivate** it can be read anywhere in the same file it was declared – even outside the type. On the other hand, a **private** property can only be read inside the type that declared it, or inside extensions to that type that were created in the same file.

In practice you're likely to see **private** used significantly more than **fileprivate**.

Remove all instances of an object from an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Arrays already have methods to find and remove a single item, or remove all items at once, but for removing all instances of a specific item you need to use a closure-based method called **removeAll(where:)**.

For example, given these numbers:

```
var numbers = [ 2, 1, 2, 3, 2, 4, 2, 5 ]
```

If we wanted to remove all instances of 2 from that array, we could use **removeAll(where:)** like this:

```
numbers.removeAll { $0 == 2 }
```

If you want to *return* the array with items removed rather than doing it in place, you'd need to write your own extension to **Array**, like this:

```
extension Array where Element: Equatable {
    func removing(_ obj: Element) -> [Element] {
        return filter { $0 != obj }
    }
}
```

Now you can write `let removed = numbers.removing(2)` to get back `[1, 3, 4, 5]`.

Removing matching elements from a collection: removeAll(where:)

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **removeAll(where:)** method performs a high-performance, in-place filter for collections. You give it a closure condition to run, and it will strip out all objects that match your condition.

For example, if you have a collection of names and want to remove people called “Terry”, you’d use this:

```
var pythons = ["John", "Michael", "Graham", "Terry", "Eric",
    "Terry"]
pythons.removeAll { $0 == "Terry" }
print(pythons)
```

Using **removeAll(where:)** is more readable than using a reversed **filter()** call because it specifies what you *don’t* want rather than what you *want*. It’s also more performant than **filter()** because it removes object in place, and so avoids extra copying.

Self vs self - what's the difference?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

When you’re writing protocols and protocol extensions, there’s a difference between **Self** (capital S) and **self** (lowercase S). When used with a capital S, **Self** refers to the type that conform to the protocol, e.g. **String** or **Int**. When used with a lowercase S, **self** refers to the value inside that type, e.g. “hello” or 556.

As an example, consider this extension on **BinaryInteger**:

```
extension BinaryInteger {
```

```
func squared() -> Self {
    return self * self
}

}
```

Remember, **Self** with a capital S refers to whatever type is conforming to the protocol. In the example above, **Int** conforms to **BinaryInteger**, so when called on **Int** the method returns an **Int**.

On the other hand, **self** with a *lowercase* S refers to whatever value the type holds. If the example above were called on an **Int** storing the value 5 it would effectively be **5 * 5**.

Tips for Android developers switching to Swift

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

Here are my top ten tips to help you switch from coding Java on Android to coding Swift on iOS:

1. Find a good tutorial and follow it. Obviously I suggest my own **Hacking with Swift** and **Pro Swift** books!
2. Don't bother with iOS 8 and earlier; 80% of people are already on iOS 9, and by the time you're shipping apps that will be higher.
3. You're used to debugging on devices because the Android Emulator is poor. The iOS Simulator is excellent, and you should use it. Be warned, though: the iOS Simulator runs at the full speed of your Mac, so you should always do performance testing on devices.
4. If you're looking for **LinearLayout**, use **UIStackView**. If you're looking for Fragments, use **UIViewController**. If you're looking for Volley, use Alamofire. If you're looking for Java, you should head back to Android.
5. Don't skimp on learning Auto Layout. It is hard, and it is a bit like black magic at first, but once you understand it your life becomes much easier.
6. Forget about DPs, SPs, etc. iOS works in virtual points, and the system handles the rest.

7. If you want to support the widest range of devices, you should learn about Size Classes. They let one app look and work great on everything from iPhone 4s through to iPad Pro, including going between Slide Over, Split View and full screen.
8. You have a *lot* more memory to play with, and your code will execute substantially faster. Garbage collection does not happen, so you'll find far fewer cases where your code stutters before optimization.
9. The Instruments tool that is built into Xcode is a dream come true if you're coming from Android Studio. Same applies to **XCTest** for unit testing and UI testing. Downside: iOS has nothing like the Application Exerciser Monkey.
10. Most important of all, use an iPhone or iPad for a while so you start to get a feel for the platform's design principles. Google has a terrible habit of making their iOS apps look like Android apps, which is just confusing for users. iOS design is simple and clear, but it's extremely consistent. Except for Google. *Sigh....*

iOS is a really fun platform to code for, and Apple's devices have a huge amount of power available to you. Have fun!

Using **stride()** to loop over a range of numbers

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift has a helpful **stride()**, which lets you move from one value to another using any increment – and even lets you specify whether the upper bound is exclusive or inclusive.

First, some examples. This first example counts from 0 to 10 in 2s:

```
for i in stride(from: 0, to: 10, by: 2) {
    print(i)
}
```

This second example counts from 0.1 up to to 0.5, exclusive:

```
for i in stride(from: 0, to: 0.5, by: 0.1) {
```

```
    print(i)  
}
```

Both those examples use **stride(from:to:by:)**, which counts from the start point up to by excluding the **to** parameter. If you want to count up and *including* the **to** parameter, you should use **stride(from:through:by:)**, like this:

```
for i in stride(from: 0, through: 10, by: 2) {  
    print(i)  
}
```

What are class and subtype existentials?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

You should already know that Swift lets you specify a concrete type as a function parameter, meaning that you can say “this parameter must be a string.” Swift also lets you specify protocols types for function parameters, meaning that you can say “this parameter must conform to **Codable**.”

Those two are straightforward, but sometimes you need more power. Fortunately, Swift lets us represent existentials of classes and subtypes that conform to protocols, which is dramatic way of saying that you can now refer to types in a more complex way.

As an example, consider this class hierarchy:

```
class Animal {}  
  
class Dog: Animal, Codable {}  
class Cat: Animal, Codable {}
```

There’s a main **Animal** class, and two subclasses called **Dog** and **Cat**. Both of the subclasses also conform to **Codable**. Swift lets us combine both **Animal** (the class) and **Codable** (the

protocol) to write functions that require a parameter to be both at the same time:

```
func encodeAnimal(with animal: Animal & Codable) {  
}  
  
let animal = Dog()  
encodeAnimal(with: animal)
```

Without the **Codable** part that function would accept instances of the main **Animal** class even though it wouldn't work inside, and without the **Animal** part that function would accept anything that's **Codable** – only the combination of the two makes sense.

What are convenience initializers?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Designated initializers are the default way of creating new instances of a type. There are others, known as convenience initializers, that are there to help you accomplish common tasks more easily, but those are in addition to your designated initializers rather than a replacement.

For example, you might have a **Polygon** class that stores sets of points to be drawn later on, like this:

```
class Polygon {  
    var points: [CGPoint]  
  
    init(points: [CGPoint]) {  
        self.points = points  
    }  
}
```

Now, if that were just a struct you could go ahead and add other initializers. But as it's a *class*

– where the rules for initialization are quite complex – you could add a convenience initializer that sets up squares of a specific length, like this:

```
convenience init(squareWithLength length: CGFloat) {
    let points = [
        CGPoint(x: 0, y: 0),
        CGPoint(x: length, y: 0),
        CGPoint(x: length, y: length),
        CGPoint(x: 0, y: length),
    ]

    self.init(points: points)
}
```

Note how the convenience initializer ends by calling the designated initializer – this is a requirement, and means that your convenience initializers are only responsible for setting up the parts that are unique to them rather than doing everything.

What are designated initializers?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Designated initializers are the default way of creating new instances of a type. There are others, known as convenience initializers, that are there to help you accomplish common tasks more easily, but those are in addition to your designated initializers rather than a replacement.

For example, you might create a **Polygon** class that stores sets of points to be drawn later on, like this:

```
class Polygon {
    var points: [CGPoint]

    init(points: [CGPoint]) {
```

```
    self.points = points
}
}
```

That initializer is your designated initializer: one that will set up all properties fully in a default way. You could add convenience initializers on top to perform certain tasks – creating squares or triangles would make sense in this scenario – but those must always end by calling a designated initializer.

What are generics?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Generics are a way of making one data type act in a variety of ways depending on how it is created. You've already used them whether you realized or not: Swift has an **Array** type, but it is *generic* – it doesn't contain any sort of specific data. Instead, you ask for arrays that hold specific kinds of data by using things like **[String]** to get a string array.

It's not hard to create generics of your own, and to demonstrate that we're going to create a simple **Queue** type. These are first-in, first-out data structures (FIFO), which means you add things to the back and remove them from the front – much like a real-life queue.

We want this queue to be generic, and in Swift you do that by writing the name of a generic placeholder inside angle brackets, like this: **struct Queue<T>** { . That **T** doesn't mean anything special – it could have been **R** or **Element** – but **T** is commonly used.

Inside the queue we're going to have an internal array tracking the items we're storing, and we'll write methods to add and remove items.

Here's the complete **Queue** struct:

```
struct Queue<T> {
    private var internalArray = [T]()
}
```

```

var count: Int {
    return internalArray.count
}

mutating func add(_ item: T) {
    internalArray.append(item)
}

mutating func remove() -> T? {
    if internalArray.count > 0 {
        return internalArray.removeFirst()
    } else {
        return nil
    }
}

```

You can now create a queue to store any object you want. For example, this create a queue of integers:

```
let queue = Queue<Int>()
```

What are implicitly unwrapped optionals?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Regular Swift optionals, e.g. **String?**, may contain a value, but may also contain nil – they might have no value at all – so before we can use them we must check to see what they contain. These are a useful way of expressing uncertainty, because a full **String** (not optional) must always contain a string.

An implicitly unwrapped optional – written as **String!** – may also contain a value or be nil, but they don't need to be checked before they are used. Checking an optionals value is called

“unwrapping”, because we’re looking inside the optional box to see what it contains. *Implicitly unwrapping* that optional means that it’s still optional and might be nil, but Swift eliminates the need for unwrapping.

Now, you might read that and think “great! I hate unwrapping optionals with **if let**”, but there’s a problem: if you try to use a value that contains nil your code will crash. You can’t catch the error and you can’t stop it from happening: your code *will* crash. Implicitly unwrapped optionals require you to be absolutely sure there’s a value there before you use them.

And *now* you might be thinking “why would I want to take that risk?” The usual reason is that there are some things we all know will start life as being nil, but will be non-nil by the time we need them and won’t be nil again. For example, when you create outlets using Interface Builder it creates them all as implicitly unwrapped optionals because when your view controller is being created those outlets will all be nil, but shortly after they get set to real views and those won’t be destroyed until the whole view controller is destroyed.

Broadly speaking, you should avoid implicitly unwrapped optionals unless you’re certain they are safe – and even then you should think twice.

What are keypaths?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift keypaths are a way of storing uninvoked references to properties, which is a fancy way of saying they refer to a property itself rather than to that property’s value.

Here’s an example struct storing a name and maximum warp speed of a starship:

```
struct Starship {  
    var name: String  
    var maxWarp: Double  
}  
  
let voyager = Starship(name: "Voyager", maxWarp: 9.975)
```

Keypaths let us refer to the **name** or **maxWarp** properties without reading them directly, like this:

```
let nameKeyPath = \Starship.name  
let warpKeyPath = \Starship.maxWarp
```

If you want to read those keypaths on a specific starship, Swift will return you the actual values attached to those properties:

```
print(voyager[keyPath: nameKeyPath])  
print(voyager[keyPath: warpKeyPath])
```

In practice, this means you can refer to the same property in multiple places all using the same keypath – and if you decide you want a different property you can change it in just one place.

What are **lazy variables**?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

It's very common in iOS to want to create complex objects only when you need them, largely because with limited computing power at your disposal you need to avoid doing expensive work unless it's really needed.

Swift has a mechanism built right into the language that enables just-in-time calculation of expensive work, and it is called a *lazy variable*. These variables are created using a function you specify only when that variable is first requested. If it's never requested, the function is never run, so it does help save processing time.

I don't want to produce a complicated example because that would rather defy the point, so instead I've built a simple (if silly!) one: imagine you want to calculate a person's age using the Fibonacci sequence. This sequence goes 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, and so on – each number is calculated by adding the previous two numbers in the sequence. So if someone was aged 8, their Fibonacci sequence age would be 21, because that's at position 8 in the sequence.

I chose this because the most common pedagogical way to teach the Fibonacci sequence is using a function like this one:

```
func fibonacci(of num: Int) -> Int {  
    if num < 2 {  
        return num  
    } else {  
        return fibonacci(of: num - 1) + fibonacci(of: num - 2)  
    }  
}
```

That function calls itself, which makes it a *recursive function*, and actually it's quite slow. If you try to calculate the Fibonacci value of something over, say, 21, expect it to be slow in a playground!

Anyway, we want to create a **Person** struct that has an age property and a **fibonacciAge** property, but we don't want that second one to be evaluated unless it's actually used. So, create this struct now:

```
struct Person {  
    var age = 16  
  
    lazy var fibonacciOfAge: Int = {  
        return fibonacci(of: self.age)  
    }()  
  
    func fibonacci(of num: Int) -> Int {  
        if num < 2 {  
            return num  
        } else {  
            return fibonacci(of: num - 1) + fibonacci(of: num - 2)  
        }  
    }  
}
```

There are five important things to note in that code:

- The lazy property is marked as **lazy var**. You can't make it **lazy let** because lazy properties must always be variables.
- Because the actual value is created by evaluation, you need to declare its data type up front. In the case of the code above, that means declaring the property as **Int**.
- Once you've set your data type, you need to use an open brace ("{") to start your block of code, then "}" to finish.
- You need to use **self** inside the function. In fact, if you're using a class rather than a structure, you should also declare **[unowned self]** inside your function so that you don't create a strong reference cycle.
- You need to end your lazy property with **()**, because what you're actually doing is making a call to the function you just created.

Once that code is written, you can use it like this:

```
var singer = Person()  
print(singer.fibonacciOfAge)
```

Remember, the point of lazy properties is that they are computed only when they are first needed, after which their value is saved. This means if you create 1000 singers and never touch their **fibonacciOfAge** property, your code will be lightning fast because that lazy work is never done.

What are property observers?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Property observers are Swift's way of letting you attach functionality to changes in property values. For example, you might want to say, "whenever the player's score changes, update this label to show their new score." Here's a basic example that prints message to the debug console when a variable changes:

```

var score = 0 {
    willSet {
        print("Score is about to change to \(newValue)")
    }

    didSet {
        print("Score just changed from \(oldValue) to \(score)")
    }
}

score = 10

```

What are protocol extensions?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

This might sound obvious, but protocol extensions are extensions to protocols as opposed to concrete types. For example, the **BinaryInteger** protocol is adopted by all integer types: **Int**, **Int64**, **UInt8**, and so on. If you wanted to add a method to all of those at once, you'd use a protocol extension to modify **BinaryInteger**, like this:

```

extension BinaryInteger {
    func cubed() -> Self {
        return self * self * self
    }
}

```

That **cubed()** method will now exist on all integer types, so you can write code like this:

```

let i: Int = 5
let j: UInt8 = 7
print(i.cubed())
print(j.cubed())

```

Note: **Self** with a capital S refers to whatever type conforms to the protocol, e.g. **Int** or **UInt32**, whereas **self** with a lowercase S refers to whatever the current value of the type is, e.g. 5 or 99.

What are sets?

Availability: iOS or later.

Sets are a type of sequence similar to arrays, except they may not store any item more than once and are unordered. This eliminates them from many places where you would use an array, but they do have one special super-power: it's extremely fast to check whether a set contains a specific value. In fact, sets perform this operation at the same speed whether they contain 10 items or 10,000 items.

Sets can be created directly from arrays, then used like them in many ways. For example:

```
var numbers = Set([1, 2, 3])
```

You can then go ahead and check whether that contains a specific value, like this:

```
print(numbers.contains(5))
```

Because sets don't have any concept of ordering, they don't have an **append()** method. Instead, they use **insert()**, like this:

```
numbers.insert(5)
```

What are static methods and variables?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Static methods and variables belong to the type that defined them, rather than instances of that

type. For example, we could create a struct to track taxis in a city, like this:

```
struct Taxi1 {  
    var ownerName: String  
    var licensePlate: String  
}
```

Each instance of that struct will have its own **ownerName** and **licensePlate** property strings. However, if we made a *static* property inside that struct then it would be shared by all taxis. For example, we could add this property to store how many taxis exist in the city:

```
struct Taxi2 {  
    var ownerName: String  
    var licensePlate: String  
    static var count: Int = 0  
}
```

When we want to reference that property we need to use **Taxi2.count**, because it belongs to the struct not to instances of that struct.

The same is true of static methods, which are sometimes called “type methods” – they belong to the struct or class that defined them rather than instance of the class. In practice that means you can't use **self** inside the method because there is no instance to refer to.

What are the changes in Swift 1.2?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift 1.2 was an interim release that fixed some early confusions and annoyances in the language. Its changes weren't big, but they did help clean up and clarify Swift, and helped tide us all over until the release of Swift 2.

The important changes are:

- You can now check and unwrap multiple optionals using **if/let** rather than create a so-called "pyramid of doom" with nested statements.
- Many Objective-C types that were being passed around now had correct nullability values set. This was done by modifying Objective-C then having many people scour through existing Apple code to add new annotations.
- Downcasting (a typecast from a higher type in your class hierarchy to a lower type) is now done using **as!** and **as?** to mark forced downcasting and optional downcasting respectively.
- Swift strings, arrays and dictionaries now no longer automatically typecast to **NSString**, **NSArray** and **NSDictionary**.
- A new **Set** data type was introduced to handle arrays where each value can appear only once.
- Constants can now be declared without a value, as long as they are provided with a value before they are used.
- Incremental build support was added, which makes it more efficient to build larger Swift projects.

What are the changes in Swift 2.0?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift 2.0 introduced a lot of major language changes. You can read my full article explaining the changes with code examples **by clicking here**, but here are the highlights:

- Checked exceptions using **try/catch**
- Automatically synthesized headers
- The **guard** keyword to check input while unwrapping optionals
- Measuring strings is now done using **characters.count** (Note: this was later un-done in Swift 4.)
- Delayed code execution using the **defer** keyword
- You now get mutability warnings if you declare variables that never get changed
- API availability checking is now built right in

- The **performSelector()** family of functions is now available

What are the changes in Swift 2.2?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift 2.2 introduced a lot of major language changes. You can read my full article explaining the changes with code examples **by clicking here**, but here are the highlights:

- You can now compare tuples up to arity 6
- Compile-time Swift version checking
- More keywords can be used as argument labels
- Renamed debug identifiers: #line, #function, #file
- The ++ and -- operators are deprecated
- Traditional C-style for loops are deprecated
- Tuple splat syntax is deprecated
- var parameters have been deprecated
- Stringified selectors are deprecated
- New documentation keywords: recommended, recommendedover, and keyword

What are the changes in Swift 3?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift 3.0 introduced the biggest changes to the language since it was released, and it's 100% guaranteed to cause your current code to break unless you had written some extraordinarily trivial apps.

I went over the changes in more detail in my article **What's new in Swift 3.0?**, but here are the headline changes:

- All function parameters have labels unless you request otherwise.
- Needless or duplicated words in method names have been removed.
- UpperCamelCase has been replaced with lowerCamelCase for enums and properties.
- C functions from Core Graphics and GCD have been replaced with method syntax.
- Everything deprecated in Swift 2.2 has now been removed from the language.
- Closures are now considered to be non-escaping by default; if you need them to escape you need to use the new **@escaping** attribute.
- Key paths (for KVO) can now be specified using the **#keyPath** directive.
- Many Foundation types have been converted to structs; most have dropped their “NS” name prefix.
- Many closure parameters now have default values, so you don’t need to write **completion: nil** much any more.

What does an exclamation mark mean?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift uses exclamation marks to signal both force unwrapping of optionals and explicitly unwrapped optionals. The former means "I know this optional variable definitely has a value, so let me use it directly." The latter means "this variable is going to be nil initially then will definitely have a value afterwards, so don't make me keep unwrapping it."

Broadly speaking, using exclamation marks is frowned upon because "trust me it's safe" isn't as good as the compiler absolutely enforcing it. That being said, it's your code: if you know something cannot be nil (usually because if it were nil your program would explode!) then do what works best.

What does override mean?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The **override** is used when you want to write your own method to replace an existing one in a parent class. It's used commonly when you're working with **UIViewControllers**, because view controllers already come with lots of methods like **viewDidLoad()** and **viewWillAppear()**. When you want to override these default methods, you need to specify this with the **override** keyword.

Now, you might be wondering why the **override** keyword is even needed, but it's really about ensuring your code is safe – if you write a method and accidentally name it the same as something that already exists, Xcode will simply refuse to build your app until you add in the **override** keyword. Similarly, if you use **override** on a method that doesn't override something that already exists, Xcode will refuse to build.

What does the **AppDelegate** class do?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you create your app using one of Xcode's built-in templates, you'll automatically get an **AppDelegate** class in `AppDelegate.swift`, which comes with a handful of empty methods.

This class is *supposed* to be there to handle application lifecycle events - i.e., responding to the app being launched, backgrounded, foregrounded, receiving data, and so on. However, in practice **AppDelegate** is often abused as an easy dumping ground for shared data – any thing that is used in several view controllers often gets thrown into the app delegate, but that's nearly always the wrong place for it.

You may also sometimes see folks creating their initial user interface inside **AppDelegate**. This is broadly a bad idea unless you're just starting out – if you've done this, consider splitting off that layout code either into a coordinator or into a view containment subclass.

What does the **open** keyword do?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

When working with code from another module – e.g., UIKit or a module you wrote separate from your main app – Swift differentiates between public accessibility and public overridability. That is, someone can be public for folks to use, but not public for them to extend.

Here's an example to demonstrate the difference:

```
open class User {  
    open func login() {}  
    public func playGame() {}  
    public init() {}  
}
```

If that were defined in its own module, any other code accessing it would be able to inherit from the **User** class because it's marked **open**. Inside the child class, they could override **login()** because it's also marked **open**, but they could *not* override **playGame()** because it's marked only as **public** – it can be *called*, but not *changed*. If you remove **open** from the whole **User** class it can be *used* but not *subclassed*.

The **open** keyword is an effective way of stopping other developers from accidentally overriding functionality that's critical to the way your app works. If you use it selectively, subclasses can add their own functionality or perhaps replace a few non-critical components, without altering the fundamental behavior of your class.

What does unowned mean?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Unowned variables are similar to weak variables in that they provide a way to reference data without having ownership. However, weak variables can become **nil** – they are effectively optional. In comparison, unowned variables must never be set to nil once they have been initialized, which means you don't need to worry about unwrapping optionals.

The most common place you'll see unowned variables is with closures that declare [**unowned self**] – this means "I want to reference **self** inside this closure but I don't want to own it." Why **unowned** rather than **weak**? Both would work, but let's face it: if **self** is nil inside a closure, something has gone wrong!

What does **weak** mean?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Unless you specific otherwise, all Swift properties are strong, which means they will not be removed from RAM until whatever owns them is removed from RAM. So, if you create an array in your view controller and you want it to stick around until the view controller is destroyed, that's what strong does.

Weak on the other hand is there when you want to say "I want to be able to reference this variable, but I don't mind if it goes away, so I don't want to own it." This might seem strange: after all, where's the point in having a reference to a variable that might not be there?

Well, the answer lies in a thing called reference cycles. If object A has a strong variable pointing at object B, and object B has a strong variable pointing at object A, neither object would ever be deleted because they both keep each other alive.

In this situation, having one of the objects change their property to be weak would solve the problem. For example, object A has a strong variable to object B, but object B has a weak variable pointing at object A. This guarantees that B cannot be destroyed while A still exists, but A can be destroyed because B doesn't have a strong variable owning it.

What is **AnyObject**?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

This is one of those things that sounds obvious in retrospect: **AnyObject** is Swift's way of

saying, "I don't mind what type of object you pass in here, it could be a string, it could be a string, it could be a number, it could be an array, or it could be a custom type you defined yourself.

If you were wondering: the reason numbers work even though they clearly aren't objects is because Swift silently *makes* them objects when they need to conform to **AnyObject**. Magic!

What is Automatic Reference Counting (ARC)?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Automatic Reference Counting (ARC) is Swift's system of tracking memory you're using. When you create an object from a class, Swift remembers that instance is being referenced precisely once. If you then point another variable at that object, Swift will increment the reference count to 2, because two variables are pointing at the same object. If you now destroy the first variable (perhaps it was inside a function and that function ended), Swift takes the reference count back down to 1.

All this matters because as long as the reference count is greater than 1 the object stays alive. But when the final variable referencing that object goes away, Swift will take the reference count down to zero. As no existing variables point at the object, its RAM can be released. So, ARC is a way of tracking an object's lifetime efficiently, and for the most part you don't even notice it happens – Swift does all the work for you.

What is MVC?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

MVC – short for Model-View-Controller – is Apple's preferred way of architecting apps for its platforms, and so it's the default approach used by most developers on Apple platforms.

In MVC each piece of your code is one of three things:

- Models store your data, such as the names of products in a store.
- Views render data for users, for example a table showing the list of products available.
- Controllers combine the two, by querying the model and converting its data to something views can show.

On iOS, macOS, and tvOS, view controllers span the “view” and “controller” buckets rather uncomfortably. They are more commonly used as controllers, but if you value clean code you should probably make them more like views.

What is MVVM?

Availability: iOS or later.

MVVM stands for “Model View ViewModel”, and it’s a software architecture often used by Apple developers to replace MVC.

In MVC the way most Apple developers practice it, the view controller forms part of the Controller layer (the C in MVC), which means it’s responsible for doing lots of layout as well as being a general dumping ground for functionality.

In MVVM view controllers are considered part of the V layer, which means their job is to focus specifically on layout and the view lifecycle – **viewDidLoad()** and so on. In its place a new object is created called the *view model*, which is effectively most of the code you had in your view controller before except without UIKit attached. That is, it should be capable of responding to requests for data, and so on, except it shouldn’t reference any user interface controls.

This might seem like you’re just pointlessly moving code around, but the difference is important: because your view model is more like a *model* than like a *view* you can write tests for it more easily. Rather than having to mock up a **UITextField** to insert some data, you should be able to call a method that accepts a string because your view model shouldn’t rely on any user interface components.

While all this sounds positive, MVVM does have a big drawback on iOS: it relies on a system of two-way bindings that can communicate view data to your view model, otherwise you need to do a lot of work shuttling data around yourself.

What is **NSNumber**?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

NSNumber is an Objective-C class designed to store a variety of types of numbers. It was important in Objective-C because its primitive number types – integers, doubles, etc – could not be used in most of Apple’s APIs without wrapping them in an object such as **NSNumber**, but mostly Swift does a good job of automatically converting its numbers to **NSNumber** when you need it.

That being said, there are a few times when Swift won’t help you out, and you need to convert to **NSNumber** by hand. For example, this code is designed to convert numerical numbers like 50 into textual numbers like “fifty”, but it won’t compile:

```
let number = 50
let formatter = NumberFormatter()
formatter.numberStyle = .spellOut

// this line won't work
// let string1 = formatter.string(from: number) ?? ""
```

The problem is that the **string(from:)** method expects an **NSNumber** and Swift isn’t able to automatically bridge the integer we created in **number**. The fix here is nice and easy – just add **as NSNumber** to help Swift bridge the two worlds:

```
let string2 = formatter.string(from: number as NSNumber) ?? ""
```

What is a **CGFloat**?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

A **CGFloat** is a specialized form of **Float** that holds either 32-bits of data or 64-bits of data depending on the platform. The CG tells you it's part of Core Graphics, and it's found throughout UIKit, Core Graphics, Sprite Kit and many other iOS libraries.

If you have a **Float** or **Double** and need a **CGFloat**, you can convert it like this:

```
let myCGFloat = CGFloat(myDouble)
```

What is a closure?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you're here because you find closures hard, that's OK: most people find closures hard. But in truth, closures aren't actually that complicated, so I hope I can explain them to you quickly and easily.

Here's my best, simplest definition: a closure is a kind of anonymous function that gets stored as a variable so it can be called later on, and has the special ability to remember the state of your program when you used it.

Some detail:

- "Anonymous function": that is, a closure is a block of code you define, starting with { and ending with }. It's anonymous because it doesn't have a name – it doesn't need a name, because it gets stored as a variable.
- "Stored as a variable": yes, the closure code literally gets saved as a variable, for example, **myCode**. Whoever is storing the closure (normally one of Apple's libraries) can then "call" that variable to run your closure's code.
- "Called later on": once your closure has been stored away by iOS, it can be called a second later, a minute later, an hour later or never, depending on the situation. For example, when you say "run this code when my animation completes," iOS will make

sure it happens at the right time.

- "Remember the state of your program": if your closure references some variables that you had created, Swift will automatically take a copy of those variables so they can be used later. Remember, your closure can be called 20 minutes after you created it, so being able to store the original program state is important.

The truth is that you've probably used closures without realizing it. Even a simple UIView animation call uses closures for the animations, and optionally also for the completion block. Just think of it as a chunk of code that gets called later on, and you're most of the way there.

What is a computed property?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift offers us two kinds of property: a *stored* property is one that saves a value for use later, and a *computed* property is one that runs some code in order to calculate the value.

As comparison, here's a **Person** struct with four stored properties and one computed one. The computed property returns a string based on joining the four stored properties into a sentence.

```
struct Person {  
    var name = "Taylor"  
    var favoriteColor = "red"  
    var favoriteCity = "Tokyo"  
    var favoriteFood = "tea"  
  
    var greeting: String {  
        return "Hello, my name is \(name), and I like \  
        (favoriteFood), \(favoriteCity), and the color \  
        (favoriteColor)."  
    }  
}
```

Note: Unlike stored properties, Swift requires you to use an explicit type with your computed properties.

What is a delegate in iOS?

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Delegates are extremely common in iOS development, but fortunately they are easy to understand: a delegate is any object that should be notified when something interesting has happened. What that "something interesting" means depends on the context: for example, a table view's delegate gets notified when the user taps on a row, whereas a navigation controller's delegate gets notified when the user moves between view controllers.

When you agree to be the delegate for an object, you will almost certainly need to conform to a specific protocol, such as **UITableViewDelegate**. These protocols will usually have some optional methods that you can implement if you care when something happens, for example, table views can notify you when users *deselect* a row, but most developers don't care. These protocols may also have some required methods that you *must* implement.

What is a dictionary?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

A dictionary is a collection of values stored at named positions. Whereas you would access values in an array using **myArray[5]**, with a dictionary you use named positions such as **myDict["Paul"]** or **myDict["Scotland"]**. You don't even need to use strings for the positions – you can use another object if you choose, such as dates.

These named positions are called "keys", so dictionaries represent what's known as a key-value pair: each key has exactly one value, and each can appear only once in a dictionary.

What is a double?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The **Double** data type is the standard Swift way of storing decimal numbers such as 3.1, 3.14159 and 16777216.333921. Whenever you create a variable or constant that holds a number like this, Swift automatically assumes it's a **Double** rather than a **Float**, because it has a higher precision and therefore less likely to lose valuable accuracy.

What is a float?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The **Float** data type stores low-precision decimal numbers such as 3.1, 3.14159 and 556.9. It is not used that often in Swift, partly because **Double** is the default for these kinds of numbers (it has a higher precision), and partly because when you come across libraries that use regular floats they are more likely to want **CGFloat** instead.

What is a functor?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

A functor is any data type that can be mapped over using **map()**, as long it abides by two laws:

1. If your map function is the identity function (i.e. it just returns each element without transformation) then your input and output must be the same.
2. If you compose function A and function B to make function C then use the result with **map()**, the result should be the same as mapping first A then B individually.

Both of those laws sound obvious, but that doesn't mean they aren't important. Arrays are functors, sets are functors, optionals are functors, and more.

What is a lazy sequence?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Lazy sequences are regular sequences where each item is computed on demand rather than up front. For example, consider this array of numbers:

```
let numbers = Array(1...100000)
```

That will hold 100,000 numbers. Now, if we wanted to double all those numbers, we'd write something like this:

```
let doubled = numbers.map { $0 * 2 }
```

That will cause Swift to double all 100,000 numbers, and sometimes that's exactly what you want. However, if you know you intend to use only a handful of them, you can make the calculation lazy instead, like this:

```
let lazyDoubled = numbers.lazy.map { $0 * 2 }
```

Now that **map()** call won't do any work up front – it just stores the original array (numbers 1 to 100,000) alongside the transformation closure (double each number). So, when you request item 5,000 it can calculate just that one for you and return it in a split second – a significant time saving.

What is a monad?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

A monad is any data type that can be mapped over using **map()** and flat mapped over using **flatMap()**, as long it abides by three laws. Arrays, sets, optionals, and more are all monads.

You don't need to understand (or even be aware of) the three monad laws in order to use them, but if you're curious I'll try to explain. The three monad laws are best demonstrated using code, because honestly it's a bit heavy when you're just learning.

The first law is left identity, and means that if you have: 1) a value, e.g. the number 5; 2) a monad that contains that value, e.g. an array containing the number 5; and 3) a function that accepts the same type of value (5) and sends back the same type of monad (an array); then calling **flatMap()** on the array should be equal to applying the function directly to the value.

In code:

```
// if you have a value, in this case 5
let myNumber = 5

// and you have a monad containing that value, in this case an
array containing 5
let myMonad = [myNumber]

// and you have a function that accepts a number and returns
the same type of monad as we had before (an array)
let doubleNumbers = { (value: Int) in return [value * 2] }

// then calling flatMap on the array...
let result1 = myMonad.flatMap(doubleNumbers)

// should be equal to applying the function directly to the
value
let result2 = doubleNumbers(myNumber)

// so, this should print "true" in a playground
result1 == result2
```

The second law is right identity, and means that if you have: 1) a value, e.g. the number 5; 2) a monad that contains that value, e.g. an array containing the number 5; and 3) a function that accepts the same type of value (5) and sends back the same kind of monad (an array) without

transforming the value; then calling **flatMap()** with that function on your monad should leave it unchanged.

In code:

```
// if you have a value, in this case 5
let value = 5

// and you have a monad containing that value, in this case an
array containing 5
let array = [5]

// and you have a function that accepts a number and returns
the same type of monad as we had before (an array) without
transforming the value
let wrapInArray = { (value: Int) in return [value] }

// then calling flatMap() with that function on your monad
should leave it unchanged
let flatMapped = array.flatMap(wrapInArray)

// this should print "true" in a playground
array == flatMapped
```

The third law is associativity, and means that if you have 1) a value, e.g. the number 5; 2) a monad that contains that value, e.g. an array containing the number 5; and 3) two functions that can be run on that monad as a chain; then it shouldn't matter how those functions are nested.

```
// if you have a value, in this case 5
let anotherNumber = 5

// and you have a monad containing that value, in this case an
array containing 5
let anotherArray = [myNumber]
```

```

// and you have two functions that can be run on that monad as
// a chain, in this case one that multiplies by 5 and one by 10
let multiplyBy5 = { [$0 * 5] }
let multiplyBy10 = { [$0 * 10] }

// then it shouldn't matter how those functions are nested
let chained =
    anotherArray.flatMap(multiplyBy5).flatMap(multiplyBy10)
let nested = anotherArray.flatMap
{ multiplyBy5($0).flatMap(multiplyBy10) }

// this should print "true" in a playground
chained == nested

```

Again, you don't need to understand these laws in order to use monads, so don't be too worried if you understood only part of the code above.

What is a nested class or nested struct?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Nested types – i.e. nested structs and nested classes – are a useful way of organizing your code, and perhaps even restricting what others can do with it. In essence, a nested type is just one data type defined inside another, like this:

```

struct Deck {
    struct Card {
        ...
    }
}

```

Now rather than creating a new **Card** struct you would instead create a new **Deck.Card**

because one is inside the other.

This approach is useful for organizing larger applications, because you might need custom types that are applicable only in certain places – exposing them elsewhere might cause problems.

If you want to re-enforce this, Swift lets you mark the inner type (**Card** above) as being private, which means it can only be used inside the **Deck** class – code from outside **Deck** can't even see it.

What is a nib?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

NIBs and XIBs are files that describe user interfaces, and are built using Interface Builder. In fact, the acronym "NIB" comes from "NeXTSTEP Interface Builder", and "XIB" from "Xcode Interface Builder". NIBs and XIBs are effectively the same thing: XIBs are newer and are used while you're developing, whereas NIBs are what get produced when you create a build.

In modern versions of iOS and macOS, NIBs and XIBs have effectively been replaced by storyboards, although you may still meet them if you work on older projects.

What is a protocol associated type?

Availability: iOS or later.

Associated types are a powerful way of making protocols generic, but they can be a bit confusing at first. In essence, they mark holes in protocols that must be filled by whatever types conform to those protocols.

Let's start with a simple example: an **ItemStoring** protocol that can store items in an array. What *type* those items are depends on whatever conforms to the protocol, but we can still use them inside the protocol and any extensions.

Here's the basic protocol:

```
protocol ItemStoring {
    associatedtype DataType

    var items: [DataType] { get set}
    mutating func add(item: DataType)
}
```

As you can see, it requires that conforming types provide an **items** array that holds an array of whatever is used to fill the **DataType** hole, and also a mutating method to add items of that type.

That mutating method is probably going to be the same for all conforming types, so we can write a protocol extension that provides a default implementation:

```
extension ItemStoring {
    mutating func add(item: DataType) {
        items.append(item)
    }
}
```

Finally we can create a **NameDatabase** struct that conforms to the **ItemStoring** protocol like this:

```
struct NameDatabase: ItemStoring {
    var items = [String]()
}
```

Swift is smart enough to realize that **String** is being used to fill the hole in the associated type, because the **items** array must be whatever **DataType** is.

That's all the code written, so you can go ahead and use **NameDatabase**:

```
var names = NameDatabase()
```

```
names.add(item: "James")
names.add(item: "Jess")
```

What is a protocol?

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

A protocol is a collection of methods that describe a specific set of similar actions or behaviors. I realize that probably didn't help much, so I'll try to rephrase in more detail: how many rows should a table view have? How many sections? What should the section titles be? Can the user move rows? If so, what should happen when they do?

All those questions concern a similar thing: data going into a **UITableView**. As a result, they all go into a single protocol, called **UITableViewDataSource**. Some of the behaviors inside that protocol are optional. For example, **canEditRowAt** is optional and defaults to true if you don't provide a value yourself.

When you work in Swift you will frequently have to make your class conform to a protocol. This is done by adding the protocol name to your class definition, then filling in any required methods, like this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController, UITableViewDataSource {
    func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
        // request 10 rows
        return 10
    }

    func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
        // return a dummy table view cell; your own code should
use prototype cells or similar
        return UITableViewCell()
    }
}
```

```
}
```

```
}
```

When you do that – when you promise Swift that your class conforms to a protocol – you can be darn sure it checks to make sure you're right. And that means it will refuse to build your code if you haven't added support for all the required methods, which is a helpful security measure.

What is a selector?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Selectors are effectively the names of methods on an object or struct, and they are used to execute some code at runtime. They were common in Objective-C, but the earliest versions of Swift didn't include some core selector functionality so their use declined for a while. That functionality (things like **performSelector(inBackground:)**) has since been restored.

In Swift, selectors are most commonly found when working with the target/action paradigm that you find in classes such as **Timer** and **UIBarButtonItem**. For example, when you create a timer you need to tell it who to notify when the timer fires (the target) and what selector should be called (the action). The same goes for bar button items: when the button is tapped, what selector should be called, and on what object?

What is a singleton?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Singletons are objects that should only ever be created once, then shared everywhere they need to be used. They are common on Apple's platforms: **FileManager**, **User Defaults**, **UIApplication**, and **UIAccelerometer** are all mostly used through their singleton implementations.

The basic implementation of a Swift singleton looks like this:

```
struct Settings {  
    static let shared = Settings()  
    var username: String?  
  
    private init() {}  
}
```

Adding an initializer to the **Settings** struct automatically disables the default memberwise initializer, and it's marked **private** so that it also can't be called from outside the class. However, the struct creates an instance of itself as a static variable, which means the only instance of the **Settings** struct is the one it created: **Settings.shared**.

What is a storyboard?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Storyboards were introduced way back in iOS 5 as a way to revamp interface design for iOS. At the time they didn't add much in the way of features that weren't available with the older XIBs, but in subsequent releases Apple have added helpful new features such as layout guides that make them much more useful – and arguably indispensable since iOS 7.

All new iOS projects come with at least one storyboard ready to use: Main.storyboard. Inside that you can create as many interfaces as you want, each representing one view controller in your app. You can then design in segues (pronounced "segway", like the gyro-bike things) that transition between view controllers – all without a single line of code.

There is one drawback to storyboards, and it's something you'll hit fairly quickly: if you have more than four view controllers in your app, you'll probably find it a little cumbersome to navigate around, particularly if you're working on a laptop. If you're working on something important, move your view controllers around: keep them organized from the beginning, otherwise your storyboard will soon become a nightmare!

What is a throwing function?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Throwing functions are those that will flag up errors if problems happen, and Swift requires you to handle those errors in your code.

To make a throwing function, just write **throws** before your function's return value. You should define the error types you can throw, so users of this function know what to expect.

As an example, try adding this custom error enum to a playground:

```
enum LoginErrors: Error {
    case badUsername
    case badPassword
}
```

We can now use that to create a throwing function called **login()**. If the username is empty we'll throw **badUsername**, if the password is empty we'll throw **badPassword**, and if both are non-empty we'll return true:

```
func login(username: String, password: String) throws -> Bool {
    if username.isEmpty { throw LoginErrors.badUsername }
    if password.isEmpty { throw LoginErrors.badPassword }
    return true
}
```

Because that function throws errors, it must be called using either **try**, **try?**, or **try!**.

There's a subtle difference between throwing functions and functions that return optionals, but it's usually a better idea to use throwing functions if there might be several different reasons why the function failed.

What is a tuple?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Tuples in Swift occupy the space between dictionaries and structures: they hold very specific types of data (like a struct) but can be created on the fly (like dictionaries). They are commonly used to return multiple values from a function call.

You can create a basic tuple like this:

```
let person = (name: "Paul", age: 35)
```

As you can see, it looks like an anonymous struct: you can read `person.name` and `person.age` just like you would with a struct. But, helpfully, we haven't had to define the struct ahead of time – this is something made to be thrown away. It also means you don't get to conform to protocols or write methods inside your tuples, but that's OK.

Tuples can be accessed using element names ("name" and "age" above), or using a position in the tuple, e.g. 0 and 1. You don't have to give your tuple elements names if you don't want to, but it's a good idea.

To give you a fully fledged tuple example, here's a function that splits a name like "Paul Hudson" in two, and returns a tuple containing the first name (Paul) and the last name (Hudson). Obviously this just a trivial example – it makes no attempt to cater for middle names, honorifics, or languages where family names come first!

```
func split(name: String) -> (firstName: String, lastName: String) {
    let split = name.components(separatedBy: " ")
    return (split[0], split[1])
}

let parts = split(name: "Paul Hudson")
parts.0
parts.1
```

```
parts.firstName  
parts.lastName
```

As you can see, the return value from that function is **(firstName: String, lastName: String)**, which is a tuple with named elements. Those elements then get accessed using **split.0**, **split.1**, **split.firstName** and **split.lastName**.

What is an enum?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

“Enum” is short for “enumeration”, and it’s a way of letting you use fixed names for special values rather than relying on strings or integers.

For example, if we wanted to track how happy a user was, you could use a number scale where -1 meant unhappy, +1 meant happy, and 0 meant they were in between, but then the onus is on you to remember what those numbers mean. A better idea is to use an enum like this one:

```
enum Satisfaction {  
    case unhappy  
    case meh  
    case happy  
}
```

Those cases can now be referenced as **Satisfaction.happy**, so it’s clear what you mean – and internally it’s treated no different from an integer, so it has no performance impact.

We can create a **Person** struct using that new enum, like this:

```
struct Person {  
    var name: String  
    var satisfaction: Satisfaction  
}
```

Because Swift knows the **satisfaction** property must be a value from the **Satisfaction** enum we can just specify the case we want to use when creating a value:

```
let person = Person(name: "Taylor", satisfaction: .happy)
```

What is an escaping closure?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift's closures are reference types, which means if you point two variables at the same closure they share that closure – Swift just remembers that there are two things relying on it by incrementing its reference count.

When a closure gets passed into a function to be used, Swift needs to know whether that function will get used immediately or whether it will be saved for use later on. If it's used immediately, the compiler can skip adding one to its reference count because the closure will be run straight away then forgotten about. But if it's used later – or even *might* be used later – Swift needs to add one to its reference count so that it won't accidentally be destroyed.

For performance reasons, Swift assumes all closures are nonescaping closures, which means they will be used immediately inside the function and not stored, which in turn means Swift doesn't touch the reference count. If this isn't the case – if you take any measure to store the closure – then Swift will force you to mark it as **@escaping** so that the reference count must be changed.

What is an optional value in Swift?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift optionals are one of the most confusing parts of the language for beginners, but actually are fairly easy to understand. Put simply, if I declare a variable as an integer, that means it must hold a number. That number might be 0, 1, -1, 159, -758119, or whatever, but it's

definitely a number. This works great for telling me, for example, where in an array a certain element can be found.

But what happens if I ask for the position of an element that doesn't exist in an array? Clearly returning 0 or any positive number isn't helpful, because you wouldn't be able to tell whether 0 meant "not found" or meant "found at the first position in an array." That's where optional values come in: an optional data type might have a value (0, 1, -1, etc) or might have no value at all.

Being able to say "has no value" for any kind of data is really important, and it's baked right into the core of Swift. You see, by default Swift won't let you work directly with optional values, because trying to work on data that isn't there causes a crash – imagine trying to uppercase someone's name when they haven't entered it yet. So, Swift forces you to check and unwrap optionals safely: if the optional has a value do something with it, otherwise do something else.

What is class inheritance?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift allows you to define a custom class as inheriting from another, which means it gains the functionality of the original class while being able to add its own. This is used extensively on Apple platforms: **UIButton** inherits from **UIControl**, which inherits from **UIView**, which inherits from **UIResponder**, which inherits from **NSObject**, for example.

This approach allows you to create something new by building upon and tweaking existing functionality. If you want to create a custom view for your app, you don't need to go all the way back to basics – you can just inherit from **UIView** and make whatever changes you need. This means you automatically benefit from things like background colors, Auto Layout, **CALayer**, and more.

While inheritance is both power and used extensively, it does create some problems. The main two are first that it's available only with classes and so Swift's structs and enums are excluded,

and the second are that it creates tight coupling, where one piece of code depends heavily on another piece of code.

What is copy on write?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Copy on write is a common computing technique that helps boost performance when copying structures. To give you an example, imagine an array with 1000 things inside it: if you copied that array into another variable, Swift would have to copy all 1000 elements even if the two arrays ended up being the same.

This problem is solved using copy on write: when you point two variables at the same array they both point to the same underlying data. Swift promises that structs like arrays and dictionaries are copied as values, like numbers, so having two variables point to the same data might seem to contradict that. The solution is simple but clever: if you modify the second variable, Swift takes a full copy at that point so that only the second variable is modified - the first isn't changed.

So, by delaying the copy operation until it's actually needed, Swift can ensure that no wasted work is done.

Warning: copy on write is a feature specifically added to Swift arrays and dictionaries; you don't get it for free in your own data types.

What is destructuring?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Destructuring is the practice of pulling a tuple apart into multiple values in a single assignment. For example, consider a trivial function that accepts names in the format “FirstName LastName” and returns a tuple containing the first and last names separated:

```
func splitName(_ name: String) -> (String, String) {
    let parts = name.components(separatedBy: " ")
    return (parts[0], parts[1])
}
```

If you want to call that using destructuring, just use two values for your assignment when calling it, like this:

```
let (first, last) = splitName("Taylor Swift")
```

That creates **first** and **last** constants out of the two returned items in the tuple, and you can then use them as normal:

```
print(first)
print(last)
```

What is function composition?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Function composition is the ability to combine small functions together to make bigger functions.

In normal circumstances, you'd give some input to function A and get back output, and do the same for function B. When those two functions are combined together, A's output becomes B's input, so you provide input to A and get the results back from B.

To demonstrate this, here's a function that generates random numbers in a specific range:

```
func generateRandomNumber(max: Int) -> Int {
    return Int(arc4random_uniform(UInt32(max)))
}
```

And here's a function that spells out any number it's given:

```
func spell(number: Int) -> String {
    let formatter = NumberFormatter()
    formatter.numberStyle = .spellOut
    return formatter.string(from: number as NSNumber) ?? ""
}
```

We can define a new operator that lets us combine those two together, like this:

```
precedencegroup CompositionPrecedence {
    associativity: left
}

infix operator >>>: CompositionPrecedence

func >>> <T, U, V>(lhs: @escaping (T) -> U, rhs: @escaping (U)
-> V) -> (T) -> V {
    return { rhs(lhs($0)) }
}
```

You can learn more about how that works in **Pro Swift**.

You can now combine your two smaller functions into bigger ones, like this:

```
let spellOutRandom = generateRandomNumber >>> spell
```

spellOutRandom() is designed to take the input from the first function (a number) and send back the output from the second function (a string), so we can use it like this:

```
print(spellOutRandom(100))
```

That will output a different spelled number each time it's run.

What is key-value observing?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Key-value observing is the ability for Swift to attach code to variables, so that whenever the variable is changed the code runs. It's similar to property observers (**willSet** and **didSet**), except KVO is for adding observers *outside* of the type definition.

KVO isn't terribly nice in pure Swift code, because it relies on the Objective-C runtime – you need to use **@objc** classes that inherit from **NSObject**, then mark each of your properties with **@objc dynamic**.

For example, we could create a **Person** class like this:

```
@objc class Person: NSObject {
    @objc dynamic var name = "Taylor Swift"
}

let taylor = Person()
```

You could then observe that user's name changing like this:

```
taylor.observe(\Person.name, options: .new) { person, change in
    print("I'm now called \(person.name)")
}
```

That asks Swift to watch for new values coming in, then prints the person's name as soon as the new value is set.

To try it out, just change the person's name to something else:

```
taylor.name = "Justin Bieber"
```

That will print “I'm now called Justin Bieber.”

Although KVO is unpleasant in pure Swift code, it's better when working with Apple's own APIs – they are all automatically both **@objc** and **dynamic** because they are written in

Objective-C.

However, one warning: even though large parts of UIKit might work with KVO, this is a coincidence rather than a promise – Apple make no guarantees about UIKit remaining KVO-compatible in the future.

What is optional chaining?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Optional chaining is a Swift feature that allows execution of a statement to stop and return nil at any point. For example, all views have an optional **superview** property that stores whichever **UIView** contains it, all **UIView** has an optional **gestureRecognizer** array that stores the gesture recognizers it has, and all arrays have an optional **first** property that returns the first item.

Optional chaining allows us to put those three optionals together like this:

```
let firstParentRecognizer =  
view.superview?.gestureRecognizers?.first
```

So, **superview** is optional, **gestureRecognizers** is optional, and **first** is optional, but the end result – **firstParentRecognizer** will be a simple **UIGestureRecognizer?** rather than a triple optional. The optional chaining – the two question marks – mean that if **superview** is nil then **firstParentRecognizer** gets set to nil and the rest of the statement is ignored, and the same is true of **gestureRecognizers**.

Without optional chaining we'd need to use a pyramid of **if let** statements, like this:

```
if let superview = view.superview {  
    if let recognizers = superview.gestureRecognizers {  
        let firstParentRecognizer = recognizers.first  
    }  
}
```

What is protocol-oriented programming?

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

One powerful feature of Swift is its ability to extend protocols – to be able to add new functionality not only to one type, but to a whole collection of types that all conform to the same protocol.

Protocol-oriented programming takes that feature and encourages you to craft your app's architecture around it so that the first thing you do is sketch out one or more protocols rather than get straight into concrete types.

If you're coming from a more traditional object-oriented system where inheritance is more common, try to think of your first protocol as being a base class. You can then create new protocols by inheriting from that initial protocol, and write extensions so they have default implementations.

However, a better approach is to write lots of small protocols that each do specific, individual things: one to make products purchasable, one to make them serializable, one to make them searchable, and so on. You can then add default implementations to those extensions, which means you can add functionality to existing types just by making them conform to your protocol.

In this respect protocol-oriented programming is sort of a similar approach to multiple inheritance from languages such as C++. However, because protocol extensions can't include state you don't get any of the cruft, and Swift's constraint-based conflict resolution is easy enough for everyone to understand.

What is the @objc attribute?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

By default Swift generates code that is only available to other Swift code, but if you need to interact with the Objective-C runtime – all of UIKit, for example – you need to tell Swift what to do.

That's where the **@objc** attribute comes in: when you apply it to a class or method it instructs Swift to make those things available to Objective-C as well as Swift code. So, any time you want to call a method from a **UIBarButton Item** or a **Timer**, you'll need to mark that method using **@objc** so it's exposed – both of those, and many others, are Objective-C code.

Don't worry: if you *forget* to add **@objc** when it's needed, your code simply won't compile – it's not something you can forget by accident and introduce a bug.

To expose a method to Objective-C, just write **@objc** before its name like this:

```
class MyController: UIViewController {  
    @objc func authenticateUser() {  
  
    }  
}
```

That whole class is automatically Objective-C friendly because it inherits from **UIViewController**, but if you need it you can also explicitly make a class open to Objective-C by marking it **@objc**.

What is the **@objcMembers** attribute?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

By default Swift generates code that is only available to other Swift code, but if you need to interact with the Objective-C runtime – all of UIKit, for example – you need to tell Swift what to do.

If you just want to expose a single method or property, you can mark that method using the **@objc** attribute. However, if you want *all* methods in a class to be exposed to Objective-C you

can use a shortcut: the **@objcMembers** keyword:

```
@objcMembers class MyController: UIViewController {  
    func login() {  
  
    }  
}
```

In that code, the **login()** method will automatically be exposed to Objective-C in the same way as if it had been marked with **@objc**, because the whole class it's inside is marked with **@objcMembers**.

What is the Never return type?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **Never** return type is a special one in Swift, and tells the compiler that execution will never return when this function is called. It's used by Swift's **fatalError()** and **preconditionFailure()** functions, both of which cause your app to crash if they are called.

The **Never** return type is useful because it lets Swift waive other requirements. For example, if you're in a function that must return a value, calling a **Never** function means you don't need to return anything – Swift knows you can't return a value any more.

What is the autoclosure attribute?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **@autoclosure** attribute can be applied to a closure parameter for a function, and automatically creates a closure from an expression you pass in. When you call a function that uses this attribute, the code you write *isn't* a closure, but it *becomes* a closure, which can be a bit confusing – even the official Swift reference guide warns that overusing autoclosures

makes your code harder to understand.

To help you understand how it works, here's a trivial example:

```
func printTest1(_ result: () -> Void) {  
    print("Before")  
    result()  
    print("After")  
}  
  
printTest1({ print("Hello") })
```

That code creates a **printTest()** method, which accepts a closure and calls it. As you can see, the **print("Hello")** is inside a closure that gets called between "Before" and "After", so the final output is "Before", "Hello", "After".

If we used **@autoclosure** instead, it would allow us to rewrite the **printTest()** call so that it doesn't need braces, like this:

```
func printTest2(_ result: @autoclosure () -> Void) {  
    print("Before")  
    result()  
    print("After")  
}  
  
printTest2(print("Hello"))
```

These two pieces of code produce identical results thanks to **@autoclosure**. In the second code example, the **print("Hello")** won't be executed immediately because it gets wrapped inside a closure for execution later.

The **@autoclosure** attribute is used inside Swift wherever code needs to be passed in and executed only if conditions are right. For example, the **&&** operator uses **@autoclosure** to allow short-circuit evaluation, and the **assert()** function uses it so that the assertion isn't checked outside of debug mode.

What is the nil coalescing operator?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Optionals are a powerful source of safety in Swift, but can also be annoying if you find them littered throughout your code. Swift's nil coalescing operator helps you solve this problem by either unwrapping an optional if it has a value, or providing a default if the optional is empty.

Here's an example to get you started:

```
let name: String? = nil
let unwrappedName = name ?? "Anonymous"
```

Because **name** is an optional string, we need to unwrap it safely to ensure it has a meaningful value. The nil coalescing operator – ?? – does exactly that, but if it finds the optional has no value then it uses a default instead. In this case, the default is "Anonymous". What this means is that **unwrappedName** has the data type **String** rather than **String?** because it can be guaranteed to have a value.

You don't need to create a separate variable to use nil coalescing. For example, this works fine too:

```
print("Hello, \(name ?? "Anonymous")!")
```

What is the ternary operator?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The ternary operator allows you to run a check and return one of two values depending on the result of that check – it has the name “ternary” because it works with three values rather than two or one like other operators. You'll often see it written as ?: but in practice the ? and : are used separately.

Like I said, the ternary operator is used with three values: the check to run, what to return if the check is true, and what to return if the check is false. For example, if we had a **score** constant that contained an integer, we could make a **result** constant equal either to “Pass” or “Fail” depending on the value of **score**:

```
let score = 88
let result = score > 85 ? "Pass" : "Fail"
```

You can read that ternary as “if score is greater than 85 return Pass otherwise return Fail.” Because **score** was set to 88, **result** will be set to Pass.

The ternary operator usually makes your code harder to read and understand, so it doesn’t get much use.

What is trailing closure syntax?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Trailing closure syntax is a little piece of syntactic sugar that makes particularly common code more pleasant to read and write. Many functions in iOS accept multiple parameters where the final parameter is a closure. For example, if you’ve done animation in iOS you’ll be familiar with this method:

```
public class func animate(withDuration: TimeInterval,
animations: () -> Void)
```

That accepts an animation duration as its first parameter, and a closure containing animation instructions as its second.

One way of calling this method is like this:

```
UIView.animate(withDuration: 1, animations: { [unowned self] in
    self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.red
})
```

While that is perfectly valid Swift code, it's harder to read than it ought to be. If a closure is the last parameter to a method, as seen here, Swift allows you write your code like this instead:

```
UIView.animate(withDuration: 1) { [unowned self] in
    self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.red
}
```

That's shorter, and avoids the double closing `)` code.

This functionality is available wherever a closure is the final parameter to a function. For testing purposes, we could write a simple one like this:

```
func greetThenRunClosure(name: String, closure: () -> ()) {
    print("Hello, \(name)!")
    closure()
}
```

That prints a message, then runs a closure. Because the closure is the final parameter to the function, we can call it using trailing closure syntax like this:

```
greetThenRunClosure(name: "Paul") {
    print("The closure was run")
}
```

What is typecasting?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

One of the many safety features of Swift is its type safety, which means it must know what kind of data is being held by all values at all times. However, sometimes you know information that Swift doesn't: you know that the **UIViewController** you have a reference to is in fact your custom **PictureViewController** subclass, and you want to treat it like one.

Typecasting is the process of passing on your extra knowledge to Swift – a way of saying “that thing you thought was an X is actually a Y”. Swift won’t let you typecast completely unrelated types, which means you can’t say things like “that thing you thought was a string is actually an integer”, but is instead mainly used for subclasses.

As an example, here’s how we create new view controllers from a storyboard:

```
let vc = storyboard?.instantiateViewController(withIdentifier:  
    "Detail") as? DetailViewController
```

That `as?` is a typecast - we’re passing on to Swift the knowledge that the view controller we expect to be created is in fact a **DetailViewController**. If the typecast fails then `vc` will be nil, but if it succeeds then Swift will be able to use it as a **DetailViewController**.

What is whole module optimization?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Whole module optimization is a compiler pass that can add significant performance gains, and so it’s always worth enabling when doing a release build of your app for the App Store. How it works is quite simple: when Swift builds the final version of your app it combines all your source files together and can evaluate the whole structure of your program at once. This lets it make extra optimizations that would be impossible before, when every file was optimized individually.

What's the difference between let and var?

Availability: iOS 7 or later.

Swift lets you create both variables and constants as ways to reference your data, but there’s a strong push (even Xcode warnings!) if you create things as variables then never change them. To make a constant, use `let` like this:

```
let x = 10
```

To make a variable, use **var** like this:

```
var y = 20
```

The reason Swift strongly encourages you to use constants wherever possible is because it's safer: if you say "this value will never change," then Swift will refuse to let you change it even by accident. It also opens the possibility of compiler optimizations if the system knows certain data will not change.

What's the difference between == and ===?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift gives us two equality operators, `==` and `===`, that do slightly different things. You will almost certainly need to use both of them so it's worth taking the time to learn them.

First, `==` is the equality operator, which tests that two things are equal for whatever definition of "equal" those things use. For example, `5 == 5` is true because there `==` means an integer comparison, and the same is true for other built-in value types such as strings, booleans, and doubles.

Things get more complicated when `==` is used with a struct you built, because by default they cannot be compared – you need to make them conform to the **Equatable** protocol.

In comparison, `===` is the *identity operator*, which checks whether two instances of a class point to the same memory. This is different from equality, because two objects that were created independently using the same values will be considered equal using `==` but not `===` because they are different objects.

The `===` operator is available only when using classes because structs are designed so they are always uniquely referenced.

What's the difference between Any and AnyObject?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift has two anonymous types: **Any** and **AnyObject**. They are subtly different, and you will need to use both sooner or later.

AnyObject refers to any instance of a class, and is equivalent to **id** in Objective-C. It's useful when you specifically want to work with a reference type, because it won't allow any of Swift's structs or enums to be used. **AnyObject** is also used when you want to restrict a protocol so that it can be used only with classes.

Any refers to any instance of a class, struct, or enum – literally anything at all. You'll see this in Swift wherever types are unknown or are mixed in ways that can be meaningfully categorized:

```
let values: [Any] = [1, 2, "Fish"]
```

Ideally you should avoid both **Any** and **AnyObject** in your code – it's better to be more specific if you can be.

What's the difference between a class and a struct?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Classes and structures (structs) are so similar in Swift that it's easy to get them confused at first, but actually there are some important underlying differences:

- A struct cannot inherit from another kind of struct, whereas classes can build on other classes.
- You can change the type of an object at runtime using typecasting. Structs cannot have inheritance, so have only one type.

- If you point two variables at the same struct, they have their own independent copy of the data. With objects, they both point at the same variable.

That last point is particularly important: with a struct you know your data is fixed in place, like an integer or other value. This means if you pass your struct into a function, you know it's not going to get modified.

What's the difference between a function and a closure?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Closures and functions are very similar in Swift, but there are some subtle differences. When you're learning, it's easiest to think of a closure as being a function that doesn't have a name of its own, and captures any values from its environment.

Nested functions – functions inside other functions – also capture values from their environment, but they have a name. As for global functions – functions that aren't inside another function or type – they are also like closures, except they have a name and *don't* capture values from their environment. Like I said, the differences are subtle!

Helpfully, Swift completely blurs the lines between functions, methods, operators, and closures, allowing us to use them interchangeably as long as they accept and return the correct types of data.

What's the difference between a function and a method?

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

Some folks use “function” and “method” interchangeably, but there's a small difference: both of them are reusable chunks of code, but methods belong to classes, structs, and enums, whereas functions do not.

So:

```
func thisIsAFunction() {  
}  
  
struct Person {  
    func thisIsAMethod() {  
    }  
}
```

Because methods always belong to a data type, they have a concept of **self** that functions do not. This is a special value passed in by Swift, and it refers to whatever instance the method was called on.

Swift uses the same keyword, **func**, for both functions and methods.

What's the difference between a protocol and a class?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

When writing protocol-oriented Swift, protocols and classes become fairly similar, but they are never the same.

In their basic form, a protocol describes what an unknown type of object can do. You might say it has two or three properties of various types, plus methods. But that protocol never includes anything *inside* the methods, or provides actual storage for the properties.

In a more advanced form, you can write extensions on your protocols that provide default implementations of the methods. You still can't provide storage for properties, however.

In comparison, classes are concrete things. While they might adopt protocols – i.e., say they implement the required properties and methods – they aren't required to do that. You can create objects from classes, whereas protocols are just type definitions. Try to think of protocols as being abstract definitions, whereas classes and structs are real things you can

create.

What's the difference between a static variable and a class variable?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Both the **static** and **class** keywords allow us to attach variables to a class rather than to instances of a class. For example, you might create a **Student** class with properties such as **name** and **age**, then create a static **numberOfStudents** property that is owned by the **Student** class itself rather than individual instances.

Where **static** and **class** differ is how they support inheritance: When you make a **static** property it becomes owned by the class and cannot be changed by subclasses, whereas when you use **class** it may be overridden if needed.

For example, here's a **Person** class with one static property and one class property:

```
class Person {
    static var count: Int {
        return 250
    }

    class var averageAge: Double {
        return 30
    }
}
```

If we created a **Student** class by inheriting from **Person**, trying to override **count** (the static property) would fail to compile if uncommented, whereas trying to override **averageAge** (the class property) is OK:

```
class Student: Person {
    // THIS ISN'T ALLOWED
    // override static var count: Int {
```

```

//    return 150
// }

// THIS IS ALLOWED
override class var averageAge: Double {
    return 19.5
}
}

```

What's the difference between `init?` and `init`?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

It's the job of a regular Swift initializer to create a fully fledged instance of a new type, however sometimes the data that has been provided is insufficient or incorrect, and creation can't proceed.

For example, consider this code:

```

struct Person {
    var ssn: String

    init(socialSecurityNumber: String) {
        self(ssn = socialSecurityNumber
    }
}

let person = Person(socialSecurityNumber: "111-11-1111")
print(person)

```

That defines a **Person** struct that can be created using a nine-digit social security number, then creates an instance of that struct.

But what should happen here?

```
let person = Person(socialSecurityNumber: "FISH")
```

In that instance we're passing an invalid social security number, so really we expect creating a **Person** to fail.

This is where failable initializers come in: they are written as **init?()**, and can return nil rather than a value if something goes wrong during creation. For example, we could write a quick check to make sure the social security number is more or less correct like this:

```
struct Person {  
    var ssn: String  
  
    init?(socialSecurityNumber: String) {  
        if socialSecurityNumber.count < 11 {  
            return nil  
        } else {  
            self(ssn = socialSecurityNumber  
        }  
    }  
}
```

Notice the initializer is now called **init?()** to reflect that it returns an optional – the process might return **nil** if the creation fails. The logic is pretty simple: if there are 11 digits we assume it's correct, otherwise we return nil. Note: if you *really* wanted to validate that number you'd need to use a regular expression.

When is it safe to force unwrap optionals?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Some developers force unwrap optionals regularly, and some never do it, but it won't surprise

you to learn that both of those are pretty extreme and will cause you problems.

Some things are optional in Swift not because they may or may not be present, but because of historical reasons. For example, when you create a new application, your **AppDelegate** class has an optional **UIWindow** property called **window**. Or there's the **Bundle** class, which has an optional **URL** property called **resourceURL** property that points to where your bundle's resources are.

Both of those are optional, but if either of them fail something is seriously wrong with your application – should you really be trying to carry on running if your app is in such a corrupt state?

Think about when you try to instantiate a view controller with an identifier. Apple's API here doesn't throw errors, and doesn't return an optional view controller – it just hard crashes, because there's no sensible way for the app to continue if it's missing a whole storyboard identifier.

You can apply that same logic to your code: if you're trying to load a **UIImage** from your asset catalog, force unwrapping is a sensible thing to do because if that image is missing it means you've either made a serious mistake or your app is in a damaged state and forcing a crash might help limit corruption of user data.

When to use a set rather than an array

Availability: iOS or later.

Sets and arrays both store objects of your choosing, but they have four important differences:

1. Sets do not store objects in the order they add them.
2. Instead, they are stored in a way to make them fast to find, which means finding items in sets is extremely efficient.
3. Sets store each item precisely once.
4. All items you want to store in a set must conform to **Hashable**.

As a result, you should use a set rather than an array if all the following criteria are true:

1. You intend to add each item only once. Sets never allow duplicates.
2. You don't care about the order of the items in the set.
3. You don't need to use APIs that require arrays.
4. You're storing **Hashable** types, either your own or one of Swift's built-in types like strings and integers. Sets use hash values for fast look up of items.

You can switch between an array and a set simply enough:

```
let array = [1, 2, 3]
let set = Set(array)
let array2 = Array(set)
```

Using **contains()** on a set takes the same amount of time if you have one item as it does if you have one thousand items – it's called an O(1) operation.

Why is immutability important?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift developers rely heavily on constants rather than variables, to the point where Xcode even warns you if you create a variable then never change it. There are three main reasons why immutability is important in Swift, and I want to walk through them briefly.

First, immutability makes your code easier to reason about. If you use constants everywhere, you know for sure that your data can't be changed by surprise by some other part of your program – in fact, it can't be changed at *all*. This also makes multi-threaded code significantly easier to think about.

Second, it stops you making silly mistakes. When you use a constant rather than a variable, Swift won't let you change that constant no matter how hard you try – it's like you've made a contract with yourself.

Third, Swift can optimize it more efficiently. If Swift knows a value can't be changed, it can in theory store your data in a more efficient way.

Strings

How to calculate the ROT13 of a string

Availability: iOS or later.

ROT13 is a simple algorithm that shifts letters in a string forward 13 places. It's obviously not suitable for any serious encryption, but it's very useful for hiding text so its meaning is not obvious – posting spoilers on a forum, for example, is best done using ROT13 to avoid someone getting annoyed.

It's not hard to write a `rot13()` function, but it *is* a little harder to wrap it up neatly so you avoid global variables while still making it easy to use. Because you can't add stored variables to an extension on `String`, the cleanest thing to do is create a new **ROT13** type that can store the transformation from regular letters to ROT13, then run the calculation.

In code, it looks like this:

```
struct ROT13 {  
    // create a dictionary that will store our character mapping  
    private static var key = [Character: Character]()  
  
    // create arrays of all uppercase and lowercase letters  
    private static let uppercase =  
        Array("ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ")  
    private static let lowercase =  
        Array("abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz")  
  
    static func string(_ string: String) -> String {  
        // if this is the first time the method is being called,  
        // calculate the ROT13 key dictionary
```

```

    if ROT13.key.isEmpty {
        for i in 0 ..< 26 {
            ROT13.key[ROT13.uppercase[i]] = ROT13.uppercase[(i
+ 13) % 26]
            ROT13.key[ROT13.lowercase[i]] = ROT13.lowercase[(i
+ 13) % 26]
        }
    }

    // now return the transformed string
    let transformed = string.map { ROT13.key[$0] ?? $0 }
    return String(transformed)
}

}

```

I've used private properties there because there's no reason these implementation details should leak out, and it's all static because there's no need to create new **ROT13** instances every time we need to run the conversion.

With that in place we can write an extension on **String** to calculate the ROT13 using our struct:

```

extension String {
    func rot13() -> String {
        return ROT13.string(self)
    }
}

```

That extension can now be called on a regular string, so users don't need to care about how we implemented ROT13:

```
print("Hello, world!".rot13())
```

How to capitalize the first letter of a string

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

If you want to capitalize the first letter of a string without touching the rest of the letters, add this simple extension of **String**:

```
extension String {  
    func capitalizingFirstLetter() -> String {  
        return prefix(1).capitalized + dropFirst()  
    }  
  
    mutating func capitalizeFirstLetter() {  
        self = self.capitalizingFirstLetter()  
    }  
}
```

Here's an example to try it out:

```
let test = "the rain in Spain"  
print(test.capitalizingFirstLetter())
```

How to capitalize words in a string using capitalized

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Swift offers several ways of adjusting the letter case of a string, but if you're looking for title case – that is, Text Where The First Letter Of Each String Is Capitalized - then you need to use the **capitalized** property, like this:

```
let str = "sunday, monday, happy days"  
print(str.capitalized)
```

How to check whether a string contains any words from an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

You should already know that you can check whether a string contains a single word like this:

```
let string = "The rain in Spain"  
let stringResult = string.contains("rain")
```

You should also know that you can check an array of strings to see whether a particular string is in there, like this:

```
let words = ["clouds", "rain", "wind"]  
let arrayResult = words.contains("rain")
```

Well, both those `contains()` methods can be combined together to form a new meaning: “do any of the words in this array exist in this string?” like this:

```
let combinedResult = words.contains(where: string.contains)
```

How to concatenate strings to make one joined string

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift offers three different ways of joining strings. The first is using the `+` operator to join two strings to make a third:

```
let string1 = "Hello, "  
let string2 = "world"  
let combined1 = string1 + string2
```

The second is user string interpolation to make a new string”

```
let combined2 = "\u{string1} \u{string2}"
```

The last is using the `+=` operator to add and assign a string to an existing string:

```
var combined3 = "Goodbye, "
combined3 += "cruel world"
```

How to convert a string to a safe format for URL slugs and filenames

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift strings are extraordinarily complex beasts, allowing you to mix in characters from any language – including emoji – freely. While this is really important to display text, it can also cause havoc while trying to create URLs and filenames, so if you need to refer to a string in those places you should first convert it to a *slug*.

If you look at a URL like <https://www.hackingwithswift.com/whats-new-in-ios-11>, the *slug* is the last part – “whats-new-in-ios-11”. The conversion process stripped out punctuation (the apostrophe in “What’s”, lowercased it all, removed any non-Latin characters, then used dashed for word separators rather than spaces.

This takes a little more work to do than you might think, particularly because of the way you need to convert non-Latin and accented characters. For example, “ä” needs to be converted to “a”, and languages such as German convert “ß” into “ss” when they are rendered as Latin characters.

If you want to get the best conversion possible, you need to use Foundation’s **StringTransform** type then call **applyingTransform()** on your string. You can then split by any characters that can’t be used in slugs, and re-join on “-” to get your finished URL.

Rather than try to write all that yourself, here’s an easy extension you can drop in:

```
extension String {
    private static let slugSafeCharacters =
```

```

CharacterSet(charactersIn:
"0123456789ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZabcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
-")

    public func convertedToSlug() -> String? {
        if let latin =
self.applyingTransform(StringTransform("Any-Latin; Latin-ASCII;
Lower;"), reverse: false) {
            let urlComponents = latin.components(separatedBy:
String.slugSafeCharacters.inverted)
            let result = urlComponents.filter { $0 !=
"" }.joined(separator: "-")

            if result.count > 0 {
                return result
            }
        }

        return nil
    }
}

```

If you use Swift's package manager, you can find that wrapped up in a cross-platform library in my SwiftSlug project. It's available on GitHub at <http://github.com/twostraws/SwiftSlug>.

How to convert a string to lowercase letters

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You can convert any string to lowercase – that is, going from "HELLO" to "hello" – by calling its **lowercased()** method, like this:

```
let str = "Sunday, Monday, Happy Days"
```

```
print(str.lowercased())
```

That will output "sunday, monday, happy days" to the Xcode console.

How to convert a string to uppercase letters

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you want to convert a string to uppercase – that is, WHERE EVERY LETTER IS A CAPITAL LETTER – you should use the **uppercase()** method of your string, like this:

```
let str = "Sunday, Monday, Happy Days"  
print(str.uppercased())
```

That code will print "SUNDAY, MONDAY, HAPPY DAYS" into the Xcode console.

How to detect a URL in a String using NSDataDetector

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

The **NSDataDetector** class makes it easy to detect URLs inside a string using just a few lines of code. This example loops through all URLs in a string, printing each one out:

```
let input = "This is a test with the URL https://  
www.hackingwithswift.com to be detected."  
let detector = try! NSDataDetector(types:  
NSTextCheckingResult.CheckingType.link.rawValue)  
let matches = detector.matches(in: input, options: [], range:  
NSRange(location: 0, length: input.utf16.count))  
  
for match in matches {  
    guard let range = Range(match.range, in: input) else
```

```
{ continue }

let url = input[range]
print(url)

}
```

How to display different strings based on available space using variantFittingPresentationWidth()

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

It's surprisingly easy to configure your project with multiple strings then have it choose one at runtime based on available space.

First, press Cmd+N in Xcode to make a new file, then choose “Stringsdict file” – this is a property list XML file containing string settings. Name it “Localizable.stringsdict”, so that iOS picks it up automatically.

Right-click on the new Localizable.stringsdict file in your Xcode project, then choose Open As > Source Code so you can see the XML inside. You should see that it ends like this:

```
</dict>
</plist>
```

Add this new XML directly before those two lines:

```
<key>Login</key>
<dict>
  <key>NSStringVariableWidthRuleType</key>
  <dict>
    <key>100</key>
    <string>Login.</string>
    <key>200</key>
    <string>You must login before continuing.</string>
    <key>300</key>
```

```
<string>Please enter your username and password to  
continue.</string>  
</dict>  
</dict>
```

That defines a single string key, “Login”, but provides three size variations: one for very little space (size 100), one for a medium amount of space (size 200), and one for lots of space (size 300). These size integers mean nothing to iOS – you can use any numbers that make sense to you, but increments of 100 leave you lots of space to insert new values in between later on.

Now that you have a width-varying string to work with, you can pass that to **NSLocalizedString()**. Note that you must cast the result to an **NSString**:

```
let localized = NSLocalizedString("Login", comment: "Prompt for  
user to log in.") as NSString
```

Finally, call **variantFittingPresentationWidth()** with a size integer of your choosing:

```
label.text = localized.variantFittingPresentationWidth(300)
```

That method only exists on **NSString**, hence the earlier typecast.

You can pass any integer you want into **variantFittingPresentationWidth()** – iOS will automatically resolve it to find the best match in your strings dictionary, counting downwards where necessary. For example, if you tried loading a string with width 500, the 300 string would be returned, but if you tried 299 then the 200 string would be returned.

How to get the length of a string

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift strings can be treated as an array of individual characters. So, to return the length of a string you can use **yourString.count** to count the number of items in the **characters** array.

How to get the lines in a string as an array

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift's strings have their lines separated by the `\n` character, which is a line break on Unix operating systems. Using that plus the `components(separatedBy:)` method, you can get an array of all the lines in a string like this:

```
let lines = str.components(separatedBy: "\n")
```

If you intend to use that regularly, consider making an extension on `String` like this one:

```
extension String {
    var lines: [String] {
        return self.components(separatedBy: "\n")
    }
}
```

How to load a string from a file in your bundle

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you have an important text file built into your app bundle that want to load it at runtime fact, `String` has an initializer just for this purpose. It's called `contentsOfFile`, and here it is in action:

```
if let filepath = Bundle.main.path(forResource: "example",
ofType: "txt") {
    do {
        let contents = try String(contentsOfFile: filepath)
        print(contents)
    } catch {
```

```
// contents could not be loaded
}
} else {
    // example.txt not found!
}
```

That code loads a file called **example.txt** into a string called **contents**.

How to load a string from a website URL

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

It takes just a few lines of Swift code to load the contents of a website URL, but there are three things you need to be careful with:

- Creating a **URL** might fail if you pass a bad site, so you need to unwrap its optional return value.
- Loading a URL's contents might fail because the site might be down (for example), so it might throw an error. This means you need to wrap the call into a **do/catch** block.
- Accessing network data is slow, so you really want to do this on a background thread.

Here's the code:

```
if let url = URL(string: "https://www.hackingwithswift.com") {
    do {
        let contents = try String(contentsOf: url)
        print(contents)
    } catch {
        // contents could not be loaded
    }
} else {
    // the URL was bad!
}
```

If you want to run that on a background thread (and you really ought to!) you should either use GCD's **async()** or **performSelector(inBackground:)**.

How to loop through letters in a string

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

You can loop through every character in a string by treating it as an array. Thanks to Swift's extended support for international languages and emoji, this works great no matter what kind of language you're using.

This code prints out each character one at a time:

```
let str = "sunday, monday, happy days"
for char in str {
    print("Found character: \(char)")
}
```

How to measure a string for Objective-C code

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Regular Swift code can treat strings like other kinds of sequence, so you can use its **count** property to read the number of characters it contains:

```
let str = "Hello, world"
let count = str.count
```

However, this falls down when you need to work with Objective-C code, for example **NSRegularExpression**, **NSDataDetector**, **UITextChecker**, and more – they use UTF-16 rather than Swift's extended grapheme clusters, and so if you use **count** with them you're

likely to miss characters.

Instead, the correct solution is to measure your string's length using `utf16.count`, like this:

```
let input = "This is a test with the URL https://  
www.hackingwithswift.com to be detected."  
let detector = try! NSDataDetector(types:  
NSTextCheckingResult.CheckingType.link.rawValue)  
let matches = detector.matches(in: input, options: [ ], range:  
NSRange(location: 0, length: input.utf16.count))
```

That guarantees your string's length is reported fully when interacting with Objective-C code.

How to parse a sentence using NSLinguisticTagger

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

If you're looking to parse natural language entered by a user, you're looking for **NSLinguisticTagger**: it automatically recognizes English words (and words in other languages too, if you ask) and tells you what kind of word it is. That is, this magic little class distinguishes between verbs, nouns, adjectives and so on, so you can focus on the important stuff: how do I (verb) this (noun)?

Here's an example to get you started:

```
let options =  
NSLinguisticTagger.Options.omitWhitespace.rawValue |  
NSLinguisticTagger.Options.joinNames.rawValue  
let tagger = NSLinguisticTagger(tagSchemes:  
NSLinguisticTagger.availableTagSchemes(forLanguage: "en") ,  
options: Int(options))  
  
let inputString = "This is a very long test for you to try"  
tagger.string = inputString
```

```

let range = NSRange(location: 0, length:
inputString.utf16.count)
tagger.enumerateTags(in: range,
scheme: .nameTypeOrLexicalClass, options:
NSLinguisticTagger.Options(rawValue: options)) { tag,
tokenRange, sentenceRange, stop in
    guard let range = Range(tokenRange, in: inputString) else
{ return }
    let token = inputString[range]
    print("\u{1f47}(tag): \u{1f47}(token)")
}

```

How to read a single character from a string

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift's strings are stored in a specific way that stops you from indexing into them easily. In fact, reading one letter from part-way through the string means starting at the beginning of the string and counting through letters until you find the one you want, so if you try reading *all* the characters in the string this way you could accidentally create extremely slow code.

However, if you only need to read one or two letters, here's a simple extension on **String** that will help:

```

extension String {
    subscript(i: Int) -> String {
        return String(self[index(startIndex, offsetBy: i)])
    }
}

```

With that place in place, you can write **myString[15]** to read the 16th letter.

How to remove a prefix from a string

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift's string have a built-in **hasPrefix()** method that returns true if the string starts with specific letters, but they don't have a way to remove those letters if they exist.

Fortunately, we can fill that gap with an extension on **String** that combines **hasPrefix()** with **dropFirst()**, which will check whether the prefix exists and remove it in one go:

```
extension String {  
    func deletingPrefix(_ prefix: String) -> String {  
        guard self.hasPrefix(prefix) else { return self }  
        return String(self.dropFirst(prefix.count))  
    }  
}
```

How to repeat a string

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift strings have a built-in initializer that lets you create strings by repeating a string a certain number of times. To use it, just provide the string to repeat and a count as its two parameters, like this:

```
let str = String(repeating: "a", count: 5)
```

That will set **str** to “aaaaa”.

How to reverse a string using reversed()

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Reversing a string in Swift is done by using the **reversed()** method on its characters, then creating a new string out of the result. Here's the code:

```
let str = "Hello, world!"  
let reversed = String(str.reversed())  
print(reversed)
```

That will print "!dlrow ,olleH" to the Xcode console.

How to run a case-insensitive search for one string inside another

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

You can search for one string inside another using the **range(of:)** method, like this:

```
let string = "The rain in Spain"  
let range1 = string.range(of: "rain")
```

That returns an optional string index: if the word was found it will say where it was found, otherwise it will be nil.

However, **range(of:)** does a *case-sensitive* search by default, which means it will match “rain” but not “Rain” or “RAIN”. If you want a case-insensitive search you need to provide an extra parameter called **options**, passing it **.caseInsensitive**:

```
let range2 = string.range(of: "rain",  
options: .caseInsensitive)
```

That returns the same optional value depending on what was found, so you can wrap the whole thing in an **if let** to see whether a match was found:

```
if let range3 = string.range(of: "rain",
options: .caseInsensitive) {
    // match
} else {
    // no match
}
```

How to save a string to a file on disk with write(to:)

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

All strings have a **write(to:)** method that lets you save the contents of the string to disk. You need to provide a filename to write to, plus two more parameters: whether the write should be atomic, and what string encoding to use. The second parameter should nearly always be **true** because it avoids concurrency problems. The third parameter should nearly always be **String.Encoding.utf8**, which is pretty much the standard for reading and writing text.

Be warned: writing a string to disk can throw an exception, so you need to catch any errors and warn the user.

Here's the code:

```
let str = "Super long string here"
let filename =
getDocumentsDirectory().appendingPathComponent("output.txt")

do {
    try str.write(to: filename, atomically: true, encoding:
String.Encoding.utf8)
} catch {
    // failed to write file - bad permissions, bad filename,
missing permissions, or more likely it can't be converted to
the encoding
```

```
}
```

That code uses a helper function called `getDocumentsDirectory()`, which finds the path to where you can save your app's files. Here it is:

```
func getDocumentsDirectory() -> URL {
    let paths =
FileManager.default.urls(for: .documentDirectory,
in: .userDomainMask)
    return paths[0]
}
```

How to specify floating-point precision in a string

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift's string interpolation makes it easy to put floating-point numbers into a string, but it lacks the ability to specify precision. For example, if a number is 45.6789, you might only want to show two digits after the decimal place.

Here's an example using basic string interpolation:

```
let angle = 45.6789
let raw = "Angle: \(angle)"
```

That will make the `raw` value equal to "Angle: 45.6789". But if you wanted to round the angle to two decimal places, you would use this code instead:

```
let formatted = String(format: "Angle: %.2f", angle)
```

The "%f" format string means "a floating point number," but "%.2f" means "a floating-point number with two digits after the decimal point. When you use this initializer, Swift will automatically round the final digit as needed based on the following number.

How to split a string into an array: components(separatedBy:)

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

You can convert a string to an array by breaking it up by a substring using the **components(separatedBy:)** method. For example, you can split a string up by a comma and space like this:

```
let str = "Andrew, Ben, John, Paul, Peter, Laura"  
let array = str.components(separatedBy: ", ")
```

That will return an array of six items, one for each name.

How to test localization by setting a debug locale and double length pseudolanguage

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you want to check how your app works when running on devices with other languages, you have two options: you can either instruct the simulator to use a specific language where you have a localization in place, or you can have it use a special "Double length pseudolanguage" that basically acts as a stress test.

Both of these options live under the scheme settings for your app, which you can get to by holding down Alt then going to the Product menu and clicking "Run..." – holding down Alt makes it say "Run..." rather than "Run", which is what triggers the scheme settings window.

In the scheme settings window, click the dropdown next to Application Language. You can either choose a language that you have localized to, or choose Double Length Pseudolanguage. This option effectively makes all your strings take up twice as much space on the screen, which shows you at a glance if your interface will cope with languages that have longer words than your own.

How to trim whitespace in a string

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

It's not hard to trim whitespace from a string in Swift, but the syntax is a little wordy – or "self-descriptive" if you're feeling optimistic. You need to use the `trimmingCharacters(in:)` method and provide a list of the characters you want to trim. If you're just using whitespace (tabs, spaces and new lines) you can use the predefined `whitespacesAndNewlines` list of characters, like this:

```
let str = " Taylor Swift "
let trimmed =
str.trimmingCharacters(in: .whitespacesAndNewlines)
```

That will set `trimmed` to be "Taylor Swift".

How to use string interpolation to combine strings, integers and doubles

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

String interpolation is Swift's way of letting you insert variables and constants into strings. But at the same time, you can also perform simple operations as part of your interpolation, such as changing letter case and basic mathematics. Swift is also smart enough to understand *how* to bring values into strings, meaning that you can use other strings, integers and floating-point numbers just fine.

Here's an example to get you started:

```
let name = "Paul"
let age = 35
let longestPi = 3.141592654
```

```
let combined = "This person's name is \(name.uppercased()),  
their age is \(age) so in \(age) years time they'll be \(age +  
age), and they know π up to \(longestPi)"
```

NSRegularExpression: How to match regular expressions in strings

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

The **NSRegularExpression** class lets you find and replace substrings using regular expressions, which are concise and flexible descriptions of text. For example, if we wanted to pull "Taylor Swift" out of the string "My name is Taylor Swift", we could write a regular expression that matches the text "My name is " followed by any text, then pass that to the **NSRegularExpression** class.

The example below does just that. Note that we need to pull out the second match range because the first range is the entire matched string, whereas the second range is just the "Taylor Swift" part:

```
do {  
    let input = "My name is Taylor Swift"  
    let regex = try NSRegularExpression(pattern: "My name is  
(.*)", options: NSRegularExpression.Options.caseInsensitive)  
    let matches = regex.matches(in: input, options: [], range:  
NSRange(location: 0, length: input.utf16.count))  
  
    if let match = matches.first {  
        let range = match.range(at:1)  
        if let swiftRange = Range(range, in: input) {  
            let name = input[swiftRange]  
        }  
    }  
} catch {
```

```
// regex was bad!
}
```

Replacing text in a string using replacingOccurrences(of:)

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

It's easy to replace text inside a string thanks to the method **replacingOccurrences(of:)**. This is a string method, and you tell it what to look for and what to replace it with, and you're done.

For example:

```
let str = "Swift 4.0 is the best version of Swift to learn, so
if you're starting fresh you should definitely learn Swift
4.0."
let replaced = str.replacingOccurrences(of: "4.0", with: "5.0")
```

That will make **replaced** equal to "Swift 5.0 is the best version of Swift to learn, so if you're starting fresh you should definitely learn Swift 5.0."

Xcode

How to add conditions to a breakpoint

Availability: iOS or later.

When you place a regular breakpoint on a line of code, Xcode will pause at that point when it's reached. However, sometimes you need something a little more fine-grained: perhaps you want the breakpoint to be ignored the first few times it's hit, or perhaps you want execution to be paused only when a certain condition is true.

Xcode has conditional breakpoints just for this purpose: when you place a breakpoint you can

right-click on it and choose “Edit Breakpoint” to see customization options. Try changing the Ignore value from 0 to 10, which will make the line hit repeatedly until finally execution pauses; or try adding a condition inside the Condition field – **myVar == 10** for example, which will pause only when **myVar** equals 10.

Conditional breakpoints look slightly different from regular breakpoints – look for the white arrow tip inside the main blue breakpoint arrow.

How to add markers to the jump bar

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Xcode’s jump bar – the popup menu describing all properties and methods in the current class, activated using Ctrl-6 – is a simple way to navigate around your file, particularly when you know you can just type a few letters to automatically filter the list.

However, if you’re finding the jump bar is getting messy, you should try to break it up by adding markers to your code. These come in a few flavors – **MARK**, **TODO**, and **FIXME** – but all help make your jump bar easier to read.

Try adding this special comment before any method:

```
// TODO: This isn't finished yet
```

In the jump bar that will appear as a blue and white list icon so it sticks out. Now try adding this somewhere:

```
// FIXME: This code is awful.
```

That will show up in the jump bar with an orange bandaid – it really stands out!

The third option is **MARK**, which renders your text in bold – it’s great for splitting up the jump bar, and is commonly used to mark divisions in your file.. Try this:

```
// MARK: UITableViewDataSource methods
```

All of these markers can have dashes placed before or after the text to make separators. For example:

```
// FIXME: - This code is really broken -
```

That will appear in the jump bar with a dividing line before and after the marker. You can just create the separator if you want, like this:

```
// MARK: -
```

That just creates a dividing line with no accompanying text.

How to create a project using Swift Package Manager

Availability: iOS or later.

Swift Package Manager is a tool that generates Swift projects then manages dependencies for them, and it's commonly used if want to build your projects without Xcode. If you have Xcode installed then you already have the Swift Package Manager, but if you're using Linux it will come with the Swift for Linux package from <https://swift.org/>.

You can create a new project using just one command, although make sure you run it in an empty directory because it creates files:

```
swift package init --type=executable
```

That will generate Sources/YourProject/main.swift for your code, plus Package.swift for dependencies, and more. Run **swift build** to build your source code, then **swift run** to execute it.

How to create exception breakpoints in Xcode

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Exception breakpoints are a powerful debugging tool that remarkably few people know about, so please read the following carefully and put it into practice!

A regular breakpoint is on a line you specify, and causes the debugger to pause execution at that point so you can evaluate your program's state. An *exception* breakpoint tells the debugger to pause whenever a problem is encountered anywhere in your program, so you can evaluate your program's state before it crashes.

Exception breakpoints are trivial to set up: go to the Breakpoint Navigation (Cmd+7), then click the + button in the bottom left and choose Add Exception Breakpoint. You can leave it there if you want to, but it's preferable to make one further change to reduce unnecessary messages: right-click on your new breakpoint, choose Edit Breakpoint, then change the Exception value from "All" to "Objective-C".

How to debug view layouts in Xcode

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

View debugging lets you visualize exactly how your app is drawing to the screen by exploding your UI into 3D. So, if you're sure you added a button but you just can't see it, view debugging is for you: you can spin your interface around inside Xcode, and you'll probably find your button lurking behind another view because of a bug.

To activate view debugging, first you need to be using iOS 8.0, either on a device or the simulator. Run your app, and browse to the view controller you want to inspect. Now go to Xcode and look just below the main text editor, where the row of debugging buttons live: you want to click the button that has three rectangles in, just to the left of the location arrow.

When you use view debugging your app is paused, so make sure and tell Xcode to continue execution when you're done by pressing Cmd+Ctrl+Y.

How to fix the error “View controller is unreachable because it has no entry points and no identifier for runtime access”

Availability: iOS or later.

All view controllers must be accessible somehow, and any that aren't will cause Xcode to throw up a warning: “View Controller is unreachable because it has no entry points, and no identifier for runtime access.” There are three ways you can fix this:

1. Make the view controller your initial view controller so that it's loaded immediately. To do that, select it, go to the attributes inspector, then check the box marked Is Initial View Controller.
2. Give it a storyboard identifier so that it can be loaded in code. To do that, select it, go to the identity inspector, then enter a name next to Storyboard ID.
3. Create a segue from an existing view controller. This might be a button click or a table cell selection for example. To do that, select the component that should trigger the segue, then Ctrl-drag from there to the disconnected view controller.

Once all view controllers have a way of accessing them the warning should disappear.

How to load assets from Xcode asset catalogs

Availability: iOS 7 or later.

Xcode asset catalogs are a smart and efficient way to bring together your artwork in a single place. But they are also optimized for performance: when your app is built, your assets converted to an optimized binary format for faster loading, so they are recommended for all kinds of apps unless you have a specific reason to avoid them. (Note: SpriteKit games should texture atlases if possible.)

If you don't already have an asset catalog in your project, you can create one by right-click on

your project and choosing New File. From "iOS" choose "Resource" then Asset Catalog, then click Next and name your catalog. You can now select your new asset catalog in Xcode, and drag pictures directly into it.

Images stored inside asset catalog all retain their original filename, minus the path extension part. For example, "taylor-swift.png" will just appear as "taylor-swift" inside your asset catalog, and that's how you should refer to it while loading too.

Asset catalogs automatically keep track of Retina and Retina HD images, but it's recommended that you name your images smartly to help make the process more smooth: taylor-swift.png, taylor-swift@2x.png and taylor-swift@3x.png are the best way to name your files for standard, Retina and Retina HD resolutions respectively.

How to lock Interface Builder controls to stop accidental changes

Availability: iOS or later.

Interface Builder is the standard tool for making iOS interfaces using drag and drop, but it does make it remarkably easy to make a mistake – moving a view by accident, adjusting a property with a typo, or perhaps embedding one view inside another by dragging.

Fortunately, there's a quick and easy fix: you can select any control then lock it so that no more changes can happen. To try it out, select something (e.g. a button), then go to the Class inspector and look for the Lock property. It's set to "Inherited – (Nothing)" by default, but you can change it to "All Properties" to ensure that it can't be moved or have any of its settings adjusted.

How to make Xcode play sounds while debugging

Availability: iOS or later.

Xcode has lots of tools to help you debug user interface problems, but it's a little trickier to

debug things you can't see – network requests failing, data loading code going wrong, and so on.

A few years ago Markos Charatzas gave a **pioneering talk at NSConference** about the importance of using sound for debugging, and it's a concept I've since used in my own projects.

To try it out, place a breakpoint somewhere in your code, then right-click on it and choose “Edit Breakpoint”. Click the Add Action button, then change the action to be “Sound” – you'll see a list of system sounds you can choose from.

It doesn't matter which sound you choose (although having sad sounds for failures does help!), but no matter what you decide you should check the box below marked “Automatically continue after evaluating actions” – this will ensure your breakpoint doesn't stop execution of the program.

That checkbox plus the sound together means your program won't pause when your breakpoints are hit, but will instead almost become musical: as network operations start, succeed, or fail, you'll hear beeps, clicks, and bongs from your Mac so you'll know exactly what's happening just by listening.

Note: In case you were worried, none of these sounds will actually play when your app ships – they are just used by Xcode's debugging engine.

How to render example content using `prepareForInterfaceBuilder()`

Availability: iOS or later.

Whenever you create a custom **UIView** subclass using **@IBDesignable**, it's usually a good idea to provide it with some sample content so it can render meaningfully at design time.

For example, here's a simple **ShapeView** class that renders a **UIBezierPath** inside a view, using **CAShapeLayer**:

```
@IBDesignable class ShapeView: UIView {
```

```

@IBInspectable var strokeColor: UIColor = UIColor.black
@IBInspectable var fillColor: UIColor = UIColor.clear
var path: UIBezierPath?

override class var layerClass: AnyClass {
    return CAShapeLayer.self
}

override func layoutSubviews() {
    guard let layer = layer as? CAShapeLayer else { return }
    layer.path = path?.cgPath
    layer.strokeColor = strokeColor.cgColor
    layer.fillColor = fillColor.cgColor
}
}

```

While that might work well enough at runtime, you won't be able to see anything when used with Interface Builder because it relies on a bezier path being set. So, while you can adjust the stroke and fill colors all you want, you can't see how those changes look.

To fix this, Xcode lets us add a special method in the view called **prepareForInterfaceBuilder()**. If present, this is called by Interface Builder when your custom view is being drawn, and it's your chance to provide some example content so others can see how it looks.

In this instance, setting the **path** property to a default shape does the job neatly:

```

override func prepareForInterfaceBuilder() {
    let drawRect = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 128, height: 128)
    path = UIBezierPath(rect: drawRect)
}

```

This method is only called at design time, so you don't have to worry about it being run in shipping code.

How to repeat code when debugging using the instruction pointer

Availability: iOS or later.

Have you ever been debugging a problem in your code and really wished you could repeat a chunk of code without having to start from scratch?

This usually happens because you've narrowed the problem down to a small piece of your program, but accidentally stepped over too many lines or didn't fully understand the problem the first time, and you'll be pleased to know Xcode has a built-in way to help: you can move the instruction pointer.

When you place a breakpoint in your code, Xcode will pause when that line is reached, and you can step through your code from there. However, what many folks don't realize is that you can move execution *backwards* too – you can literally ask Xcode to wind back 1, 2, or 20 lines so that it runs them again, giving you a second chance to watch what happens as they execute.

To try it yourself, wait until your breakpoint is hit, and you should see a light green-colored line pointing to where your code was paused – it will say something like “Thread 1: breakpoint 1.1”.

Directly to the left of that message is a box with three horizontal lines – you can click on that and drag it up or down as you need. When you release Xcode will give you a warning: are you sure you want to move the instruction pointer? Keep in mind that if you try to access some memory you just released, you'll hit problems – use this power wisely!

When you click Move, execution will advance or rewind as needed, so you can continue stepping through your code as you need.

This feature by itself is very clever, but becomes brilliant with one extra feature: the ability for LLDB to inject changes directly into your app.

The command here is called **expr**, or just **e**, and is typed directly into the “(lldb)” prompt inside Xcode. For example, this will change the **username** variable to “twostraws”

```
e.username = "twostraws"
```

This allows you to wind execution backwards a little, set your app state exactly as you want, then step through until you find your bug – and do this as often as you need until the problem is identified.

How to use storyboard references to simplify your storyboards

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

Storyboards deliver useful features, such as being able to see a lot of your user interface side-by-side and being able to design static cell designs for your table and collection views.

However, they can also cause havoc with teams, because two developers attempting to modify the storyboard at the same time will immediately hit source control problems.

Fortunately, Interface Builder comes with a simple solution in the form of storyboard references: links that connect one storyboard to another, using any identifier or presentation segue you want. They let you break up one huge storyboard into several smaller ones, and in doing so also allow you to re-use scenes more easily.

Storyboard references are easy to use, but don't get a lot of use because they were introduced four years(!) after storyboards – a lot of folks either decided they didn't like the initial storyboard implementation and haven't checked back since, or still use the same approach they learned back in iOS 5.

Using storyboard references takes three steps:

1. Create a new storyboard in your app, e.g. `Subscribe.storyboard`. Inside there create a view controller however you need, and give it a storyboard identifier.
2. In `Main.storyboard`, drag out a storyboard reference object. In the attributes inspector select your new storyboard from the Storyboard dropdown, then enter your target storyboard identifier in the Referenced ID box.
3. That storyboard reference can now be treated like a regular view controller, so you can

make connections to it such as a Show segue.

Xcode will check your configuration at build time, so if you try to reference a storyboard identifier that doesn't exist your project will refuse to build.

While storyboard references do solve the problem of storyboards becoming unwieldy and tricky with source control, they *don't* solve the problem of storyboards forcing your app to flow in a certain direction. For that you should consider something like the **coordinator pattern** instead.

How to use vector images in your asset catalog

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

Xcode lets you use vector images for all your artwork, which saves you having to worry about retina artwork, super retina artwork, and whatever Apple dreams up in the future. Even better, using this vector artwork has no performance cost – iOS and Xcode do all the work for you,

To try it out, drop a PDF file into your asset catalog, then change its Scales property to Single Scale – this has the effect of making Xcode convert it to @2x and @3x at build time.

The natural size of a vector image – its effective @1x resolution – is determined by the size of the vector, which might be confusing at first because vector images are resolution independent. But even then they still have a natural size, and Xcode will display that when you select your vector art.

Xcode has a couple of vector options that are worth exploring. The first is using Individual and Single Scales mode, which lets you override any specific size you want while using the vector for the others. The other is Preserve Vector Data, which copies the PDF into the final build so it can be re-rasterized at runtime to fit any size need – the only hiccup here is that iOS needs to be precisely sure what size the image is going to be, so if you try to rely on an intrinsic content size you'll hit problems.

To try it out yourself, add an image view to a view controller and assign it a PDF asset from

your asset catalog, then give it fixed width and height constraints that are much bigger than the natural size of your PDF. It might look blurry in IB but that's OK – it will look great on the device.

How to used a named UIColor in code and Interface Builder

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

Since Xcode 9.0 we've been able to create named colors directly inside asset catalogs, which means it's possible to select a precise color once then use it uniformly across all code and storyboards.

To try this out, open your asset catalog, click the + button, then choose New Color Set from the menu that appears. Select the new color that got created – it will be a large white square – then press Alt+Cmd+4 to activate the attributes inspector so that you can customize it.

Named colors are comprised of two rather obvious parts: a name (e.g. "PayPal blue") and a color, which you can specify as ranges from 0-1, ranges from 0-255, or hexadecimal.

Once a named color is in place you can use it code like this:

```
myView.backgroundColor = UIColor(named: "Chartreuse")
```

You can also use it inside storyboards by selecting it from the color dropdown menu – all your named colors will automatically be shown in their own section of the menu.

What are Swift error breakpoints?

Availability: iOS or later.

Xcode has a few special breakpoint types, accessed by going to the breakpoint navigator (Cmd+8) then clicking + in the bottom-left corner. One of the options in that menu is Swift Error Breakpoint, and it allows Xcode to pause when Swift errors are thrown.

Swift error breakpoints are different from catching errors normally – in fact, the two complement each other nicely. If you’re calling someone else’s code (e.g. Apple’s) and that code throws an error, a Swift error breakpoint won’t halt on that. Instead, it will halt on errors thrown by your own code, i.e. wherever you use a **throw** statement.

Swift error breakpoints are helpful because of the way Swift errors propagate – sometimes an error might be thrown five methods deep in your code, then bubble upwards and upwards until they get handled. Once you enable the error breakpoint, Swift will pause where the error is thrown, so you don’t need to dig through your code.

What are breakpoints?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Breakpoints are locations in your code where Xcode will pause so that you can inspect the state of your program. They don’t have any impact on the final performance of your code – in fact, they don’t even exist in your code at all – so there’s no harm using them liberally.

To place a breakpoint, click to the left of a line of code you want to pause on – in the gutter, where the line numbers are visible if you use them. If you prefer keyboard shortcuts, press Cmd+. When you run your program now, Xcode will pause as soon as that line is reached.

To remove a breakpoint, either press Cmd+\ on it again, or drag it off the gutter.

What are watchpoints?

Availability: iOS or later.

You’re probably already familiar with Xcode’s breakpoints, which allow you to pause code when a certain point is reached. Watchpoints also let you pause code, but their job is to pause when a variable is changed anywhere else in your code – it’s like a property observer, except implemented entirely using Xcode’s debugger.

To try it out, place a breakpoint in your program next to a variable you want to watch, then run your code. When the breakpoint hits, look for your variable inside the variables view – that's in Xcode's debug area at the bottom, to the left of the console.

When you find your variable, right-click on it and choose “Watch”. Once that's done you can continue your program as normal, and anywhere the variable is read from or written to Xcode will pause and you can use the debug navigator to step through the call stack to figure out what happened.

What is an **IBOutlet**?

Availability: iOS or later.

When you connect your storyboard to your code Xcode inserts two special markers: **@IBAction** and **@IBOutlet**. Both of these effectively do nothing when you build your app, but they are still important because Xcode uses them to understand which of your properties and methods are relevant to Interface Builder.

In the case of **@IBOutlet**, this is a connection from an Interface Builder user interface component – e.g. a **UIButton** – to a property in a view controller or other piece of Swift code. To the left of the code you should see a black circle with a ring around it, which is Xcode's visual confirmation that a given **@IBOutlet** has an active connection.

If you're using the assistant editor with IB in one pane and your code in the other, you can hover over that circle with your mouse pointer to see the UI component highlighted.

Testing

How to do conditional test tear down using **addTeardownBlock()**

Availability: iOS or later.

All **XCTestCase** subclasses have access to **setUp()** and **tearDown()** instance methods, plus **setUp()** and **tearDown()** class methods for one-time setup and tear down. But sometimes you need to add *conditional* tear down code: if your test creates a resource that must be destroyed, you can add that as an additional tear down step using the **addTeardownBlock()** method.

As an example, consider this test method:

```
func testDatabaseQuery() {
    let database = connectToDatabase()
    let results = database.fetchExampleData()

    XCTAssertEqual(results.count, 1, "We should receive exactly
one result.")
}
```

That connects to a database, runs an example query, and checks the result. However, behind the scenes our database needs to be reset every time a connection is finished. If *all* our tests relied on the database being created then we could add the cleanup code either to the **tearDown()** instance method or to the **tearDown()** class method, but if it's only used *sometimes* then that isn't an option.

Fortunately, the **addTeardownBlock()** is designed to fix this: you can pass in any code you want to run when your test is being torn down, and it will be run after the current test finishes, but before the **tearDown()** instance method.

In the case of the **connectToDatabase()** method that needs clean up, we *could* write that clean up code directly into each test, but that just duplicates code and is likely to cause problems. So, instead we're going to add the clean up right inside the connection code, like this:

```
func connectToDatabase() -> Database {
    let database = Database()
    database.connect()

    addTeardownBlock {
        database.cleanUp()
    }
}
```

```
    }

    return database
}
```

That **database.cleanUp()** code will be called only when the surrounding test is complete, so it acts a bit like **defer** except the scope is the current test.

It's important to get the order of set up and tear down correct, because various things happen at different times. If you have two tests in your **XCTestCase** here's how it would look:

1. The **setUp()** class method is called.
2. The **setUp()** instance method is called.
3. One test is run.
4. Any tear down blocks that were registered are run.
5. The **tearDown()** instance method is called.
6. The **setUp()** instance method is called again.
7. The second test is run.
8. Any tear down blocks that were registered are run.
9. The **tearDown()** instance method is called again.
10. The **tearDown()** class method is called.

You won't need to use tear down blocks often, but they are a useful tool to have.

How to do one-time setup for your tests

Availability: iOS or later.

When you create a default **XCTestCase** using Xcode you'll get default **setUp()** and **tearDown()** methods like these:

```
override func setUp() {
    super.setUp()
```

```

    // Put setup code here. This method is called before the
    invocation of each test method in the class.
}

override func tearDown() {
    // Put teardown code here. This method is called after the
    invocation of each test method in the class.
    super.tearDown()
}

```

Those are called before and after every test inside your **XCTestCase** subclass, which allows you to reset your testing environment fully. However, sometimes you prefer to do some setup once and keep that state during all your tests, for example if you need to generate some test data that gets shared in all your tests.

As well as the regular **setUp()** and **tearDown()** instance methods, you can also define class methods with the same names, like this:

```

override class func setUp() {
    super.setUp()
}

override class func tearDown() {
    super.tearDown()
}

```

Unlike their instance method equivalents, these two class methods will be run only once each: **setUp()** before all your tests are run, and **tearDown()** after all your tests have completed.

How to set baselines for your performance tests

Availability: iOS or later.

All performance tests in Xcode can have baselines attached to them, which are stored results that you consider representative of your app's performance as things stand. The baseline is useful because it gives Xcode a measuring point for all other changes you make: if you accidentally change your code so that it runs slower, Xcode will consider your performance test to be a failure.

To set a baseline for a performance test, first make sure it has been run at least once. You should see a gray bar next to the test saying “No baseline average for time”, but if you click the gray diamond to the left of your test a balloon appears offering more information.

To set a baseline, click the Set Baseline button inside that balloon. You'll see a “Max STDDEV” field set to 10% by default – that's how much variance Xcode allows before it considers a test to have failed, but you can change it however you want. Broadly speaking, extremely fast code should have a higher standard deviation allowance than slower code, only because extremely fast code is likely to show more variance due to system conditions.

How to test asynchronous functions using expectation()

Availability: iOS or later.

XCTestCase has the built-in ability to work with asynchronous code using a system of expectations. First, you create one or more instances of **XCTExpectation** using the **expectation()** method, then you run your asynchronous code, and finally you call **waitForExpectations()** so the test doesn't end prematurely.

When your asynchronous code completes you call **fulfill()** on it to mark it as complete, and you can then call some variant of **XCTAssert()** to check whether the test succeeded or failed.

As an example, I have a **FeedParser** struct that loads stories from disk and parses them ready for display. It takes a few milliseconds to run, so to avoid freezing my app it has an asynchronous method called **loadStories()** that calls a completion handler when the stories are ready to be used. Using **XCTestCase** expectations I would write a test like this:

```
func testStoryLoading() throws {
```

```

let parser = FeedParser()

// create the expectation
let exp = expectation(description: "Loading stories")

// call my asynchronous method
parser.loadStories {
    // when it finishes, mark my expectation as being
    fulfilled
    exp.fulfill()
}

// wait three seconds for all outstanding expectations to be
fulfilled
waitForExpectations(timeout: 3)

// our expectation has been fulfilled, so we can check the
result is correct
XCTAssertEqual(parser.stories.count, 20, "We should have
loaded exactly 20 stories.")
}

```

If my asynchronous code does not complete in the allotted time of three seconds, the test is considered an immediate failure.

XCTestExpectation has two properties you might want to explore further. The first is **isInverted**: if you set that to true then the test will be considered a failure if **fulfill()** gets called before the time out, so for example you might want the AI in your game to wait at least two seconds before making its move so the player can see it's definitely thinking.

The second is **expectedFulfillmentCount**: if you set this to 5 for example, it means **fulfill()** must be called five times before the time out is reached, which allows you to implement more advanced testing logic.

How to test throwing functions

Availability: iOS or later.

One of the many brilliant features of Swift's error handling system is its ability to throw errors during tests and have them considered as failures. That is, if you mark your test using **throws** you run any throwing code inside that test and if it throws an error the test will be marked as a failure.

For example, if I have an **ImageGenerator** struct that has a throwing method called **generateImages()**, I could test it out using code like this:

```
func testFailingExample() throws {
    let generator = ImageGenerator()
    let result = try generator.generateImages()
    XCTAssertTrue(result, "Image generation should complete
successfully.")
}
```

That creates an instance of the struct, attempts to run its **generateImages()** method, then asserts that the result of the method was true. If **generateImages()** throws an error it won't be caught inside the test – there's no **do/catch** blocks in there – so instead it will bubble up to the **XCTTestCase**, which will automatically mark the test as being failed.

Although this approach works well for individual throwing methods like you see above, I don't think you should use it for more complex tests because you can mask failures too easily. If you have three throwing function calls inside a single test, it's a better idea to wrap them individually in **do/catch** blocks so you can deal with the error inline by calling **XCTFail()** at the point of failure.

How to write performance tests using **measure()**

Availability: iOS or later.

Performance tests let you check how fast your code runs, but more importantly it lets you check how fast your code runs *over time* – you can spot performance changes as your code evolves.

Writing a performance test takes just two steps:

1. Create a new method starting with the name “test” in your Xcode tests.
2. Using the **measure()** method inside that test, running any work you want.

To try it out, look in the “Tests” group in your Xcode project, then open your tests file. In my test I’m going to try generating images using a fictional **ImageGenerator** struct that has a **generateImages()** method. I’m specifically going to be testing the **generateImages()** method, which means I’ll create a test instance of **ImageGenerator** *outside* the **measure()** method, like this:

```
func testPerformanceExample() {  
    let generator = ImageGenerator()  
  
    measure {  
        generator.generateImages()  
    }  
}
```

When that test runs, Xcode will run the contents of **measure()** 10 times to get a spread of results.

Libraries

How to convert speech to text using **SFSpeechRecognizer**

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

iOS has a built-in speech transcription system, which allows you to convert any audio

recording into a text stream. It takes a few steps to configure, so let's walk through them.

First, add **import Speech** to the top of your Swift file, to bring in the Speech framework.

Second, request permission to transcribe audio:

```
func requestTranscribePermissions() {
    SFSpeechRecognizer.requestAuthorization { [unowned self]
authStatus in
    DispatchQueue.main.async {
        if authStatus == .authorized {
            print("Good to go!")
        } else {
            print("Transcription permission was declined.")
        }
    }
}
}
```

Third, add a key to your Info.plist called **NSSpeechRecognitionUsageDescription**, then give it a string describing what you intend to do with the transcriptions.

Finally, write a method to perform transcription on an audio URL. This URL should be a recording you've already made, that is stored locally on the device:

```
func transcribeAudio(url: URL) {
    // create a new recognizer and point it at our audio
    let recognizer = SFSpeechRecognizer()
    let request = SFSpeechURLRecognitionRequest(url: url)

    // start recognition!
    recognizer?.recognitionTask(with: request) { [unowned self]
(result, error) in
        // abort if we didn't get any transcription back
        guard let result = result else {

```

```

        print("There was an error: \(error!)")
        return
    }

    // if we got the final transcription back, print it
    if result.isFinal {
        // pull out the best transcription...
        print(result.bestTranscription.formattedString)
    }
}
}

```

Note: the **isFinal** property is there because you may get an initial transcription back containing some or all of the text, but it's only considered final – i.e. as good as it gets – when the **isFinal** flag is true.

How to display PDFs using PDFView

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

Apple's PDFKit framework provides a huge range of code to help us work with PDFs, and one of the most useful is **PDFView** – it renders PDFs to the screen and lets users interact with them.

To try it out, start by importing the PDFKit framework:

```
import PDFKit
```

Next, add this code to your **viewDidLoad()** method to create a **PDFView** and make it fill all available space:

```
let pdfView = PDFView()
```

```
pdfView.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
view.addSubview(pdfView)

pdfView.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.leadingAnchor).isActive = true
pdfView.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
pdfView.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.topAnchor).isActive = true
pdfView.bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.bottomAnchor).isActive = true
```

Finally, create a **URL** pointing to a PDF you have in your bundle somewhere (or one in your documents directory), then create a **PDFDocument** object from that and pass it to the PDF view:

```
guard let path = Bundle.main.url(forResource: "example",
withExtension: "pdf") else { return }

if let document = PDFDocument(url: path) {
    pdfView.document = document
}
```

Done!

How to extract text from a PDF using PDFKit

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

PDFKit comes with a built-in class called **PDFDocument**, which allows us to load and parse PDF documents. It's used when you want to put your PDF into a **PDFView**, but it's also useful when you just want to read text from the PDF: you can loop over each page in the PDF, read its **attributedString** property, then append it to an attributed string containing all the text from

the PDF.

Here's some example code to do just that:

```
if let pdf = PDFDocument(url: url) {
    let pageCount = pdf.pageCount
    let documentContent = NSMutableAttributedString()

    for i in 1 ..< pageCount {
        guard let page = pdf.page(at: i) else { continue }
        guard let pageContent = page.attributedString else
        { continue }
        documentContent.append(pageContent)
    }
}
```

It's an *attributed* string, so it will retain formatting from the PDF as best as it can.

How to get a Cover Flow effect on iOS

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

You can get an instant Cover Flow effect on iOS by using the marvelous and free iCarousel library. You can download it from <https://github.com/nicklockwood/iCarousel> and drop it into your Xcode project fairly easily by adding a bridging header (it's written in Objective-C).

If you haven't added Objective-C code to a Swift project before, follow these steps:

- **Download iCarousel** and unzip it
- Go into the folder you unzipped, open its iCarousel subfolder, then select iCarousel.h and iCarousel.m and drag them into your project navigation – that's the left pane in Xcode. Just below Info.plist is fine.
- Check "Copy items if needed" then click Finish.
- Xcode will prompt you with the message "Would you like to configure an Objective-C

bridging header?" Click "Create Bridging Header"

- You should see a new file in your project, named YourProjectName-Bridging-Header.h.
- Add this line to the file: **#import "iCarousel.h"**

Once you've added iCarousel to your project you can start using it. Make sure you conform to both the **iCarouselDelegate** and **iCarouselDataSource** protocols.

Here's a complete, albeit simplified, example:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    let carousel = iCarousel(frame: CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width:
300, height: 200))
    carousel.dataSource = self
    carousel.type = .coverFlow
    view.addSubview(carousel)

}

func numberOfItems(in carousel: iCarousel) -> Int {
    return 10
}

func carousel(_ carousel: iCarousel, viewForItemAt index: Int,
reusing view: UIView?) -> UIView {
    let imageView: UIImageView

    if view != nil {
        imageView = view as! UIImageView
    } else {
        imageView = UIImageView(frame: CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width:
128, height: 128))
    }
}
```

```
    }

    imageView.image = UIImage(named: "example")

    return imageView
}
```

That example loads the same image for all 10 carousel slides, so you'll need to change that to load data from your app.

If you have the time, do check out the other carousel types that iCarousel offers – they're quite remarkable!

How to make empty UITableViews look more attractive using DZNEmptyDataSet

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you use table views or collection views and you want to take one simple step to make your app both more attractive and more user-friendly, let me tell you what the pros do: we use **DZNEmptyDataSet**. This simple, free, open source library is designed to handle the case when your data source is empty by showing some prompt text, and optionally also a button or an image.

What I love about this library is that it's so astonishingly simple, and it even uses **NSAttributedString** so you can provide custom formatting.

First things first: [go here and click Download Zip](#) to get the source code to **DZNEmptyDataSet**. Now unzip it, then look inside its Source folder for two files: **UIScrollView+EmptyDataSet.h** and **UIScrollView+EmptyDataSet.m**.

Drag these into your Xcode project, and Xcode should prompt you with the message "Would you like to configure an Objective-C bridging header?" Click "Creating Bridging Header" and you'll see a file called **YourProjectName-Bridging-Header.h** appear in your project. Open

that file for editing in Xcode and give it this text:

```
#import "UIScrollView+EmptyDataSet.h"
```

This is required because **DZNEmptyDataSet** is written in Objective-C, so these steps are required to make it available to use in Swift.

Next, tell Swift that your current table view controller (or collection view controller) conforms to the **DZNEmptyDataSetSource** and **DZNEmptyDataSetDelegate** protocols like this:

```
class ViewController: UITableViewController,  
DZNEmptyDataSetSource, DZNEmptyDataSetDelegate {  
    // your view controller here  
}
```

You then need to add these three lines of code to your **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
tableView.emptyDataSetSource = self  
tableView.emptyDataSetDelegate = self  
tableView.tableFooterView = UIView()
```

The first two lines set your code up ready to provide various **DZNEmptyDataSet** elements; the third one is just there to make your interface cleaner.

One of the great things about **DZNEmptyDataSet** is that you only need to provide what you want. This means you can provide just a heading, or perhaps a heading and an image, or a heading, a description, an image and even a button. Even better, the button is made for you: all you need to do is tell **DZNEmptyDataSet** what its title should be.

The example code below sets up a title, a description, an image and a button, and even provides a response to the button being tapped. Remember: you don't need all these, just the ones you want to use in your app.

```
func title(forEmptyDataSet scrollView: UIScrollView) ->  
NSAttributedString? {  
    let str = "Welcome"
```

```

    let attrs = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:
UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .headline)]
    return NSAttributedString(string: str, attributes: attrs)
}

func description(forEmptyDataSet scrollView: UIScrollView) ->
NSAttributedString? {
    let str = "Tap the button below to add your first
grokkleglob."
    let attrs = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:
UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .body)]
    return NSAttributedString(string: str, attributes: attrs)
}

func image(forEmptyDataSet scrollView: UIScrollView) ->
UIImage? {
    return UIImage(named: "taylor-swift")
}

func buttonTitle(forEmptyDataSet scrollView: UIScrollView, for
state: UIControlState) -> NSAttributedString? {
    let str = "Add Grokkleglob"
    let attrs = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:
UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .callout)]
    return NSAttributedString(string: str, attributes: attrs)
}

func emptyDataSet(_ scrollView: UIScrollView, didTap button:
UIButton) {
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Button tapped!", message:
nil, preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "Hurray",
style: .default))
    present(ac, animated: true)
}

```

```
}
```

How to parse JSON using SwiftyJSON

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

SwiftyJSON is a super-simplified JSON parsing library that gives you clearer syntax than the built-in iOS libraries (yes, even more than **JSONEncoder** from **Codable**), and is free.

You can **download it from here** – unzip the file you downloaded, then look in its Source directory and drag SwiftyJSON.swift into your Xcode project. To use SwiftyJSON, you need to convert your JSON string into a **Data** object, then send it in for parsing. Once that's done, you simply request data in the format you want, and (here's the awesome bit) *SwiftyJSON is guaranteed to return something*.

That "something" is going to be your data, if all things are in good shape. But if you requested the wrong thing (either with a typo, or because you didn't understand your JSON structure correctly) or if the JSON has changed, SwiftyJSON will just return a default value instead.

To get you started, here is some example JSON:

```
let json = "{ \"people\": [ { \"firstName\": \"Paul\",  
\"lastName\": \"Hudson\", \"isAlive\": true }, { \"firstName\":  
\"Angela\", \"lastName\": \"Merkel\", \"isAlive\": true },  
{ \"firstName\": \"George\", \"lastName\": \"Washington\",  
\"isAlive\": false } ] }
```

That contains an array of three people, each of which have a first name, a last name, and an "is alive" status. To parse that using SwiftyJSON and print out all the first names, here's the code:

```
if let data = json.data(using: .utf8) {  
    if let json = try? JSON(data: data) {  
        for item in json["people"].arrayValue {  
            print(item["firstName"].stringValue)
```

```
        }
    }
}
```

It's the **arrayValue** and **stringValue** properties that do all the magic: the first one returns the array of people or an empty array if the "people" element didn't exist, and the second one returns the "firstName" property of a person, or an empty string if it wasn't set. So, no matter what happens, that code will work, which means it's easy to write and safe to run.

Sometimes JSON has quite deeply nested dictionaries, but that's OK: SwiftyJSON can navigate through multiple levels in one call, and if any one level fails you'll still get back your default value. For example, if you have JSON like this:

```
{
    "metadata": {
        "responseInfo": {
            "status": 200,
            "developerMessage": "OK",
        }
    }
}
```

You might want to check that the status code is 200 before continuing. To do that, just read the "metaData", "responseInfo" and "status" values all at once, and ask SwiftyJSON for its **intValue** – you'll either get the correct number (200) or 0 if any of those values don't exist. Like this:

```
if json["metadata"]["responseInfo"]["status"].intValue == 200 {
    // we're OK to parse!
}
```

How to preview files using Quick Look and QLPreviewController

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

Apple's Quick Look framework lets you embed previewing for a huge range of file types, including iWork documents, Microsoft Office documents, PDFs, images, and more, all without writing much code.

First, import the QuickLook framework, then make your view controller conform to the **QLPreviewControllerDataSource** protocol. This protocol lets you provide items to Quick Look, which should be URLs pointing to whatever documents you're trying to preview.

Now go ahead and create and present an instance of **QLPreviewController**, setting your view controller to be its data source:

```
let previewController = QLPreviewController()
previewController.dataSource = self
present(previewController, animated: true)
```

There are two methods you need to implement: how many items your Quick Look controller should show, and the URL for each item. The first of those is just a matter of returning an integer from **numberOfPreviewItems()**:

```
func numberOfPreviewItems(in controller: QLPreviewController) -> Int {
    return 3
}
```

Now for the important part: Quick Look will call a **previewItemAt** method for each item you want to preview, and you need to pass back a **QLPreviewItem** pointing at it.

For this example I added three PDF files – 0.pdf, 1.pdf, and 2.pdf – to my project, so I'm going to pass back URLs to each of them. **URL** conforms to **QLPreviewItem** already, so we can just do an **as** typecast to make this work:

```
func previewController(_ controller: QLPreviewController,
                     previewItemAt index: Int) -> QLPreviewItem {
    guard let url = Bundle.main.url(forResource: String(index),
```

```

withExtension: "pdf") else {
    fatalError("Could not load \(index).pdf")
}

return url as QLPreviewItem
}

```

When that runs you'll be able to swipe horizontally through Quick Look items, or swipe up and down through pages in your PDFs.

How to scan NFC tags using Core NFC

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

Any iPhones since the iPhone 7 are able to scan any NFC tags you have around, and it doesn't take much work – iOS even provides default user interface for you.

To try it out, start by selecting your project in the project navigator, then choosing the Capabilities tab for your target. You need to enable the Near Field Communication Tag Reading capability, which configures your app to have NFC-scanning permissions.

Next, add new row to your Info.plist that completes the sentence “Hold iPhone near…”, describing your app's usage. Open Info.plist, right-click in the white space, then choose Add Row. Select “Privacy - NFC Scan Usage Description” for the key name and “NFC tag to scan it” for the value.

That's our configuration done, so let's dive straight into the code. Start by opening code for your scanning view controller and adding a new import statement:

```
import CoreNFC
```

We need to start a scanning session when the app launches, but we need to store it in memory so it stays active. So, add this property to your view controller:

```
var session: NFCNDEFReaderSession?
```

Next, add these two lines of code to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
session = NFCNDEFReaderSession(delegate: self, queue:  
DispatchQueue.main, invalidateAfterFirstRead: false)  
session?.begin()
```

Xcode will complain that the **ViewController** class doesn't currently conform to the **NFCNDEFReaderSessionDelegate** protocol, so you'll need to amend your class definition to include it:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController,  
NFCNDEFReaderSessionDelegate {
```

As per usual, Xcode will then complain that you're missing some required methods, so use its recommended fix to insert these two method stubs:

```
func readerSession(_ session: NFCNDEFReaderSession,  
didDetectNDEFs messages: [NFCNDEFMessage]) {  
  
}  
  
func readerSession(_ session: NFCNDEFReaderSession,  
didInvalidateWithError error: Error) {  
  
}
```

Both of those methods are easy enough, but error handling is particularly so – we're just going to make the error print out to the Xcode console. Fill in the **didInvalidateWithError** method like this:

```
func readerSession(_ session: NFCNDEFReaderSession,  
didInvalidateWithError error: Error) {  
    print(error.localizedDescription)
```

```
}
```

Now for the **didDetectNDEFs** method. When this is called you'll get an array of detected messages, each of which can contain one or more records describing a single piece of data.

What you do with the NFC data is down to you, so we're just going to print it out. Modify your **didDetectNDEFs** method to this:

```
func readerSession(_ session: NFCNDEFReaderSession,  
didDetectNDEFs messages: [NFCNDEFMessage]) {  
    for message in messages {  
        for record in message.records {  
            if let string = String(data: record.payload,  
encoding: .ascii) {  
                print(string)  
            }  
        }  
    }  
}
```

That's all the code complete, so go ahead and run the app! If everything has worked, you will immediately see some system user interface appear prompting the user to hold their device near something to scan.

How to search your app's Spotlight index

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

If you choose to index your app's content using Spotlight (and you should), you can then use more Core Spotlight code to search your own index from inside your app.

All the work is done using the **CSSearchQuery** class, which works asynchronously. You need to give it two closures to work with: one to call when it finds a matching item (which should

append the item to a results array), and one to call when the search finishes, at which point you should update your UI with the search results.

CSSearchBar works similarly to Core Data – it even has the same approach to specifying search criteria. In this example we’re going to search for "**contentDescription** == \"***(text)***\\\"c", which means “find things that have a **contentDescription** value equal to any text, followed by our search text, then any text, using case-insensitive matching.

There are a few more things you need to know before I show you the code:

1. Running a **CSSearchBar** returns **CSSearchableItem** items, so we need to an array to store that data type.
2. We’ll be taking advantage of closure capturing to share that array between the “found items” closure and the “search is finished” handler.
3. Your closures can be called on any thread, so as you usually manipulate the UI when the search finishes you should push that work to the main thread.
4. You need to explicitly call **start()** on the search to make it begin.
5. In case a user types really fast, we want to a way to cancel the existing search before starting a new one. To make that happen, it’s a good idea to store the **CSSearchBar** object as a property in the class, then call **cancel()** on it before searching.

To try out the code below, add **import CoreSpotlight** to a view controller’s class, then give it a **CSSearchBar?** property called **searchQuery**.

Now add this method:

```
func runSearch(text: String) {  
    var allItems = [CSSearchableItem]()  
  
    searchQuery?.cancel()  
  
    let queryString = "contentDescription == \"*\\(text)*\\\"c"  
    searchQuery = CSSearchBar(queryString: queryString,  
    attributes: nil)
```

```

        searchQuery?.foundItemsHandler = { items in
            allItems.append(contentsOf: items)
        }

        searchQuery?.completionHandler = { error in
            DispatchQueue.main.async { [unowned self] in
                self.updateUI(matches: allItems)
            }
        }
    }

    searchQuery?.start()
}

```

You'll need to implement **updateUI()** to do something with your search results, such as updating a table view.

How to show PDF thumbnails using PDFThumbnailView

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

Apple's PDFKit framework provides a huge range of code to help us work with PDFs, including a dedicated view for rendering thumbnails of PDF pages: **PDFThumbnailView**. However, using it takes a little extra work because it doesn't read PDF directly – you first load the PDF into a **PDFView**, then connect *that* to the thumbnail view.

To try it out, start by importing the PDFKit framework:

```
import PDFKit
```

Next, add this code to your **viewDidLoad()** method to create a **PDFView** and make it pin to the top, left, and right edges of your view:

```
let pdfView = PDFView()
```

```
pdfView.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
view.addSubview(pdfView)

pdfView.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.leadingAnchor).isActive = true
pdfView.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
pdfView.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.topAnchor).isActive = true
```

Third, create a **PDFThumbnailView** and pin to the bottom, left, and right edges of your view controller:

```
let thumbnailView = PDFThumbnailView()
thumbnailView.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
view.addSubview(thumbnailView)

thumbnailView.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.leadingAnchor).isActive = true
thumbnailView.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
thumbnailView.bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.bottomAnchor).isActive = true
```

We need the PDF view and PDF thumbnail view to share the space, so we're going to make the limit the thumbnail to 120 points of height, with the PDF view taking up the rest of the space:

```
pdfView.bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    thumbnailView.topAnchor).isActive = true
thumbnailView.heightAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant:
    120).isActive = true
```

PDFThumbnailView has a few interesting properties to set, of which the most important are the size of the thumbnails and the direction they should be born:

```
thumbnailView.thumbnailSize = CGSize(width: 100, height: 100)  
thumbnailView.layoutMode = .horizontal
```

Now we just need to connect the two views together so that changing one also changes the other:

```
thumbnailView.pdfView = pdfView
```

Finally, create a **URL** pointing to a PDF you have in your bundle somewhere (or one in your documents directory), then create a **PDFDocument** object from that and pass it to the PDF view:

```
guard let path = Bundle.main.url(forResource: "example",  
withExtension: "pdf") else { return }  
  
if let document = PDFDocument(url: path) {  
    pdfView.document = document  
}
```

Done!

How to watermark PDFs inside a PDFView

Availability: iOS or later.

PDFKit makes it easy to watermark PDFs as they are rendered, for example to add “FREE SAMPLE” over pages. It takes six steps, five of which are trivial and one which involves a little Core Graphics heavy lifting.

Let’s get the easy stuff out of the way:

1. Create a new Cocoa Touch Class called “SampleWatermark”, making it a subclass of **PDFPage**.
2. Add **import PDFKit** to the top of the new file.
3. Open whichever view controller owns your **PDFView** and make the **ViewController** class conform to the **PDFDocumentDelegate** protocol.
4. Find the code where you load your document (something like **pdfView.document = document**) then insert this directly before: **document.delegate = self**. That means the document will ask your view controller what class it should use to render pages.
5. Finally, we need to add a new method to the view controller to tell it to use the **SampleWatermark** class for its pages.

Add this method to your view controller now:

```
func classForPage() -> AnyClass {
    return SampleWatermark.self
}
```

What we've just done is create a new **PDFPage** subclass that will handle watermark rendering, then tell our **PDFDocument** to use it for all pages. We haven't given the **SampleWatermark** class any code yet, which means it will look just like a regular page – we're going to fix that now.

When doing custom PDF rendering there are a few things to know:

1. If you draw your content before calling **super.draw()**, your content will appear behind the page content. That might be what you want, but we'll be doing the opposite here.
2. You're given a graphics context to draw into, but you should tread carefully: save the context and its state before you make any changes, then restore them afterwards.
3. PDFs have a variety of drawing boxes that determine how things are displayed. We don't care which one is used, but we do need to ask PDFKit to tell us the page bounds for that box so we know how to position our text.
4. UIKit and PDFs draw in different directions, but you can correct that by moving the drawing position down by the height of the document then flipping its Y axis.

We're going to write the words "FREE SAMPLE" in red, centered near the top of each page using a bold font. Add this method to SampleWatermark.swift:

```
override func draw(with box: PDFDisplayBox, to context: CGContext) {
    super.draw(with: box, to: context)

    let string: NSString = "FREE SAMPLE"
    let attributes: [NSAttributedString.Key: Any] =
        [.foregroundColor: UIColor.red, .font:
            UIFont.boldSystemFont(ofSize: 32)]
    let stringSize = string.size(withAttributes: attributes)

    UIGraphicsPushContext(context)
    context.saveGState()

    let pageBounds = bounds(for: box)
    context.translateBy(x: (pageBounds.size.width -
        stringSize.width) / 2, y: pageBounds.size.height)
    context.scaleBy(x: 1.0, y: -1.0)

    string.draw(at: CGPoint(x: 0, y: 55), withAttributes:
        attributes)

    context.restoreGState()
    UIGraphicsPopContext()
}
```

If everything went well you should now see "FREE SAMPLE" emblazoned across every page of your PDF.

What is CloudKit?

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

CloudKit is Apple's dedicated back-end service for your apps, allowing you to store user data and assets remotely entirely using Swift. It works similar to Core Data, although it's much simpler in practice – you can save any kind of Swift data you like, and CloudKit takes care of the rest.

Even better, CloudKit is free as long as you stay within a generous quota – you get 10GB of asset storage, 100MB of database storage, 2GB of data transfer, and 40 requests per second – and those are just the starting figures. As you add more users your free quota also increases so your app can continue expanding up to 10 million users without paying a penny.

CloudKit is entirely powered through your iOS code, which means you can get started today without having to learn anything special or having to pay anything. For more advanced uses, you can even have CloudKit monitor your database and notify users with a push message when something important happens – you have complete control over what should be watched.

If you're keen to try it yourself, Hacking with Swift has a complete project using CloudKit: What's that Whistle?

Media

CIDetectorTypeFace: How to detect faces in a UIImage

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

Core Image has a number of feature detectors built right in, including the ability to detect faces, eyes, mouths, smiles and even blinking in pictures. When you ask it to look for faces in a picture, it will return you an array of all the faces it found, with each one containing face feature details such as eye position. Here's an example:

```
if let inputImage = UIImage(named: "taylor-swift") {  
    let ciImage = CIImage(cgImage: inputImage.cgImage!)  
}
```

```

let options = [CIDetectorAccuracy: CIDetectorAccuracyHigh]
let faceDetector = CIDetector(ofType: CIDetectorTypeFace,
context: nil, options: options)!

let faces = faceDetector.features(in: ciImage)

if let face = faces.first as? CIFaceFeature {
    print("Found face at \(face.bounds)")

    if face.hasLeftEyePosition {
        print("Found left eye at \(face.leftEyePosition)")
    }

    if face.hasRightEyePosition {
        print("Found right eye at \(face.rightEyePosition)")
    }

    if face.hasMouthPosition {
        print("Found mouth at \(face.mouthPosition)")
    }
}
}

```

How to choose a photo from the camera roll using **UIImagePickerController**

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

The **UIImagePickerController** class is a super-simple way to select and import user photos into your app. As a bonus, it also automatically handles requesting user permission to read the photo library, so all you need to do is be ready to respond when the user selects a photo.

First, make sure your view controller conforms to the **UINavigationControllerDelegate** and

UIImagePickerControllerDelegate protocols. Next, fill it in with methods to trigger selecting a picture, to handle cancelling, and to handle picture selection.

Here's a working example to get you started:

```
func imagePickerController(_ picker: UIImagePickerController,
didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo info:
[UIImagePickerController.InfoKey : Any]) {
    var newImage: UIImage

    if let possibleImage = info[.editedImage] as? UIImage {
        newImage = possibleImage
    } else if let possibleImage = info[.originalImage] as?
    UIImage {
        newImage = possibleImage
    } else {
        return
    }

    // do something interesting here!
    print(newImage.size)

    dismiss(animated: true)
}
```

To use that code in your own project, replace the call to **print()** with something useful – you have the image, now what?

There's one more thing before you're done, which is to add a description of *why* you want access – what do you intend to do with your user's photos? To set this, look for the file Info.plist in the project navigator and select it. This opens a new editor for modifying property list values ("plists") – app configuration settings.

In the Key column, hover your mouse pointer over any item and you'll see a + button appear; please click that to insert a new row. A huge list of options will appear – please scroll down

and select “Privacy - Photo Library Usage Description”. In the “Value” box for your row, enter “We need to import photos of people”. This is the message Apple will show to the user when photo access is requested.

How to control the pitch and speed of audio using AVAudioEngine

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Although it’s easy enough to play sound effects and music using AVKit, it’s actually one of the most powerful frameworks in iOS and can easily add some fun and interesting effects to your apps and games.

For example, one of the powerful classes in AVKit is called **AVEngine**. Its job is to connect audio processing objects in a chain so that the output of one object is the input for another. You can feed audio into the start, apply processing in the middle, then play the audio as the output, giving you real-time audio manipulation without much effort.

To try this out, we’ll create a simple test that loads an MP3 file and starts playing it, but adjusts the playback speed and pitch of the audio every time the user taps the screen.

First you need a property to store your **AVAudioEngine** object, along with properties that store an **AVAudioUnitTimePitch** and an **AVAudioUnitVarispeed** – the processors that transform the speed and pitch of audio:

```
let engine = AVAudioEngine()
let speedControl = AVAudioUnitVarispeed()
let pitchControl = AVAudioUnitTimePitch()
```

Next you need a method that will play a URL. This takes six steps:

1. Create an **AVAudioFile** that reads from whatever file URL gets passed into the method.
2. Create an **AVAudioPlayerNode** that will read in your **AVAudioFile**. This is a like a more advanced **AVAudioPlayer**, and we can use it as part of our engine connections.

3. Connect the audio player, the pitch control, and the speed control to our playback engine.
4. Arrange the parts so that the audio player feeds into the speed control, the speed control feeds into the pitch control, and the pitch control feeds to the main mixer output – gets played aloud.
5. Prepare the audio player node to start reading its file.
6. Start the engine and the player.

Here's the code for that, with comments matching the numbers above:

```
func play(_ url: URL) throws {
    // 1: load the file
    let file = try AVAudioFile(forReading: url)

    // 2: create the audio player
    let audioPlayer = AVAudioPlayerNode()

    // 3: connect the components to our playback engine
    engine.attach(audioPlayer)
    engine.attach(pitchControl)
    engine.attach(speedControl)

    // 4: arrange the parts so that output from one is input to
    // another
    engine.connect(audioPlayer, to: speedControl, format: nil)
    engine.connect(speedControl, to: pitchControl, format: nil)
    engine.connect(pitchControl, to: engine.mainMixerNode,
    format: nil)

    // 5: prepare the player to play its file from the beginning
    audioPlayer.scheduleFile(file, at: nil)

    // 6: start the engine and player
    try engine.start()
```

```
    audioPlayer.play()
}
```

Now you can call that method using a path to any audio file in your app bundle.

As for changing the pitch and rate, we made **pitchControl** and **speedControl** properties so we can adjust them at will. For example:

```
override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    pitchControl.pitch += 50
    speedControl.rate += 0.1
}
```

As you'll see, this processing happens incredibly quickly – it's all realtime, so you can create fun effects for apps and games in just a few minutes of work!

How to convert text to speech using **AVSpeechSynthesizer**, **AVSpeechUtterance** and **AVSpeechSynthesisVoice**

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you're looking for text-to-speech conversion, it's baked right into iOS thanks to the **AVSpeechSynthesizer** class and its friends. As you can tell from the "AV" part of its name, you'll need to add AVFoundation to your project, like this:

```
import AVFoundation
```

With that done, you can speak whatever you want. For example, to say "Hello world" in a very slow British accent, use this:

```
let utterance = AVSpeechUtterance(string: "Hello world")
utterance.voice = AVSpeechSynthesisVoice(language: "en-GB")
utterance.rate = 0.1
```

```
let synthesizer = AVSpeechSynthesizer()
synthesizer.speak(utterance)
```

You can omit the **rate** property entirely to have a natural-speed voice, or change the language to "en-US" (English, American accent), "en-IE" (English, Irish accent), "en-AU" (English, Australian accent) or whichever other accents Apple chooses to add in the future.

How to create a PDF417 barcode

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

PDF417 barcodes - most frequently seen on boarding passes at airports, but also seen in digital postage stamps and other places – are built right into iOS. This function below accepts a string as its only parameter and returns a **UIImage** containing the PDF417 barcode representing that string:

```
func generatePDF417Barcode(from string: String) -> UIImage? {
    let data = string.data(using: String.Encoding.ascii)

    if let filter = CIFilter(name: "CIPDF417BarcodeGenerator") {
        filter.setValue(data, forKey: "inputMessage")
        let transform = CGAffineTransform(scaleX: 3, y: 3)

        if let output = filter.outputImage?.transformed(by:
transform) {
            return UIImage(ciImage: output)
        }
    }

    return nil
}
```

```
let image = generatePDF417Barcode(from: "Hacking with Swift")
```

How to create a QR code

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

iOS has a built-in QR code generator, but it's a bit tricksy to use because it's exposed as a Core Image filter that needs various settings to be applied. Also, it generates codes where every bit is just one pixel across, which looks terrible if you try to stretch it inside an image view.

So, here's a simple function that wraps up QR code generation while also scaling up the QR code so it's a respectable size:

```
func generateQRCode(from string: String) -> UIImage? {
    let data = string.data(using: String.Encoding.ascii)

    if let filter = CIFilter(name: "CIQRCodeGenerator") {
        filter.setValue(data, forKey: "inputMessage")
        let transform = CGAffineTransform(scaleX: 3, y: 3)

        if let output = filter.outputImage?.transformed(by:
transform) {
            return UIImage(ciImage: output)
        }
    }

    return nil
}

let image = generateQRCode(from: "Hacking with Swift is the
best iOS coding tutorial I've ever read!")
```

How to create a barcode

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

You can generate a string into a traditional barcode using iOS using Core Image, but you should make sure and convert your input string to a **Data** using **String.Encoding.ascii** to ensure compatibility. Here's a function you can use that wraps it all up neatly, including scaling up the barcode so it's a bit bigger:

```
func generateBarcode(from string: String) -> UIImage? {
    let data = string.data(using: String.Encoding.ascii)

    if let filter = CIFilter(name: "CICode128BarcodeGenerator") {
        filter.setValue(data, forKey: "inputMessage")
        let transform = CGAffineTransform(scaleX: 3, y: 3)

        if let output = filter.outputImage?.transformed(by:
transform) {
            return UIImage(ciImage: output)
        }
    }

    return nil
}
```

With that method in place, you can now write code like this:

```
let image = generateBarcode(from: "Hacking with Swift")
```

How to desaturate an image to make it black and white

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

One of the most useful filters to have in your toolbox is called **CIColorMonochrome**, and its job is to remove the color variance from an image then tint it however you want. If you use gray as your tint color, it produces plain black and white images, but you can also use other colors to get sepia tone and other effects.

Here's some example code to get you started:

```
guard let currentCGImage = yourUIImage.cgImage else { return }
let currentCIImage = CIImage(cgImage: currentCGImage)

let filter = CIFilter(name: "CIColorMonochrome")
filter?.setValue(currentCIImage, forKey: "inputImage")

// set a gray value for the tint color
filter?.setValue(CIColor(red: 0.7, green: 0.7, blue: 0.7),
forKey: "inputColor")

filter?.setValue(1.0, forKey: "inputIntensity")
guard let outputImage = filter?.outputImage else { return }

let context = CIContext()

if let cgimg = context.createCGImage(outputImage, from:
outputImage.extent) {
    let processedImage = UIImage(cgImage: cgimg)
    print(processedImage.size)
}
```

To make that work you'll need a **UIImage** called **yourUIImage**, then replace the **print(processedImage.size)** line at the end with whatever you want to do with your black and white image.

How to filter images using Core Image and CIFilter

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

Core Image is the one of the most powerful frameworks available to iOS developers: it makes hardware-accelerated image manipulation ridiculously easy, which means you get to add powerful graphical effects to your apps and games with very little work.

Most of the work is done by choosing the right **CIFilter**. Apple's official documentation goes into great detail about the various filters you can use, and you can also read Hacking with Swift project 13 for a hands-on tutorial showing off various effects. The code below applies a 50% sepia tone effect to an image:

```
let inputImage = UIImage(named: "taylor-swift")!
let context = CIContext(options: nil)

if let currentFilter = CIFilter(name: "CISepiaTone") {
    let beginImage = CIImage(image: inputImage)
    currentFilter.setValue(beginImage, forKey: kCIInputImageKey)
    currentFilter.setValue(0.5, forKey: kCIInputIntensityKey)

    if let output = currentFilter.outputImage {
        if let cgimg = context.createCGImage(output, from:
output.extent) {
            let processedImage = UIImage(cgImage: cgimg)
            // do something interesting with the processed image
        }
    }
}
```

How to highlight text to speech words being read using AVSpeechSynthesizer

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

iOS has text-to-speech synthesis built right into the system, but even better is that it allows you to track when individual words are being spoken so that you can highlight the words on the screen. This is extremely easy to do thanks to the **AVSpeechSynthesizerDelegate** protocol: you get two callbacks in the form of **willSpeakRangeOfSpeechString** and **didFinish**, where you can do your work.

First, make sure you import AVFoundation into your project. Now make your class conform to the **AVSpeechSynthesizerDelegate** protocol.

Place a label into your view controller, then hook it up to an outlet called **label**. Now add these two methods:

```
func speechSynthesizer(_ synthesizer: AVSpeechSynthesizer,  
willSpeakRangeOfSpeechString characterRange: NSRange,  
utterance: AVSpeechUtterance) {  
    let mutableAttributedString =  
        NSMutableAttributedString(string: utterance.speechString)  
        mutableAttributedString.addAttribute(.foregroundColor,  
value: UIColor.red, range: characterRange)  
    label.attributedText = mutableAttributedString  
}  
  
func speechSynthesizer(_ synthesizer: AVSpeechSynthesizer,  
didFinish utterance: AVSpeechUtterance) {  
    label.attributedText = NSAttributedString(string:  
utterance.speechString)  
}
```

Finally, you need to trigger the text-to-speech engine – this might be by a button press perhaps, but it's down to you. Here's the method I attached to a button press:

```
@IBAction func speak(_ sender: AnyObject) {  
    let string = label.text!
```

```
let utterance = AVSpeechUtterance(string: string)
utterance.voice = AVSpeechSynthesisVoice(language: "en-GB")

let synthesizer = AVSpeechSynthesizer()
synthesizer.delegate = self
synthesizer.speak(utterance)
}
```

How to loop audio using AVAudioPlayer and numberOfLoops

Availability: iOS 2.2 or later.

By default **AVAudioPlayer** plays its audio from start to finish then stops, but you can control how many times to make it loop by setting its **numberOfLoops** property. For example, to make your audio play five times in total, you'd write this:

```
audioPlayer.numberOfLoops = 5
```

You can also set this property to -1, which automatically causes **AVAudioPlayer** to loop the sound forever.

How to make resizable images using resizableImage(withCapInsets:)

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you use a small image in a large image view, you can make the image stretch to fit if you want to but it probably won't look great. iOS provides an alternative known as *resizable images*, which is where you define part of an image as being fixed in size and let iOS stretch the remainder.

This technique is common with button graphics: you make the corners fixed in size, then stretch the center part as big as it needs to be. The center part ought to be just one pixel by one

pixel in size so that it stretches perfectly, but you can also ask iOS to repeat the center area as a tile if that's what you want.

This example code below creates a resizable image by defining the corners as 8 points each and stretching the rest:

```
if let img = UIImage(named: "button") {
    let resizable = img.resizableImage(withCapInsets:
    UIEdgeInsets(top: 8, left: 8, bottom: 8, right: 8),
    resizingMode: .stretch)
}
```

How to pixellate a UIImage

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Core Image has a number of interesting filters baked in, and an easy one to use is **CIPixellate** – it pixellates images, making them appear blocky. You have control over how big each pixel block should be, so it's suitable for a range of tasks.

Below is some sample code to get you started. To use it you should:

1. Change **yourUIImage** to be whatever input **UIImage** you want to use.
2. Change the value of 12 for however strong your pixellation effect should be.
3. Change the **print(processedImage.size)** line at the end for something more interesting – maybe you want to display the pixellated image somewhere?

Here's the code:

```
guard let currentCGImage = yourUIImage.cgImage else { return }
let currentCIImage = CIImage(cgImage: currentCGImage)

let filter = CIFilter(name: "CIPixellate")
filter?.setValue(currentCIImage, forKey: kCIInputImageKey)
```

```

filter?.setValue(12, forKey: kCIInputScaleKey)
guard let outputImage = filter?.outputImage else { return }

let context = CIContext()

if let cgimg = context.createCGImage(outputImage, from:
outputImage.extent) {
    let processedImage = UIImage(cgImage: cgimg)
    print(processedImage.size)
}

```

Note: if you intend to run pixellation several times you'll find it more efficient to save your **CIContext** rather than keep recreating it.

How to play sounds using AVAudioPlayer

Availability: iOS 2.2 or later.

The most common way to play a sound on iOS is using **AVAudioPlayer**, and it's popular for a reason: it's easy to use, you can stop it whenever you want, and you can adjust its volume as often as you need. The only real catch is that you must store your player as a property or other variable that won't get destroyed straight away – if you don't, the sound will stop immediately.

AVAudioPlayer is part of the AVFoundation framework, so you'll need to import that:

```
import AVFoundation
```

Like I said, you need to store your audio player as a property somewhere so it is retained while the sound is playing. In our example we're going to play a bomb explosion sound, so I created a property for it like this:

```
var bombSoundEffect: AVAudioPlayer?
```

With those two lines of code inserted, all you need to do is play your audio file. This is done first by finding where the sound is in your project using **path(forResource:)**, then creating a file URL out of it. That can then get passed to **AVAudioPlayer** to create an audio player object, at which point – finally – you can play the sound. Here's the code:

```
let path = Bundle.main.path(forResource: "example.mp3",
ofType:nil)!

let url = URL(fileURLWithPath: path)

do {
    bombSoundEffect = try AVAudioPlayer(contentsOf: url)
    bombSoundEffect?.play()
} catch {
    // couldn't load file :(
}
```

If you want to stop the sound, you should use its **stop()** method.

How to play videos using **AVPlayerViewController**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

AVPlayerViewController is designed to make it easy to play media just like Apple's own apps. You can play movies and audio, local and remote, and you benefit from the same user interface layout used elsewhere in the system.

Using the class only takes a few steps, starting with importing the AVKit framework and creating a **URL** that points to the movie you want to play. Once that's done, you create an **AVPlayer** instance pointing at your URL, send that in to an **AVPlayerViewController**, then call **play()** on it when you're ready.

Here's some example code to get you started:

```
let player = AVPlayer(url: videoURL)
```

```

let vc = AVPlayerViewController()
vc.player = player

present(vc, animated: true) {
    vc.player?.play()
}

```

How to read the average color of a UIImage using CIAreaAverage

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

Core Image has a filter that resample an image down to 1x1 pixels so you can read the average color, although it's a weirdly hard to use.

To simplify things, here's an extension on **UIImage** that returns an optional **UIColor** – it will be nil only if something went wrong while reading your image, but otherwise it will contain the average color for the entire image:

```

extension UIImage {
    var averageColor: UIColor? {
        guard let inputImage = CIImage(image: self) else { return nil }

        let extentVector = CIVector(x: inputImage.extent.origin.x, y: inputImage.extent.origin.y, z: inputImage.extent.size.width, w: inputImage.extent.size.height)

        guard let filter = CIFilter(name: "CIAreaAverage",
parameters: [kCIInputImageKey: inputImage, kCIInputExtentKey: extentVector]) else { return nil }

        guard let outputImage = filter.outputImage else { return nil }

        var bitmap = [UInt8](repeating: 0, count: 4)

```

```

        let context = CIContext(options: [.workingColorSpace:
kCFNull])
        context.render(outputImage, toBitmap: &bitmap, rowBytes:
4, bounds: CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 1, height: 1),
format: .RGBA8, colorSpace: nil)

        return UIColor(red: CGFloat(bitmap[0]) / 255, green:
CGFloat(bitmap[1]) / 255, blue: CGFloat(bitmap[2]) / 255,
alpha: CGFloat(bitmap[3]) / 255)
    }
}
}

```

How to record audio using AVAudioRecorder

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

While it's not *hard* to record audio with an iPhone, it does take quite a bit of code so give yourself a few minutes to get this implemented. First you need to import the **AVFoundation** framework into your view controller.

You will need to add three properties to your view controller: a button for the user to tap to start or stop recording, an audio session to manage recording, and an audio recorder to handle the actual reading and saving of data. You can create the button in Interface Builder if you prefer; we'll be doing it in code here.

Put these three properties into your view controller:

```

var recordButton: UIButton!
var recordingSession: AVAudioSession!
var audioRecorder: AVAudioRecorder!

```

Recording audio requires a user's permission to stop malicious apps doing malicious things, so we need to request recording permission from the user. If they grant permission, we'll create

our recording button. Put this into `viewDidLoad()`:

```
recordingSession = AVAudioSession.sharedInstance()

do {
    try recordingSession.setCategory(.playAndRecord,
mode: .default)
    try recordingSession.setActive(true)
    recordingSession.requestRecordPermission() { [unowned self] allowed in
        DispatchQueue.main.async {
            if allowed {
                self.loadRecordingUI()
            } else {
                // failed to record!
            }
        }
    }
} catch {
    // failed to record!
}
```

You should replace the `// failed to record!` comment with a meaningful error alert to your user, or perhaps an on-screen label.

I made the code for `loadRecordingUI()` separate so you can replace it easily either with IB work or something else. Here's the least you need to do:

```
func loadRecordingUI() {
    recordButton = UIButton(frame: CGRect(x: 64, y: 64, width:
128, height: 64))
    recordButton.setTitle("Tap to Record", for: .normal)
    recordButton.titleLabel?.font =
UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .title1)
    recordButton.addTarget(self, action:
```

```

    #selector(recordTapped), for: .touchUpInside)
        view.addSubview(recordButton)
    }
}

```

That configures the button to call a method called **recordTapped()** when it's tapped. Don't worry, we haven't written that yet!

Before we write the code for **recordTapped()** we need to do a few other things. First, we need a method to start recording. This needs to decide where to save the audio, configure the recording settings, then start recording. Here's the code:

```

func startRecording() {
    let audioFilename =
        getDocumentsDirectory().appendingPathComponent("recording.m4a")

    let settings = [
        AVFormatIDKey: Int(kAudioFormatMPEG4AAC),
        AVSampleRateKey: 12000,
        AVNumberOfChannelsKey: 1,
        AVEncoderAudioQualityKey: AVAudioQuality.high.rawValue
    ]

    do {
        audioRecorder = try AVAudioRecorder(url: audioFilename,
            settings: settings)
        audioRecorder.delegate = self
        audioRecorder.record()

        recordButton.setTitle("Tap to Stop", for: .normal)
    } catch {
        finishRecording(success: false)
    }
}

```

That code won't build just yet, because it has two problems. First, it uses the method `getDocumentsDirectory()`, which is a helper method I include in most of my projects. Here it is:

```
func getDocumentsDirectory() -> URL {
    let paths =
FileManager.default.urls(for: .documentDirectory,
in: .userDomainMask)
    return paths[0]
}
```

Second, it assigns `self` to be the delegate of the audio recorder, which means you need to conform your view controller to the `AVAudioRecorderDelegate` protocol.

With the code written to start recording, we need matching code to finish recording. This will tell the audio recorder to stop recording, then put the button title back to either "Tap to Record" (if recording finished successfully) or "Tap to Re-record" if there was a problem. Here's the code:

```
func finishRecording(success: Bool) {
    audioRecorder.stop()
    audioRecorder = nil

    if success {
        recordButton.setTitle("Tap to Re-record", for: .normal)
    } else {
        recordButton.setTitle("Tap to Record", for: .normal)
        // recording failed :(
    }
}
```

With those two in place, we can finally write `recordTapped()`, because it just needs to call either `startRecording()` or `finishRecording()` depending on the state of the audio recorder. Here's the code:

```

@objc func recordTapped() {
    if audioRecorder == nil {
        startRecording()
    } else {
        finishRecording(success: true)
    }
}

```

Before you're done, there's one more thing to be aware of: iOS might stop your recording for some reason out of your control, such as if a phone call comes in. We are the delegate of the audio recorder, so if this situation crops up you'll be sent a **audioRecorderDidFinishRecording()** message that you can pass on to **finishRecording()** like this:

```

func audioRecorderDidFinishRecording(_ recorder:
AVAudioRecorder, successfully flag: Bool) {
    if !flag {
        finishRecording(success: false)
    }
}

```

How to record user videos using ReplayKit

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

ReplayKit is one of many useful social media features built into iOS, and it's trivial to add to your projects. What's more, it's not just for games – you can record any kind of app just fine. I should add, though, that the recording quality is fairly low, so it's not worth trying to record fine details.

Below is a complete example of how to use ReplayKit to record the screen. You'll need to add a navigation controller around your view controller because the code uses the right bar button item to start and stop recording, and of course it's down to you to add some interesting user

interface that's actually worth recording!

```
import ReplayKit
import UIKit

class ViewController: UIViewController,
RPPreviewViewControllerDelegate {
    override func viewDidLoad() {
        super.viewDidLoad()

        navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
UIBarButtonItem(title: "Start", style: .plain, target: self,
action: #selector(startRecording))
    }

    @objc func startRecording() {
        let recorder = RPSScreenRecorder.shared()

        recorder.startRecording{ [unowned self] (error) in
            if let unwrappedError = error {
                print(unwrappedError.localizedDescription)
            } else {
                self.navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
UIBarButtonItem(title: "Stop", style: .plain, target: self,
action: #selector(self.stopRecording))
            }
        }
    }

    @objc func stopRecording() {
        let recorder = RPSScreenRecorder.shared()

        recorder.stopRecording { [unowned self] (preview, error)
in
```

```

        self.navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem =
UIBarButtonItem(title: "Start", style: .plain, target: self,
action: #selector(self.startRecording))

        if let unwrappedPreview = preview {
            unwrappedPreview.previewControllerDelegate = self
            self.present(unwrappedPreview, animated: true)
        }
    }
}

func previewControllerDidFinish(_ previewController:
RPPreviewViewController) {
    dismiss(animated: true)
}
}

```

ReplayKit does three more cool things for you:

- It automatically asks the user for permission to start recording the first time you try.
- While recording, no system user interface is shown, which means you can't see messages coming in from other apps.
- When the user stops recording, they'll get the chance to preview their recording, make changes, save it to their devices and share it – your app doesn't get access to the recording.

How to render a UIView to a UIImage

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

You can render any **UIView** into a **UIImage** in just four lines of code, and that even handles drawing all the subviews automatically. Here's the code:

```
let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: view.bounds.size)
let image = renderer.image { ctx in
    view.drawHierarchy(in: view.bounds, afterScreenUpdates:
true)
}
```

Helpfully, that code works equally well no matter what the view contains - if you're using UIKit, SpriteKit, Metal or whatever, it all works.

How to save a **UIImage** to a file using **jpegData()** and **pngData()**

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you've generated an image using Core Graphics, or perhaps rendered part of your layout, you might want to save that out as either a PNG or a JPEG. Both are easy thanks to two methods: **pngData()** and **jpegData()**, both of which convert a **UIImage** into a **Data** instance you can write out.

Here's an example:

```
if let image = UIImage(named: "example.png") {
    if let data = image.pngData() {
        let filename =
getDocumentsDirectory().appendingPathComponent("copy.png")
        try? data.write(to: filename)
    }
}
```

That call to **getDocumentsDirectory()** is a little helper function I include in most of my projects, because it makes it easy to locate the user's documents directory where you can save app files. Here it is:

```
func getDocumentsDirectory() -> URL {
```

```
let paths =
FileManager.default.urls(for: .documentDirectory,
in: .userDomainMask)
return paths[0]
}
```

If you want to save your image as a JPEG rather than a PNG, use this code instead:

```
if let image = UIImage(named: "example.png") {
    if let data = image.jpegData(compressionQuality: 0.8) {
        let filename =
getDocumentsDirectory().AppendingPathComponent("copy.png")
        try? data.write(to: filename)
    }
}
```

The parameter to `jpegData()` is a float that represents JPEG quality, where 1.0 is highest and 0.0 is lowest.

How to scan a QR code

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

iOS has built-in support for scanning QR codes using AVFoundation, but the code isn't easy: you need to create a capture session, create a preview layer, handle delegate callbacks, and more. To make it easier for you, I've created a `UIViewController` subclass that does all the hard work for you – you just need to modify the `found(code:)` method to do something more interesting.

Note: rotation when using the camera can be quite ugly, which is why most apps fix the orientation as you see below.

```
import AVFoundation
```

```
import UIKit

class ScannerViewController: UIViewController,
AVCaptureMetadataOutputObjectsDelegate {
    var captureSession: AVCaptureSession!
    var previewLayer: AVCaptureVideoPreviewLayer!

    override func viewDidLoad() {
        super.viewDidLoad()

        view.backgroundColor = UIColor.black
        captureSession = AVCaptureSession()

        guard let videoCaptureDevice =
        AVCaptureDevice.default(for: .video) else { return }
        let videoInput: AVCaptureDeviceInput

        do {
            videoInput = try AVCaptureDeviceInput(device:
videoCaptureDevice)
        } catch {
            return
        }

        if (captureSession.canAddInput(videoInput)) {
            captureSession.addInput(videoInput)
        } else {
            failed()
            return
        }

        let metadataOutput = AVCaptureMetadataOutput()
        if (captureSession.canAddOutput(metadataOutput)) {
```

```

        captureSession.addOutput(metadataOutput)

        metadataOutput.setMetadataObjectsDelegate(self, queue:
DispatchQueue.main)
        metadataOutput.metadataObjectTypes = [.qr]
    } else {
        failed()
        return
    }

    previewLayer = AVCaptureVideoPreviewLayer(session:
captureSession)
    previewLayer.frame = view.layer.bounds
    previewLayer.videoGravity = .resizeAspectFill
    view.layer.addSublayer(previewLayer)

    captureSession.startRunning()
}

func failed() {
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Scanning not
supported", message: "Your device does not support scanning a
code from an item. Please use a device with a camera.",
preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
    present(ac, animated: true)
    captureSession = nil
}

override func viewWillAppears(animated: Bool) {
    super.viewWillAppears(animated)

    if (captureSession?.isRunning == false) {
        captureSession.startRunning()
    }
}

```

```

        }
    }

    override func viewWillDisappear(_ animated: Bool) {
        super.viewWillDisappear(animated)

        if (captureSession?.isRunning == true) {
            captureSession.stopRunning()
        }
    }

    func metadataOutput(_ output: AVCaptureMetadataOutput,
didOutput metadataObjects: [AVMetadataObject], from connection:
AVCaptureConnection) {
        captureSession.stopRunning()

        if let metadataObject = metadataObjects.first {
            guard let readableObject = metadataObject as?
AVMetadataMachineReadableCodeObject else { return }
            guard let stringValue = readableObject.stringValue
            else { return }

            AudioServicesPlaySystemSound(SystemSoundID(kSystemSoundID_Vibra
te))
            found(code: stringValue)
        }
    }

    dismiss(animated: true)
}

func found(code: String) {
    print(code)
}

```

```

override var prefersStatusBarHidden: Bool {
    return true
}

override var supportedInterfaceOrientations:
UIInterfaceOrientationMask {
    return .portrait
}
}

```

How to scan a barcode

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

iOS supports barcode scanning out of the box, but to be honest it's not that easy to do. So, here's a complete **UIViewController** subclass that you can add to your Swift project and get immediate support with no hassle – all you need to do is update the **found(code:)** method to take some interesting action, then present this view controller when you're ready:

```

import AVFoundation
import UIKit

class ScannerViewController: UIViewController,
AVCaptureMetadataOutputObjectsDelegate {
    var captureSession: AVCaptureSession!
    var previewLayer: AVCaptureVideoPreviewLayer!

    override func viewDidLoad() {
        super.viewDidLoad()

        view.backgroundColor = UIColor.black
        captureSession = AVCaptureSession()

```

```

        guard let videoCaptureDevice =
AVCaptureDevice.default(for: .video) else { return }
        let videoInput: AVCaptureDeviceInput

        do {
            videoInput = try AVCaptureDeviceInput(device:
videoCaptureDevice)
        } catch {
            return
        }

        if (captureSession.canAddInput(videoInput)) {
            captureSession.addInput(videoInput)
        } else {
            failed()
            return
        }

        let metadataOutput = AVCaptureMetadataOutput()

        if (captureSession.canAddOutput(metadataOutput)) {
            captureSession.addOutput(metadataOutput)

            metadataOutput.setMetadataObjectsDelegate(self, queue:
DispatchQueue.main)
            metadataOutput.metadataObjectTypes =
[.ean8, .ean13, .pdf417]
        } else {
            failed()
            return
        }

        previewLayer = AVCaptureVideoPreviewLayer(session:
captureSession)
    }
}

```

```

        previewLayer.frame = view.layer.bounds
        previewLayer.videoGravity = .resizeAspectFill
        view.layer.addSublayer(previewLayer)

        captureSession.startRunning()
    }

    func failed() {
        let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Scanning not
supported", message: "Your device does not support scanning a
code from an item. Please use a device with a camera.",
preferredStyle: .alert)
        ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
        present(ac, animated: true)
        captureSession = nil
    }

    override func viewDidAppear(_ animated: Bool) {
        super.viewDidAppear(animated)

        if (captureSession?.isRunning == false) {
            captureSession.startRunning()
        }
    }

    override func viewWillDisappear(_ animated: Bool) {
        super.viewWillDisappear(animated)

        if (captureSession?.isRunning == true) {
            captureSession.stopRunning()
        }
    }

    func metadataOutput(_ output: AVCaptureMetadataOutput,

```

```

didOutput metadataObjects: [AVMetadataObject], from connection:
AVCaptureConnection) {
    captureSession.stopRunning()

    if let metadataObject = metadataObjects.first {
        guard let readableObject = metadataObject as?
AVMetadataMachineReadableCodeObject else { return }
        guard let stringValue = readableObject.stringValue
    } else { return }

    AudioServicesPlaySystemSound(SystemSoundID(kSystemSoundID_Vibrate))
        found(code: stringValue)
    }

    dismiss(animated: true)
}

func found(code: String) {
    print(code)
}

override var prefersStatusBarHidden: Bool {
    return true
}

override var supportedInterfaceOrientations:
UIInterfaceOrientationMask {
    return .portrait
}
}

```

How to turn on the camera flashlight to make a torch

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

There is one simple property required to enable or disable a device's torch, but you do need to put in some wrapper code to make it work safely. Specifically, you need to use the **lockForConfiguration()** and **unlockForConfiguration()** methods of the **AVCaptureDevice** class in order to make sure only one app can control the torch at a time.

You will need to import the AVFoundation framework, because that's where the **AVCaptureDevice** class comes from. Once that's done, add this function to your code and you're good to code:

```
func toggleTorch(on: Bool) {
    guard let device = AVCaptureDevice.default(for: .video) else
    { return }

    if device.hasTorch {
        do {
            try device.lockForConfiguration()

            if on == true {
                device.torchMode = .on
            } else {
                device.torchMode = .off
            }

            device.unlockForConfiguration()
        } catch {
            print("Torch could not be used")
        }
    } else {
        print("Torch is not available")
    }
}
```

With that, you can now turn the torch on like this:

```
toggleTorch(on: true)
```

UIImageWriteToSavedPhotosAlbum(): how to write to the iOS photo album

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

It's not hard to save an image straight to the user's photo library, but I have to admit the syntax isn't immediately obvious! iOS has a function called **UIImageWriteToSavedPhotosAlbum()** that takes four parameters: parameter one is the image to save, parameters two and three set a delegate and selector to send when the image has been written successfully, and parameter four is any additional context information you want to send.

For example, you might use it like this:

```
UIImageWriteToSavedPhotosAlbum(yourImage, self,  
#selector(image(_:didFinishSavingWithError:contextInfo:)), nil)
```

That will write the image to the photo library, then call a method when it completes. That method needs to be named very precisely, which is where it's easy to go wrong. Using the call above, you need to write your callback method like this:

```
@objc func image(_ image: UIImage, didFinishSavingWithError  
error: NSError?, contextInfo: UnsafeRawPointer) {  
    if let error = error {  
        // we got back an error!  
        let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Save error", message:  
error.localizedDescription, preferredStyle: .alert)  
        ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))  
        present(ac, animated: true)
```

```

    } else {
        let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Saved!", message:
"Your altered image has been saved to your photos.",
preferredStyle: .alert)
        ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
        present(ac, animated: true)
    }
}

```

Networking

How to create a peer-to-peer network using the multipeer connectivity framework

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The **MultipeerConnectivity** framework is designed to allow ad hoc data transfer between devices that are in close proximity. The connection is started managed for you by iOS, but you're responsible for presenting useful interface to your users and for understanding the data that is being sent and received.

First things first, import the **MultipeerConnectivity** framework:

```
import MultipeerConnectivity
```

Now define these three properties to hold the multipeer session information:

```
var peerID: MCPeerID!
var mcSession: MCSession!
var mcAdvertiserAssistant: MCAdvertiserAssistant!
```

The peer ID is simply the name of the current device, which is useful for identifying who is joining a session. We're just going to use the current device's name when creating our

connection, but we're also going to require encryption. Add this to your **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
peerID = MCPeerID(displayName: UIDevice.current.name)
mcSession = MCSession(peer: peerID, securityIdentity: nil,
encryptionPreference: .required)
mcSession.delegate = self
```

You will need to tell iOS that your view controller conforms to the **MCSessionDelegate** and **MCBrowserViewControllerDelegate** delegates, like this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController, MCSessionDelegate,
MCBrowserViewControllerDelegate {
    // your view controller here
}
```

Conforming to those two delegates means implementing quite a few methods. Fortunately, five of them are super simple because three are empty and the other two just dismiss a view controller. Add this code now:

```
func session(_ session: MCSession, didReceive stream:
InputStream, withName streamName: String, fromPeer peerID:
MCPeerID) {

}

func session(_ session: MCSession,
didStartReceivingResourceWithName resourceName: String,
fromPeer peerID: MCPeerID, with progress: Progress) {

}

func session(_ session: MCSession,
didFinishReceivingResourceWithName resourceName: String,
fromPeer peerID: MCPeerID, at localURL: URL?, withError error:
```

```

Error?) {

}

func browserViewControllerDidFinish(_ browserViewController: MCBrowserViewController) {
    dismiss(animated: true)
}

func browserViewControllerWasCancelled(_ browserViewController: MCBrowserViewController) {
    dismiss(animated: true)
}

```

Next comes a slightly harder method: you need to do something when clients connect or disconnect. That something could just be "I don't care; do nothing," or it might be where you show a message on the screen to tell your user. Here's a basic version that just prints out a status message to the Xcode log:

```

func session(_ session: MCSession, peer peerID: MCPeerID, didChange state: MCSessionState) {
    switch state {
        case MCSessionState.connected:
            print("Connected: \(peerID.displayName)")

        case MCSessionState.connecting:
            print("Connecting: \(peerID.displayName)")

        case MCSessionState.notConnected:
            print("Not Connected: \(peerID.displayName)")
    }
}

```

Time for the important stuff: sending and receiving data. Now, obviously the data you will

send and receive depends on what your app does, so you will need to customize this code to fit your needs. In the example I'm going to give, we'll use sending and receiving images, but you could just as easily send strings or anything else.

So, here's how to encode an image into a **Data** then send that to all connected peers:

```
func sendImage(img: UIImage) {
    if mcSession.connectedPeers.count > 0 {
        if let imageData = img.pngData() {
            do {
                try mcSession.send(imageData, toPeers:
mcSession.connectedPeers, with: .reliable)
            } catch let error as NSError {
                let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Send error",
message: error.localizedDescription, preferredStyle: .alert)
                ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK",
style: .default))
                present(ac, animated: true)
            }
        }
    }
}
```

To receive that on the other side, you need a method like this:

```
func session(_ session: MCSession, didReceive data: Data,
fromPeer peerID: MCPeerID) {
    if let image = UIImage(data: data) {
        DispatchQueue.main.async { [unowned self] in
            // do something with the image
        }
    }
}
```

Note that I've explicitly pushed the work to the main thread so that you're safe to do UI work.

All that remains now is to either host a session or join a session. Add these two methods to your code, then call whichever one you need:

```
func startHosting(action: UIAlertAction!) {
    mcAdvertiserAssistant = MCAdvertiserAssistant(serviceType:
"hws-kb", discoveryInfo: nil, session: mcSession)
    mcAdvertiserAssistant.start()
}

func joinSession(action: UIAlertAction!) {
    let mcBrowser = MCBrowserViewController(serviceType: "hws-
kb", session: mcSession)
    mcBrowser.delegate = self
    present(mcBrowser, animated: true)
}
```

Note: to test this code you'll need either two iOS devices or one device and the simulator.

How to download files with URLSession and downloadTask()

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

URLSession is designed to make network transfers as easy as possible, and a great example of that is its **downloadTask()** method. This fetches the contents of a URL you specify, saves it to a local file, then calls a completion handler so you can manipulate the file – all in one.

To demonstrate this, here's some code to download the source code to the apple.com homepage:

```
let url = URL(string: "https://www.apple.com")!

let task = URLSession.shared.downloadTask(with: url)
{ localURL, urlResponse, error in
```

```

if let localURL = localURL {
    if let string = try? String(contentsOf: localURL) {
        print(string)
    }
}
}

task.resume()

```

There are a few important things to note in there:

1. Your completion handler gets called with a local URL, which is where the data was saved locally. This is optional, so you need to unwrap it carefully.
2. If something went wrong – e.g. if the network was down – then you'll get an error passed to you explaining what happened.
3. When you have created your download task you should call **resume()** on it to make it happen.
4. You don't need to worry about storing the download task somewhere while it happens – it's being tracked by the shared **URLSession** on your behalf.

Games

How to add a fragment shader to an **SKSpriteNode** using **SKShader**

Availability: iOS 8 or later.

Fragment shaders let you adjust individual pixels inside sprites to create effects such as embossing, pixellation, and even water, and you can attach fragment shader to any **SKSpriteNode** just by setting its **shader** property.

First, you need a fragment shader. This should be a file in your bundle with the extension “fsh”, and should be written in GLSL – the OpenGL shading language. I'm not going to teach GLSL here, but I do want to give you an example. Here's a commented example that causes all

colors in a sprite to be inverted:

```
void main() {
    // find the current pixel color
    vec4 current_color = texture2D(u_texture, v_tex_coord);

    // if it's not transparent
    if (current_color.a > 0.0) {
        // subtract its current RGB values from 1 and use its
        current alpha; multiply by the node alpha so we can fade in or
        out

        gl_FragColor = vec4(1.0 - current_color.rgb,
        current_color.a) * current_color.a * v_color_mix.a;
    } else {
        // use the current (transparent) color
        gl_FragColor = current_color;
    }
}
```

Save that as “inverted.fsh” and put it in your bundle. When you want to assign that to a sprite node, just set its **shader** property like this:

```
yourSprite.shader = SKShader(filename: "inverted")
```

Shaders are compiled on the device at runtime, which means they always take advantage of all GPU features on the user’s device. However, it also means there will be a small performance hit while your shader is being compiled, so it’s a good idea to compile them ahead of time and keep a cache.

If you’d like to explore shaders more, I made a whole library of them called ShaderKit. All examples are extensively commented and free to use: <https://github.com/twostraws/ShaderKit>.

How to add physics to an SKSpriteNode

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

SpriteKit comes with a modified version of the Box2D physics framework, and it's wrapped up a lot of complicated physics mathematics into just one or two lines of code. For example, we can create a square, red sprite and give it rectangular physics like this:

```
let box = SKSpriteNode(color: UIColor.red, size: CGSize(width: 64, height: 64))
box.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(rectangleOf: CGSize(width: 64, height: 64))
```

That rectangle will wrap perfectly around the box's color, so it will bounce and rotate as it collides with other objects in your scene.

If you want to create circular physics to simulate balls, this is done using the **circleOfRadius** constructor:

```
let ball = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "ballRed")
ball.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius: ball.size.width / 2.0)
```

How to add pixel-perfect physics to an SKSpriteNode

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Pixel-perfect physics is just one line of code in SpriteKit. Don't believe me? Here you go:

```
player = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "player")
player.position = CGPoint(x: 100, y: 384)
player.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(texture: player.texture!, size: player.size)
```

That last line is the one that does the magic: SpriteKit will use the alpha values of your sprite (i.e., the transparent pixels) to figure out which parts should be part of a collision.

As you might imagine, pixel-perfect collision detection is significantly slower than using rectangles or circles, so you should use it carefully.

How to advance time in an **SKEmitterNode** using **advanceSimulationTime()**

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

When you create a particle system in SpriteKit, the particles start at their creation point and move outwards from there. That's fine for things like explosions and fire, but if you're using the particles to simulate something that has no real start or end – space dust, for example – then having your particles start from a particular location looks wrong.

To fix this, you should use the **advanceSimulationTime()** method of **SKEmitterNode**: give it a number of seconds, and it effectively fast forwards the particle system by that amount. For a space dust particle system, this would fill the screen with particles, so the game screen doesn't start empty.

Here's some code:

```
if let starfield = SKEmitterNode(fileNamed: "Starfield") {  
    starfield.position = CGPoint(x: 1024, y: 384)  
    starfield.advanceSimulationTime(10)  
    addChild(starfield)  
}
```

How to change **SKScene** with a transition: **presentScene()**

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

You can change between SpriteKit scenes by calling the `presentScene()` method on your `SKView`. This can be called either just with a new scene, or with a new scene and a transition animation to use, depending on the effect you want. Here's an example with a transition:

```
let scene = NewGameScene(fileNamed: "NewGameScene")!
let transition = SKTransition.moveIn(with: .right, duration: 1)
self.view?.presentScene(scene, transition: transition)
```

There are several beautiful transition types you can try, with the `SKTransition.doorway(withDuration: 1)` transition looking particularly neat.

How to change a sprite's texture using `SKTexture`

Availability: iOS 7.1 or later.

Although you can create an `SKSpriteNode` from a color and size, most folks create them from textures – image data stored in an asset catalog or texture atlas. SpriteKit's textures are handled using their own class called `SKTexture`, and you can load them individually then use them to change the texture used to draw a sprite.

At its most basic, you can change a sprite's texture like this:

```
let texture1 = SKTexture(imageNamed: "newTexture")
someSprite.texture = texture1
```

However, that only works if your sprite and the texture are the same size – if they don't, the texture will get squashed to fit the available space.

If the sprite and texture are *different* sizes then a better thing to do is use the `setTexture()` action, passing in true for its `resize` parameter like this:

```
let texture2 = SKTexture(imageNamed: "newTexture")
let action = SKAction.setTexture(texture2, resize: true)
someSprite.run(action)
```

That will switch the texture over, then grow the sprite to fit the new texture size.

How to color an **SKSpriteNode** using **colorBlendFactor**

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

One powerful and under-used feature of SpriteKit is its ability to recolor **SKSpriteNodes** dynamically. This has almost zero performance impact, which makes it perfect for having multiple-colored enemies or players. It can also be animated, meaning that you could for example make your player flash white briefly when they've been hit by an enemy.

To tint a sprite cyan, use this code:

```
firework.color = UIColor.cyan  
firework.colorBlendFactor = 1
```

If you want to animate the sprite coloring, you'd use this:

```
let action = SKAction.colorize(with: UIColor.red,  
colorBlendFactor: 1, duration: 1)
```

How to create 3D audio sound using **SKAudioNode**

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

3D audio is a feature where a sound is dynamically altered so that listeners think it comes from a particular location. Obviously they are looking at a flat 2D screen ahead of them, but using some clever mathematics iOS can make sounds "feel" like they are behind you, or at a more basic level adjust the panning so that sounds come from the left or right of the user's audio device.

As of iOS 9.0, you get these features for free: all you need to do is create an **SKAudioNode** for your sound and set its **isPositional** property to be **true**. That's it – iOS will automatically use the position of the node to adjust the way its audio sounds, and it even adjusts the audio as you move it around.

To give you a working example, this creates an audio node from a file called music.m4a (you'll need to provide that), then makes the audio move left and right forever. If you listen to this using headphones (which is the only effective way for 3D sound to work on iOS devices) you'll really hear a pronounced panning effect.

```
override func didMove(to view: SKView) {
    let music = SKAudioNode(fileNamed: "music.m4a")
    addChild(music)

    music.isPositional = true
    music.position = CGPoint(x: -1024, y: 0)

    let moveForward = SKAction.moveTo(x: 1024, duration: 2)
    let moveBack = SKAction.moveTo(x: -1024, duration: 2)
    let sequence = SKAction.sequence([moveForward, moveBack])
    let repeatForever = SKAction.repeatForever(sequence)

    music.run(repeatForever)
}
```

How to create a SpriteKit texture atlas in Xcode

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

A SpriteKit texture atlas is actually just a folder with the extension .atlas, but it's more efficient than loading textures individually because multiple images are stored in a single file and thus can be loaded faster. Even better, you don't need to worry about how they are placed or even orientation – you just use them as normal, and SpriteKit does the rest.

In Finder, go into your project directory (where your .swift files are), then create a new folder called assets.atlas. Now go to where you have your SpriteKit assets stored and drag them from there into your assets.atlas directory. Finally, drag your assets.atlas directory into your Xcode project so that it gets added to the build.

That's it – enjoy your efficiency improvements!

How to create shapes using SKShapeNode

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

SpriteKit's **SKShapeNode** class is a fast and convenient way to draw arbitrary shapes in your games, including circles, lines, rounded rectangles and more. You can assign a fill color, a stroke color and width, plus other drawing options such as whether it should glow – yes, really.

The example code below draws a rounded rectangle smack in the middle of the game scene, giving it a red fill color and a 10-point blue border:

```
let shape = SKShapeNode()
shape.path = UIBezierPath(roundedRect: CGRect(x: -128, y: -128,
width: 256, height: 256), cornerRadius: 64).cgPath
shape.position = CGPoint(x: frame.midX, y: frame.midY)
shape.fillColor = UIColor.red
shape.strokeColor = UIColor.blue
shape.lineWidth = 10
addChild(shape)
```

How to crop a sprite using SKCropNode

Availability: iOS 7.1 or later.

SpriteKit has a dedicated node type for handling cropping, and you can add things to it,

position it where you want, then add it to your scene just like any other node.

However, its role is to crop the nodes it contains: when you assign a node to its **maskNode** property, SpriteKit looks at the colors of the mask and uses that to crop all the child nodes of the crop node. So, you might create an **SKCropNode** with five child nodes, then give it a circular mask node so that parts of the children are invisible. Everything that has a color in the mask won't be cropped, and everything that is invisible will be.

Let's look at some code. First you create and position your crop node:

```
let cropNode = SKCropNode()
cropNode.position = CGPoint(x: 50, y: 50)
```

Next you set its **maskNode** property to any SpriteKit node. Using a sprite node is easy enough:

```
cropNode.maskNode = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "cropMask")
```

Third you create a child node, position it inside the crop node, then add it to the crop node:

```
childNode = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "child")
childNode.position = CGPoint(x: 0, y: -90)
childNode.name = "character"
cropNode.addChild(childNode)
```

Finally add the crop node to your main scene:

```
addChild(cropNode)
```

How to debug physics in a SpriteKit scene using **showsPhysics**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

SpriteKit's **SKView** class has a few built-in debugging options, of which two are enabled by default: **showsFPS** to show the current frames per second, and **showsNodeCount** to show how

many nodes are currently in your scene.

If you're having trouble understanding the way your physics objects are behaving, you should enable the **showsPhysics** option on your view, like this:

```
skView.showsPhysics = true
```

You can put that into GameViewController.swift if you're using Xcode's default SpriteKit template, alongside **showsFPS** and **showsNodeCount**.

When set to true, **showsPhysics** will automatically draw blue lines around all your physics shapes, allowing you to see them in exactly the same way as the physics engine does.

Hopefully you'll be able to see where you've made a mistake and can correct it quickly!

How to emit particles using SKEmitterNode

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

SpriteKit has built-in support for particle systems, which are a realistic and fast way to create effects such as smoke, fire and snow. Even better, Xcode has a built-in visual particle editor so that you can tweak your designs until they look exactly right.

To get started, right-click on your project in Xcode and choose New File. Select iOS > Resource > SpriteKit Particle File, then choose the Smoke template and click Next to name your effect. Once that's done, your particle will be opened immediately in the visual editor so you can adjust its design.

When it comes to using your effect, just create a new **SKEmitterNode** object using the name of your particle effect, like this:

```
if let particles = SKEmitterNode(fileNamed:  
"yourParticleFile.sks") {  
    particles.position = player.position  
    addChild(particles)
```

}

Obviously you will want to set your own position rather than using an example **player** node.

How to find a touch's location in a node using **location(in:)**

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

It's just one line of code to find where the user touched the screen when you're using SpriteKit, and that one line can even be used to calculative relative positions of a touch compared to any node in your game.

To get started, you should implement **touchesBegan()** in your SpriteKit node or scene. This will get called when the user starts touching the node, regardless of where on the node. To locate the exact position, call **location(in:)** on any **UITouch**, passing in the node you want to check, like this:

```
override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    if let touch = touches.first {
        let location = touch.location(in: self)
        print(location)
    }
}
```

How to generate a random number with **GKRandomSource**

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

GameplayKit is a powerful new framework introduced in iOS 9.0, and one of the (many!) things it does is provide a number of ways to generate random numbers easily. To get started, import the framework into your code like this:

```
import GameplayKit
```

You can immediately start generating random numbers just by using this code:

```
print(GKRandomSource.sharedRandom().nextInt())
```

That code produces a number between -2,147,483,648 and 2,147,483,647, so if you're happy with negative numbers then you're basically done. Alternatively, if you want a random number between and an upper bound (inclusive!), you should use this code instead:

```
print(GKRandomSource.sharedRandom().nextInt(upperBound: 10))
```

That will return a number between 0 and 10, including 0 and 10 themselves.

How to generate fair random numbers using GKShuffledDistribution

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

A so-called “fair” random number generator is one that generates each of its possible values in equal amounts and with an even distribution. For example, if you were generating numbers between 1 and 4, you might get 4, 2, 1, 3, but you would never get 4 4 1 4.

GameplayKit has support for fair random number generation using **GKShuffledDistribution**. First, add an import for the GameplayKit framework:

```
import GameplayKit
```

Second, create an instance of **GKShuffledDistribution**, telling it the lowest and highest values it can generate:

```
let distribution = GKShuffledDistribution(lowestValue: 1,  
highestValue: 8)
```

Finally, call **nextInt()** on it as needed to generate numbers. You should get all numbers between 1 and 8 at least once before you see any repeated.

How to generate shaped random numbers using **GK Gaussian Distribution**

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

A shaped random number generator is one that generates each of its possible values but does so in a way that numbers near the middle are more frequent. For example, you might use it to generate heights of characters, because most people are around average height while some outliers are much shorter or much taller. For example, if you were generating numbers between 1 and 10, 5 and 6 would be generated significantly more than 1 or 10.

GameplayKit has support for shaped random number generation using **GK Gaussian Distribution**. First, add an import for the GameplayKit framework:

```
import GameplayKit
```

Second, create an instance of **GK Gaussian Distribution**, telling it the lowest and highest values it can generate:

```
let distribution = GK Gaussian Distribution(lowestValue: 1,  
highestValue: 8)
```

Finally, call **nextInt()** on it as needed to generate numbers. You should find that the numbers returned are most commonly 4s and 5s, with quite a few 3s and 6s, not many 2s or 7s, and hardly any 1s or 8s.

How to make an **SKSpriteNode** render faster using **blendMode**

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

All SpriteKit nodes have a **blendMode** property that describes how they should be drawn to the screen. The default value is **.alpha**, which means the sprite should be drawn so that its alpha transparency is respected – any parts that are translucent get blended with the existing background color at that point, and any fully transparent parts are not drawn at all.

Alpha drawing is obviously a sensible default, because it allows us to render sprites with irregular shapes and holes. However, if you know for a fact that your sprite is completely rectangular and has no holes then using **.alpha** is wasteful – SpriteKit is forced to do alpha blending even though it isn't required. This is particularly common with background images: if they are designed to fill the full screen, there's no need to make them drawing using **.alpha**.

To fix this – and make such drawing significantly faster – change the blend mode of opaque sprites to be **.replace**, which ignores any alpha in the texture:

```
background.blendMode = .replace
```

How to make a sprite follow a path

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

SpriteKit makes it easy for a node to follow a path we specify, and you can use it to make rockets take off, enemies to zig zag around a maze, and more.

First, create a **UIBezierPath** specifying the shape of your path:

```
let path = UIBezierPath()
path.move(to: CGPoint(x: 0, y: 0))
path.addLine(to: CGPoint(x: 0, y: 1000))
```

That will move directly up.

Next, turn that into an **SKAction** using **SKAction.follow()**. You can specify whether this path is an *offset* or contains absolute coordinates – we used X:0 Y:0 above, so if we request offset movement that will be equivalent to the node's starting position.

The **follow()** method also accepts parameters for speed (how fast the movement should happen), and whether the node should orient itself to the path. The orientation option is particularly neat: your node will turn itself so that it's always facing towards the path.

Try this code to make a node follow a path with path orientation enabled:

```
let move = SKAction.follow(path.cgPath, asOffset: true,  
orientToPath: true, speed: 200)  
node.run(move)
```

How to make one sprite draw in front of another using zPosition

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

All nodes in SpriteKit have a **zPosition** property that dictates its depth on the screen. If you're using Xcode's default SpriteKit template then the view you're rendering into has its **ignoresSiblingOrder** property set to true, which means **zPosition** is the only factor that decides whether one node is drawn above or below another.

All Z positions default to 0, but if you use negative values (-1, -2, etc) it forces those nodes to be drawn behind nodes that have higher Z positions (1, 2, etc). These numbers don't have any absolute meaning – all that matters is that one number is higher or lower than another. That is, setting a Z position to 10,000 doesn't make a sprite any larger or more prominent than setting it to 1,000.

Here's some example code:

```
// place the background behind other things  
background.zPosition = -1  
  
// place the player in front  
player.zPosition = 1
```

```
// make the score go above everything
score.zPosition = 10
```

How to roll a dice using GameplayKit and GKRandomDistribution

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

GameplayKit's random number generator includes help constructors that produces numbers in a specific range, simulating a six-sided die and a 20-sided die. To get started you should import the GameplayKit framework like this:

```
import GameplayKit
```

You can then create a virtual six-sided die and "roll" it like this:

```
let d6 = GKRandomDistribution.d6()
d6.nextInt()
```

For a 20-sided die, do this:

```
let d20 = GKRandomDistribution.d20()
d20.nextInt()
```

If you want to set your own range for the virtual die, there's a special constructor just for you:

```
let massiveDie = GKRandomDistribution(lowestValue: 1,
highestValue: 556)
massiveDie.nextInt()
```

How to run SKActions in a group

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

SpriteKit action groups let you run multiple SpriteKit actions simultaneously. The grouped actions become a new action that can go into a sequence, and SpriteKit automatically ensures all actions in a group finish before the sequence continues.

The code below makes a spaceship shrink down to 10% of its original size while fading out, with both actions happening at the same time:

```
let sprite = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "Spaceship")

let scale = SKAction.scale(to: 0.1, duration: 0.5)
let fade = SKAction.fadeOut(withDuration: 0.5)
let group = SKAction.group([scale, fade])

sprite.run(group)
```

How to run SKActions in a sequence

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

One of the great features of SpriteKit's actions is that they can be chained together using action sequences. SpriteKit automatically ensures each action finishes before the next one begins – all you need to do is create the actions then put them into an array.

The example below makes a spaceship shrink down to 10% of its original size before fading out:

```
let sprite = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "Spaceship")

let scale = SKAction.scale(to: 0.1, duration: 0.5)
let fade = SKAction.fadeOut(withDuration: 0.5)
let sequence = SKAction.sequence([scale, fade])

sprite.run(sequence)
```

How to simulate gravity in a SpriteKit scene

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Once you've given all your SpriteKit nodes physics bodies, you might want to add some simulated gravity so they fall to the ground over time. This technique is also useful if you want to simulate wind (think of it like horizontal gravity), or even for making the user tilt their device to make nodes fall in different directions.

Gravity for your scene is configured using the **physicsWorld.gravity** property. By default it's set to a value equal to Earth's gravity of 9.8 meters per second, but you can change that however you want. For example, you might want to simulate someone walking on the moon where gravity is 1.62 meters per second:

```
physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx: 0, dy: -1.62)
```

Alternatively you can disable gravity entirely by using a zero vector:

```
physicsWorld.gravity = .zero
```

These changes don't need to be permanent – you could disable gravity when the player picks up an anti-grav belt, then re-enable it after 30 seconds.

How to stop an SKPhysicsBody responding to physics using its dynamic property

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Enabling physics in SpriteKit is just one line of code, but sometimes you want your physics to be a little more nuanced. For example, your player might have circle physics and should respond to gravity, whereas walls might have rectangle physics and not respond to gravity –

they are there to be bounced off, but nothing more.

This problem is solved in SpriteKit by using the **isDynamic** property. It's **true** by default, which means that your objects respond to the world's environment as you would expect, but if you set it to be **false** then you get an object that has active physics but doesn't move as a result of those physics.

Here's an example:

```
let wall = SKSpriteNode(imageNamed: "wall")
wall.position = CGPoint(x: 512, y: 0)
wall.physicsBody = SKPhysicsBody(circleOfRadius:
wall.size.width / 2.0)
wall.physicsBody?.isDynamic = false
addChild(wall)
```

How to warp a sprite using SKWarpGeometryGrid

Availability: iOS 7.1 or later.

SpriteKit allows you to warp sprites by dividing them up into small squares then stretching those squares into different positions. The result is that you can warp a sprite in various ways – you can effectively pull different parts of it however you want.

There's a cost to doing this: a sprite is effectively one quad by default, which is a fancy way of saying it's a rectangle. Behind the scenes that becomes two triangles, pieced together to look like a single rectangle. If we split that single sprite into two rows and two columns, you end up with four times as many triangles; if you split it into 10 rows and 10 columns, you end up with a huge number of triangles just to represent one tiny sprite – your game will slow down massively.

Helpfully, SpriteKit employs a technique called automatic quad subdivision: even though you create two rows and two columns, it will automatically split them further if it needs to, allowing to warp transformation to look silky smooth.

Warping a sprite is done in two steps: first you specify source points that describe where various points of your sprite are in their natural, unwarped state, and second you specify destination points that move those source points somewhere else. From that SpriteKit calculates the warp, bending the texture neatly to fit.

We're going to use a three by three grid here, so we need nine sets of points inside an array. These must all be specified using the `vector_float2` type, and be done in a precise order.

Try adding these source points as a property for your class:

```
let src = [
    // bottom row: left, center, right
    vector_float2(0.0, 0.0),
    vector_float2(0.5, 0.0),
    vector_float2(1.0, 0.0),

    // middle row: left, center, right
    vector_float2(0.0, 0.5),
    vector_float2(0.5, 0.5),
    vector_float2(1.0, 0.5),

    // top row: left, center, right
    vector_float2(0.0, 1.0),
    vector_float2(0.5, 1.0),
    vector_float2(1.0, 1.0)
]
```

I added comments in there so you can hopefully see how all nine points are positioned. For example, the middle point is X: 0.5 Y: 0.5, meaning that it's in the center of both axes. Having your source points as a property is a good idea if you plan to use them a lot – it's easiest to take a copy of those points then make small changes than to keep setting them up from scratch.

We're also going to create a warp geometry that uses the `src` positions twice: the same for before and after. This means it will look identical to a sprite without a warp geometry attached,

but it also means that when we apply a new geometry with the same number of rows and columns SpriteKit will be able to animate the change.

Here's the code for that:

```
let warp = SKWarpGeometryGrid(columns: 2, rows: 2,  
sourcePositions: src, destinationPositions: src)  
yourSprite.warpGeometry = warp
```

So far we've defined the source points on our warp geometry and applied it to a sprite, but we haven't actually done the important part: creating a warp animation. To make that happen we're going to take a copy of the source points, change any points we want, then wrap that in a new **SKWarpGeometryGrid** and use it with an animation.

You can specify multiple warp animations to have iOS cycle through them, and as a result the animation *timing* is actually an array of times relative to the start of the animation. To demonstrate this process, we're going to make a small change to our source points, take a copy of the original warp geometry we set earlier, then animate to the new points and back to the old points over one second.

Add this code to your scene:

```
// take a copy of our source points  
var dst = src  
  
// pull the two bottom edges of the sprite downwards  
dst[0] = vector_float2(0, -0.5)  
dst[2] = vector_float2(1, -0.5)  
  
// create a new warp geometry by mapping from src to dst  
let newWarp = SKWarpGeometryGrid(columns: 2, rows: 2,  
sourcePositions: src, destinationPositions: dst)  
  
// pull out the existing warp geometry so we have something to  
animate back to
```

```
let oldWarp = spaceship.warpGeometry!

// try to create an SKAction with these two warps; each will
animate over 0.5 seconds
if let action = SKAction.animate(withWarps: [newWarp, oldWarp],
times: [0.5, 1]) {
    // run it on the sprite
    yourSprite.run(action)
}
```

How to write text using SKLabelNode

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The **SKLabelNode** class is a fast and efficient way to draw text in SpriteKit games. To use it, first create a property in your game scene:

```
var scoreLabel: SKLabelNode!
```

Now create the label node by telling it want font use, its alignment, and also an initial text value if you want one. This code creates a label node using the Chalkduster font, places it in the top-right corner of the screen, and gives it the initial text "Score: 0":

```
scoreLabel = SKLabelNode(fontNamed: "Chalkduster")
scoreLabel.text = "Score: 0"
scoreLabel.horizontalAlignmentMode = .right
scoreLabel.position = CGPoint(x: 980, y: 700)
addChild(scoreLabel)
```

With that score label in place, you can now create a **score** integer property to store the actual number of a player's score, then use a property observer to modify the label whenever the score changes:

```
var score: Int = 0 {
    didSet {
        scoreLabel.text = "Score: \(score)"
    }
}
```

WKWebView

How to control the sites a WKWebView can visit using WKNavigationDelegate

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

By default a **WKWebView** can navigate to any links the user selects, but it's common to want to restrict that. It only takes a few simple steps:

1. Make your view controller conform to **WKNavigationDelegate**.
2. Assign your view controller to be your web view's **navigationDelegate**.
3. Implement the **decidePolicyFor** method to decide whether each URL should be allowed or denied.

Let's try it out now. First, make your view controller conform to **WKNavigationDelegate**.

Second, set your view controller to be the **navigationDelegate** property of your web view:

```
yourWebView.navigationDelegate = self
```

Finally, implement the **decidePolicyFor** method. This is the only part that takes any work: you need to pull out the host of the URL that was requested, run any checks you want to make sure it's OK, then call the **decisionHandler()** closure with either **.allow** to allow the URL or **.cancel** to deny access.

Here's an example to get you started:

```

func webView(_ webView: WKWebView, decidePolicyFor
navigationAction: WKNavigationAction, decisionHandler:
@escaping (WKNavigationActionPolicy) -> Void) {
    if let host = navigationAction.request.url?.host {
        if host.contains("hackingwithswift.com") {
            decisionHandler(.allow)
            return
        }
    }

    decisionHandler(.cancel)
}

```

How to control the user interface of a WKWebView using WKUIDelegate

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

By default **WKWebView** works sort of like Safari, albeit in a single view rather than having tabs. If you want something more advanced – being able to monitor opening and closing windows, override behavior for JavaScript user interface, and so on – then the **WKUIDelegate** protocol is for you.

First, make your view controller conform to it by adding **WKUIDelegate** to its list of protocols. Second, assign your view controller to the **uiDelegate** property of your web view:

```
yourWebView.uiDelegate = self
```

Finally, implement whichever of the optional methods of **WKUIDelegate** takes your interest. For example, you can make **WKWebView** show a custom alert controller when any web page uses the **alert()** JavaScript function:

```
func webView(_ webView: WKWebView,
```

```

runJavaScriptAlertPanelWithMessage message: String,
initiatedByFrame frame: WKFrameInfo, completionHandler:
@escaping () -> Void) {
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Hey, listen!", message:
message, preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default,
handler: nil))
    present(ac, animated: true)
    completionHandler()
}

```

There's also **runJavaScriptConfirmPanelWithMessage** for showing confirm and deny UI, **runJavaScriptTextInputPanelWithPrompt** for requesting user text input, and so on.

Note: You *must* call the completion handler. JavaScript's alerts are blocking, which means JavaScript execution will not continue until the alert finishes. As a result, WebKit will complain if you don't let it know when you're done.

How to enable back and forward swiping gestures in WKWebView

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

One of the many advantages of **WKWebView** over **UIWebView** is its ability to draw on some of the native user interface of Safari. It's a long way from the **SFSafariViewController** that was introduced in iOS 9.0, but you can enable the built-in gestures that let users go back and forward by swiping left and right.

Here's the code:

```
webView.allowsBackForwardNavigationGestures = true
```

How to load HTTP content in WKWebView and UIWebView

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

App Transport Security (ATS) normally doesn't allow our apps to connect to HTTP servers, but there's a special exception you can add to allow **UIWebView** and **WKWebView** to load insecure content.

Like all all ATS settings, this is configured inside your application's Info.plist file, and this is one of the very few times when editing your plist as source code is faster than trying to use the GUI editor in Xcode. So, right-click on your Info.plist and choose Open As > Source Code.

Your plist should end like this:

```
</dict>
</plist>
```

Just before that, I'd like you to paste this:

```
<key>NSAppTransportSecurity</key>
<dict>
    <key>NSAllowsArbitraryLoadsInWebContent</key>
    <true/>
</dict>
```

That tells ATS to allow Apple's web views to access any content, secure or otherwise.

How to monitor WKWebView page load progress using key-value observing

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

iOS often uses a delegate system to report important changes, such as when a table view cell has been tapped or when a web page has finished loading. But the delegate system only goes so far, and if you want fine-grained detailed information sometimes you need to turn to KVO,

or "key-value observing."

In the case of seeing how much of a page has loaded in **WKWebView**, KVO is exactly what you need: each web view has a property called **estimatedProgress**, and you can be asked to be notified when that value has changed.

First, create a progress view that will be used to show the loading progress:

```
progressView = UIProgressView(progressViewStyle: .default)
progressView.sizeToFit()
```

You can place that anywhere you like. Now add the current view controller as an observer of the **estimatedProgress** property of your **WKWebView**, like this:

```
webView.addObserver(self, forKeyPath:
#keyPath(WKWebView.estimatedProgress), options: .new, context:
nil)
```

The **.new** in that line of code means "when the value changes, tell me the new value."

Finally, implement the **observeValue(forKeyPath:of:change:context:)** method in your view controller, updating the progress view with the estimated progress from the web view, like this:

```
override func observeValue(forKeyPath keyPath: String?, of
object: Any?, change: [NSKeyValueChangeKey : Any]?, context:
UnsafeMutableRawPointer?) {
    if keyPath == "estimatedProgress" {
        progressView.progress = Float(webView.estimatedProgress)
    }
}
```

How to run JavaScript on a WKWebView with evaluateJavaScript()

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Using `evaluateJavaScript()` you can run any JavaScript in a **WKWebView** and read the result in Swift. This can be any JavaScript you want, which effectively means you can dig right into a page and pull out any kind of information you want.

Here's an example to get you started:

```
webView.evaluateJavaScript("document.getElementById('someElement').innerText") { (result, error) in
    if error != nil {
        print(result)
    }
}
```

What's the difference between **UIWebView** and **WKWebView**?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **UIWebView** class has been around since iOS 2.0 as a way to show HTML content inside your app, but iOS 8.0 introduced **WKWebView** as an alternative - what's the difference?

Well, there are several differences, but two are particularly important. First, **UIWebView** is part of UIKit, and thus is available to your apps as standard. You don't need to import anything – it's just there. This also means it's available inside Interface Builder, so you can drag and drop web view into your designs.

Second, **WKWebView** is run in a separate process to your app so that it can draw on native Safari JavaScript optimizations. This means **WKWebView** loads web pages faster and more efficiently than **UIWebView**, and also doesn't have as much memory overhead for you.

In iOS 8.0 **WKWebView** was unable to load local files, but this got fixed in iOS 9.0. The main reason to use **UIWebView** nowadays is for access to older features such as "Scale pages to fit" - this is not available in **WKWebView**.

Core Graphics

How to calculate the Manhattan distance between two CGPoints

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Manhattan distance is the distance between two integer points when you are unable to move diagonally. It's named "Manhattan distance" because of the grid-like layout of New York: whether you go four streets up then five streets across, or five streets across then four streets up, or you zig zag to and fro, the actual end distance is identical because you're just moving across a grid.

If you want to calculate Manhattan distance in your own code, just drop in this function:

```
func CGPointManhattanDistance(from: CGPoint, to: CGPoint) ->
    CGFloat {
    return (abs(from.x - to.x) + abs(from.y - to.y))
}
```

How to calculate the distance between two CGPoints

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You can calculate the distance between two **CGPoints** by using Pythagoras's theorem, but be warned: calculating square roots is not fast, so if possible you want to avoid it. More on that in a moment, but first here's the code you need:

```
func CGPointDistanceSquared(from: CGPoint, to: CGPoint) ->
    CGFloat {
    return (from.x - to.x) * (from.x - to.x) + (from.y - to.y) *
        (from.y - to.y)
}
```

```
func CGPointDistance(from: CGPoint, to: CGPoint) -> CGFloat {
    return sqrt(CGPointDistanceSquared(from: from, to: to))
}
```

Note that there are two functions: one for returning the distance between two points, and one for returning the distance squared between two points. The latter one doesn't use a square root, which makes it substantially faster. This means if you want to check "did the user tap within a 10-point radius of this position?" it's faster to square that 10 (to make 100) then use **CGPointDistanceSquared()** instead.

How to compare two CGRects with equalTo()

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You could compare two **CGRect** values by evaluating their X, Y, width and height values, but there's a much faster way: **equalTo()**. This takes two rects as its only two parameters and returns true if they are the same, or false otherwise.

Here's an example:

```
let rect1 = CGRect(x: 64, y: 64, width: 128, height: 128)
let rect2 = CGRect(x: 256, y: 256, width: 128, height: 128)

if rect1.equalTo(rect2) {
    // rects equal!
} else {
    // rects not equal
}
```

How to draw a circle using Core Graphics: addEllipse(in:)

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

Core Graphics is able to draw circles and ellipses with just a few lines of code, although there is some set up to do first. The example code below creates a 512x512 circle with a red fill and a black border:

```
let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width: 512, height: 512))
let img = renderer.image { ctx in
    ctx.cgContext.setFillColor(UIColor.red.cgColor)
    ctx.cgContext.setStrokeColor(UIColor.green.cgColor)
    ctx.cgContext.setLineWidth(10)

    let rectangle = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 512, height: 512)
    ctx.cgContext.addEllipse(in: rectangle)
    ctx.cgContext.drawPath(using: .fillStroke)
}
```

Please note: although a 10-point border is specified, Core Graphics draws borders half-way inside and half-way outside the path you create, so if you want to see the whole border (rather than have it cropped) you either need to draw a smaller shape or create a bigger context.

How to draw a square using Core Graphics: addRect()

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

You can draw a square (or indeed any size of rectangle) using the **addRect()** Core Graphics function. There's a little bit of set up work required, such as creating a context big enough to hold the square and setting up colors, but the code below does everything you need:

```
let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width: 512, height: 512))
let img = renderer.image { ctx in
```

```

ctx.cgContext.setFillColor(UIColor.red.cgColor)
ctx.cgContext.setStrokeColor(UIColor.green.cgColor)
ctx.cgContext.setLineWidth(10)

let rectangle = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 512, height: 512)
ctx.cgContext.addRect(rectangle)
ctx.cgContext.drawPath(using: .fillStroke)
}

```

Important note: when setting a line width using `setLineWidth()`, the center of the border is the edge of your path. This means our board will be 5 points inside the rectangle and 5 points outside, because we have a total border width of 10 points. Because the square's path is the same size as the context, this means the outside part of the border will be clipped.

How to draw a text string using Core Graphics

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

To draw text in Core Graphics is trivial because every Swift string has a built-in `draw(with:)` method that takes an array of attributes and a position and size. There is, like always, some Core Graphics set up work to do, but this next code snippet is a complete example you can reuse easily:

```

let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width: 512,
height: 512))
let img = renderer.image { ctx in
    let paragraphStyle = NSMutableParagraphStyle()
    paragraphStyle.alignment = .center

    let attrs = [NSAttributedString.Key.font: UIFont(name:
"HelveticaNeue-Thin", size: 36)!,  

    NSAttributedString.Key.paragraphStyle: paragraphStyle]

```

```

    let string = "How much wood would a woodchuck\nchuck if a
woodchuck would chuck wood?"
    string.draw(with: CGRect(x: 32, y: 32, width: 448, height:
448), options: .usesLineFragmentOrigin, attributes: attrs,
context: nil)
}

```

How to draw lines in Core Graphics: move(to:) and addLine(to:)

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

You can draw lines in Core Graphics using **move(to:)** and **addLine(to:)**. The first function moves the Core Graphics path to a **CGPoint** of your choosing, and the second function moves the path to a new point while also adding a line. Once you add in the required code to set up a context and choose a color, you can draw a triangle with this code:

```

let renderer1 = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width:
500, height: 500))
let img1 = renderer1.image { ctx in
    ctx.cgContext.setStrokeColor(UIColor.white.cgColor)
    ctx.cgContext.setLineWidth(3)

    ctx.cgContext.move(to: CGPoint(x: 50, y: 450))
    ctx.cgContext.addLine(to: CGPoint(x: 250, y: 50))
    ctx.cgContext.addLine(to: CGPoint(x: 450, y: 450))
    ctx.cgContext.addLine(to: CGPoint(x: 50, y: 450))

    let rectangle = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 512, height: 512)
    ctx.cgContext.addRect(rectangle)
    ctx.cgContext.drawPath(using: .fillStroke)
}

```

Once you've mastered drawing basic lines, you can create neat effects by rotating the context

as you draw, like this:

```
let renderer2 = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: CGSize(width: 512, height: 512))
let img2 = renderer2.image { ctx in
    ctx.cgContext.setStrokeColor(UIColor.black.cgColor)

    ctx.cgContext.translateBy(x: 256, y: 256)

    var first = true
    var length: CGFloat = 256

    for _ in 0 ..< 256 {
        ctx.cgContext.rotate(by: CGFloat.pi / 2)

        if first {
            ctx.cgContext.move(to: CGPoint(x: length, y: 50))
            first = false
        } else {
            ctx.cgContext.addLine(to: CGPoint(x: length, y: 50))
        }

        length *= 0.99
    }

    ctx.cgContext.strokePath()
}
```

How to find the rotation from a CGAffineTransform

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

A **CGAffineTransform** value combines scale, translation and rotation all at once, but if you

just want to know its rotation value is then use this code:

```
func rotation(from transform: CGAffineTransform) -> Double {  
    return atan2(Double(transform.b), Double(transform.a))  
}
```

How to find the scale from a CGAffineTransform

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you have a **CGAffineTransform** and want to know what its scale component is – regardless of whether it has been rotated or translated – use this code:

```
func scale(from transform: CGAffineTransform) -> Double {  
    return sqrt(Double(transform.a * transform.a + transform.c *  
        transform.c))  
}
```

How to find the translation from a CGAffineTransform

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You can pull out the translation from a **CGAffineTransform** by using the function below.

Feed it a transform and it will return you a **CGPoint**:

```
func translation(from transform: CGAffineTransform) -> CGPoint {  
    return CGPoint(x: transform.tx, y: transform.ty)  
}
```

How to render a PDF to an image

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

iOS has built-in APIs for drawing PDFs, which means it's relatively straight forward to render a PDF to an image. I say "relatively" because there's still some boilerplate you need to worry about: figuring out the document size, filling the background in a solid color to avoid transparency, and flipping the rendering so that the PDF draws the right way up.

To make things easy for you, here's a pre-made method you can use that takes a URL to a PDF and returns either a rendered image or nil if it failed. To call it you should pull out the URL to a resource in your bundle or another local PDF file.

```
func drawPDFfromURL(url: URL) -> UIImage? {
    guard let document = CGPDFDocument(url as CFURL) else
    { return nil }
    guard let page = document.page(at: 1) else { return nil }

    let pageRect = page.getBoxRect(.mediaBox)
    let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: pageRect.size)
    let img = renderer.image { ctx in
        UIColor.white.set()
        ctx.fill(pageRect)

        ctx.cgContext.translateBy(x: 0.0, y:
pageRect.size.height)
        ctx.cgContext.scaleBy(x: 1.0, y: -1.0)

        ctx.cgContext.drawPDFPage(page)
    }

    return img
}
```

How to use Core Graphics blend modes to draw a UIImage differently

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you're rendering images using Core Graphics you should definitely try out some of the alternate blend modes that are available. If you've ever used Photoshop's blend modes these will be familiar: screen, luminosity, multiply and so on – these are all available right in Core Graphics.

To give you an idea what's possible, here's some code that takes two UIImageViews and draws them into one single image. The first image is drawn using normal rendering, and the second using **.luminosity**.

```
if let img = UIImage(named: "example"), let img2 =
    UIImage(named: "example2") {
    let rect = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: img.size.width, height:
        img.size.height)
    let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: img.size)

    let result = renderer.image { ctx in
        // fill the background with white so that translucent
        colors get lighter
        UIColor.white.set()
        ctx.fill(rect)

        img.draw(in: rect, blendMode: .normal, alpha: 1)
        img2.draw(in: rect, blendMode: .luminosity, alpha: 1)
    }
}
```

How that looks depends on the source images you used – try drawing them the other way around to see what difference it makes, or try using **.multiply** rather than **.luminosity**.

If you're looking for a more advanced example, this function accepts an image and returns the same image with a rainbow effect to it. This is done by drawing six colored strips onto an image, then overlaying the original image using the blend mode `.luminosity` along with a slight alpha.

```
func addRainbow(to img: UIImage) -> UIImage {
    // create a CGRect representing the full size of our input
    // image
    let rect = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: img.size.width, height:
        img.size.height)

    // figure out the height of one section (there are six)
    let sectionHeight = img.size.height / 6

    // set up the colors – these are based on my trial and error
    let red = UIColor(red: 1, green: 0.5, blue: 0.5, alpha: 0.8)
    let orange = UIColor(red: 1, green: 0.7, blue: 0.35, alpha:
        0.8)
    let yellow = UIColor(red: 1, green: 0.85, blue: 0.1, alpha:
        0.65)
    let green = UIColor(red: 0, green: 0.7, blue: 0.2, alpha:
        0.5)
    let blue = UIColor(red: 0, green: 0.35, blue: 0.7, alpha:
        0.5)
    let purple = UIColor(red: 0.3, green: 0, blue: 0.5, alpha:
        0.6)
    let colors = [red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple]

    let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(size: img.size)
    let result = renderer.image { ctx in
        UIColor.white.set()
        ctx.fill(rect)

        // loop through all six colors
    }

    return result
}
```

```

for i in 0 ..< 6 {
    let color = colors[i]

        // figure out the rect for this section
        let rect = CGRect(x: 0, y: CGFloat(i) * sectionHeight,
width: rect.width, height: sectionHeight)

        // draw it onto the context at the right place
        color.set()
        ctx.fill(rect)
}

// now draw our input image over using Luminosity mode,
with a little bit of alpha to make it fainter
img.draw(in: rect, blendMode: .luminosity, alpha: 0.6)

}

return result
}

```

UIKit

Changing which UITabBarController tabs can be edited

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you have a More tab in your tab bar controller, this will automatically get an Edit button so that users can drag tabs around to customize the user interface. This doesn't actually save the tab ordering for you, which means the tabs will revert on next run unless you persist the user's choices yourself, but it does do everything else for you.

By default, users can move any and all tabs, but if you want to force some tabs to be in place you should set the **customizableViewControllers** property of your tab bar controller. This

should be an array of the view controllers you want to give your users access to edit, or an empty array if you want the Edit button to go away entirely.

If your tab bar controller is your window's root view controller (for example, if you started with the Xcode tab bar template project), you can allow users to customize the first three view controllers like this:

```
func application(_ application: UIApplication,  
didFinishLaunchingWithOptions launchOptions:  
[UIApplication.LaunchOptionsKey: Any]?) -> Bool {  
    if let tabBarController = window?.rootViewController as?  
UITabBarController {  
        let slice = tabBarController.viewControllers![0...2]  
        let array = Array(slice)  
  
        tabBarController.customizableViewControllers = array  
    }  
  
    return true  
}
```

Place that into your AppDelegate.swift file in place of the existing **didFinishLaunchingWithOptions** method, and you're done.

Fixing "Failed to obtain a cell from its DataSource"

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

This is a common error, but it's easily fixed. There are two main reasons why table views fail to return cells, but they give different error messages. If you get an error like this:

```
Terminating app due to uncaught exception  
'NSInternalInconsistencyException', reason: 'UITableView  
(<UITableView: 0x7f9cd8830c00; frame = (0 0; 414 736);
```

```
clipsToBounds = YES; autoresizingMask = W+H; gestureRecognizers =
<NSArray: 0x7f9cd8430900>; layer = <CALayer: 0x7f9cd8428370>;
contentOffset: {0, -64}; contentSize: {414, 0}>) failed to
obtain a cell from its dataSource
```

...it means that your **cellForRowAt** method is returning nil for some reason, and it's usually because you are failing to dequeue a reusable cell.

If you want to confirm this, just set a breakpoint after your current dequeue call. For example, if you have code like this:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Cell")!
    let object = objects[indexPath.row]
    cell.textLabel!.text = object.description
    return cell
}
```

...then you should set the breakpoint on the **let object =** line. If the problem is that **tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:)** is returning nil, you'll find **cell** is set to nil.

If you're using modern Xcode templates where you get a prototype cell made for you, you should probably be using this instead:

```
let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Cell", for: indexPath)
```

If you aren't using an Xcode template, use that line of code anyway then register your own reuse identifier like this:

```
tableView.register(UITableViewCell.self,
forCellReuseIdentifier: "Cell")
```

All being well that should resolve the problem. If not, check that the cell identifier is correct: it's "Cell" by default, but you might have changed it. Such a misspelling ought to cause a crash when **tableView.dequeueReusableCellReusableCell(withIdentifier:)** fails, but it's worth checking anyway.

Fixing "Unable to dequeue a cell with identifier"

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

This error usually means there's a problem with your cell prototypes. There are two main reasons why table views fail to return cells, but they give different error messages. If you get an error like this:

```
Terminating app due to uncaught exception
'NSInternalInconsistencyException', reason: 'unable to dequeue
a cell with identifier Cell - must register a nib or a class
for the identifier or connect a prototype cell in a storyboard'
```

...it means that your call to **dequeueReusableCellReusableCell(withIdentifier:)** is failing, which is usually caused by having no prototype cells with the identifier you requested.

First: check that you have a prototype cell registered. By default you should have one in the storyboard, but if you created your own table view then you might have moved things around. You might also have registered one in code.

Second: check that your spelling of the identified is correct. It's "Cell" by default, in the code and in the storyboard, and these two things need to match in order for everything to work.

You can verify the error by placing a breakpoint in your **cellForRowAtIndexPath** method. For example, if you have code like this:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt
indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCellReusableCell(withIdentifier:
```

```
"Cell")!  
    let object = objects[indexPath.row]  
    cell.textLabel?.text = object  
    return cell  
}
```

...then you should set the breakpoint on the `let object =` line. If the problem is that `tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:)` is failing, your breakpoint won't be hit.

If you're using modern Xcode templates where you get a prototype cell made for you, you should probably be using this instead:

```
let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:  
"Cell", for: indexPath)
```

You should then ensure a prototype cell exists in your tableview with that identifier – double check the name, and make sure you've typed it into the "Identifier" box and not "Class" or something else.

If you aren't using an Xcode template, use that line of code anyway then register your own reuse identifier like this:

```
tableView.register(UITableViewCell.self,  
forCellReuseIdentifier: "Cell")
```

How do you show a modal view controller when a UITabBarController tab is tapped?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Usually tapping a tab in a `UITabBar` shows that tab, but it's often the case that you want to override that behavior, for example to show a view modally. If you're using one of Xcode's built-in storyboard templates for creating your user interface, it's not immediately obvious how

to do this, but fortunately it's not so hard using the approach below.

First, find the **viewDidLoad()** method for your initial view controller – whichever one is shown first in your app. Now add this code to it:

```
self.tabBarController?.delegate = UIApplication.shared.delegate  
as? UITabBarControllerDelegate
```

That sets up your application delegate (in `AppDelegate.swift`) to handle events from the tab bar controller. This line uses optionals safely, so it will do nothing if you change your app structure later.

Now open `AppDelegate.swift`, and add **UITabBarControllerDelegate** to the list of protocols your app delegate conforms to, like this:

```
class AppDelegate: UIResponder, UIApplicationDelegate,  
UITabBarControllerDelegate {
```

Finally, you should implement the **shouldSelect** method on your app delegate, which must return true or false depending on whether you want the regular tab behavior (return true) or your own (return false).

In the example below, I want the regular view controller behavior for all tabs unless the user is trying to show one with the class **YourViewController**. When that happens, I'll create a new view controller and show it modally instead:

```
func tabBarController(_ tabBarController: UITabBarController,  
shouldSelect viewController: UIViewController) -> Bool {  
    if viewController is YourViewController {  
        if let newVC =  
tabBarController.storyboard?.instantiateViewController(withIdentifier:  
"YourVCStoryboardIdentifier") {  
            tabBarController.present(newVC, animated: true)  
            return false  
    }  
}
```

```
    }

    return true
}
```

There are two things to note about that code. First, you'll need to give your view controller a storyboard identifier so that `instantiateViewController(withIdentifier:)` will work. Second, this won't have any extra performance impact on your code – the view that would have been shown wasn't created yet, so creating a new one here won't be duplicating any work.

How set different widths for a `UISegmentedControl`'s elements

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

Segmented controls give each segment equal width by default, which is aesthetically pleasing when you have space to spare but technically irritating when space is tight. Rather than try to squash too much into a small space, you have two options: set custom segment widths, or ask iOS to size them individually for you.

The first option looks like this:

```
segmentedControl.setWidth(100, forSegmentAt: 0)
segmentedControl.setWidth(50, forSegmentAt: 1)
```

That gives you individually sized segments while sticking to a value you define, which means you get to tweak the aesthetics as you want. The second option looks like this:

```
segmentedControl.apportionsSegmentWidthsByContent = true
```

That hands full control over to iOS, which is probably the best thing to do most of the time.

How to activate multiple Auto Layout constraints using `activate()`

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Using Auto Layout is the best way to create complex layouts that automatically adapt to their environment, but sometimes adding and removing lots of constraints can cause performance problems.

As an example, here's a simple `UIView` with some color so you can see it on-screen:

```
let vw = UIView()  
vw.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false  
vw.backgroundColor = .red  
view.addSubview(vw)
```

We could use Auto Layout anchors to give that constraints: stay 20 points from the leading and trailing edges of its superview, be fixed at 100 points in height, and center itself on-screen:

```
vw.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.leadingAnchor, constant: 20).isActive  
= true  
vw.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.trailingAnchor, constant:  
-20).isActive = true  
vw.heightAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant: 100).isActive =  
true  
vw.centerYAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.centerYAnchor).isActive = true
```

However, while that approach is easy to read – and perfectly fine while you're learning or if you don't have complex layouts – there is a more efficient way. `NSLayoutConstraint` has a class method called `activate()` that activates multiple constraints at once, which should allow Auto Layout to update its entire layout as a single batch.

The code for this is straightforward: just pass in an array of constraints to the `activate()` method, like this:

```

NSLayoutConstraint.activate([
    vw.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
        view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.leadingAnchor, constant: 20),
    vw.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
        view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.trailingAnchor, constant: -20),
    vw.heightAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant: 100),
    vw.centerYAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
        view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.centerYAnchor)
])

```

If you need to *deactivate* constraints, there's an equivalent **deactivate()** method that is used the same way.

Note: Auto Layout is smart enough to bulk actual layout changes even with the **isActive** approach – i.e., it will only call **layoutSubviews()** once per view even if you change four constraints – but Apple says that using **activate()** is definitely more efficient.

How to add Retina and Retina HD graphics to your project

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

iOS has a simple, beautiful solution for handling Retina and Retina HD graphics, and in fact it does almost all the work for you – all you have to do is name your assets correctly.

Imagine you have an image called `taylor.png`, which is 100x100 pixels in size. That will look great on non-Retina devices, which means iPad 2 and the first-generation iPad Mini. If you want it to look great on Retina devices (which means iPad 3, 4, Air, Air 2, Mini 2, Mini 3, Pro, plus iPhone 4s, 5, 5s, 6, and 6s) you need to provide a second image called `taylor@2x.png` that is 200x200 pixels in size – i.e., exactly twice the width and height.

Retina HD devices – that's the iPhone 6 Plus, iPhone 7 Plus, and iPhone 8 Plus – have an even higher resolution, so if you want your image to look great there you should provide a third image called `taylor@3x.png` that is 300x300 pixels in size – i.e., exactly three times the width

and height of the original.

If you're not using an asset catalog, you can just drag these images into your project to have iOS use them. If you are using an asset catalog, drag them into your asset catalog and you should see Xcode correctly assign them to 1x, 2x and 3x boxes for the image. **It's critical you name the files correctly** because that's what iOS uses to load the correct resolution.

With that done, you just need to load taylor.png in your app, and iOS will automatically load the correct version of it depending on the user's device.

How to add a **UIApplicationShortcutItem** quick action for 3D Touch

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

There are two ways to add a shortcut item for 3D Touch: you can register a list of static items that always get shown, or you can create a dynamic list in code based on user information.

Let's start by tackling static lists. Open your Info.plist file, and add a new key called **UIApplicationShortcutItems**, then set it to be an Array. Add one new item in there, which will get the name "Item 0", and set its data type to be Dictionary. Finally, add these three keys to that dictionary, all using the String data type:

- Key name: **UIApplicationShortcutItemIconType**, value: **UIApplicationShortcutIconTypeAdd**.
- Key name: **UIApplicationShortcutItemTitle**, value: **Add User**.
- Key name: **UIApplicationShortcutItemType**, value: **com.yoursite.yourapp.adduser**.

You need all three of those keys, but you will want to change the values to whatever fits your needs.

The first one should be one of the built-in icon types, such as **UIApplicationShortcutIconTypeCompose**, **UIApplicationShortcutIconTypePlay**, **UIApplicationShortcutIconTypeSearch**, **UIApplicationShortcutIconTypeLove**, **UIApplicationShortcutIconTypeShare**, or **UIApplicationShortcutIconTypeAlarm**.

The second key should be the text string to show next to the shortcut icon. I've used "Add User" above, but you might want "Start Game", "Favorites", "New Message", and so on.

The third key should be a unique identifier, which is usually specified as your app's bundle ID followed by a new string. This is what identifies the command relative to other shortcuts you might add.

The shortcut item type is used when your app is launched using a shortcut menu item. The **launchOptions** dictionary of **didFinishLaunchingWithOptions** will have a key set called **UIApplication.LaunchOptionsKey.shortcutItem**, which you can check to see what shortcut was triggered.

The code below – placed into your app delegate – will catch the shortcut we just created, although you should change the type string to match whatever you're using:

```
func application(_ application: UIApplication,  
didFinishLaunchingWithOptions launchOptions:  
[UIApplication.LaunchOptionsKey: Any]?) -> Bool {  
    if let shortcutItem = launchOptions?  
        [UIApplication.LaunchOptionsKey.shortcutItem] as?  
        UIApplicationShortcutItem {  
            if shortcutItem.type == "com.yoursite.yourapp.adduser" {  
                // shortcut was triggered!  
            }  
        }  
  
    return true  
}
```

If you want to create *dynamic* quick actions – which can live alongside static actions if you want – you need to create instances of **UIApplicationShortcutIcon** and **UIApplicationShortcutItem**, then assign to your application's **shortcutItems** property like this:

```
let icon = UIApplicationShortcutIcon(type: .add)
```

```
let item = UIApplicationShortcutItem(type:  
"com.yoursite.yourapp.adduser", localizedTitle: "Add User",  
localizedSubtitle: "Meet someone new", icon: icon, userInfo:  
nil)  
UIApplication.shared.shortcutItems = [item]
```

If your shortcut item should provide some sort of identifying information – perhaps it's the name of the most recently used contact – then you should place that into the **userInfo** dictionary. This will then be provided back to you when the application gets launched, and you can respond appropriately.

How to add a UITextField to a UIAlertController

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **UIAlertController** class from iOS 8.0 lets you add as many text fields as you need, and you can read the value of those text fields when the user taps a button.

The example below creates an alert controller with one button and a text field. When the button is tapped, the text of the text field is pulled out, at which point it's down to you to do something interesting with it:

```
func promptForAnswer() {  
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Enter answer", message:  
nil, preferredStyle: .alert)  
    ac.addTextField()  
  
    let submitAction = UIAlertAction(title: "Submit",  
style: .default) { [unowned ac] _ in  
        let answer = ac.textFields![0]  
        // do something interesting with "answer" here  
    }  
}
```

```
        ac.addAction(submitAction)

    present(ac, animated: true)
}
```

How to add a badge to your UITabBarItem

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You can put a badge over any of your tab bar items, and doing so is a great way to encourage users to activate the tab to see what information you want to show them.

Even better, these badges can be anything you want - you can use a number if you like, but you can also use short words like “NEW” or even ASCII symbols like a star.

To try it out, add this code to any view controller that’s inside a tab bar controller:

```
tabBarItem.badgeValue = "NEW"
```

How to add a bar button to a navigation bar

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Navigation bars are one of the most common user interface components in iOS, so being able to add buttons to them is something you’ll do *a lot*. You can add buttons to the left and right side of a navigation bar, and you can add more than one to either side.

Note: usually bar button items don’t belong to the **UINavigationBar** directly. Instead, they belong to a **UINavigationItem** that is currently active on the navigation bar, which in turn is usually owned by the view controller that is currently active on the screen.

So, to create bar button items for your view controller, you would add code like this to the

`viewDidLoad()` method of a view controller:

```
navigationItem.leftBarButtonItem =
UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target: self,
action: #selector(addTapped))
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title:
"Add", style: .plain, target: self, action:
#selector(addTapped))
```

That will call the `addTapped()` method on the current view controller when either button is tapped. Note that the first one uses a standard system icon (recommended when it's available!) and the second one uses text.

Like I said, you can attach more than one bar button item to either side of the navigation bar, like this:

```
let add = UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target:
self, action: #selector(addTapped))
let play = UIBarButtonItem(title: "Play", style: .plain,
target: self, action: #selector(playTapped))

navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem = [add, play]
```

How to add a button to a UITableView

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

There are two steps to add a working button to a table view cell. The first step is to add a button like this:

```
cell.accessoryType = .detailDisclosureButton
```

The second step is to take action when the button is tapped by creating the

accessoryButtonTappedForRowWith method:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
accessoryButtonTappedForRowWith indexPath: IndexPath) {  
    doSomethingWithItem(indexPath.row)  
}
```

That's it!

How to add a button to a navigation bar using storyboards

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

Once you've placed a view controller inside a navigation controller, you'll see that Interface Builder simulates a navigation bar at the top of that view controller. If you select it, what you actually select is the navigation item for that controller – the same thing you would get if you were manipulating its **navigationItem** property.

You can add a **UIBarButtonItem** directly to that navigation item if you want, then connect it to up to a method in your code. To try it out, look in the object library for Bar Button Item, then drag it over the simulated navigation bar. As you move over the left and right sides you should see those slots glow blue signaling that you can drop there, but you can also add more than one item in which case you'll see insertion lines appear showing whether the new button will be added before or after existing buttons.

Drop a button on the right-hand side of the navigation bar, then switch to the assistant editor so we can connect it to some code. Ctrl-drag from your new bar button item into your source code, and when you release your mouse button change Connection from “Outlet” to “Action”. Give it a name - e.g. “saveTapped” – and Xcode will generate a method that will be called when the button is tapped.

How to add a custom view to a UIBarButtonItem

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Most **UIBarButtonItem**s contain either an icon or some text, but they can do so much more – in fact, you can embed any kind of **UIView** subclass inside a bar button item, then put that button into a navigation bar or toolbar as you normally would.

For example, you can create a **UIProgressView** and place it into a bar button like this:

```
var progressView = UIProgressView(progressViewStyle: .default)
progressView.sizeToFit()

let progressButton = UIBarButtonItem(customView: progressView)
```

How to add a flexible space to a UIBarButtonItem

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

There's a special kind of **UIBarButtonItem** called **flexibleSpace**, and this acts like a spring between other buttons, pushing them to one side. A flexible space will always expand to take up as much room as possible, splitting space evenly between other flexible spaces if they exist.

For example, if you add this button to a toolbar, it will sit on the left edge of the toolbar:

```
let refresh = UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .refresh,
target: self, action: #selector(refreshTapped))
```

If you create and add a flexible space first, then that button will be pushed to the right edge as the flexible space expands to take up most of the toolbar. Here's how you create the flexible space:

```
let spacer =
UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .flexibleSpace, target:
nil, action: nil)
```

How to add a number over your app icon using applicationIconBadgeNumber

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Once your app has the user's permission to do so, you can show numbers over your icon to indicate outstanding tasks, unread messages, game invites, or whatever makes sense for your app.

You *do* need to get their permission, though, so you should start by adding an import for the UserNotifications framework, then request permission with code like this:

```
UNUserNotificationCenter.current().requestAuthorization(options:  
    : .badge) { (granted, error) in  
    if error != nil {  
        // success!  
    }  
}
```

Once you have that permission – anywhere inside the `// success!` comment or at some point afterwards – you can place an integer badge of your app icon with one line of code:

```
UIApplication.shared.applicationIconBadgeNumber = 1
```

How to add a section header to a table view

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You can use the built-in iOS table section headers by returning a value from `titleForHeaderInSection` like this:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,  
titleForHeaderInSection section: Int) -> String? {  
    return "Section \(section)"  
}
```

If you want to return a custom header view with something more than just some text, you should use **viewForHeaderInSection** instead, like this:

```
override func tableView(tableView: UITableView,  
viewForHeaderInSection section: Int) -> UIView? {  
    let vw = UIView()  
    vw.backgroundColor = UIColor.red  
  
    return vw  
}
```

How to add a shadow to a UIView

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

iOS can dynamically generate shadows for any **UIView**, and these shadows automatically adjust to fit the shape of the item in question – even following the curves of text inside a **UILabel**. This functionality is built right in, so all you need to do is configure its properties, and there are four you need to care about:

- **shadowColor** sets the color of the shadow, and needs to be a **CGColor**.
- **shadowOpacity** sets how transparent the shadow is, where 0 is invisible and 1 is as strong as possible.
- **shadowOffset** sets how far away from the view the shadow should be, to give a 3D offset effect.
- **shadowRadius** sets how wide the shadow should be.

Here's a simple example to get you started:

```
let yourView = UIView()
yourView.layer.shadowColor = UIColor.black.cgColor
yourView.layer.shadowOpacity = 1
yourView.layer.shadowOffset = .zero
yourView.layer.shadowRadius = 10
```

Be warned: generating shadows dynamically is expensive, because iOS has to draw the shadow around the exact shape of your view's contents. If you can, set the **shadowPath** property to a specific value so that iOS doesn't need to calculate transparency dynamically. For example, this creates a shadow path equivalent to the frame of the view:

```
yourView.layer.shadowPath = UIBezierPath(rect:
yourView.bounds).cgPath
```

Alternatively, ask iOS to cache the rendered shadow so that it doesn't need to be redrawn:

```
yourView.layer.shouldRasterize = true
```

If you want to go down the rasterization route, you should make sure iOS caches the shadow at the same drawing scale as the main screen, otherwise it will look pixelated:

```
yourView.layer.rasterizationScale = UIScreen.main.scale
```

How to add a toolbar above the keyboard using **inputAccessoryView**

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

If your user is likely to want common editing operations to appear while they are typing, you should set a custom view for your text fields' **inputAccessoryView** property. For example, Tweetbot shows common Twitter symbols right above the keyboard, such as @ and #, so you can type them without having to adjust the iOS keyboard.

There are several ways you can do this, but the easiest is just to create a **UIToolbar** with any

buttons you want. You can then call `sizeToFit()` on it so the toolbar fits all its buttons, then assign that to the `inputAccessoryView` property of any text fields and text views that should use it.

Here's some code to get you started:

```
let bar = UIToolbar()
let reset = UIBarButtonItem(title: "Reset", style: .plain,
target: self, action: #selector(resetTapped))
bar.items = [reset]
bar.sizeToFit()
textField.inputAccessoryView = bar
```

How to add blur and vibrancy using UIVisualEffectView

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

As of iOS 8.0, visual effects such as blur and vibrancy are a cinch because Apple provides a built in `UIView` subclass that does all the hard work: `UIVisualEffectView`. For example, if you want to blur an image, you would use this code:

```
let imageView = UIImageView(image: UIImage(named: "example"))
imageView.frame = view.bounds
imageView.contentMode = .scaleToFill
view.addSubview(imageView)

let blurEffect = UIBlurEffect(style: .dark)
let blurredEffectView = UIVisualEffectView(effect: blurEffect)
blurredEffectView.frame = imageView.bounds
view.addSubview(blurredEffectView)
```

As well as blurring content, Apple also lets you add a "vibrancy" effect to your views – this is a translucency effect designed to ensure that text is readable when it's over any kind of blurred

background, and it's used to create that soft glow effect you see in the notification center.

We could extend the previous example so that it adds a segmented control in the middle of the view, using a vibrancy effect. This is accomplished by created a second **UIVisualEffectView** inside the first one, this time using **UIVibrancyEffect** to create the glow. Note that you need to use the same blur type for both your visual effect views, otherwise the glow effect will be incorrect.

```
let segmentedControl = UISegmentedControl(items: ["First Item",  
"Second Item"])  
segmentedControl.sizeToFit()  
segmentedControl.center = view.center  
  
let vibrancyEffect = UIVibrancyEffect(blurEffect: blurEffect)  
let vibrancyEffectView = UIVisualEffectView(effect:  
vibrancyEffect)  
vibrancyEffectView.frame = imageView.bounds  
  
vibrancyEffectView.contentView.addSubview(segmentedControl)  
blurredEffectView.contentView.addSubview(vibrancyEffectView)
```

Warning: you need to add child views to the **contentView** property of a **UIVisualEffectView** otherwise they will not be drawn correctly.

How to add custom spacing to **UIStackView** items

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

Each **UIStackView** has an overall **spacing** property that affects spacing between all of its arranged subviews, but in addition you can add custom spacing after specific views – for example, “put 20 points of space under this button.”

To make that happen, use the **setCustomSpacing()** method of your stack view, providing it the

number of points of spacing you want and the view that should precede the spacing.

For example, this code creates a stack view and a button, adds the button to the stack view, then requests 20 points of spacing after it:

```
let stackView = UIStackView()
let btn = UIButton()

stackView.addArrangedSubview(btn)
stackView.setCustomSpacing(20, after: btn)
```

How to add drag and drop to your app

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

Drag and drop is a feature that's hugely useful, so don't be surprised if your users email you asking for it to be added. Even though both **UITableView** and **UICollectionView** both have support for drag and drop, it still takes a fair amount of work to set up.

To try it out now, create a new Single View App template in Xcode, then open ViewController.swift for editing. We need to put two table views in there, both filled with example data.

This code will:

- Create two table views, and create two string array filled with "Left" and "Right".
- Configure both table views to use the view controller as their data source, give them hard-coded frames, register a re-use cell, then add them to the view.
- Implement **numberOfRowsInSection** so that each table view has the correct number of items based on its string array.
- Implement **cellForRowAt** to dequeue and cell then show the correct item from one of the two string arrays depending on which table this is.

This is all code from before iOS 11, so it should be nothing new to you. Replace the content of

ViewController.swift with this:

```
import UIKit

class ViewController: UIViewController, UITableViewDataSource,
UITableViewDelegate {
    var leftTableView = UITableView()
    var rightTableView = UITableView()

    var leftItems = [String](repeating: "Left", count: 20)
    var rightItems = [String](repeating: "Right", count: 20)

    override func viewDidLoad() {
        super.viewDidLoad()

        leftTableView.dataSource = self
        rightTableView.dataSource = self

        leftTableView.frame = CGRect(x: 0, y: 40, width: 150,
height: 400)
        rightTableView.frame = CGRect(x: 150, y: 40, width: 150,
height: 400)

        leftTableView.register(UITableViewCell.self,
forCellReuseIdentifier: "Cell")
        rightTableView.register(UITableViewCell.self,
forCellReuseIdentifier: "Cell")

        view.addSubview(leftTableView)
        view.addSubview(rightTableView)
    }

    func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {

```

```

        if tableView == leftTableView {
            return leftItems.count
        } else {
            return rightItems.count
        }
    }

    func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
        let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Cell", for: indexPath)

        if tableView == leftTableView {
            cell.textLabel?.text = leftItems[indexPath.row]
        } else {
            cell.textLabel?.text = rightItems[indexPath.row]
        }

        return cell
    }
}

```

If you run the app you'll see it gives us two side-by-side table views filled with items. We're going to modify that so the user can grab an item from one table and copy it into the other, in either direction.

The first step is to tell both table views to use the current view controller as their drag and drop delegate, then enable drag interaction on both of them. Add this code to `viewDidLoad()`:

```

leftTableView.dragDelegate = self
leftTableView.dropDelegate = self
rightTableView.dragDelegate = self
rightTableView.dropDelegate = self

```

```
leftTableView.dragInteractionEnabled = true  
rightTableView.dragInteractionEnabled = true
```

Xcode will throw up several warnings because our current view controller class doesn't conform to the **UITableViewDragDelegate** or **UITableViewDropDelegate** protocols. This can be fixed by adding those two protocols to our class – scroll up to the top and change the class definition to this:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController, UITableViewDataSource,  
UITableViewDelegate, UITableViewDragDelegate,  
UITableViewDropDelegate {
```

This in turn creates another problem: we're saying we conform to those two new protocols, but we aren't implementing their required methods. Xcode can automatically complete required methods for protocols – click the number "2" on the red highlighted line of code, and you should see a more detailed explanation appear. Click "Fix" to have Xcode insert the two missing methods for us – you should see this appear in your class:

```
func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, itemsForBeginning  
session: UIDragSession, at indexPath: IndexPath) ->  
[UIDragItem] {  
  
}  
  
func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, performDropWith  
coordinator: UITableViewDropCoordinator) {  
  
}
```

The **itemsForBeginning** method is easiest, so let's start there. It gets called when the user has initiated a drag operation on a table view cell by holding down their finger, and needs to return an array of drag items. If you return an empty array, you're effectively declining drag and drop.

We're going to give this method four lines of code:

1. Figure out which string is being copied. We can do that with a simple ternary: if the table view in question is the left table view then read from **leftItems**, otherwise read from **rightItems**.
2. Attempt to convert the string to a **Data** object so it can be passed around using drag and drop.
3. Place that data inside an **NSItemProvider**, marking it as containing a plain text string so other apps know what to do with it.
4. Finally, place that item provider inside a **UIDragItem** so that it can be used for drag and drop by UIKit.

To mark the item data as being plain text we need to import the MobileCoreServices framework, so please add this line of code near the top of ViewController.swift:

```
import MobileCoreServices
```

Now replace your itemsForBeginning method stub with this:

```
func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, itemsForBeginning session: UIDragSession, at indexPath: IndexPath) -> [UIDragItem] {
    let string = tableView == leftTableView ?
        leftItems[indexPath.row] : rightItems[indexPath.row]
    guard let data = string.data(using: .utf8) else { return [] }
    let itemProvider = NSItemProvider(item: data as NSData,
        typeIdentifier: kUTTypePlainText as String)

    return [UIDragItem(itemProvider: itemProvider)]
}
```

Now we need to fill in **performDropWith**, which is tricky because there are two potential complexities.

First, we might be getting several strings at the same time if someone is dragging in lots of

things, so we need to insert them all sensibly. Second, we might be told where the user wants to insert the rows, but we might not – they might just drag the strings onto some whitespace in the table, so we need to decide what that means for us.

To solve those two problems means writing more code than you may have expected, but I'll try to walk you through it step by step to make it a bit easier.

First, the easier part: figuring out where to drop rows. The **performDropWith** method passes us an object of the class **UITableViewDropCoordinator**, which has a **destinationIndexPath** property telling us where the user wants to drop the data. However, it's optional: it will be nil if they dragged their data over some empty cells in our table view, and if that happens we're going to assume they wanted to drop the data at the end of the table.

So, start by adding this code to the **performDropWith** method:

```
let destinationIndexPath: IndexPath

if let indexPath = coordinator.destinationIndexPath {
    destinationIndexPath = indexPath
} else {
    let section = tableView.numberOfSections - 1
    let row = tableView.numberOfRows(inSection: section)
    destinationIndexPath = IndexPath(row: row, section: section)
}
```

As you can see, that either uses the coordinator's **destinationIndexPath** if it exists, or creates one by looking at the last row of the last section.

The next step is to ask the drop coordinator to load all the objects it has for a specific class, which in our case will be **NSString**. (No, regular **String** won't work.)

We need to send this a closure of code to run when the items are ready, which is where the complexity starts: we need to insert them all one by one below the destination index path, modifying either the **leftItems** or **rightItems** arrays, before finally calling **insertRows()** on our table view to make them appear.

So, again: we've just written code to figure out the destination index path for a drop operation. But if we get multiple items then all we have is the initial destination index path – the path for the first item. The second item should be one row lower, the third item should be two rows lower, and so on. As we move down each item to copy, we're going to create a new index path and stash it away in an **indexPaths** array so we can call **insertRows()** on our table view all at once.

Add this code to your **performDropWith** method, below the previous code we just wrote:

```
// attempt to load strings from the drop coordinator
coordinator.session.loadObjects(ofClass: NSString.self) { items
in
    // convert the item provider array to a string array or bail
out
    guard let strings = items as? [String] else { return }

    // create an empty array to track rows we've copied
    var indexPaths = [IndexPath]()

    // loop over all the strings we received
    for (index, string) in strings.enumerated() {
        // create an index path for this new row, moving it down
        // depending on how many we've already inserted
        let indexPath = IndexPath(row: destinationIndexPath.row +
            index, section: destinationIndexPath.section)

        // insert the copy into the correct array
        if tableView == self.leftTableView {
            self.leftItems.insert(string, at: indexPath.row)
        } else {
            self.rightItems.insert(string, at: indexPath.row)
        }

        // keep track of this new row
        indexPaths.append(indexPath)
    }
}
```

```

        indexPaths.append(indexPath)
    }

    // insert them all into the table view at once
    tableView.insertRows(at: indexPaths, with: .automatic)
}

```

That's all the code complete – you should be able to run the app now and drag rows between the two table views to copy them. This code also automatically supports drag and drop from other apps, so you can try dragging things from external apps onto your table views.

How to add multiple UIBarButtonItem to a navigation bar using rightBarButtonItems

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

The **navigationItem** property of your view controller has two properties responsible for displaying multiple bar button items on either side of **UINavigationBar**: **leftBarButtonItems** for the left-hand side and **rightBarButtonItems** for the right-hand side. These are *not* to be confused with **leftBarButtonItem** and **rightBarButtonItem**, which are older properties designed to store single items.

One confusion when working with arrays of bar button items is the order in which they are displayed: they fill from the outside in. So, when using **leftBarButtonItems** they appear in the order of your array, and when using **rightBarButtonItems** they appear in *reverse* order.

For example, here's some code to display a share button and an add button on the right-hand side of the navigation bar, and the add button will be on the *right* of the share button:

```

let share = UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .action,
                           target: self, action: #selector(shareTapped))
let add = UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target:
                           self, action: #selector(addTapped))

```

```
navigationItem.rightBarButtonItem = [add, share]
```

How to add peek and pop to a UITableView

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

Peek and pop are features of 3D Touch that let users press hard on something to show more information. It's surprisingly easy to add when working with table view cells and collection view cells, and downright trivial if you use storyboards and segues.

First, the trivial case: if you're using storyboards and segues, Xcode can do all the work for you. If you want to see how easy it is, create a new iOS app using the Master-Detail project template, then open Main.storyboard. Find the Show Detail segue that moves from the table view to the detail view, then check the box marked "Preview & Commit Segues" in the attributes inspector.

That's it: iOS will automatically make peek and pop code for that segue – you can press hard on a table view cell to bring up the detail controller as a preview, then press harder to make it full screen. (Note: if you're using the simulator this isn't easy to do – try using a real device!)

If you're *not* using segues you need to write some code yourself. First, make your view controller conform to **UIViewControllerPreviewingDelegate** so that you're able to respond to previewing requests correctly. Second, you need to tell the system we want to support previewing by calling **registerForPreviewing()** in your **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
registerForPreviewing(with: self, sourceView: yourTableView)
```

That tells iOS that the view controller is able to respond to previewing requests for your table view.

There are two methods you need to fill in for the **UIViewControllerPreviewingDelegate** protocol: which view controller should be shown when the user presses at a certain location, and when the user presses harder how do you want to present it.

For many apps the code to create a previewing detail controller will be the same code to create a regular detail view controller, so it's a good idea to create a method to instantiate a detail view controller and configure it as needed.

For example, you might have something like this:

```
func detailViewController(for index: Int) ->
    DetailViewController {
    guard let vc =
        storyboard?.instantiateViewController(withIdentifier: "Detail")
        as? DetailViewController else {
        fatalError("Couldn't load detail view controller")
    }

    vc.selectedItem = index
    return vc
}
```

You would then have something like this inside your **didSelectRowAt** method:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
didSelectRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) {
    let vc = detailViewController(for: indexPath.row)
    navigationController?.pushViewController(vc, animated: true)
}
```

Now for the important part: filling in the peek and pop methods.

You need to write a **viewControllerForLocation** method, which gets called with whatever location on the screen the user touched. You can pass that straight to the table view to ask it what row is at that location, then tell the previewing context to use that row as its source rect – iOS will cause that row to zoom up while the others get blurred. Finally you can return the correct view controller, but if no cell was tapped you need to return **nil** instead so that no 3D Touch effect happens.

Here's how that looks in code:

```
func previewingContext(_ previewingContext:  
UIViewControllerPreviewing, viewControllerForLocation location:  
CGPoint) -> UIViewController? {  
    if let indexPath = yourTableView.indexPathForRow(at:  
location) {  
        previewingContext.sourceRect =  
yourTableView.rectForRow(at: indexPath)  
        return detailViewController(for: indexPath.row)  
    }  
  
    return nil  
}
```

As for the pop effect, that's just one line of code inside a **commit** method. You'll be given the view controller that's currently being peeked, so your method just needs to decide how to present it. For example, if you're using a navigation controller you probably want to call **pushViewController()** here – iOS will automatically convert that into a pop zoom animation with bounce effect, but the end result will be a pushed view controller so you can go back like normal.

Here's that in Swift:

```
func previewingContext(_ previewingContext:  
UIViewControllerPreviewing, commit viewControllerToCommit:  
UIViewController) {  
  
navigationController?.pushViewController(viewControllerToCommit  
, animated: true)  
}
```

That's all the code – it's not really that hard to do, and UIKit makes the result look great.

How to add scopes to a UISearchController

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

By default a **UISearchController** provides just a text input field, but with a few small changes you can make it add scopes buttons underneath to let the user control how their search happens.

First, make your view controller conform to **UISearchBarDelegate** as well as **UISearchResultsUpdating**.

You need to add two new lines where you create your search controller: one to add the scope button titles you want to use, and one to tell the search bar to report changes back to the view controller:

```
search.searchBar.scopeButtonTitles = ["Friends", "Everyone"]
search.searchBar.delegate = self
```

Finally, implement the **selectedScopeButtonIndexDidChange** method so you get notified when the user tapped a scope button:

```
func searchBar(_ searchBar: UISearchBar,
selectedScopeButtonIndexDidChange selectedScope: Int) {
    print("New scope index is now \(selectedScope)")
}
```

You can read the selected index at any time by using the **searchController.searchBar.selectedScopeButtonIndex** property.

How to adjust a UIScrollView to fit the keyboard

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If your user interface brings up the keyboard, you should respond by adjusting your layout so

that all parts are still visible. If you're using a **UIScrollView** or any classes that have a scroll view as part of their layout (table views and text views, for example), this means adjusting the **contentInset** property to account for the keyboard.

First you need to register for keyboard change notifications. Put this into your **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
let notificationCenter = NotificationCenter.default
notificationCenter.addObserver(self, selector:
#selector(adjustForKeyboard), name:
UIResponder.keyboardWillHideNotification, object: nil)
notificationCenter.addObserver(self, selector:
#selector(adjustForKeyboard), name:
UIResponder.keyboardWillChangeFrameNotification, object: nil)
```

Now add this method somewhere else in your class:

```
@objc func adjustForKeyboard(notification: Notification) {
    guard let keyboardValue = notification.userInfo?
[UIResponder.keyboardFrameEndUserInfoKey] as? NSValue else
{ return }

    let keyboardScreenEndFrame = keyboardValue.cgRectValue
    let keyboardViewEndFrame =
view.convert(keyboardScreenEndFrame, from: view.window)

    if notification.name ==
UIResponder.keyboardWillHideNotification {
        yourTextView.contentInset = .zero
    } else {
        yourTextView.contentInset = UIEdgeInsets(top: 0, left: 0,
bottom: keyboardViewEndFrame.height -
view.safeAreaInsets.bottom, right: 0)
    }
}
```

```
    yourTextView.scrollIndicatorInsets =  
    yourTextView.contentInset  
  
    let selectedRange = yourTextView.selectedRange  
    yourTextView.scrollRangeToVisible(selectedRange)  
}
```

That example code is for adjusting text views. If you want it to apply to a regular scroll view, just take out the last two lines - they are in there so that the text view readjusts itself so the user doesn't lose their place while editing.

Note: It's important to subtract `view.safeAreaInsets.bottom` from the keyboard height to avoid making your text view too small on devices with a home indicator.

How to adjust image content mode using aspect fill, aspect fit and scaling

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

All views (including those that don't hold images) have a content mode that affects the way they draw their content. The default is **Scale To Fill** because it's fastest: the contents of the view just get stretched up (or down) to fit the space available. But there are two others that you'll be using a lot: Aspect Fit and Aspect Fill.

"Aspect Fit" means "stretch this image up as large as it can go, but make sure that all the image is visible while keeping its original aspect ratio." This is useful when you want an image to be as large as possible without stretching its proportions, and it's probably the most commonly used content mode.

"Aspect Fill" means "stretch this image up as large as it can go, cropping off any parts that don't fit while keeping its original aspect ratio." This is useful when you want an image to fill its image view, even when that means losing either the horizontal or vertical edges. If you want to force an image to fill a specific space, but you want to keep its aspect ratio, this is the one

you should use.

How to animate a blur effect using **UIVisualEffectView**

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

UIKit's **UIVisualEffectView** class lets us add blurring effects to any view, optionally also combining a vibrancy effect to overlaid controls to help make them stand out. This makes it perfect for partly obscuring background content when you want to present information on top, and you can even animate that presentation if you want.

First, place a **UIVisualEffectView** into your view controller, either using code or using IB with an outlet.

When your app launches you should clear the **effect** property of your visual effect view, causing it to do nothing:

```
visualEffectView.effect = nil
```

When you want the blur to animate in – i.e., when you're ready to show information on top – just set that **effect** property to a new instance of **UIBlurEffect** inside an animation block, like this:

```
UIView.animate(withDuration: 5) {
    self.visualEffectView.effect = UIBlurEffect(style:
    UIBlurEffect.Style.prominent)
}
```

UIKit will take care of the rest!

How to animate views using **UIViewControllerAnimated**

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

iOS 10 introduced a new closure-based animation class in the form of **UIViewControllerAnimated**. Amongst other things, it lets you interactively adjust the position of an animation, making it jump to any point in time that we need – a technique commonly called *scrubbing*.

To try it yourself, create a new Single View App project targeting iPad, then lock it so that it supports landscape only and use Interface Builder to embed its view controller inside a navigation controller.

To demonstrate animation scrubbing we're going to create a **UISlider** then fix it to the bottom of our view, spanning the full width.

Open ViewController.swift and add this code to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
let slider = UISlider()
slider.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
view.addSubview(slider)

slider.bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.bottomAnchor).isActive = true
slider.widthAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.widthAnchor).isActive = true
```

When that slider is dragged from left to right, it will count from 0 to 1 and we're going to use that to manipulate an animation of a red box sliding across the screen.

Add this code to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
let redBox = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: -64, y: 0, width: 128,
height: 128))
redBox.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
redBox.backgroundColor = UIColor.red
redBox.center.y = view.center.y
view.addSubview(redBox)
```

That creates a 128x128 red box, centered vertically and part-way off the left edge of the screen. Even though we're going to manipulate it elsewhere in the app, we *don't* need a property for it – **UIViewPropertyAnimator** works using closures, so it will capture the box for us.

Next, add a property for the animator:

```
var animator: UIViewPropertyAnimator!
```

We're going to make the animation move the box from the left to the right, while spinning around and scaling down to nothing. All that will happen over two seconds, with an ease-in-ease-out curve. Add this to the end of **viewDidLoad()**:

```
animator = UIViewPropertyAnimator(duration: 2,
curve: .easeInOut) { [unowned self, redBox] in
    redBox.center.x = self.view.frame.width
    redBox.transform = CGAffineTransform(rotationAngle:
CGFloat.pi).scaledBy(x: 0.001, y: 0.001)
}
```

That doesn't actually *run* the animation, which is OK for now. Instead, it creates the animation and stores it away in the **animator** property, ready for us to manipulate.

At this point, we have a slider on the screen and a red box too, so we just need to connect it all. When the slider is moved, its **.valueChanged** event will be triggered, and we can add a method to catch that. We can actually feed the slider's **value** property – the number from 0.0 to 1.0 – directly into the **fractionComplete** property of our **UIViewPropertyAnimator**, which controls how much of the animation has happened, and UIKit will take care of the rest for us.

Add this method to **ViewController**:

```
@objc func sliderChanged(_ sender: UISlider) {
    animator.fractionComplete = CGFloat(sender.value)
}
```

To make that get called by the slider, add this to **viewDidLoad()**:

```
slider.addTarget(self, action: #selector(sliderChanged),  
for: .valueChanged)
```

That's it! We've created the user interface, prepared an animation, then connected the slider's value to the animation's progress. If you run the app now you'll see you can drag the slider from left to right and back again to manipulate the box – you literally have exact control over its position in the animation.

If you wanted to make the animation play the traditional way – i.e., without user control – just call its **startAnimation()** method. You can also set **animator.isReversed = true** to force the animation to move backwards, ultimately returning to its starting state.

How to animate views using **animate(withDuration:)**

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

Animation in iOS is done by starting an animation block, then telling iOS what changes you want to make. Because the animation block is active, those changes won't happen straight away – instead, iOS will execute them smoothly over the time you specified, so you don't have to worry when it will finish or what all the intermediate states are.

Here's a basic example to make a view fade out:

```
let viewToAnimate = UIView()  
  
UIView.animate(withDuration: 1) {  
    viewToAnimate.alpha = 0  
}
```

If you want to remove the view from its superview once the fade has finished, you can use a more advanced version of the same method that gives you a completion block – a closure that

will be run once the animation finishes. Here's how that looks:

```
UIView.animate(withDuration: 1, animations: {
    viewToAnimate.alpha = 0
}) { _ in
    viewToAnimate.removeFromSuperview()
}
```

You can also specify a delay before the animation starts, and even control the acceleration and deceleration curves of the animation, like this:

```
UIView.animate(withDuration: 1, delay: 1,
options: .curveEaseIn, animations: {
    viewToAnimate.alpha = 0
}) { _ in
    viewToAnimate.removeFromSuperview()
}
```

How to animate views with spring damping using `animate(withDuration:)`

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Spring animations work by changing from a start state to an end state, with a slight overshoot and bounce at the end. For example, if you want to animate a view moving from X:0 to X:100, it might move to X:120 before bouncing back to X:80, then X:110 and finally X:100, as if the animation were attached to a spring.

Spring animations are built into iOS as of iOS 7.0 and require two values: how "springy" the spring should be, and how fast it should start. The first value is specified with `usingSpringWithDamping`, where higher values make the bouncing finish faster. The second value is specified with `initialSpringVelocity`, where higher values give the spring more initial momentum.

Here's the code to make a view fade out, then fade it the tiniest bit, then fade out again – all done using a spring animation:

```
UIView.animate(withDuration: 1, delay: 1,
usingSpringWithDamping: 0.5, initialSpringVelocity: 5,
options: .curveEaseInOut, animations: {
    self.viewToAnimate.alpha = 0
}) { _ in
    self.viewToAnimate.removeFromSuperview()
}
```

How to animate when your size class changes: **willTransition(to:)**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

A size class change is usually triggered by your user rotating their device, but it can also happen for example when using the new iOS 9.0 multitasking to adjust window splits. Your UI needs to look great in all size classes it supports, which means you either create multiple variations of your layouts inside Interface Builder (this is the preferred route) or you make changes in code.

More often than not, I find myself mixing approaches: I do the vast majority of work inside IB, then make minor changes by hand inside the **willTransition(to:)** method. When this is called, you'll be given a **UIViewControllerTransitionCoordinator** object (yes, that's an extremely long name!) to work with, which allows you to animate your changes as needed.

To give you a very visible demonstration of how this works, I've written some example code below that adjusts the background color of the current view. **You should run this using the iOS simulator using an iPhone rather than an iPad.** The reason that this requires the iPhone simulator rather than the iPad simulator is that iPads have the same size classes in portrait and landscape, which makes the changes harder to spot.

Anyway, put this code into a view controller, then try it on an iPhone. When you rotate the

simulator, the screen will change between red and blue, or green and blue, depending on the rotation. The important thing is that the change is animated because it's placed inside a call to **animate(alongsideTransition:)**, which automatically makes your animation match the rotation animation.

Using this method requires two closures: the first is where you make the changes you want to animate, and the second is code to be run when the animation completes. So, when the new vertical size class is compact, the screen will animate from blue to red, then jump back to blue. I realize this isn't directly useful in your own apps, but that's because you'll want to make your own changes – just take the code below and replace the background color changes with your own logic.

```
override func willTransition(to newCollection:  
UITraitCollection, with coordinator:  
UIViewControllerTransitionCoordinator) {  
    super.willTransition(to: newCollection, with: coordinator)  
  
    coordinator.animate(alongsideTransition: { [unowned self] _  
in  
        if newCollection.verticalSizeClass == .compact {  
            self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.red  
        } else {  
            self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.green  
        }  
    }) { [unowned self] _ in  
        self.view.backgroundColor = UIColor.blue  
    }  
}
```

How to ask users to review your app using SKStoreReviewController

Availability: iOS 10.3 or later.

Many apps ask users to review their apps, but it's increasingly common to see dark patterns such as apps pre-screening users so they get sent to the App Store only if they said they like the app.

To avoid this problem in the future, and also to provide a standardized interface that users can trust, iOS 10.3 brought a built-in way to ask users to review the app, and it couldn't be much easier to use.

But first, some important information:

1. You *request* that the system show a review dialog, which means the request might be ignored based on internal logic known only to Apple.
2. Because the request might be ignored, you should *not* trigger the request from a user-facing button saying something like "Leave a review" – it might appear to do nothing at all.
3. When you are in development, requesting a review will always show the review user interface, but you can't submit an actual review.
4. When you are using TestFlight to test your app, requesting a review will do nothing at all.

Once you understand those rules, the process really couldn't be easier. First, add this **import** to your code:

```
import StoreKit
```

Then at some point in your app call this method:

```
SKStoreReviewController.requestReview()
```

That's it!

Again, you should *not* call that in response to user input, although if you have any sense you won't just put it inside **viewDidAppear()** in your app.

Instead, consider storing a simple run count for your app using **User Defaults**, then calling the method after your app has been run 10 times. By that point it's pretty clear the user keeps coming back to your app, so hopefully you have more chance of getting a positive review!

How to bring a subview to the front of a UIView

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

UIKit draws views back to front, which means that views higher up the stack are drawn on top of those lower down. If you want to bring a subview to the front, there's a method just for you: **bringSubviewToFront()**. Here's an example:

```
parentView.bringSubviewToFront(childView)
```

This method can also be used to bring any subview to the front, even if you're not sure where it is:

```
childView.superview?.bringSubviewToFront(childView)
```

How to center a view in its container

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

There are two ways to center one **UIView** inside another, depending on whether you use Auto Layout.

If you don't use Auto Layout, it's only one line of code:

```
childView.center = parentView.center
```

That sets the position once, so it won't update when your user rotates their device or if they use something like Slide Over to change the size of your app.

If you're using Auto Layout, you can center your child view inside its parent like this:

```
childView.centerXAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
parentView.centerXAnchor).isActive = true  
childView.centerYAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
parentView.centerYAnchor).isActive = true
```

Those constraints will automatically update as the available space changes.

How to change the scroll indicator inset for a UIScrollView

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

It's common to adjust content insets of a scroll view or any class that embeds one (table view, text view, etc) so that you control the scrolling mechanism precisely, but whenever you change the content inset it's a good idea also to change the scroll indicator inset: the visual indicator bar on the right that shows users how far they have left to scroll.

Changing this value adds a tiny bit of UI polish and it's easy to do:

```
scrollView.scrollIndicatorInsets = UIEdgeInsets(top: 30, left:  
0, bottom: 0, right: 10)
```

How to change your app icon dynamically with setAlternateIconName()

Availability: iOS 10.3 or later.

iOS 10.3 finally gave developers the ability to change their app's icon programmatically, although it takes a little work to set up. It also isn't quite as powerful as you might hope – you can't recreate the moving hands of the Clock app, for example.

The actual code to change your app's icon is trivial, but first there's some setup work because you must declare all possible icons in your Info.plist file. The process behind this is far from optimal, and right now the best thing to do is edit your Info.plist as XML rather than trying to use the built-in property list editor in Xcode.

To get started, we need some icons. **These should be placed loose in your project or in a group, rather than inside an asset catalogue.** Remember to use the @2x and @3x naming convention to ensure iOS automatically picks the correct icon for users' devices.

For this example, we're using these example icon files:

- Icon-1-@2x.png, Icon-1@3x.png
- Icon-2-@2x.png, Icon-2@3x.png
- Icon-3-@2x.png, Icon-3@3x.png

They are all just regular PNGs, with the @2x being 120x120 and the @3x being 180x180.

Now go to your project navigator, right-click your Info.plist file, and choose Open As > Source Code. This will reveal the raw XML behind your plist – it might seem like a lot at first, but trust me this is *way* better than using the GUI for this particular task.

Defining the icons for your app is done with a very specific set of property list keys and values:

1. **CFBundleIcons** is a dictionary that defines what your primary icon is (**CFBundlePrimaryIcon**) and what your alternate icons are (**CFBundleAlternateIcons**)
2. The primary icon key itself is a dictionary that lists its icon files (**CFBundleIconFiles**), which is an array containing the filenames for your primary icon, and whether iOS should apply gloss effects to it (**UIPrerenderedIcon**). Yes, that latter setting has been dead since iOS 7 but it still loiters around.
3. The alternate icons key is also a dictionary, but this time the keys of its children are the names of images you want to use. This doesn't need to be their filename, just however you want to reference each icon in your code.
4. Each icon name is another dictionary, which contains the same two keys as

CFBundlePrimaryIcon: the **CFBundleIconFiles** array and the **UIPrerenderedIcon** boolean.

To be quite clear, **CFBundleIcons** is a dictionary containing the key **CFBundleAlternateIcons**, which is a dictionary containing the key **YourImageName**, which is another dictionary containing the icon files and gloss effect settings.

If your head is spinning a little, that's OK: it really is far too complex and I'm amazed this is new API. However, it's what we have so if you want to start using it today then you're going to want some example XML to get you started.

At the end of your property list XML you should see this:

```
</dict>
</plist>
```

Before that – i.e., directly before **</dict>**, add this:

```
<key>CFBundleIcons</key>
<dict>
  <key>CFBundlePrimaryIcon</key>
  <dict>
    <key>CFBundleIconFiles</key>
    <array>
      <string>Icon-1</string>
    </array>
    <key>UIPrerenderedIcon</key>
    <false/>
  </dict>
  <key>CFBundleAlternateIcons</key>
  <dict>
    <key>AppIcon-2</key>
    <dict>
      <key>CFBundleIconFiles</key>
      <array>
```

```

        <string>Icon-2</string>
    </array>
    <key>UIPrerenderedIcon</key>
    <false/>
</dict>
<key>AppIcon-3</key>
<dict>
    <key>CFBundleIconFiles</key>
    <array>
        <string>Icon-3</string>
    </array>
    <key>UIPrerenderedIcon</key>
    <false/>
</dict>
</dict>
</dict>

```

Again, I've used the files Icon-1@2x.png, Icon-1@3x.png, Icon-2-@2x.png, Icon-2@3x.png, Icon-3-@2x.png, and Icon-3@3x.png for that – you'll need to replace those filenames with your own.

Do not put the @2x or @3x parts into your plist, and don't add the .png either.

In that example XML above I used the icon names “AppIcon-2” and “AppIcon-3”. Remember, these *aren't* the filenames, they are just the reference names you want to use in your code.

Now that you have your property list configured the rest is easy: all the hard work is done by the method **setAlternateIconName()**, which takes an icon name to change to or nil to use the app's default icon.

For example, you might want to add a button that changes your app icon to AppIcon-2, in which case you would use this:

```
UIApplication.shared.setAlternateIconName("AppIcon-2")
```

To reset your icon to the primary icon, you would use this:

```
UIApplication.shared.setAlternateIconName(nil)
```

If you want, you can optionally provide a completion handler to be run when the call finishes. This gets passed an **Error?** parameter that will be set to a value if something went wrong, so if you wanted to make your code more robust you might use something like this:

```
UIApplication.shared.setAlternateIconName("AppIcon-2") { error
in
    if let error = error {
        print(error.localizedDescription)
    } else {
        print("Success!")
    }
}
```

That's all you need to get started, but it's important to mention two more things just briefly.

First, you can check whether your app is able to switch to an alternate icon by checking the **supportsAlternateIcons** property on your application, like this:

```
if UIApplication.shared.supportsAlternateIcons {
    // let the user choose a new icon
}
```

You can also query which alternate icon is currently showing by reading the **alternateIconName** property. This is a **String?**: it will be **nil** if your primary icon is showing, or an icon name if an alternate icon is showing:

```
print(UIApplication.shared.alternateIconName ?? "Primary")
```

One last thing: **setAlternateIconName()** looks for the icon files in your app's resource folder rather than any arbitrary location, which means you can't generate icons dynamically.

How to check a string is spelled correctly using `UITextChecker`

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

You can draw on the iOS dictionary in just a few lines of code thanks to the `UITextChecker` class. Tell it the range of the string you want to check (this could be the whole string or just part of it), then ask it to tell you where the spelling error is. If it says there are no errors, the word is good. Here's the code:

```
func isReal(word: String) -> Bool {
    let checker = UITextChecker()
    let range = NSRange(location: 0, length: word.utf16.count)
    let misspelledRange = checker.rangeOfMisspelledWord(in:
        word, range: range, startingAt: 0, wrap: false, language: "en")

    return misspelledRange.location == NSNotFound
}
```

Note that `rangeOfMisspelledWord(in:)` accepts a language parameter, so you can change that as needed.

How to check whether an iPhone or iPad is upside down or face up

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If your app needs to know the orientation of the user's device – face up or face down – it takes only four steps to implement.

First, write a method that can be called when the device orientation changes:

```
@objc func orientationChanged() {
```

```
}
```

That needs to be marked `@objc` because it's going to be called by the system whenever the accelerometer signals the orientation has changed. So, step two is to request those changes be sent to the new method:

```
NotificationCenter.default.addObserver(self, selector:  
#selector(orientationChanged), name:  
UIDevice.orientationDidChangeNotification, object: nil)
```

Third, ask the system to start checking for orientation changes:

```
UIDevice.current.beginGeneratingDeviceOrientationNotifications()  
)
```

You shouldn't leave that on all the time unless you need it; you should call `beginGeneratingDeviceOrientationNotifications()` when you're done with the data.

Finally, you can read the `orientation` property of the current `UIDevice` to see what the orientation currently is. This property doesn't work correctly unless you already asked UIKit to begin generating device orientation notifications, which is why the above steps were required:

```
if UIDevice.current.orientation == .faceDown {  
    // it's face down  
}
```

You probably want that inside `orientationChanged()` so that it reads values as they change.

How to check whether users have enabled the reduced motion setting

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

There's a lot of animation in UIKit, and many users find it either distracting or hard to follow.

As a result, iOS has a Reduce Motion accessibility setting that disables many animation and parallax effects, and simplifies most others – at least in their own apps.

If you want to follow suit – and you should – all you need to do is call **UIAccessibilityIsReduceMotionEnabled()**. This returns a boolean telling you whether the setting is active or not, so if it's true you should take steps to animate differently or perhaps not at all.

How to control a **UIProgressView**'s animation

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

The **UIProgressView** class has a built-in **setProgress()** method that adjusts its progress with animation, but by default you don't have control over the timing of that animation.

Fortunately, if you want to time the animation to match other aspects of your user interface you can wrap it inside an animation block of your own.

For example, given a **UIProgressView** stored in a **progressView** property, this will animate the progress view to completion over four seconds:

```
UIView.animate(withDuration: 4.0) {
    self.progressView.setProgress(1.0, animated: true)
}
```

How to control which screen edges trigger system gestures using **preferredScreenEdgesDeferringSystemGestures**

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

iOS 11.0 was the first to showcase complex system gestures based around the iPhone X, and it's the point now where all edges of the screen do different things on different devices.

Historically, iOS apps automatically delayed system gestures from the top and bottom edges if they were run as full screen apps – if they hid the status bar – but as of iOS 11 you should now make your view controllers override the **preferredScreenEdgesDeferringSystemGestures** property to tell the system which edges should delay the built-in system gestures.

For example, if your main view controller uses the bottom screen edge you might give it code like this:

```
override func preferredScreenEdgesDeferringSystemGestures() ->
UIRectEdge {
    return [.bottom]
}
```

That will allow iOS to use left, right, and top edge swipes freely, but defer the system gesture for bottom swipes.

How to convert a CGPoint in one UIView to another view using convert()

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Each view has its own co-ordinate system, meaning that if I tap a button and ask iOS where I tapped, it will tell me where I tapped *relative to the top-left of the button*. This is usually what you want, but if you want to translate a position in one view into a position it's easy enough to do.

As an example, this code creates two views, creates a virtual "tap", then converts it from the first view's co-ordinate space to the second's:

```
let view1 = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: 50, y: 50, width: 128,
height: 128))
let view2 = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: 200, y: 200, width: 128,
height: 128))
```

```
let tap = CGPoint(x: 10, y: 10)
let convertedTap = view1.convert(tap, to: view2)
```

That will set **convertedTap** to X -140.0, Y -140.0.

How to create Auto Layout constraints in code: constraints(withVisualFormat:)

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

While the complexities of Auto Layout make it something most people prefer to grapple with using Interface Builder, it does have some cool tricks up its sleeve if you prefer to work in code. One of those tricks is called Visual Format Language (VFL) and lets you use ASCII art to tell iOS how you want your views laid out.

First, here's a dummy test case you can copy and paste into your project. It creates five labels of different colors and adds them all to your view:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    let label1 = UILabel()
    label1.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
    label1.backgroundColor = UIColor.red
    label1.text = "THESE"
    label1.sizeToFit()

    let label2 = UILabel()
    label2.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
    label2.backgroundColor = UIColor.cyan
    label2.text = "ARE"
    label2.sizeToFit()
```

```

let label3 = UILabel()
label3.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
label3.backgroundColor = UIColor.yellow
label3.text = "SOME"
label3.sizeToFit()

let label4 = UILabel()
label4.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
label4.backgroundColor = UIColor.green
label4.text = "AWESOME"
label4.sizeToFit()

let label5 = UILabel()
label5.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
label5.backgroundColor = UIColor.orange
label5.text = "LABELS"
label5.sizeToFit()

view.addSubview(label1)
view.addSubview(label2)
view.addSubview(label3)
view.addSubview(label4)
view.addSubview(label5)
}

```

If you run the project, you'll see the labels are all bunched up in the top-left corner, which doesn't look great. To fix this, we're going to use VFL to have each label occupy the full width of the screen, then spaced out so they are positioned below each other.

When you use VFL you need to create a dictionary of the views you want to work with. This dictionary needs to have the name of the view inside VFL and a reference to the view itself, but in practice most people just use the same name for VFL as the variable like this:

```
let viewsDictionary = [ "label1": label1, "label2": label2,
```

```
"label3": label3, "label4": label4, "label5": label5]
```

Put that just below the final `addSubview()` call.

Now for the VFL itself: put this directly beneath the previous line in order to have every label stretch out to occupy the full width of the screen:

```
for label in viewsDictionary.keys {  
  
    view.addConstraints(NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualFo  
rmat: "H:|[\\(label)|]", options: [], metrics: nil, views:  
viewsDictionary))  
}
```

Finally, add this to make the views lay themselves out below each other:

```
view.addConstraints(NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualFo  
rmat: "V:|[label1]-[label2]-[label3]-[label4]-[label5]",  
options: [], metrics: nil, views: viewsDictionary))
```

This is only the beginning of what VFL can do – you should definitely read my Auto Layout tutorial for more details.

How to create a page curl effect using `UIPageViewController`

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

When iBooks first launched in iOS 3.2, its page curl effect was almost addictive: it moved so fluently with your finger that it felt you were touching real paper. From iOS 5.0 on this page curl effect is available for every developer as part of the `UIPageViewController` class. Its API isn't immediately obvious to newbies, though, so I'm going to give you a complete example.

In the code below, the page view controller is created in `viewDidLoad()`. I also create five `UIViewControllers` to serve as pages inside the app, then tell the page view controller to start

with the first one. I put in a couple of helper methods so that the view controllers could have random background colors so you can see it all working.

Most of the work is done by the **viewControllerBefore** and **viewControllerAfter** methods, which must either return a view controller to show before or after the current one (when the user starts to turn the page) or **nil** to mean the user is at the end and there are no more pages to show in that direction.

To make this work in your own app, you'll obviously want to replace the plain view controller pages with your own **UIViewController** subclass that does something more interesting. If you're showing quite a few different pages, you should probably create them on demand rather than creating an array of them all up front.

Anyway, here is the complete example – you can use this with the Xcode "Single View App" to get a page view controller up and running immediately:

```
import UIKit

class ViewController: UIViewController,
    UIPageViewControllerDataSource, UIPageViewControllerDelegate {
    var pageController: UIPageViewController!
    var controllers = [UIViewController]()

    override func viewDidLoad() {
        super.viewDidLoad()

        pageController =
            UIPageViewController(transitionStyle: .pageCurl,
                navigationOrientation: .horizontal, options: nil)
        pageController.dataSource = self
        pageController.delegate = self

        addChild(pageController)
        view.addSubview(pageController.view)
```

```

        let views = [ "pageController": pageController.view] as
[ String: AnyObject]

view.addConstraints(NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualFo
rmat: "H:|[pageController]|", options: [], metrics: nil, views:
views))

view.addConstraints(NSLayoutConstraint.constraints(withVisualFo
rmat: "V:|[pageController]|", options: [], metrics: nil, views:
views))

    for _ in 1 ... 5 {
        let vc = UIViewController()
        vc.view.backgroundColor = randomColor()
        controllers.append(vc)
    }

    pageController.setViewControllers([controllers[0]], direction: .forward, animated: false)
}

func pageViewController(_ pageViewController:
UIPageViewController, viewControllerBefore viewController:
UIViewController) -> UIViewController? {
    if let index = controllers.firstIndex(of: viewController)
{
        if index > 0 {
            return controllers[index - 1]
        } else {
            return nil
        }
    }

    return nil
}

```

```

    }

    func pageViewController(_ pageViewController:
UIPageViewController, viewControllerAfter viewController:
UIViewController) -> UIViewController? {
    if let index = controllers.firstIndex(of: viewController)
    {
        if index < controllers.count - 1 {
            return controllers[index + 1]
        } else {
            return nil
        }
    }
}

return nil
}

func randomCGFloat() -> CGFloat {
    return CGFloat(arc4random()) / CGFloat(UInt32.max)
}

func randomColor() -> UIColor {
    return UIColor(red: randomCGFloat(), green:
randomCGFloat(), blue: randomCGFloat(), alpha: 1)
}
}

```

How to create a parallax effect in UIKit

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Parallax effects have been standard since iOS 7.0, and the **UIInterpolatingMotionEffect** class

makes this easy by automatically smoothing accelerometer input so your views can adjust to tilt data.

If you want to have a **UIView** respond to tilting, add this function to your code then call it on any view you want:

```
func addParallaxToView(vw: UIView) {
    let amount = 100

    let horizontal = UIInterpolatingMotionEffect(keyPath:
"center.x", type: .tiltAlongHorizontalAxis)
    horizontal.minimumRelativeValue = -amount
    horizontal.maximumRelativeValue = amount

    let vertical = UIInterpolatingMotionEffect(keyPath:
"center.y", type: .tiltAlongVerticalAxis)
    vertical.minimumRelativeValue = -amount
    vertical.maximumRelativeValue = amount

    let group = UIMotionEffectGroup()
    group.motionEffects = [horizontal, vertical]
    vw.addMotionEffect(group)
}
```

How to create custom menus using **UIViewControllerAnimated**

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

iOS has a built-in menu system that, while *useful*, doesn't actually get much *use* – because users don't expect to see it, developers don't use it, thus making it even less likely that users expect to see it.

Anyway, if you want to attach multiple actions to elements in your UI – pieces of text in a text

view or web view, table view rows, and so on – you might find iOS menus are for you, so you need to turn to **UIMenuController**. This has extremely simple API: you just create a **UIMenuItem** object for every action you want, then register them all and wait for the user to do something.

Below is a complete example for a view controller that has a web view inside it – you'll need to create that in your storyboard. The code sets up a new menu item named "Grok" that runs the **runGrok()** method when tapped. I've made it do something real: when the user selects some text, they tap Grok to have that printed out to the Xcode console.

Here's the code:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController, UITextViewDelegate {  
    @IBOutlet var webView: UIWebView!  
  
    override func viewDidLoad() {  
        super.viewDidLoad()  
  
        webView.loadHTMLString("<p>Hello, world!</p>", baseURL:  
nil)  
        enableCustomMenu()  
    }  
  
    func enableCustomMenu() {  
        let lookup = UIMenuItem(title: "Grok", action:  
#selector(runGrok))  
        UIMenuController.shared.menuItems = [lookup]  
    }  
  
    func disableCustomMenu() {  
        UIMenuController.shared.menuItems = nil  
    }  
  
    @objc func runGrok() {  
        let text = webView.stringByEvaluatingJavaScript(from:  
    }
```

```

        "window.getSelection().toString();")
        print(text)
    }
}

```

How to create keyframe animations using animateKeyframes()

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you need to combine a selection of animations over time the easiest thing to do is create a keyframe animation. This starts with a call to **animateKeyframes()**, then you go ahead and call **addKeyframe()** as many times as you need.

Each keyframe you add has a relative start time and relative duration, so they work independently of the overall timing. You also provide each keyframe with the animation it should perform, again not worrying about the rest of the animation. When it runs, iOS combines them all together, blending one animation seamlessly into the next.

To give you an example, here's some code that moves and scales an image view around the screen:

```

let start = self.imageView.center

UIView.animateKeyframes(withDuration: 5, delay: 0,
options: .calculationModeCubic, animations: {
    UIView.addKeyframe(withRelativeStartTime: 0.0,
    relativeDuration: 0.25) {
        self.imageView.transform = CGAffineTransform(scaleX: 2,
        y: 2)
    }

    UIView.addKeyframe(withRelativeStartTime: 0.25,
    relativeDuration: 0.25) {

```

```

        self.imageView.center = CGPointMake(x: self.view.bounds.midX,
y: self.view.bounds.maxY)
    }

    UIView.addKeyframe(withRelativeStartTime: 0.5,
relativeDuration: 0.25) {
    self.imageView.center = CGPointMake(x:
self.view.bounds.width, y: start.y)
}

    UIView.addKeyframe(withRelativeStartTime: 0.75,
relativeDuration: 0.25) {
    self.imageView.center = start
}
)

```

The **calculationModeCubic** option tells iOS to blend the animations together, so you'll see the image view overshoot one animation as it curves into the next. You should also try using **calculationModeCubicPaced** instead – in the above code it makes the scaling part run over the entire length of the animation.

How to create live playgrounds in Xcode

Availability: iOS 7 or later.

A reader emailed me to say they had enjoyed my books, and were considering applying for a scholarship to WWDC17. The process for this requires creating a live playground, and they were emailing to ask whether I had any tutorials on the process.

Well, I don't. Or at least *didn't*, because I wrote this one just to help you get started if you're considering applying for the scholarship as well.

First up, a few general pointers:

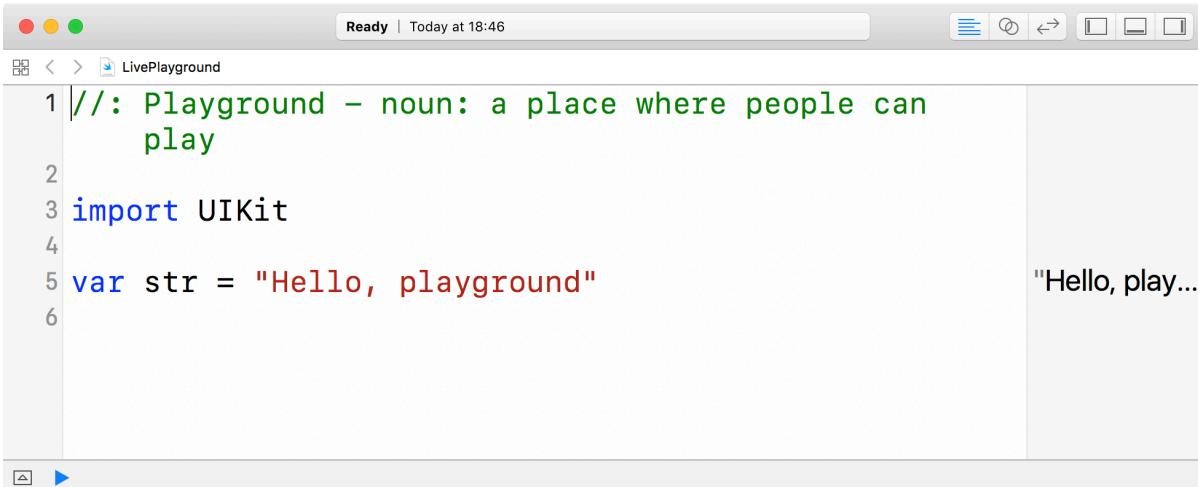
1. You need to be 13 years or older, and registered as an Apple developer.
2. You need to be a student of any age, or a member/graduate from a STEM organization.
3. You must submit a Swift playground created by you, and only by you, demonstrating something interesting. I'm providing some example code below to help you start, but your finished submission must be your own work.
4. Your playground must work entirely offline, and be no larger than 25MB when zipped.
5. Apple will pay for your lodging in San Jose, your WWDC ticket, and your breakfast and lunch. You're responsible for getting there and buying dinner.
6. You can optionally write an essay (maximum 500 words) describing "how you've considered sharing your coding knowledge and enthusiasm for computer science with others" – but let's face it, that's basically required if you're serious.

Before we dive into the code, there's one last thing: I'm not the judge of the WWDC scholarship program, and I don't even know who the judges are, but if I *were* a judge I'd actively be looking for people from under-represented groups. Previous years have seen Apple specifically call out groups such as App Camp for Girls, Black Girls Code, Girl Develop It, and more.

OK, enough chat: let's look at how to build a live playground using Xcode 10 and Swift 4.

Start by launching Xcode, then choosing "Get started with a playground". Choose an iOS blank template then name it whatever you please.

By default, Playgrounds look like you'll see below – big and empty.

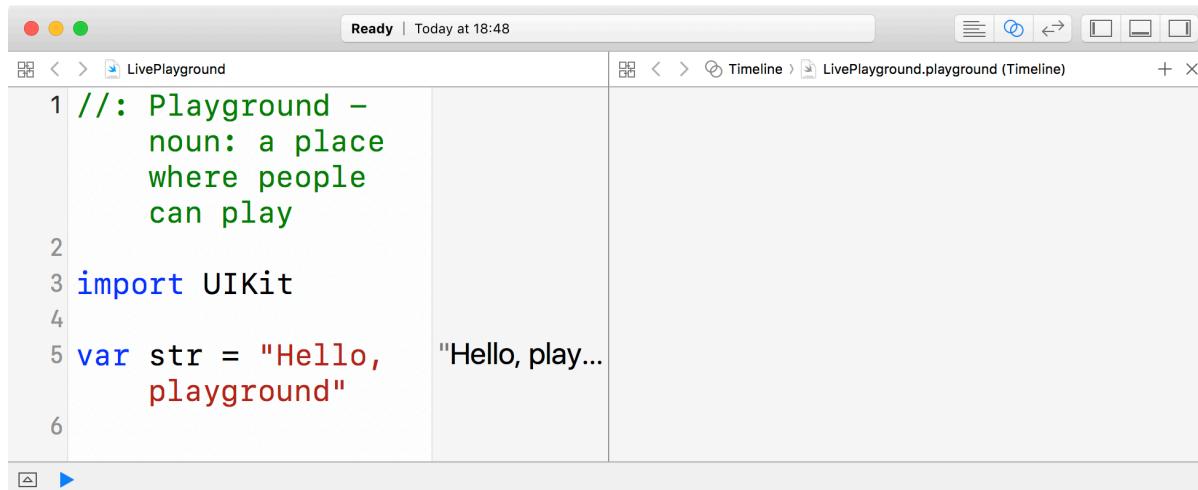


The screenshot shows the Xcode interface with a new playground project titled "LivePlayground". The playground file contains the following code:

```
1 //: Playground - noun: a place where people can
2 // play
3
4 import UIKit
5
6 var str = "Hello, playground"      "Hello, play...
```

Before we write any code, you need to enable the assistant editor by pressing Alt+Cmd+Return, or clicking the small overlapping circles button near the top-right of your Xcode window. This splits your screen so that you have code on the left, and a live preview of your results on the right.

Right now we don't have anything to preview, so Xcode should look like the below:



Tip: If your assistant editor is configured to appear below your code, you might find it easier to switch to a vertical layout for previewing reasons. Go to the View menu and choose Assistant Editor > Assistant Editors On Right.

The first thing we're going to do is set up a simple table view so we can see something useful in the assistant editor.

Delete all the existing code line in the playground, and replace it with this:

```
import PlaygroundSupport  
import UIKit  
  
class WWDCMasterViewController: UITableViewController {  
}
```

The first import is new, and gives us access to live playground previewing. It then creates a new class called **WWDCMasterViewController** based on **UITableViewController**. It won't do much just yet, but that's OK – we're just making sure everything works.

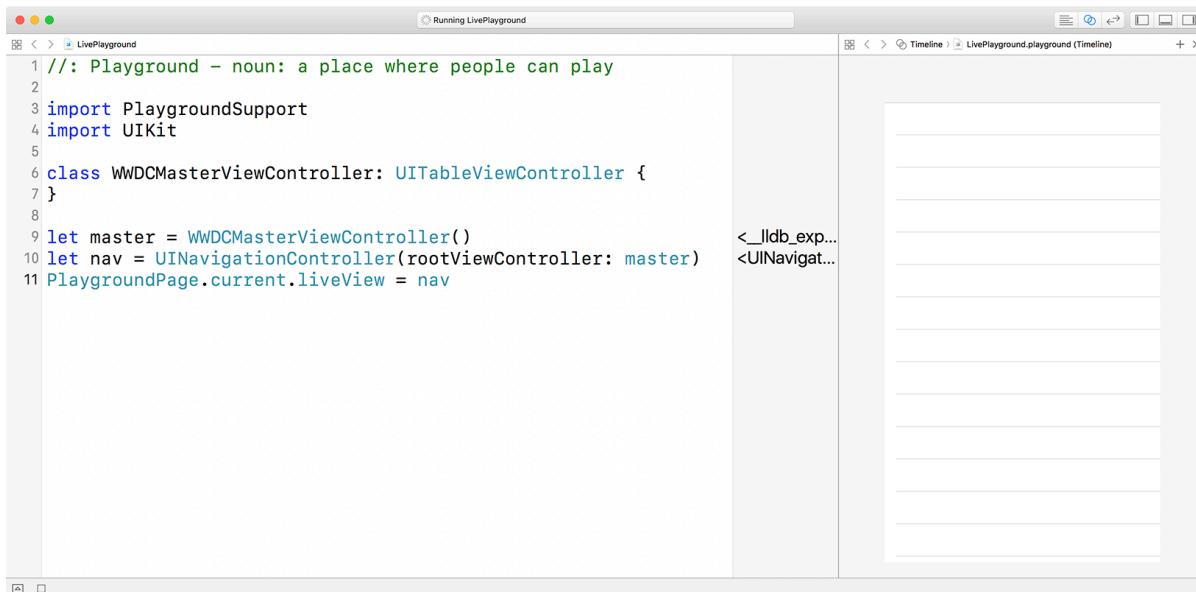
After that class, we need to write some simple code to create and present our custom view controller. To make things a little more interesting, we'll wrap it inside a navigation controller so we can push and pop a detail view later on. Add this code now:

```
let master = WWDCMasterViewController()
let nav = UINavigationController(rootViewController: master)
```

The last thing to do is connect that `nav` constant to the playground's live view. We already imported the `PlaygroundSupport` framework, so that's just one line of code:

```
PlaygroundColor.current.liveView = nav
```

All being well, Xcode will build and run that playground and show something inside the assistant editor: a large, empty table view.



There *is* a navigation bar at the top of the table view, but you can't see it because it has the same color as the playground's background.

So, let's start by making the navigation bar a little more obvious – add this code to **WWDCMasterViewController**:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    title = "Reasons I should attend WWDC"
```

```
}
```

The screenshot shows a Xcode playground window titled "LivePlayground". The left pane contains Swift code for a `WWDCMasterViewController`:

```
//: Playground - noun: a place where people can play
import PlaygroundSupport
import UIKit

class WWDCMasterViewController: UITableViewController {
    override func viewDidLoad() {
        title = "Reasons I should attend WWDC"
    }
}

let master = WWDCMasterViewController()
let nav = UINavigationController(rootViewController: master)
PlaygroundPage.current.liveView = nav
```

The right pane shows a note-taking interface with a title "Reasons I should attend WWDC" and a list area with several empty lines.

The navigation bar should now be visible, but of course the table view itself is still empty. To fix that, we need to think up some great reasons for you to attend WWDC. I'm sure you can think of a few (and perhaps you'll even mention a few in your scholarship application!), but I'm going to give you a few to get you started.

We're going to store all these reasons in a property of **WWDCMasterViewController**, so we can reference them in the table view. So, add this property to our class now:

```
var reasons = ["the labs are great", "the sessions teach new
things", "the people are awesome", "the keynote rocks", "I must
hug Joe Groff"]
```

We want our table view to show one of those reasons in each of its rows, so we can tell it to load as many rows as we have reasons. This is done by implementing the **numberOfRowsInSection** method, making it return **reasons.count**, like this:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
 numberOfRowsInSection section: Int) -> Int {
    return reasons.count
}
```

When that code runs, you'll probably get a large black screen in the assistant editor, along with lots of errors in the debug area. That's OK: it's just because we've told iOS we want lots of rows, but *haven't* told iOS what's *in* those rows.

To fix this problem, we need to implement the **cellForRowAt** method so that it grabs a reusable table view cell (or creates one if it doesn't already exist), and configures it to show our Incredibly Awesome Reason for Attending WWDC.

Here's the first part of the method – add this to the **WWDCMasterViewController** class:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
    // attempt to dequeue a cell
    var cell: UITableViewCell!
    cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier: "Cell")

    if cell == nil {
        // none to dequeue – make a new one
        cell = UITableViewCell(style: .subtitle, reuseIdentifier:
        "Cell")
        cell.accessoryType = .disclosureIndicator
    }

    // configure cell here

    return cell
}
```

That creates cells by hand because I've made it specifically request the **.subtitle** cell style to make things look a little more interesting.

That should fix our problem, and when the code runs now you ought to see five small disclosure arrows along the right edge of your table view. There's no other content in there, but you can try clicking one of those five rows to see it highlight gray.

```

17    override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
18                           cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
19        var cell: UITableViewCell!
20        cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:
21            "Cell")
22
23        if cell == nil {
24            cell = UITableViewCell(style: .subtitle,
25                                  reuseIdentifier: "Cell")
26            cell?.accessoryType = .disclosureIndicator
27
28            // configure cell here
29
30        }
31
32    let master = WWDCMasterViewController()

```

The next step is to list all our Totally Unbeatable Reasons for Attending WWDC, which is just a matter of pulling one item out of the table and drawing it inside the table view cell. Add this code where the `// configure cell here` comment is:

```

let reason = reasons[indexPath.row]
cell.detailTextLabel?.text = "I want to attend because \
(reason)"
cell.textLabel?.text = "Reason #\((indexPath.row + 1))"

```

```

17    override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
18                           cellForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {
19        var cell: UITableViewCell!
20        cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:
21            "Cell")
22
23        if cell == nil {
24            cell = UITableViewCell(style: .subtitle,
25                                  reuseIdentifier: "Cell")
26            cell?.accessoryType = .disclosureIndicator
27
28        let reason = reasons[indexPath.row]
29
30        cell.detailTextLabel?.text = "I want to attend because \
31        \n(reason)"
32        cell.textLabel?.text = "Reason #\((indexPath.row + 1))"
33
34    return cell

```

That's our first view controller finished, but of course this is a *live* view so what we want to do is interact with the app at least a little. To demonstrate that, we're going to create a second view controller that gets pushed on-screen from the first, and will show whichever Absolutely Foolproof Reason for attending WWDC was selected.

Start by adding this class directly after the existing **WWDCMasterViewController** class:

```
class WWDCDetailViewController: UIViewController {
    var message = ""
}
```

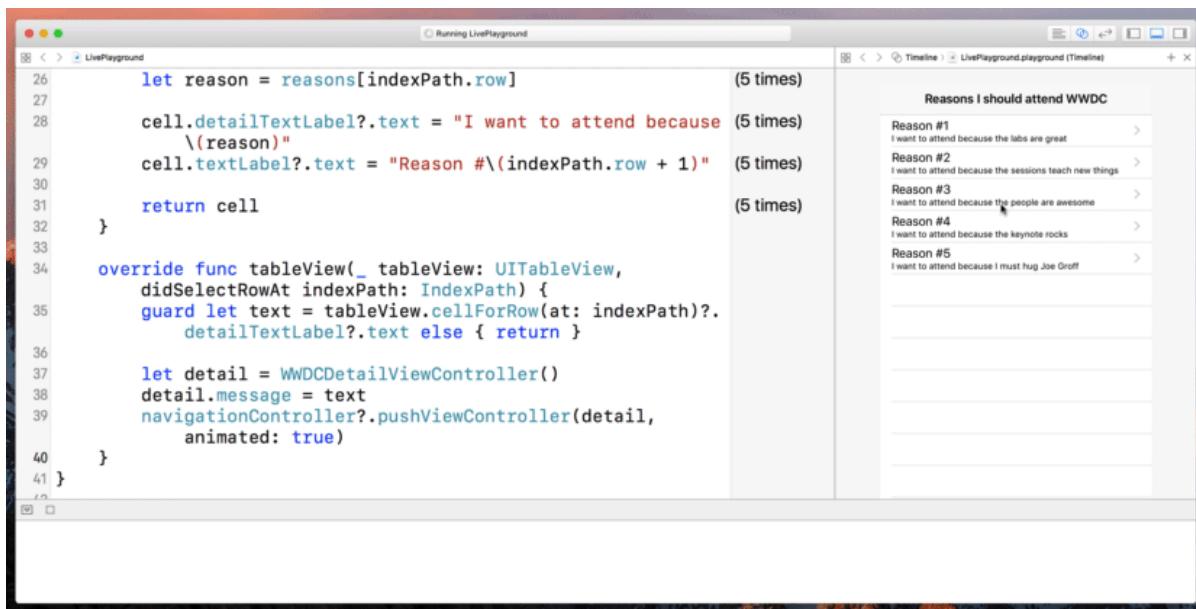
With that in place, you can present a second view controller by implementing the **didSelectRowAt** method in **WWDCMasterViewController**, like this:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
didSelectRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) {
    guard let text = tableView.cellForRow(at:
indexPath)?.detailTextLabel?.text else { return }

    let detail = WWDCDetailViewController()
    detail.message = text
    navigationController?.pushViewController(detail, animated:
true)
}
```

That pulls out the text from the cell that was tapped, creates a new detailed view controller, sets its **message** property to the cell text, then pushes it onto the navigation controller stack.

If you give it a try, you'll see this sort of works, but looks wrong: a black screen is pushed onto the navigation controller, and the previous view controller doesn't animate away correctly.

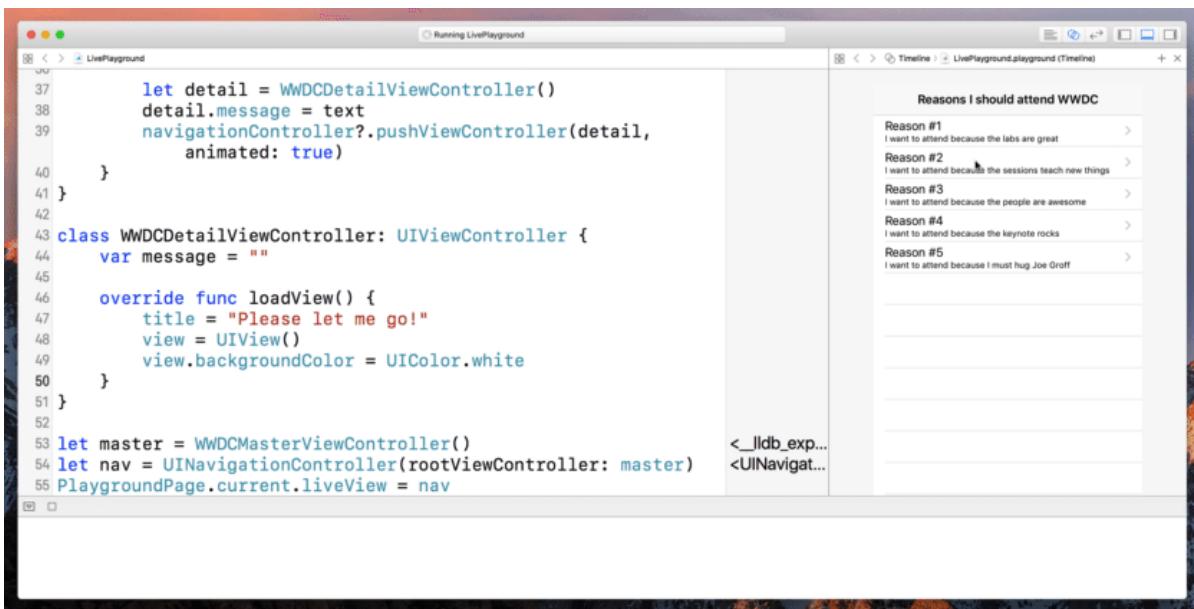


To fix this, we need to tell **WWDCDetailViewController** how to load its view by adding a **loadView** method. This doesn't need to do much: we'll create an empty **UIView** with a white background color, and set a default title so there's something in the navigation bar.

To make that work, add this code to the **WWDCDetailViewController** class now:

```
override func loadView() {
title = "Please let me go!"
view = UIView()
view.backgroundColor = UIColor.white
}
```

When you try tapping a table cell now, the animation should look much better.



The final step is to do something interesting with the detail view controller. We already set its **message** property, so let's make that text display.

There are a number of ways you could do this, but Apple specifically calls out “technical accomplishment” and “creativity of ideas” in its scholarship details. Clearly I’m not going to do this for you (not least because it would disqualify you from entering!) but at the same time it would be rather dull of me just to show some fixed text in this demonstration.

So, while you’re here let’s learn something new: UIKit dynamics. This lets you attach physical properties to your UIKit views to make them move a little more naturally on the screen.

To finish our detail view controller, we’re going to split the message up into individual words, make each word into a **UILabel**, then make those labels fall down our view using a gravity effect. Trust me: it’s easier than you think.

First, you need to add a property to **WWDCDetailViewController** that will store a reference to our **UIDynamicAnimator** object. This is what tracks our dynamic effects (“fall down with gravity”, “bounce off other things”) over time.

Add this property now:

```
var animator: UIDynamicAnimator?
```

Now for the fun part. When our view has finished loading fully and sized itself, we're going to do the following:

1. Split our **message** property up into words.
2. Create a new **UILabel** array, starting empty.
3. Go over every word in our message, and convert it to a **UILabel** with a nice and large font.
4. Position the word labels one above the other, in the horizontal center of the screen.
5. Create a **UIGravityBehavior** object that's attached to all our labels, and add that to our **animator** property.
6. Create a **UICollisionBehavior** object that's also attached to all our labels, and add that to our **animator** property as well.
7. Make the collision behavior use view bounds as boundaries – i.e., make sure our views stay on the screen.

The easiest place to put this code is inside the **viewDidLayoutSubviews()** method, because at that point our main **UIView** will have its **frame** value set correctly.

So, to finish up you need to add one more method to **WWDCDetailViewController** – I've made the comments match my numbers above:

```
override func viewDidLayoutSubviews() {  
    guard animator == nil else { return }  
  
    // 1: split the message up into words  
    let words = message.components(separatedBy: " ")  
  
    // 2: create an empty array of labels  
    var labels = [UILabel]()  
  
    // 3: convert each word into a label  
    for (index, word) in words.enumerated() {  
        let label = UILabel()  
        label.font = UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .title1)
```

```

    // 4: position the labels one above the other
    label.center = CGPoint(x: view.frame.midX, y: 50 +
CGFloat(30 * index))
    label.text = word
    label.sizeToFit()
    view.addSubview(label)

    labels.append(label)
}

// 5: create a gravity behaviour for our labels
let gravity = UIGravityBehavior(items: labels)
animator = UIDynamicAnimator(referenceView: view)
animator?.addBehavior(gravity)

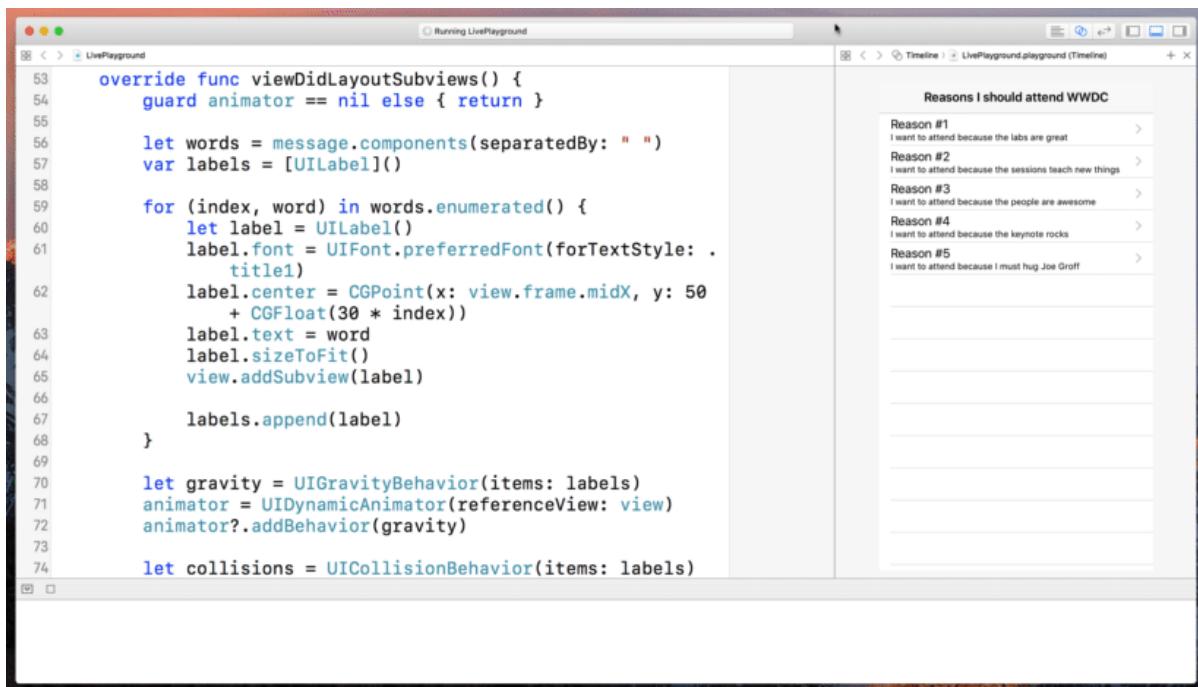
// 6: create a collision behavior for our labels
let collisions = UICollisionBehavior(items: labels)

// 7: give some boundaries for the collisions
collisions.translatesReferenceBoundsIntoBoundary = true
animator?.addBehavior(collisions)
}

```

Note: I added a **guard** statement in there so the method is run only once.

When you run the code now, you should be able to tap a row to see the words fall down and bounce around in the detail view controller – what's not to like?



So, at this point you have a table view, a navigation controller, a detail view being presented with animation, plus some UIKit dynamics – more than enough, I hope, to at least get you out of first gear when it comes to applying for a WWDC scholarship.

As a reminder, Apple really does want to see some sort of technical accomplishment and creativity – you've seen how to create an interactive live view here, but you should aim significantly higher. Don't be afraid to use SpriteKit. Add your own images and audio (within the 25MB limit!). Try to make something delightful, no matter how small.

Good luck!

How to create popover menus using UIPopoverPresentationController

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later

Show a **UIAlertController** action sheet on iPad isn't as easy as on iPhone. The reason for this is simple: on iPhone the action sheet slides up from the bottom, effectively owning the user's attention until it's dismissed, whereas on iPad it could be shown from anywhere. In fact, if you

just try and show one on an iPad like this, your app crashes:

```
let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Hello!", message: "This is a test.", preferredStyle: .actionSheet)
present(ac, animated: true)
```

The solution is to use a **UIPopoverPresentationController**, which gets created for you when you try to access the **popoverPresentationController** property of a **UIAlertController**. With this, you can tell it where to show from (and what view those coordinates relate to) before presenting the action sheet, which makes it work correctly on iPad.

To rewrite the previous lines so they work, you'd do this:

```
let popover = ac.popoverPresentationController
popover?.sourceView = view
popover?.sourceRect = CGRect(x: 32, y: 32, width: 64, height: 64)

present(ac, animated: true)
```

How to customize a view controller's back button on a navigation bar: **backBarButtonItem**

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

When you move between view controllers using **UINavigationController**, it automatically configures a Back button show either “Back” or the title of the previous view controller. That usually works well enough, but if your previous controller has a long title you'll probably want something custom.

This is where the **backBarButtonItem** property comes in: set this to an instance of **UIBarButtonItem** to have UIKit create a back button title of your choosing. You don't need to provide anything for the **target** or **action** parameters of your button, because even with a

custom title it's still just a back button.

Here's some example code:

```
navigationItem.backBarButtonItem = UIBarButtonItem(title: "Cancel", style: .plain, target: nil, action: nil)
```

How to customize swipe edit buttons in a UITableView

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

As of iOS 8.0 there's an easy way to customize the list of buttons that appear when the user swipes from right to left: **editActionsForRowAt**. Return an array of **UITableViewRowAction** objects that have titles and styles (and also background colors if you want to customize their appearance), and iOS does the rest.

When you create a **UITableViewRowAction** object you give it a trailing closure describing what should happen when the user taps the button. You'll get reminded of what action triggered the code, and you'll also be given the index path of the row where the user was tapping. For example, you might do this:

```
func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, editActionsForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> [UITableViewRowAction]? {
    let delete = UITableViewRowAction(style: .destructive, title: "Delete") { (action, indexPath) in
        // delete item at indexPath
    }

    let share = UITableViewRowAction(style: .normal, title: "Disable") { (action, indexPath) in
        // share item at indexPath
    }
}
```

```
share.backgroundColor = UIColor.blue

return [delete, share]
}
```

Note that the first button uses a **.destructive** style so it will be colored red by default, but the second button specifically has a blue color assigned to it.

How to deselect a UITableViewCell using **clearsSelectionOnViewWillAppear**

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

When a user taps a table view row, it automatically gets highlighted by iOS, and frequently we use that action to show another view controller with more detailed information. When the user goes back, though, you probably want their selection to go away so that it doesn't remain selected, and if you're using a **UITableViewController** that's easy to do with **clearsSelectionOnViewWillAppear**

If you set this property to be **true** the user's selected cell will automatically be deselected when they return to the table view. It does this intelligently, though: the row starts selected, and animates to be deselected, meaning that the user gets a brief reminder of the row they tapped before it gets deselected.

How to detect a double tap gesture

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

The iOS **UITapGestureRecognizer** class has a built-in way to detect a double tap on any view. All you need to do is create the recognizer, set its **numberOfTapsRequired** property to 2, then add it to the view you want to monitor.

Here's an example:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    let tap = UITapGestureRecognizer(target: self, action:
#selector(doubleTapped))
    tap.numberOfTapsRequired = 2
    view.addGestureRecognizer(tap)
}

@objc func doubleTapped() {
    // do something here
}
```

How to detect edge swipes

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Detecting pan gestures is easy enough with a regular **UIPanGestureRecognizer**, but there's a special gesture recognizer to use if you want to detect the user swiping from the edge of their screen. The example below demonstrates detecting the user swiping from the left edge of the screen:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    let edgePan = UIScreenEdgePanGestureRecognizer(target: self,
action: #selector(screenEdgeSwiped))
    edgePan.edges = .left

    view.addGestureRecognizer(edgePan)
}
```

```
@objc func screenEdgeSwiped(_ recognizer:  
UIScreenEdgePanGestureRecognizer) {  
    if recognizer.state == .recognized {  
        print("Screen edge swiped!")  
    }  
}
```

How to detect long presses using UILongPressGestureRecognizer

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

UIKit has a dedicated gesture recognizer that can detect and respond to the user pressing and holding on a view. You can configure how many fingers should be used, whether the user needs to tap the screen first, and how much they are allowed to move their finger before the long press is considered to be a panning movement instead.

To get started, create a **UILongPressGestureRecognizer** that points to a method in your view controller:

```
let recognizer = UILongPressGestureRecognizer(target: self,  
action: #selector(longPressHappened))  
view.addGestureRecognizer(recognizer)
```

That will call a method called **longPressHappened()**, which needs to be marked with the **@objc** attribute so it can be called from the Objective-C system.

If you want the user to tap the screen *then* do a long press – i.e., press, release, then long press – set the **numberOfTapsRequired** property to 1 like this:

```
recognizer.numberOfTapsRequired = 1
```

How to detect when the Back button is tapped

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You probably already know that **viewWillDisappear()** is called when a view controller is about to go away, and that's also called when the user taps the Back button in a navigation controller. Problem is, the same method is called when the user moves forward, i.e. when you push another view controller onto the stack.

The solution is simple: create a Boolean property called **goingForwards** in your view controller, and set it to **true** before pushing any view controller onto the navigation stack, then set it back to **false** when the view controller is shown again. This way, when **viewWillDisappear()** is called you can check **goingForwards**: if it's false, the user tapped Back.

How to detect when the user takes a screenshot

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you're showing sensitive data it can be important to know when your user takes a screenshot. Snapchat, for example, automatically notifies participants in a conversation if someone takes a screenshot, effectively letting them know their privacy might have been breached.

The key is to watch for the **.UIApplicationUserDidTakeScreenshot** message to be posted, which will happen whenever a screenshot happens. For example, this runs a **screenshotTaken()** method:

```
NotificationCenter.default.addObserver(self, selector:  
#selector(screenshotTaken), name:  
UIApplication.userDidTakeScreenshotNotification, object: nil)
```

And this just prints a log message instead:

```
NotificationCenter.default.addObserver(forName:  
    UIApplication.userDidTakeScreenshotNotification, object: nil,  
    queue: OperationQueue.main) { notification in  
    print("Screenshot taken!")  
}
```

Use whichever of those two fits your needs best.

How to detect when your size class changes

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

All view controllers have a size class, which is a vague description of how much space is available both horizontally and vertically. These sometimes change when the user rotates their device, but can also change on iPad when they split the screen between two apps in various ways.

If your app needs to respond to size class changes, it's important you implement the **traitCollectionDidChange** method. There you can check the size class of the current trait collection and respond appropriately. For example:

```
override func traitCollectionDidChange(_  
previousTraitCollection: UITraitCollection?) {  
    if traitCollection.horizontalSizeClass == .compact {  
        // load slim view  
    } else {  
        // load wide view  
    }  
}
```

How to dim the screen

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

There is no built-in way to dim the screen unless you're presenting a view controller, at which point iOS dims the background view controller for you.

Instead, if you want to dim stuff you need to do it yourself: create a full-screen **UIView** with a translucent background color (I find 66% black works best) then set its alpha to be 0. When you want things to dim, set the alpha to be 1.

How to draw custom views in Interface Builder using **IBDesignable**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

You've always been able to have custom views inside your apps, but if you're having a hard time visualizing how they look at design time then you should try **@IBDesignable**: it lets you see exactly how your custom views look inside IB, and if you combine it with **@IBInspectable** you can even adjust your view's design there too.

This example view draws an ellipse that fills itself. If you add this to your project, create a view, then set that view to have this custom subclass, you'll see an ellipse appear immediately. You can move the view or resize it, and the ellipse will be updated. Plus, because I used **@IBInspectable** you can adjust the colors and stroke width right inside the attributes inspector, helping you make sure your UI looks exactly as you expect.

```
@IBDesignable class EllipseView: UIView {
    @IBInspectable var strokeWidth: CGFloat = 0
    @IBInspectable var fillColor: UIColor = UIColor.black
    @IBInspectable var strokeColor: UIColor = UIColor.clear

    override func draw(_ rect: CGRect) {
        guard let context = UIGraphicsGetCurrentContext() else
        { return }
        let rectangle = bounds.insetBy(dx: strokeWidth / 2, dy:
```

```

        strokeWidth / 2)

    context.setFillColor(fillColor.cgColor)
    context.setStrokeColor(strokeColor.cgColor)
    context.setLineWidth(strokeWidth)

    context.addEllipse(in: rectangle)
    context.drawPath(using: .fillStroke)
}

}

```

How to draw shapes using UIBezierPath

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

UIBezierPath is a simple and efficient class for drawing shapes using Swift, which you can then put into **CAShapeLayer**, **SKShapeNode**, or other places. It comes with various shapes built in, so you can write code like this to create a rounded rectangle or a circle:

```

let rect = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 256, height: 256)
let roundedRect = UIBezierPath(roundedRect: rect, cornerRadius:
50)
let circle = UIBezierPath(ovalIn: rect)

```

You can also create custom shapes by moving a pen to a starting position then adding lines:

```

let freeform = UIBezierPath()
freeform.move(to: .zero)
freeform.addLine(to: CGPoint(x: 50, y: 50))
freeform.addLine(to: CGPoint(x: 50, y: 150))
freeform.addLine(to: CGPoint(x: 150, y: 50))
freeform.addLine(to: .zero)

```

If your end result needs a **CGPath**, you can get one by accessing the **cgPath** property of your **UIBezierPath**.

How to enable large titles in your navigation bar

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

iOS 11 introduced a new design for navigation bar titles, allowing developers to enable large titles for view controllers that needed to be particularly prominent.

By default these large titles are disabled, but you can enable them with one line of code in your navigation controller's top view controller:

```
navigationController?.navigationBar.prefersLargeTitles = true
```

That will enable large titles for all view controllers that subsequently get pushed, but you can be more selective by adjusting the **navigationItem.largeTitleDisplayMode** property of your view controllers.

For example, if you wanted subsequent view controllers to never use large titles, you would put this into their **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
navigationItem.largeTitleDisplayMode = .never
```

How to find a **UIView** subview using **viewWithTag()**

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you need a quick way to get hold of a view inside a complicated view hierarchy, you're looking for **viewWithTag()** – give it the tag to find and a view to search from, and this method will search all subviews, and all sub-subviews, and so on, until it finds a view with the matching tag number. The method returns an optional **UIView** because it might not find a view

with that tag, so unwrap it carefully.

Here's an example:

```
if let foundView = view.viewWithTag(0xDEADBEEF) {  
    foundView.removeFromSuperview()  
}
```

Easy to remember tags such as **0xDEADBEEF** are quite common amongst coders.

NB: Extensive use of **viewWithTag()** is a sign of code structure. It's good for the occasional shortcut, but really shouldn't be relied on for serious development.

How to find a touch's location in a view with location(in:)

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

When the user starts touching an iOS screen, **touchesBegan()** is immediately called with a set of **UITouches**. If you want to find where the user touched, you need to take one of those touches then use **location(in:)** on it, like this:

```
override func touchesBegan(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event:  
UIEvent?) {  
    if let touch = touches.first {  
        let position = touch.location(in: view)  
        print(position)  
    }  
}
```

That will make **position** a **CGPoint** representing where the user touched in the current view. You can if you want pass a different view to **location(in:)**, and it will tell you where the touch was relative to that other view instead.

How to find an aspect fit image's size inside an image view

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

All images have a natural size, which is the number of pixels they are wide and high. All image views also have a size, which is whatever width and height they have once their Auto Layout constraints have been resolved.

Things get a little more complex when you place an image inside an image view and make it use *aspect fit* content mode – the image gets scaled down to fit inside the image view, so that all parts of the image are visible.

If you need to find the size of an aspect fit image inside its image view, I have just the extension for you:

```
extension UIImageView {
    var contentClippingRect: CGRect {
        guard let image = image else { return bounds }
        guard contentMode == .scaleAspectFit else { return
bounds }

        guard image.size.width > 0 && image.size.height > 0 else
{ return bounds }

        let scale: CGFloat
        if image.size.width > image.size.height {
            scale = bounds.width / image.size.width
        } else {
            scale = bounds.height / image.size.height
        }

        let size = CGSize(width: image.size.width * scale,
height: image.size.height * scale)
        let x = (bounds.width - size.width) / 2.0
        let y = (bounds.height - size.height) / 2.0
    }
}
```

```

        return CGRect(x: x, y: y, width: size.width, height:
size.height)
    }
}

```

You can now use `imageView.contentClippingRect` to read how read the position and size of the image inside.

How to find the view controller responsible for a view

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you need to find the view controller that is responsible for a particular view, the easiest thing to do is walk the responder chain. This chain is built into all iOS apps, and lets you walk from one view up to its parent view, its grandparent view, and so on, until it reaches a view controller. You can even carry on going if you want, up through parent view controllers and ultimately to the app delegate.

To try it out, add this extension to `UIView` to your code:

```

extension UIView {
    func findViewController() -> UIViewController? {
        if let nextResponder = self.next as? UIViewController {
            return nextResponder
        } else if let nextResponder = self.next as? UIView {
            return nextResponder.findViewController()
        } else {
            return nil
        }
    }
}

```

You can now call `findViewController()` on any view, and you'll get back nil or its view

controller.

How to fix Auto Layout problems

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

If your Auto Layout code isn't behaving the way you want, there's a good chance you're seeing Xcode spew errors into its log while your user interface is thoroughly broken. There are a few steps you can take that might help, and I want to walk through each of them here.

First, customize the **identifier** property of each of your constraints. This is a free-text string that can be whatever you want, so use it to give your identifiers meaningful name "Image View aligns its right edge to the title label" for example. When Xcode spits out Auto Layout errors in the future, this identifier will be included so you get a better idea of what's causing the problem.

Second, try calling the **exerciseAmbiguityInLayout()** method of the view that's causing problems. This is a method specifically designed to debugging, and causes a view to randomly shift between all layouts that are possible given the constraints you've applied. If you run this a few times then it should be clear what's causing the issue: if two views vary in their widths, it means your current constraints don't make it clear which is the correct layout.

Third, try creating your constraints in Interface Builder. You don't need to keep them there if you prefer doing things in code, but if you try to create them in IB you'll be able to see visually where the problem is – IB will flag up a warning or error depending on your mistake.

Finally, try pasting Xcode's Auto Layout errors into <http://www.wtfautolayout.com/>. This is a web service that reads Xcode Auto Layout errors and converts them into a graphical representation of what's happened. It won't direct you to the solution, but it might at least help make it clearer.

How to fix incorrect VoiceOver pronunciations

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

As clever as VoiceOver is, sometimes it will get the pronunciation wrong for certain words – particularly when it's missing some context that would have made clear what the correct pronunciation was.

For example, if you have a **UILabel** containing the string “Live” should that be pronounced as “liv” or as “lyve”? Or how about “Read” – is that pronounced as “reed” or “red”? There’s no way for VoiceOver to know unless you tell it.

The official way to do this is by using the **UIAccessibilitySpeechAttributeIPANotation** key in an attributed string, but in practice using that just makes your sounds come out poorly.

An easier way that also produces better results is just to use your own phonetic lettering. For example:

```
label.text = "read"  
label.accessibilityLabel = "red"
```

Using this approach, the screen will show “read” but VoiceOver users will hear “red” – it works for everyone.

There are two places where this approach either won’t be enough or will prove extremely complicated.

First, if you use foreign languages inside your app they will be read out as if they were the user’s primary language. So, French words might be pronounced as if they were English, for example.

Second, if your app uses punctuation that the user needs to hear audibly, the result won’t be what you hoped for. For example, if you write some Swift code like **user.name** that will be interpreted by VoiceOver as “user (pause) name” rather than “user period name”.

Both of these problems can be fixed by using special attributes of **NSMutableAttributedString**. For example, we can specify the language for an attributed string like this:

```

let attributedString1 = NSAttributedString(
    string: "Bonjour", attributes:
[.accessibilitySpeechLanguage: "fr-FR"]
)

label.text = "Bonjour"
label.accessibilityAttributedLabel = attributedString1

```

And we can tell VoiceOver to read all punctuation like this:

```

let attributedString2 = NSAttributedString(
    string: "user.name", attributes:
[.accessibilitySpeechPunctuation: true]
)

label.text = "user.name"
label.accessibilityAttributedLabel = attributedString2

```

Much better!

How to fix the error “Failed to instantiate the default view controller for UIMainStoryboardFile”

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

This error happens due to a simple mistake in your storyboard, and it's easy to fix. When your app starts, iOS needs to know precisely which view controller needs to be shown first – known as your default view controller.

If you accidentally deleted that view controller, or otherwise made it not the default, then you'll see the error “Failed to instantiate the default view controller for UIMainStoryboardFile 'Main' - perhaps the designated entry point is not set?” when your app launches, along with a plain black screen.

To fix the problem, open your Main.storyboard file and find whichever view controller you want to be shown when your app first runs. When it's selected, go to the attributes inspector and check the box marked "Is Initial View Controller". You should see a right-facing arrow appear to the left of that view controller, showing that it's your storyboard's entry point.

How to flip a UIView with a 3D effect: transition(with:)

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

iOS has a built-in way to transition between views, and you can use this to produce 3D flips in just a few lines of code. Here's a basic example that flips between two views:

```
@objc func flip() {
    let transitionOptions: UIView.AnimationOptions =
    [.transitionFlipFromRight, .showHideTransitionViews]

    UIView.transition(with: firstView, duration: 1.0, options:
    transitionOptions, animations: {
        self.firstView.isHidden = true
    })

    UIView.transition(with: secondView, duration: 1.0, options:
    transitionOptions, animations: {
        self.secondView.isHidden = false
    })
}
```

Here's a basic test harness you can use to see that method in action:

```
var firstView: UIView!
var secondView: UIView!

override func viewDidLoad() {
```

```

super.viewDidLoad()

firstView = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: 32, y: 32, width: 128,
height: 128))
secondView = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: 32, y: 32, width: 128,
height: 128))

firstView.backgroundColor = UIColor.red
secondView.backgroundColor = UIColor.blue

secondView.isHidden = true

view.addSubview(firstView)
view.addSubview(secondView)

perform(#selector(flip), with: nil, afterDelay: 2)
}

```

Try experimenting with the different values of **UIView.AnimationOptions** to see what other animations are available.

How to force a UIView to redraw: **setNeedsDisplay()**

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

All views and subclasses are rendered using the **drawRect()** method, but you should never call that method directly yourself. Instead, it gets called by the system whenever drawing is required, which allows it to avoid multiple redraws if **drawRect()** is called several times in a row.

Instead, if you want a view to redraw immediately, you should call its **setNeedsDisplay()** method like this:

```
myButton.setNeedsDisplay()
```

That will ask UIKit to redraw the button using **drawRect()**, but only if a redraw is not already queued.

How to generate haptic feedback with **UIFeedbackGenerator**

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

iOS 10 introduced new ways of generating haptic feedback using predefined vibration patterns shared by all apps, thus helping users understand that various types of feedback carry special significance. The core of this functionality is provided by **UIFeedbackGenerator**, but that's just an abstract class – the three classes you really care about are **UINotificationFeedbackGenerator**, **UIImpactFeedbackGenerator**, and **UISelectionFeedbackGenerator**.

The first of these, **UINotificationFeedbackGenerator**, lets you generate feedback based on three system events: error, success, and warning. The second, **UIImpactFeedbackGenerator**, lets you generate light, medium, and heavy effects that Apple says provide a "physical metaphor that complements the visual experience." Finally, **UISelectionFeedbackGenerator** generates feedback that should be triggered when the user is changing their selection on screen, e.g. moving through a picker wheel.

At this time, only the new Taptic Engine found in the iPhone 7 and iPhone 7 Plus support these APIs. Other devices silently ignore the haptic requests.

To start trying these APIs yourself, create a Single View App template in Xcode, then replace the built-in **ViewController** class with this test harness:

```
import UIKit

class ViewController: UIViewController {
    var i = 0
```

```

override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()

    let btn = UIButton()
    btn.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false

    btn.widthAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant: 128).isActive
= true
    btn.heightAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant:
128).isActive = true
    btn.centerXAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.centerXAnchor).isActive = true
    btn.centerYAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.centerYAnchor).isActive = true

    btn.setTitle("Tap here!", for: .normal)
    btn.setTitleColor(.red, for: .normal)
    btn.addTarget(self, action: #selector(tapped),
for: .touchUpInside)

    view.addSubview(btn)
}

@objc func tapped() {
    i += 1
    print("Running \(i)")

    switch i {
    case 1:
        let generator = UINotificationFeedbackGenerator()
        generator.notificationOccurred(.error)

    case 2:
        let generator = UINotificationFeedbackGenerator()

```

```

        generator.notificationOccurred(.success)

    case 3:
        let generator = UINotificationFeedbackGenerator()
        generator.notificationOccurred(.warning)

    case 4:
        let generator =
UIImpactFeedbackGenerator(style: .light)
        generator.impactOccurred()

    case 5:
        let generator =
UIImpactFeedbackGenerator(style: .medium)
        generator.impactOccurred()

    case 6:
        let generator =
UIImpactFeedbackGenerator(style: .heavy)
        generator.impactOccurred()

default:
        let generator = UISelectionFeedbackGenerator()
        generator.selectionChanged()
        i = 0
    }
}
}

```

When you run that on your phone, pressing the "Tap here!" button cycles through all the vibration options in order.

One tip: because it can take a small amount of time for the system to prepare haptic feedback, Apple recommends you call the **prepare()** method on your generator before triggering the

haptic effect. If you don't do this, and there *is* a slight delay between the visual effect and the matching haptic, it might confuse users more than it helps.

Although you can technically use a success notification feedback for whatever you want, doing so inappropriately may confuse users, particularly those who are heavily reliant on haptic feedback for device interaction. Apple specifically requests that you use them judiciously, that you avoid using the wrong haptic for a given situation, and that you remember not all devices support this new haptic feedback – you need to consider older iPhones too.

How to give UITableViewCells a selected color other than gray

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Ever since iOS 7.0, table view cells have been gray when tapped, even when you specifically told Interface Builder you wanted them to be blue. Don't worry, though: it's an easy thing to change, as long as you don't mind writing three lines of code. Specifically, you need to add something like this to your **cellForRowAt** method:

```
let backgroundView = UIView()
backgroundView.backgroundColor = UIColor.red
cell.selectedBackgroundView = backgroundView
```

You can customize the view as much as you want to, but remember to keep the overall amount of work low to avoid hurting scroll performance.

How to give a UINavigationBar a background image: **setBackgroundImage()**

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

You can call **setBackgroundImage()** on any navigation bar, providing an image to use and the bar metrics you want it to affect, and you're done. Bar metrics left you specify what sizes of

bars you want to change: should this by all bars, just phone-sized bars, or just phone-sized bars on landscape?

Here's an example that changes the navigation bar background image to a file called "navbar-background.png" (you'll want to change that!) across all device sizes:

```
let img = UIImage(named: "navbar-background")
navigationController?.navigationBar.setBackgroundImage(img,
for: .default)
```

How to give a UIStackView a background color

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

You can't do this – **UIStackView** is a non-drawing view, meaning that **drawRect()** is never called and its background color is ignored. If you desperately want a background color, consider placing the stack view inside another **UIView** and giving that view a background color.

How to hide passwords in a UITextField

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

User text in a **UITextField** is visible by default, but you can enable the iOS text-hiding password functionality just by setting your text field's **isSecureTextEntry** property to be true, like this:

```
textField.isSecureTextEntry = true
```

How to hide the home indicator on iPhone X

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

iPhone X did away with the home button for the first time in any iPhone, replacing it with an interactive line that sits at the bottom of the screen called the home indicator.

This indicator always remains visible unless you request others, and generally Apple suggests it's a good idea to keep it visible. At the same time, there are many times when you want full control of the screen to yourself, for example if the user is watching a video, and in those times you're going to want to hide the home indicator.

To hide the home indicator on iPhone X all you need to do is return true from the **prefersHomeIndicatorAutoHidden** property in your view controller. You can add logic if you want, allowing you to hide the home indicator only when certain conditions are reached, or you can just always request it be hidden, like this:

```
override var prefersHomeIndicatorAutoHidden: Bool {  
    return true  
}
```

That will cause the home indicator to be hidden after a couple of seconds, but it will reappear as soon as the user touches the screen.

How to hide the navigation bar using **hidesBarsOnSwipe**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

iOS gives **UINavigationController** a simple property that masks some complex behavior. If you set **hidesBarsOnSwipe** to be true for any **UINavigationController**, then iOS automatically adds a tap gesture recognizer to your view to handle hiding (and showing) the navigation bar as needed. This means you can mimic Safari's navigation bar behavior in just one line of code, like this:

```
navigationController?.hidesBarsOnSwipe = true
```

Remember to set this back to **false** when you want to stop the behavior from happening.

How to hide the navigation bar using **hidesBarsOnTap**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

As of iOS 8.0 it's easy to make a navigation bar automatically hide when the user taps the screen, but only when it's part of a **UINavigationController**. When set to **true**, the **hidesBarsOnTap** property of a navigation controller automatically adds a tap gesture recognizer to your view to handle hiding (and showing) the navigation bar as needed.

Code:

```
navigationController?.hidesBarsOnTap = true
```

Remember to set this back to **false** when you want to stop the behavior from happening.

How to hide the status bar

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

You can hide the status bar in any or all of your view controllers just by adding this code:

```
override var prefersStatusBarHidden: Bool {
    return true
}
```

Any view controller containing that code will hide the status bar by default.

If you want to animate the status bar in or out, just call **setNeedsStatusBarAppearanceUpdate()** on your view controller – that will force **prefersStatusBarHidden** to be read again, at which point you can return a different value. If

you want, your call to **setNeedsStatusBarAppearanceUpdate()** can actually be inside an animation block, which causes the status bar to hide or show in a smooth way.

How to hide the tab bar when a view controller is shown

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

If you're using **UITabBarController** to display a tab strip at the bottom of your user interface, the default behavior for iOS is to display the tabs at all times – even if the user has navigated deep into a **UINavigationController** in one of the tabs.

If you don't want that behavior, you should set **hidesBottomBarWhenPushed** to true where applicable. This will hide the tab bar along with any toolbars you had showing, but only when a view controller is pushed onto the navigation stack. This allows you to show the tab bar at first, then hide it when you need more room.

If you're using segues, the best place to set this property is inside the **prepare(for:)** method, where you configure any other properties in your destination view controller:

```
override func prepare(for segue: UIStoryboardSegue, sender: Any?) {
    self.hidesBottomBarWhenPushed = true
}
```

If you aren't using segues, you will usually need to override the initializer for your view controller and set **hidesBottomBarWhenPushed** to true there, like this:

```
override init(nibName nibNameOrNil: String?, bundle nibBundleOrNil: Bundle?) {
    super.init(nibName: nibNameOrNil, bundle: nibBundleOrNil)
    hidesBottomBarWhenPushed = true
}
```

How to hide your navigation bar when the keyboard shows: `hidesBarsWhenKeyboardAppears`

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Showing the keyboard on an iPhone dramatically reduces how much space you have available, which is particularly annoying if the user is trying to type into a multi-line text view.

One simple way you can free up space is by setting to true the **`hidesBarsWhenKeyboardAppears`** property of your navigation controller – that will cause the navigation bar and any toolbars to hide themselves when the keyboard is shown.

Use this code to enable it:

```
navigationController?.hidesBarsWhenKeyboardAppears = true
```

How to identify your Auto Layout constraints

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Auto Layout constraints a powerful way of expressing your layouts, but when they go wrong they can be hard to debug. Fortunately, all constraints have a built-in **`identifier`** property that you can use to identify them uniquely.

It's an optional string so you don't have to provide anything, but if you *do* set an identifier you'll find it much easier to see where your constraints are going wrong because Xcode will use those identifiers in its debug logs.

If you create your constraints in code, just set the **`identifier`** property to a string as you go – “Main Title Horizontal Center” for example. If you use Interface Builder, you can select any constraint and you'll see a dedicated “Identifier” text property you can fill in.

There is literally no reason not to add identifiers to your constraints – they don't affect your layouts at all, but they do make layout debugging significantly easier!

How to let users tap on a UITableViewCell while editing is enabled

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

As soon as you set the **editing** property of a **UITableView** to be true, its cells stop being tappable. This is often a good idea, because if a user explicitly enabled editing mode they probably want to delete or move stuff, and it's only going to be annoying if they can select rows by accident.

Of course, as always, there are times when you specifically want both actions to be available - for the user to be able to move or delete a cell, and also tap on it to select. If that's the situation you find yourself in right now, here's the line of code you need:

```
tableView.allowsSelectionDuringEditing = true
```

How to limit the number of characters in a UITextField or UITextView

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you have a **UITextField** or **UITextView** and want to stop users typing in more than a certain number of letters, you need to set yourself as the delegate for the control then implement either **shouldChangeCharactersIn** (for text fields) or **shouldChangeTextIn** (for text views).

Next, add one of these two methods, depending on whether you are working with text fields (single line) or text views (multiple lines):

```
func textField(_ textField: UITextField,  
shouldChangeCharactersIn range: NSRange, replacementString  
string: String) -> Bool {  
    let currentText = textField.text ?? ""  
    guard let stringRange = Range(range, in: currentText) else
```

```

    { return false }

    let updatedText = currentText.replacingCharacters(in:
stringRange, with: string)

    return updatedText.count <= 16
}

func textView(_ textView: UITextView, shouldChangeTextIn range:
NSRange, replacementText text: String) -> Bool {
    let currentText = textView.text ?? ""
    guard let stringRange = Range(range, in: currentText) else
    { return false }

    let changedText = currentText.replacingCharacters(in:
stringRange, with: text)

    return changedText.count <= 16
}

```

I've specified 16 as the maximum number of characters, but just change that to whatever you need.

How to load a HTML string into a WKWebView or UIWebView: loadHTMLString()

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you want to generate HTML locally and show it inside your app, it's easy to do in both **UIWebView** and **WKWebView**. First, here's the code for **UIWebView**:

```

let webView1 = UIWebView()
webView1.loadHTMLString("<html><body><p>Hello!</p></body></"

```

```
html>" , baseURL: nil)
```

And now here's the code for **WKWebView**:

```
let webView2 = WKWebView()
webView2.loadHTMLString("<html><body><p>Hello!</p></body></
html>" , baseURL: nil)
```

If you want to load resources from a particular place, such as JavaScript and CSS files, you can set the **baseURL** parameter to any **URL**. This could, for example, be the resource path for your app bundle, which would allow you to use local images and other assets alongside your generated HTML.

How to load a remote image URL into UIImageView

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

UIImageView is designed to load only local images, but with a little work you can make it load remote images too. To get a basic solution, add an extension to **UIImageView** that downloads image data using a GCD background thread, then converts that to a **UIImage**, and loads it back into the image view on the main thread:

```
extension UIImageView {
    func load(url: URL) {
        DispatchQueue.global().async { [weak self] in
            if let data = try? Data(contentsOf: url) {
                if let image = UIImage(data: data) {
                    DispatchQueue.main.async {
                        self?.image = image
                    }
                }
            }
        }
    }
}
```

```
    }  
}
```

Keep in mind that if you try to call that method several times on the same image view - e.g. if you're scrolling through a table – then you're going to hit problems, because multiple images will start downloading.

If you want *that* to work then you should subclass **UIImageView** so you can store the URL that was requested, and compare that URL inside the **load()** function to make sure it hasn't been changed in the time between starting the fetch and loading the image. But if you're that serious, I would suggest using something like SDWebImage instead: <https://github.com/rs/SDWebImage>.

How to localize your iOS app

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Localizing an app – i.e. making it display its user interface in other languages – is surprisingly painless in iOS, and really the only hard part is making sure you get all your text translated by native speakers of your target languages.

There are two steps to creating a localized app. The first is preparing our app to hold strings in different languages – a process known as internationalization, or i18n because it has an “i” then 18 letters then an “n”. Once that’s done, you can go ahead and get all your text placeholders translated into your target languages, which is (strictly speaking) what the term “localization” refers to. Just like “i18n”, you’ll often find localization written as “110n”.

Note: Depending on what your app does, you might need to localize more than just your text strings. Sometimes icons and images have different meanings, and you may need to adjust the way you show dates, numbers, and money.

Xcode uses the concept of *base internationalization* for the default state of your app. This is usually English, but you can change it if you want. You’ve probably noticed a “Base.lproj”

directory inside your project – that's the localized form of your project assets that will be used for your base language. As you add other languages, more of these folders will be created.

To add a new language, go to your project settings. This means selecting your project in the project navigator pane, then selecting it in the projects and targets list. You should see two tabs: Info and Build Settings. Info is the one we want, so please select that now.

The Info tab is where we configured the languages we want for our app, and you should already see “English - Development Language” in the list of localizations. Below that is a + button, so please click that now. A menu will appear asking you what language you'd like to target – I'm going to choose “French (fr)”, but you should choose whichever language you're targeting.

Xcode will ask which files should be used to create the French localization. Leave both storyboard selected, then click Finish. Xcode will now create directories similar to “en.lproj” and “fr.lproj” depending on which language you chose, and in there will be strings files for the storyboards you selected when creating the localization.

Localizing text you create in code

Go to the File menu and choose New > File, then select Strings File from the list of file types and click Next. Give this file the name “Localizable.strings”, then click Create to open it for editing.

By default this new file won't be enabled for l10n, but if you activate the file inspector (Alt+Cmd+1) you should be able to find and click the Localize button. This will ask you what language this file should be moved to, but it's empty so it doesn't matter what you choose – I went for English. When you dismiss the dialog you'll see the Localize button has been replaced with checkboxes for your available languages – please check them both.

Once both languages are selected you'll see a disclosure indicator appear next to Localizable.strings in your project navigator. This is because it's now available in both our languages: if you open that indicator arrow you'll see “Localizable.strings (English)” and “Localizable.strings (French)”, both as separate text files you can edit. I'd like you to choose the English variant to start with.

Strings files are trivial little things: you can (and should!) add comments describing what things mean, but most of the time you'll just be adding key value pairs like this:

```
"Hello" = "Hello";  
"Buy" = "Buy this book";  
"Register" = "Register for a new account";
```

On the left is the *name* of the string you want to localize. This is what you'll use to reference each string in your code, so it needs to be unique. On the right is the English text you want to associate with this string name. This is what you'll get back when you load the string key.

However, we're not going to add to our strings files directly. Instead, I'd like you to open ViewController.swift and give it this code:

```
let buttonTitle = NSLocalizedString("bear", comment: "The name  
of the animal")  
print(buttonTitle)
```

NSLocalizedString is a central function in localization, and causes Xcode to look up the meaning of “bear” in the current localization. We haven’t defined how to say “bear” in French yet, but we *have* defined a comment: “The name of the animal”.

I chose “bear” specifically because it has several meanings in English – it could mean carrying weight, it could mean giving birth, it could mean “turn” as in “turn left”, and it could mean the large carnivorous animal. This comment does nothing in our code, but it *does* help guide translators to know which meaning we’re referring to.

Now, you *could* go ahead and start entering key-value pairs into your strings file, but there’s a much easier way: we can run a program to do it for us.

Open your Mac’s Terminal app, then change into the directory where your project’s ViewController.swift file is. Now run this command: **genstrings -o en.lproj *.swift** – that means “read all Swift files for localized strings, then write them out to the localized strings file for the English project.”

When that command completes (it will only take a fraction of a second), you should see the

following in the English version of Localizable.strings:

```
/* The name of the animal */  
"bear" = "bear";
```

Now you can see the importance of adding comments to each **NSLocalizedString()** call – it will automatically get used to generate your localization data.

Repeat the command, this time for French: **genstrings -o fr.lproj *.swift**. This time we need to change the resulting file, because bear in French is not “bear”. So, open “Localizable Strings (French)” and give it this content:

```
/* The name of the animal */  
"bear" = "l'ours";
```

Notice that the string on the left doesn’t change – that’s the *name* of our string, and is mostly for internal use only.

Tip: If you try to load a localization string name that doesn’t exist, UIKit will show the key name itself to your user.

Now that we have something to localize, go ahead and run your app. If you’re using English you should see “bear” printed out, but if you change to French you’ll see “l’ours”.

Tip: You can switch between languages by going to the Product menu, holding down the Alt key, then choosing “Run...” Look under the Options tab and you’ll see Application Language is set to System Language by default, but you can change to others there for testing purposes.

Localizing text you create in storyboards

First, go ahead and give all your UI elements whatever natural text makes sense in your base localization. For example, this might mean giving all your labels English text.

Second, select one of your UI elements and look in the identity inspector for its Object ID. This will be a series of random letters and numbers that identify this element uniquely, e.g. “XVt-6R-OJ3”. Select that text, then copy it to your clipboard.

Third, open “Main.strings (French)”, which is the localized version of Main.storyboard’s strings for French speakers. Give it this content:

```
"XVt-6R-OJ3.text" = "Bonjour!";
```

You should change the “XVt-6R-OJ3” part to whatever object ID you copied to your clipboard.

And that’s it: that string will now dynamically be replaced with “Bonjour” at runtime for French speakers.

How to lock a view controller’s orientation using supportedInterfaceOrientations

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

At the project level you can configure which orientations your whole app should support, but sometimes you want individual view controllers to support a subset of those. For example, you might want most of your app to work in any orientation, but one part to work specifically in portrait.

To configure this, you need to override the **supportedInterfaceOrientations** property in your **UIViewController** subclass, returning whichever orientations you want. Probably the most common use for this is to support all orientations for iPads, but **.allButUpsideDown** on iPhone.

Here’s some example code doing just that:

```
override var supportedInterfaceOrientations:  
UIInterfaceOrientationMask {  
    if UIDevice.current.userInterfaceIdiom == .phone {  
        return .allButUpsideDown  
    } else {  
        return .all
```

```
    }  
}
```

How to make UICollectionView headers stay fixed using sectionHeadersPinToVisibleBounds

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

Since the earliest days of iOS, **UITableView** has had fixed headers: as you scrolled within a table section the header stayed still, only moving off when another section reached the top.

This same functionality was added for **UICollectionView** in iOS 9.0, although it's not enabled by default and only available with **UICollectionViewFlowLayout**.

To use it yourself, first make sure your collection view's **collectionViewLayout** property is an instance of **UICollectionViewFlowLayout**, then set that flow layout's **sectionHeadersPinToVisibleBounds** property to true. For example, you might write this:

```
if let layout = collectionView.collectionViewLayout as?  
UICollectionViewFlowLayout {  
    layout.sectionHeadersPinToVisibleBounds = true  
}
```

There's a similar property to make footers behave the same way:
sectionFootersPinToVisibleBounds.

How to make UITableViewCell separators go edge to edge

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

All table view cells have a separator underneath them by default, and that separator likes to start a little way from the left edge of the screen for stylistic reasons. If this clashes with your

own personal aesthetic, you might *think* it's easy to remove but Apple has made the matter quite confused by changing its mind more than once.

If you absolutely, definitely want to remove the separator inset from all cells, you need to do two things. First, add these two lines of code to your table view controller's **viewDidLoad()** method:

```
tableView.layoutMargins = UIEdgeInsets.zero  
tableView.separatorInset = UIEdgeInsets.zero
```

Now look for you **cellForRowAtIndex** method and add this:

```
cell.layoutMargins = UIEdgeInsets.zero
```

Done!

How to make UITableViewCells auto resize to their content

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Since iOS 11, table view cells automatically resize to fit their content as long as your cells use Auto Layout to configure themselves. For example, if you use the built-in Basic style for your cell prototype, all you need to do is change the Lines property to 0 for its label and the cell will grow as needed.

Tip: If you find your cells *aren't* autosizing, go to the size inspector with your table view selected then check "Automatic" next to both Row Height and Estimate.

The situation is slightly more complicated when you want some cells to be autosized and others not. To make this work you should add two methods to your table view controller, **heightForRowAtIndex** and **estimatedHeightForRowAtIndex**, then make them both return the special value **UITableView.automaticDimension** for the cells you want to be sized automatically.

In case you're still not sure, here's some example code. This demonstrates a fairly common

scenario where you want some important cells at the start to show all their content, but cells in subsequent sections to get clipped:

```
func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, heightForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> CGFloat {
    if indexPath.section == 0 {
        return UITableView.automaticDimension
    } else {
        return 40
    }
}

override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView,
estimatedHeightForRowAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> CGFloat {
    if indexPath.section == 0 {
        return UITableView.automaticDimension
    } else {
        return 40
    }
}
```

How to make **UIViewControllerAnimated** scrub with a custom curve: **scrubsLinearly**

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

UIViewControllerAnimated is an incredibly easy way to build custom animations on iOS, making it trivial to support scrubbable, reversible animations. However, by default scrubbing behaves differently from your regular animation: scrubbing always happens linearly, even if your animation was performed using a curve such as ease-in-ease-out.

This is actually a feature rather than a bug, and it's incredibly intelligent – iOS automatically maps your curve onto a linear animation at the same point, and does the same in reverse,

because it can be confusing for users if they try to scrub an animation and it doesn't follow their finger.

On the flip side, of you're scrubbing an animation programmatically this behavior isn't always desirable. Fortunately, iOS 11 introduced a **scrubsLinearly** property for **UIViewControllerAnimated**: set this to false to make scrubbing retain your custom animation curve.

The default setting is true, which makes **UIViewControllerAnimated** continue working like it did on iOS 10. To change it, just add this code:

```
animator.scrubsLinearly = false
```

How to make a UIView fill the screen using Auto Layout anchors

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

You can make one view fill all available space inside another by pinning all four of its anchors to the same anchors in its parent container. If you use this when the parent container is the view for your view controller, your child view will fill the screen.

Although it takes only four lines of code, this is the sort of thing I'd put into an extension:

```
extension UIView {
    func pinEdges(to other: UIView) {
        leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
            other.leadingAnchor).isActive = true
        trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
            other.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
        topAnchor.constraint(equalTo: other.topAnchor).isActive =
            true
        bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
            other.bottomAnchor).isActive = true
    }
}
```

```
}
```

You can now call `pinEdges(to: someOtherView)` directly on the view you want to adjust.

How to make a background image run under the safe area

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

Broadly speaking it's important to place your views so they are inside the safe area layout guide, but there are some occasions when you want to ignore that and have some that run *under* the safe area. Apple's Weather app, for example, goes edge to edge with background weather graphics, then places the important content inside the safe area.

This is easy enough to accomplish: just make sure your background view goes edge to edge using your main view's leading, trailing, top, and bottom anchors, then use the safe area layout guide's anchors for your foreground view.

Here's how that looks in code:

```
let background = UIView()
background.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
background.backgroundColor = .red
view.addSubview(background)

let foreground = UIView()
foreground.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
foreground.backgroundColor = .blue
view.addSubview(foreground)

background.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.leadingAnchor).isActive = true
background.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
background.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
```

```
view.topAnchor).isActive = true  
background.bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.bottomAnchor).isActive = true  
  
foreground.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.leadingAnchor).isActive = true  
foreground.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.trailingAnchor).isActive = true  
foreground.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.topAnchor).isActive = true  
foreground.bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.bottomAnchor).isActive = true
```

How to make a button glow when tapped with showsTouchWhenHighlighted

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you want an easy way to let users know when a **UIButton** was tapped, try setting its **showsTouchWhenHighlighted** property to be true. This will render a circular glow effect behind the button when it's tapped, which is particularly effective on text-only buttons.

Here's the code:

```
btn.showsTouchWhenHighlighted = true
```

If you're using Interface Builder, look for and check the "Shows touch when highlighted" option for your button.

How to make a clear button appear in a textfield

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you want to let users clear their entry on a **UITextField**, the standard approach is to add a clear button to the right edge of the text field. This can be done in two ways, depending on what effect you want:

```
textField.clearButtonMode = .always  
textField.clearButtonMode = .whileEditing
```

The first will always show the clear button, and the second will only show it while the user is editing the text.

How to make gesture recognizers work together using `require(toFail:)`

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

It's common to have multiple gesture recognizers attached to a single view, all doing different things depending on the user's taps on your screen. By default, iOS lets them fight for control, but usually you want to execute them in some sort of particular order: one gesture should only be matched if another failed.

For example, here are two gesture recognizers that exist on the same view:

```
let swipe = UISwipeGestureRecognizer(target: self, action:  
#selector(executeSwipe))  
let tap = UITapGestureRecognizer(target: self, action:  
#selector(executeTap))  
  
view.addGestureRecognizer(swipe)  
view.addGestureRecognizer(tap)
```

A swipe gesture is a tap followed by a linear movement, whereas a tap is just a tap – we need to make sure the swipe gesture has definitely not been recognizer before the tap gesture is

checked.

iOS often does a fairly good job of this, but there's no need to leave it up to chance: if you call `require(toFail:)` on the tap gesture recognizer, passing in the swipe recognizer, iOS will definitely make sure they don't compete:

```
tap.require(toFail: swipe)
```

How to make the master pane always visible in a UISplitViewController

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Split view controllers on iPad have an automatic display mode, which means in landscape both the left and right view controllers are visible, but in portrait the left view controller slides over and away as needed.

If this isn't preferable – if, for example, you want to mimic the way the Settings app works in portrait – you can force both view controllers to be visible at all times like this:

```
yourSplitViewController.preferredDisplayMode = .allVisible
```

How to make your user interface in code

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

Creating your user interface in code gives you the flexibility to build things conditionally, to step through problems in a debugger, to re-use components more easily, and to monitor changes more closely in source control. On the flip side, you lose features like easy segues, static cell design in table views, the ability to preview on multiple devices simultaneously, and more.

However, I'm going to assume you've already decided you want to make your UI in code, so let's take a look at how it's done:

Often you'll see code like this inside the `viewDidLoad()` method of a view controller:

```
backgroundColor = UIColor(white: 0.9, alpha: 1)

let stackView = UIStackView()
stackView.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
stackView.spacing = 10
view.addSubview(stackView)

stackView.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.topAnchor).isActive = true
stackView.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.leadingAnchor).isActive = true
stackView.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
stackView.axis = .vertical

let notice = UILabel()
notice.numberOfLines = 0
notice.text = "Your child has attempted to share the following
photo from the camera:"
stackView.addArrangedSubview(notice)

let imageView = UIImageView(image: shareImage)
stackView.addArrangedSubview(imageView)

let prompt = UILabel()
prompt.numberOfLines = 0
prompt.text = "What do you want to do?"
stackView.addArrangedSubview(prompt)
```

```

for option in ["Always Allow", "Allow Once", "Deny", "Manage
Settings"] {
    let button = UIButton(type: .system)
    button.setTitle(option, for: .normal)
    stackView.addSubview(button)
}

```

That's a complex user interface, but if you're writing that sort of thing inside your **viewDidLoad()** method you're making a terrible mistake. In fact, if you write that kind of code and you aren't just prototyping or learning something, then you lose all rights to complain that your view controllers are massive later on.

All the code above – literally all of it – is *view* code, and needs to be treated as such. It is not controller code, and even with Apple's muddled definition of MVC it is not *view controller* code either. It's view code, and belongs in a subclass of **UIView**.

This change is trivial to make: you copy all that code, paste it into a new subclass of **UIView** called **SharePromptView**, then change the class of your view controller to your new subclass.

The final **SharePromptView** class should look something like this:

```

class SharePromptView: UIView {
    override init(frame: CGRect) {
        super.init(frame: frame)
        createSubviews()
    }

    required init?(coder aDecoder: NSCoder) {
        super.init(coder: aDecoder)
        createSubviews()
    }

    func createSubviews() {
        // all the layout code from above
    }
}

```

```
}
```

All **UIView** subclasses must implement **init(coder:)**, but as you're creating your UI in code you will also need to add **init(frame:)**. The **createSubviews()** method is there to support both.

Thanks to that custom **UIView** subclass you can now take a huge amount of code out of your view controller:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController {
    var shareView = SharePromptView()

    override func loadView() {
        view = shareView
    }

    override func viewDidLoad() {
        super.viewDidLoad()
    }
}
```

Having a dedicated **shareView** property allows you to access any properties you declare inside **SharePromptView** without having to keep casting **view**.

How to mask one **UIView** using another **UIView**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

All views have a **mask** property that allows you to cut out parts depending on what you need. This mask can be any other kind of **UIView**, so you could for example use a label to cut out an image view.

To try it out, first create a view with some obvious content such as a background color:

```
let redView = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: 50, y: 50, width: 128,
```

```
height: 128))  
redView.backgroundColor = .red  
view.addSubview(redView)
```

Now create your mask as a separate **UIView**. Although it won't be directly visible you should give this either a background color or some other content because the alpha channel of this mask determines what shows through in the original view.

To demonstrate this, here's a mask view that's the same size as the original view, but it's offset 64 pixels to the right and has a 64-point corner radius. When used as a mask for the previous view it will have the effect of turning it into a semi-circle:

```
let maskView = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: 64, y: 0, width: 128,  
height: 128))  
maskView.backgroundColor = .blue  
maskView.layer.cornerRadius = 64  
redView.mask = maskView
```

The blue background color won't be visible – that's just there to make sure all pixels in the mask are opaque.

How to measure touch strength using 3D Touch

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

You can read a user's 3D Touch strength using the **force** property of a **UITouch**, which is best used when compared against the **touch.maximumPossibleForce**. For example, you can divide one into the other to see how much relative strength is applied, or do a straight comparison to check to see whether the user is pressing as hard as possible.

Before you try to make use of 3D Touch, make sure it's available by checking the **forceTouchCapability** of your current trait collection. Here's an example **touchesMoved()** implementation that checks whether 3D Touch is available and the user is pressing hard:

```

override func touchesMoved(_ touches: Set<UITouch>, with event: UIEvent?) {
    super.touchesMoved(touches, with: event)

    if let touch = touches.first {
        if view.traitCollection.forceTouchCapability == .available {
            if touch.force == touch.maximumPossibleForce {
                // user pressed hard – do something!
            }
        }
    }
}

```

How to move to the next UITextField when the user presses return

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you're in a situation where your iOS app has multiple **UITextField** instances lined up, users expect to be able to move between them by pressing Next/Return on their on-screen keyboard. There is no built-in way of making this happen, so we need to write code ourselves using one of several approaches.

The easiest approach is using view tags: give your text fields incrementing tag numbers, then make them all point to a common delegate – it might be your view controller, but it doesn't need to be.

Once that's done you can use the **becomeFirstResponder()** and **resignFirstResponder()** methods to manipulate which view is in control like this:

```

func textFieldShouldReturn(_ textField: UITextField) -> Bool {
    let nextTag = textField.tag + 1

```

```

if let nextResponder =
    textField.superview?.viewWithTag(nextTag) {
    nextResponder.becomeFirstResponder()
} else {
    textField.resignFirstResponder()
}

return true
}

```

If you're desperately opposed to using tags, the other solution is to place your labels in an array, find the position of the text field that triggered the event, then move one down in the array.

Note: If you ever need to force the first responder to resign itself and aren't sure which text field is in control, it's easier to use `view.endEditing(true)`.

How to pad a UITextView by setting its text container inset

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

You can force the text of any `UITextView` to have padding – i.e., to be indented from its edges – by setting its `textContainerInset` property to a value of your choosing. For example, to give a text view insets of 50 points from each edge, you would use this code:

```
textView.textContainerInset = UIEdgeInsets(top: 50, left: 50,
bottom: 50, right: 50)
```

How to perform a segue programmatically using `performSegue()`

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

Segues are a visual way to connect various components on your storyboard, but sometimes it's important to be able to trigger them programmatically as well as after a user interaction.

Fortunately, it only takes two steps. First, select a segue in your storyboard, then go to the attributes inspector and give it a name such as "showDetail".

Now head to your Swift code, to the place where you want to trigger the segue you just named. The method you need to call is **performSegue()**, which exists on all view controllers: pass it a segue identifier as well as whatever object you want to send along, and you're done:

```
performSegue(withIdentifier: "showDetail", sender: nil)
```

Technically the **sender** parameter is whatever triggered the segue, but you can put whatever you want in there.

How to position a view using Auto Layout anchors

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

Auto Layout anchors make it easy to position your views relative to others. There are lots of anchors to choose from: leading and trailing edges, top and bottom edges, center X and center Y, and more.

To try it out, first create a view something like this:

```
let child = UIView()
child.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
child.backgroundColor = .red
view.addSubview(child)
```

Now we can position that view by activating various anchors. For example, we could pin it to the top and bottom edges of the screen, make it precisely 128 points wide, then center it horizontally:

```
child.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.topAnchor).isActive = true  
child.bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.bottomAnchor).isActive = true  
child.widthAnchor.constraint(equalToConstant: 128).isActive =  
true  
child.centerXAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.centerXAnchor).isActive = true
```

To explore anchors further, try typing **child.anchor** and exploring the code completion options.

How to print using UIActivityViewController

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

Printing in iOS used to be done using **UIPrintInteractionController**, and, while that still works, it has a much better replacement in the form of **UIActivityViewController**. This new class is responsible for taking a wide variety of actions of which printing is just one, but users can also tweet, post to Facebook, send by email, and any other action that has been registered by another app.

If you have a **UIImage** you want to print, you can just pass it in. If you want to print text, you can wrap it inside an **NSAttributedString** with some formatting, then place that inside a **UISimpleTextPrintFormatter** object, then print *that* – iOS automatically takes care of pagination, margins and more.

Below are two example functions that print an image and some text to help get you started:

```
func share(image: UIImage) {  
    let vc = UIActivityViewController(activityItems: [image],  
applicationActivities: [])  
    present(vc, animated: true)
```

```

}

func share(text: String) {
    let attrs = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:
UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 72),
NSAttributedString.Key.foregroundColor: UIColor.red]
    let str = NSAttributedString(string: text, attributes:
attrs)
    let print = UISimpleTextPrintFormatter(attributedText: str)

    let vc = UIActivityViewController(activityItems: [print],
applicationActivities: nil)
    present(vc, animated: true)
}

```

How to put a background picture behind UITableViewController

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

You can put any type of **UIView** behind a table view, and iOS automatically resizes it to fit the table. So, adding a background picture is just a matter of using a **UIImageView** like this:

```
tableView.backgroundView = UIImageView(image: UIImage(named:
"taylor-swift"))
```

How to read a title from a UIPickerView using titleForRow

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

As soon as you start using **UIPickerView** for the first time, you realize it doesn't have a built-in way to read the title of any of its items. The reason for this is obvious in retrospect, but don't

worry if you didn't get it at first: you should read the title straight from the picker's data source.

You should already have conformed to the **UIPickerViewDataSource** and **UIPickerViewDelegate** protocols, which means implementing the **titleForRow** picker view method. If you want to read the title of the selected item later, you can do one of the following:

- Read straight from the array you used to populate the picker view. This is the most common method, but of course it only works if the data is simple.
- Write a new method named something like **titleForPickerRow()** that you can use in your data source and to read the title later. This is preferred if it takes some work to calculate row titles, but really it's better to cache this kind of thing if the work is non-trivial.
- Use the same method call as the picker view:
pickerView(_:titleForRow:forComponent:). Yes, that just calls the method you implemented, but it's neat and self-describing so as long as your data doesn't take time to calculate this is fine to use.

If you want to try the last option, here's some example code:

```
let title = pickerView(yourPickerView, titleForRow: 0,  
forComponent: 0)
```

How to read the battery level of an iPhone or iPad

Availability: iOS or later.

iOS lets you track the battery level and status of the device you're running on, which is helpful if you're overlaying some sort of battery indicator over your user interface. You could even write a trivial app to detect power outages just by plugging in a spare phone then waiting for the charge state to change.

To get started, first enable the **isBatteryMonitoringEnabled** property of the current device, like this:

```
UIDevice.current.isBatteryMonitoringEnabled = true
```

You can now read the current battery level as a value between 0.0 (flat) and 1.0 (fully charged) using this:

```
let level = UIDevice.current.batteryLevel
```

If you want to be notified every time the battery level changes you can register for the **UIDeviceBatteryLevelDidChange** notification (sent up to once a minute), and you can also register for **UIDeviceBatteryStateDidChange** notification to see when the charge state changes. Both of those require **isBatteryMonitoringEnabled** to be enabled.

How to read the interface orientation: portrait or landscape?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Apple generally doesn't want developers to think about things like "portrait" and "landscape" because devices come in a range of sizes, and in the case of iPad you get slide over and split view on top. However, sometimes it's just *useful*, particularly on iPhone where the difference between portrait and landscape is huge.

If you just want to read the *current* interface orientation you can do so using **UIApplication.shared.statusBarOrientation**, which will contain a value such as **.portraitUpsideDown**. Alternatively, you can use its **isLandscape** and **isPortrait** properties to check for both values of landscape or both values of portrait at once.

If you want your interface to adapt every time the user moves between landscape and portrait, you should check **UIApplication.shared.statusBarOrientation** inside the **willTransition(to:)** method, which is triggered when the trait collection of your app changes.

Something like this ought to do the trick:

```
override func willTransition(to newCollection:  
UITraitCollection, with coordinator:
```

```

UIViewControllerAnimatedTransitionCoordinator) {
    coordinator.animate(alongsideTransition: { context in
        if UIApplication.shared.statusBarOrientation.isLandscape
        {
            // activate landscape changes
        } else {
            // activate portrait changes
        }
    })
}
}

```

How to recolor UIImageViews using template images and withRenderingMode()

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Template images are the iOS 7.0 way of tinting any kind of image when it's inside a **UIImageView**. This is usually used to mimic the tinting of button images (as seen in toolbars and tab bars) but it works anywhere you want to dynamically recolor an image.

To get started, load an image then call **withRenderingMode()** on it, like this:

```

if let myImage = UIImage(named: "myImage") {
    let tintableImage =
    myImage.withRenderingMode(.alwaysTemplate)
    imageView.image = tintableImage
}

```

The tint color of a **UIImageView** is the standard iOS 7 blue by default, but you can change it easily enough:

```
imageView.tintColor = UIColor.red
```

How to register a cell for UICollectionView reuse

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

If you're working entirely in code, you can register a **UICollectionViewCell** subclass for use with your collection view, so that new cells are dequeued and re-use automatically by the system.

Here's the most basic form of this technique:

```
collectionView.register(UICollectionViewCell.self,  
forCellWithReuseIdentifier: "Cell")
```

That registers a basic collection view cell, which you can then customize in code if you want to. You can then dequeue a cell with this:

```
func collectionView(_ collectionView: UICollectionView,  
cellForItemAt indexPath: IndexPath) -> UICollectionViewCell {  
    let cell =  
collectionView.dequeueReusableCell(withReuseIdentifier: "Cell",  
for: indexPath)  
    return cell  
}
```

If a cell doesn't already exist that can be re-used, a new one will be created automatically.

As you might imagine, you will most of the time want to create your own custom **UICollectionViewCell** subclass and use that instead, but the code is the same – just use your class name instead.

If you're working with Interface Builder, all this work is done for you by creating prototype cells.

How to register a cell for UITableViewCell reuse

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

Reusing table view cells has been one of the most important performance optimizations in iOS ever since iOS 2.0, but it was only with iOS 6.0 that the API got cleaned up a little with the addition of the **register()** method.

There are two variants to **register**, but both take a parameter called **forCellReuseIdentifier**, which is a string that lets you register different kinds of table view cells. For example, you might have a reuse identifier "DefaultCell", another one called "Heading cell", another one "CellWithTextField", and so on. Re-using different cells this way helps save system resources.

If you want to use **register()** with a Swift class, you provide a table view cell class as its first parameter. This is useful if your cell is defined entirely in code. As an example, this uses the default **UITableViewCell** class:

```
tableView.register(UITableViewCell.self,  
forCellReuseIdentifier: "DefaultCell")
```

The other option is to use **register()** with an Interface Builder nib file, like this:

```
tableView.register(UINib(nibName: "yourNib", bundle: nil),  
forCellReuseIdentifier: "CellFromNib")
```

Regardless of which option you choose, you can dequeue your cells like this:

```
func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, cellForRowAt  
indexPath: IndexPath) -> UITableViewCell {  
    let cell = tableView.dequeueReusableCell(withIdentifier:  
"DefaultCell")!  
    return cell  
}
```

If there aren't any cells created that can be reused, iOS will automatically create them – this

API really is very easy.

Although knowing the above code is definitely useful, if you're using storyboards you will find it easier to create prototype cells and give them a reuse identifier directly inside Interface Builder.

How to remove a UIView from its superview with `removeFromSuperview()`

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you created a view dynamically and want it gone, it's a one-liner in Swift thanks to the `removeFromSuperview()` method. When you call this, the view gets removed immediately and possibly also destroyed – it will only be kept around if you have a reference to it elsewhere. Here's how it's done:

```
yourView.removeFromSuperview()
```

How to remove cells from a UITableView

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

It's easy to delete rows from a table view, but there is one catch: you need to remove it from the data source first. If you don't do this, iOS will realize there's a mis-match between what the data source thinks should be showing and what the table view is actually showing, and you'll get a crash.

So, to remove a cell from a table view you first remove it from your data source, then you call `deleteRows(at:)` on your table view, providing it with an array of index paths that should be zapped. You can create index paths yourself, you just need a section and row number.

Here's some example code to get you started:

```
objects.remove(at: 0)
let indexPath = IndexPath(item: 0, section: 0)
tableView.deleteRows(at: [indexPath], with: .fade)
```

How to render PDFs using **UIGraphicsPDFRenderer**

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

UIKit comes with a built-in class for rendering PDFs, and you can render strings, attributed strings, images, and more right to PDF pages. To get started, just create an instance of **UIGraphicsPDFRenderer** with the paper size you want, then call its **pdfData()** method and pass in your drawing instructions. You get back a **Data** object, which you can then write to disk however you want.

Let's work through some example code so you can try it out. First, pick a paper size:

```
// A4 size
let pageRect = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 595.2, height: 841.8)

// Use this to get US Letter size instead
// let pageRect = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 612, height: 792)
```

Next, use that size to create a **UIGraphicsPDFRenderer**:

```
let renderer = UIGraphicsPDFRenderer(bounds: pageRect)
```

Third, decide what you want to render. I'm going to render some attributed text as if we were printing an essay:

```
let title = "School report\n"
let text = String(repeating: "This is an important report about
the weather. ", count: 20)
```

```
let titleAttributes = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:  
UIFont.boldSystemFont(ofSize: 36)]  
let textAttributes = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:  
UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 12)]  
  
let formattedTitle = NSMutableAttributedString(string: title,  
attributes: titleAttributes)  
let formattedText = NSAttributedString(string: text,  
attributes: textAttributes)  
formattedTitle.append(formattedText)
```

Once you have your content ready, call **pdfData()** on your renderer, begin a new page, then render as much as you want:

```
let data = renderer.pdfData { ctx in  
    ctx.beginPage()  
  
    formattedTitle.draw(in: pageRect.insetBy(dx: 50, dy: 50))  
}
```

As you can see, I've inset my formatted text by 50 points on all side, which should be enough to allow printers to print it accurately.

Finally, save **data** somewhere as your finished PDF file.

How to render an NSAttributedString to a PDF

Availability: iOS 4.2 or later.

Attributed strings contain all the formatting they need to go straight to images, PDFs, and other visual output, although it does take a little setup to get a good PDF out.

First, create your attributed string:

```
let attributedString = NSAttributedString(string: "This is a test", attributes: [NSAttributedString.Key.foregroundColor: UIColor.red])
```

Next, wrap that inside a **UISimpleTextPrintFormatter**, which is responsible for layout out that string over as many pages as needed:

```
let printFormatter = UISimpleTextPrintFormatter(attributedText: attributedString)
```

You can then put that formatter inside a page renderer, telling it to start printing at page 0:

```
let renderer = UIPrintPageRenderer()
renderer.addPrintFormatter(printFormatter, startingAtPageAt: 0)
```

Next you need to define a few sizes: how big your paper size is, along with what margins you want.

```
// A4 size
let pageSize = CGSize(width: 595.2, height: 841.8)

// Use this to get US Letter size instead
// let pageSize = CGSize(width: 612, height: 792)

// create some sensible margins
let pageMargins = UIEdgeInsets(top: 72, left: 72, bottom: 72,
right: 72)

// calculate the printable rect from the above two
let printableRect = CGRect(x: pageMargins.left, y:
pageMargins.top, width: pageSize.width - pageMargins.left -
pageMargins.right, height: pageSize.height - pageMargins.top -
pageMargins.bottom)

// and here's the overall paper rectangle
```

```
let paperRect = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: pageSize.width,  
height: pageSize.height)
```

You can now pass the paper and printable rectangles to the page renderer, like this:

```
renderer.setValue(NSValue(cgRect: paperRect), forKey:  
"paperRect")  
renderer.setValue(NSValue(cgRect: printableRect), forKey:  
"printableRect")
```

The next step is to create an empty instance of **NSMutableData**, then ask UIKit to render into that data object:

```
let pdfData = NSMutableData()  
  
UIGraphicsBeginPDFContextToData(pdfData, paperRect, nil)  
renderer.prepare(forDrawingPages: NSMakeRange(0,  
renderer.numberOfPages))
```

Now all that remains is to render draw each page into the bounds of the PDF context, like this:

```
let bounds = UIGraphicsGetPDFContextBounds()  
  
for i in 0 ..< renderer.numberOfPages {  
    UIGraphicsBeginPDFPage()  
  
    renderer.drawPage(at: i, in: bounds)  
}  
  
UIGraphicsEndPDFContext()
```

At this point your **pdfData** value contains the finished PDF, so you can write it wherever you want:

```
do {
```

```
    try pdfData.write(to: yourURL)
} catch {
    print(error.localizedDescription)
}
```

How to render shadows using NSShadow and setShadow()

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

There are two ways to add shadows when rendering images: calling `setShadow()` and providing offset, blur, and color, or by using an `NSShadow` attached to an attributed string. Both have their own advantages, so both are worth trying.

First, here's some example drawing code without a shadow:

```
let rect = CGRect(x: 0, y: 0, width: 512, height: 256)
let renderer = UIGraphicsImageRenderer(bounds: rect)

let img = renderer.image { ctx in
    UIColor.black.set()
    ctx.fill(rect)

    let str = """
    He thrusts his fists
    Against the posts
    And still insists
    He sees the ghosts
    """
}

let attrs: [NSAttributedString.Key: Any] = [
    .font: UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 36),
    .foregroundColor: UIColor.white
]
```

```
let attributedString = NSAttributedString(string: str,  
attributes: attrs)  
attributedString.draw(in: rect.insetBy(dx: 50, dy: 50))  
}
```

That draws some white text on a black background.

If we want to add a shadow effect to the text, we can use the **setShadow** method of the Core Graphics context we're working with. For example, if you place this line before the **draw()** call at the end, you'll make the text have a 5-point red glow:

```
ctx.cgContext.setShadow(offset: .zero, blur: 5, color:  
UIColor.red.cgColor)
```

The advantage of using **setShadow()** is that once you enable a shadow color, everything you draw has the same color – all text, all images, and all shapes.

When you're done with the shadow and want normal rendering to resume, just use nil for the color value like this:

```
ctx.cgContext.setShadow(offset: .zero, blur: 0, color: nil)
```

The other way of drawing shadows is using **NSAttributedString** and the **NSShadow** class. This is an object you create and can attach to any attributed strings you want, giving you the flexibility to add shadowing to only certain parts of a string rather than the whole thing – something that **setShadow()** can't do.

First, create an **NSShadow** instance like this:

```
let shadow = NSShadow()  
shadow.shadowColor = UIColor.red  
shadow.shadowBlurRadius = 5
```

That will create the same 5-point red glow as our earlier call to **setShadow()**.

Now go ahead and put that into your attributed string dictionary using the `.shadow` key, like this:

```
let attrs: [NSAttributedString.Key: Any] = [
    .font: UIFont.systemFont(ofSize: 36),
    .foregroundColor: UIColor.white,
    .shadow: shadow
]
```

Here the end result will look identical to `NSShadow`, but as I said you now have the ability to shadow only parts of a string - or even add different shadows across the string.

Pro-tip: If you want to make your shadow stronger – to make it darker so that the color shows through more clearly – just draw your object repeatedly. For example, this will draw our attributed string five times to give it a really strong red glow:

```
for _ in 1...5 {
    attributedString.draw(in: rect.insetBy(dx: 50, dy: 50))
}
```

How to resize a custom font using `UIFontMetrics`

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

Dynamic Type allows developers to adjust the size of in-app text based on user accessibility preferences, but if you use custom fonts it's easy to forget to add support.

To combine custom fonts with Dynamic Type, you need to use `UIFontMetrics`. You create instances of this class by specifying what type of content you want to measure – e.g. headline text or body text – and once that's done you can pass it a font and ask it to provide a scaled font back. This converts your custom font and size into a scaled font suitable for the user's preferences.

Here's an example in code:

```
if let font = UIFont(name: "Helvetica", size: 72) {
    let fontMetrics = UIFontMetrics(forTextStyle: .headline)
    label.font = fontMetrics.scaledFont(for: font)
}
```

How to respond to the device being shaken

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

You can make any **UIViewController** subclass respond to the device being shaken by overriding the **motionBegan** method. This is used to handle motion (shaking) but in theory also remote control actions – although I can't say I've ever seen someone write code to handle that!

This code will print a message every time the device is shaken:

```
override func motionBegan(_ motion: UIEvent.EventSubtype, with
event: UIEvent?) {
    print("Device was shaken!")
}
```

How to run JavaScript on a UIWebView with **stringByEvaluatingJavaScript(from:)**

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you're still using the deprecated **UIWebView**, you can run custom JavaScript on it using the method **stringByEvaluatingJavaScript(from:)**. The method returns an optional string, which means if the code returns a value you'll get it back otherwise you'll get back **nil**.

Here's an example that pulls out the current page's title:

```
let pageTitle =
```

```
yourUIWebView.stringByEvaluatingJavaScript(from:  
"document.title")
```

Note: if you're using a **WKWebView** you can use its **title** property directly to get the same thing.

How to scale, stretch, move and rotate UIViews using CGAffineTransform

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Every **UIView** subclass has a **transform** property that lets you manipulate its size, position and rotation using something called an affine transform. This property is animatable, which means you can make a view smoothly double in size, or make it spin around, just by changing one value.

Here are some examples to get you started:

```
imageView.transform = CGAffineTransform(scaleX: 2, y: 2)  
imageView.transform = CGAffineTransform(translationX: -256, y:  
-256)  
imageView.transform = CGAffineTransform(rotationAngle:  
CGFloat.pi)  
imageView.transform = CGAffineTransform.identity
```

The first one makes an image view double in size, the second one makes it move up and left 256 points, the third one makes it spin around 180 degrees (the values are expressed in radians), and the fourth one sets the image view's transform back to "identity" – this means "reset."

How to send an email

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

In the MessageUI framework lies the **MFMailComposeViewController** class, which handles sending emails from your app. You get to set the recipients, message title and message text, but you don't get to send it – that's for the user to tap themselves.

Here's some example code:

```
func sendEmail() {
    if MFMailComposeViewController.canSendMail() {
        let mail = MFMailComposeViewController()
        mail.mailComposeDelegate = self
        mail.setToRecipients(["you@yoursite.com"])
        mail.setMessageBody("<p>You're so awesome!</p>", isHTML:
true)

        present(mail, animated: true)
    } else {
        // show failure alert
    }
}

func mailComposeController(_ controller:
MFMailComposeViewController, didFinishWith result:
MFMailComposeResult, error: Error?) {
    controller.dismiss(animated: true)
}
```

Make sure you add **import MessageUI** to any Swift file that uses this code, and you'll also need to conform to the **MFMailComposeViewControllerDelegate** protocol.

Note that not all users have their device configure to send emails, which is why we need to check the result of **canSendMail()** before trying to send. Note also that you need to catch the **didFinishWith** callback in order to dismiss the mail window.

Warning: this code frequently fails in the iOS Simulator. If you want to test it, try on a real device.

How to set a custom title view in a UINavigationBar

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Each view controller has a **navigationItem** property that dictates how it customizes the navigation bar if it is viewed inside a navigation controller. This is where you add left and right bar button items, for example, but also where you can set a title view: any **UIView** subclass that is used in place of the title text in the navigation bar.

For example, if you wanted to show an image of your logo rather than just some text you would use this:

```
navigationItem.titleView = UIImageView(image: UIImage(named:  
"logo"))
```

How to set prompt text in a navigation bar

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You should already know that you can give a title to a navigation controller's bar by setting the **title** property of your view controllers or a view controller's **navigationItem**, but did you also know that you can provide prompt text too? When provided, this causes your navigation bar to double in height and show both the title and prompt.

It's easy to do:

```
navigationItem.title = "Your title text here"  
navigationItem.prompt = "Your prompt text here"
```

Your prompt text appears above your title text, so choose carefully.

How to set the tabs in a UITabBarController

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you're creating your tab bar controller from scratch, or if you just want to change the set up of your tabs at runtime, you can do so just by setting the **viewControllers** property of your tab bar controller. This expects to be given an array of view controllers in the order you want them displayed, and you should already have configured each view controller to have its own **UITabBarItem** with a title and icon.

If your tab bar controller is the root view controller of your window, you should be able to write something like this:

```
if let tabBarController = window?.rootViewController as?  
UITabBarController {  
    let first = FirstViewController()  
    let second = SecondViewController()  
  
    tabBarController.viewControllers = [first, second]  
}
```

How to set the tint color of a UIView

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The **tintColor** property of any **UIView** subclass lets you change the coloring effect applied to it. The exact effect depends on what control you're changing: for navigation bars and tab bars this means the text and icons on their buttons, for text views it means the selection cursor and highlighted text, for progress bars it's the track color, and so on.

tintColor can be set for any individual view to color just one view, for the whole view in your view controller to color all its subviews, or even for the whole window in your application so that all views and subviews are tinted at once.

To tint just the current view controller, use this code:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    view.tintColor = UIColor.red
}
```

If you want to tint all views in your app, put this in your AppDelegate.swift:

```
func application(_ application: UIApplication,
didFinishLaunchingWithOptions launchOptions:
[UIApplication.LaunchOptionsKey: Any]?) -> Bool {
    // Override point for customization after application
    launch.

    window?.tintColor = UIColor.red

    return true
}
```

How to share content with UIActivityViewController

Availability: iOS 6 or later.

Before iOS 6.0 was released there were a number of third-party libraries that tried to simplify the sharing of content, but even with those libraries in place it was still far too hard.

Fortunately, Apple added **UIActivityViewController**, a class that makes sharing to any service as simple as telling it what kind of content you have.

The nice thing about **UIActivityViewController** is that it automatically takes advantage of the apps the user has installed. If they have configured Twitter, they can post tweets; if they have

configured Facebook, they can post to their timeline; if they have a printer configured, they can print your images; and more. It takes no extra work from you: you just tell iOS what kind of content you want to share, and it does the rest.

Here's how you share an image:

```
if let image = UIImage(named: "myImage") {
    let vc = UIActivityViewController(activityItems: [image],
applicationActivities: [])
    present(vc, animated: true)
}
```

And here's an example of sharing a text and an image:

```
let shareText = "Hello, world!"

if let image = UIImage(named: "myImage") {
    let vc = UIActivityViewController(activityItems: [shareText,
image], applicationActivities: [])
    present(vc, animated: true)
}
```

If you want to share a URL to a website, make sure you wrap it up in a **URL** first.

How to share content with the Social framework and SLComposeViewController

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

The **UIActivityViewController** class is the iOS way of sharing almost anything to almost anywhere, but what if you don't want to let users choose? Well, iOS has a tool for that too, although it's part of the Social framework that get deprecated in iOS 11. That doesn't mean you can't use it, but it does mean at some point in the distant future Apple may withdraw it.

Start by importing the Social framework now now:

```
import Social
```

You can now create and present a **SLComposeViewController** that allows the user to share to Facebook like this:

```
if let vc = SLComposeViewController(forServiceType:  
SLServiceTypeFacebook) {  
    vc.setInitialText("Look at this great picture!")  
    vc.add(UIImage(named: "myImage.jpg")!)  
    vc.add(URL(string: "https://www.hackingwithswift.com"))  
    present(vc, animated: true)  
}
```

That attaches initial text, an image and a URL all to that share sheet, although the user can customize the text before posting. If you want to use Twitter instead, try using **SLServiceTypeTwitter** instead.

How to show and hide a toolbar inside a UINavigationController

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

All navigation controllers have a toolbar built right in, but it's not showing by default. And even if it were showing, it doesn't have any items by default – that's down to you fill in.

To get started, give a view controller some toolbar items by setting its **toolbarItems** property like this:

```
let add = UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .add, target:  
self, action: #selector(addTapped))  
let spacer =  
UIBarButtonItem(barButtonSystemItem: .flexibleSpace, target:  
self, action: nil)
```

```
toolbarItems = [add, spacer]
```

You can now tell the navigation controller to show its toolbar like this:

```
navigationController?.setToolbarHidden(false, animated: false)
```

If you animate between two view controllers with different toolbar items, iOS automatically animates their change.

How to stop Auto Layout and autoresizing masks conflicting: translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you create any views in code – text views, buttons, labels, etc – you need to be careful how you add Auto Layout constraints to them. The reason for this is that iOS creates constraints for you that match the new view's size and position, and if you try to add your own constraints these will conflict and your app will break.

There are two solutions. First, don't add Auto Layout constraints to views created in code. Sound like a bad idea? That's because it is: like it or lump it, Auto Layout is something you want on your side. So, that leaves option two: tell iOS *not* to create Auto Layout constraints automatically, and that's done with this line of code:

```
yourView.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
```

How to stop empty row separators appearing in UITableView

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Table views show separators between empty rows by default, which looks quite strange when you have only a handful of visible rows. Fortunately, one simple line of code is all it takes to

force iOS not to draw these separators, and it's this:

```
tableView.tableFooterView = UIView()
```

What's actually happening is that you're creating an empty **UIView** and making it act as the footer of the table – this is the bottom most thing visible in the table. When iOS reaches the bottom of the cells you provide, it draws this view at the end rather than drawing empty rows and their separators, so it totally clears up the problem.

How to stop users selecting text in a UIWebView or WKWebView

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Using a web view to show rich media easily is a common thing to do, but by default users can select the text and that makes it look a little less like native code. To fix this, add the following CSS to the HTML you load, and users won't be able to select anything again:

```
<style type="text/css">
*
{
    -webkit-touch-callout: none;
    -webkit-user-select: none;
}
</style>
```

How to stop your UISearchController bar hiding when you scroll

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

You can embed a search controller right into any view controller that's inside a **UINavigationController** using code like this:

```
navigationItem.searchController = yourSearchController
```

However, when your view controller happens to be a scrolling one – most commonly a table view or a collection view – the search bar will automatically hide itself along with your content.

If this isn't what you want - if you want the search bar to be visible regardless of the user's scroll position - then you need to set your navigation item's **hidesSearchBarWhenScrolling** property to false, like this:

```
navigationItem.hidesSearchBarWhenScrolling = false
```

How to stop your view going under the navigation bar using edgesForExtendedLayout

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

As of iOS 7.0, all views automatically go behind navigation bars, toolbars and tab bars to provide what Apple calls "context" – having some idea of what's underneath the UI (albeit blurred out with a frosted glass effect) gives users an idea of what else is just off screen.

If this is getting in your way (and honestly it does get in the way surprisingly often) you can easily disable it for a given view controller by modifying its **edgesForExtendedLayout** property.

For example, if you don't want a view controller to go behind any bars, use this:

```
edgesForExtendedLayout = []
```

How to style the font in a UINavigationBar's title

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

If you're setting title's in a navigation bar, you can customize the font, size and color of those titles by adjusting the **titleTextAttributes** attribute for your navigation bar.

To do this on a single bar just set it directly whenever you want to; to change all bars, set it inside your app delegate using the appearance proxy for **UINavigationBar** so that it kicks in before the first bar is loaded.

Here's an example that makes title text be 24-point Georgia Bold in red:

```
let attrs = [
    NSAttributedString.Key.foregroundColor: UIColor.red,
    NSAttributedString.Key.font: UIFont(name: "Georgia-Bold",
size: 24) !
]

UINavigationBar.appearance().titleTextAttributes = attrs
```

How to subclass **UIApplication** using **UIApplicationMain**

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

Subclassing **UIApplication** allows you to override functionality such as opening URLs or changing your icon, but it's a non-trivial task in Swift because of the **@UIApplicationMain** attribute.

If you look in your `AppDelegate.swift` file you'll see **@UIApplicationMain** appears directly before **class AppDelegate** – this is a special attribute that tells the Swift compiler to generate code to launch your application using default settings.

You need to delete **@UIApplicationMain** from that file. We're going to replace it with custom code.

With that line deleted, create a new Cocoa Touch Class called “MyApplication”, making it subclass from **UIApplication**. We're going to make our class override the **open()** method so

that no part of our application can open URLs outside of <https://www.hackingwithswift.com>:

```
import UIKit

class MyApplication: UIApplication {
    override func open(_ url: URL, options: [UIApplication.OpenExternalURLOptionsKey : Any] = [:], completionHandler completion: ((Bool) -> Void)? = nil) {
        if let host = url.host,
        host.contains("hackingwithswift.com") {
            super.open(url, options: options, completionHandler: completion)
        } else {
            completion?(false)
        }
    }
}
```

The third and final step is to create a file called main.swift that is responsible for launching our application. The name is important: it must be exactly “main.swift”, because that’s the only file that can contain top-level code – i.e., code that isn’t wrapped inside a function, class, struct, or enum.

So, create a new Swift file called main.swift, and give it this code:

```
import UIKit

UIApplicationMain(
    CommandLine.argv,
    CommandLine.unsafeArgv,
    NSStringFromClass(MyApplication.self),
    NSStringFromClass(AppDelegate.self)
)
```

You have now subclassed **UIApplication** and can add any more customizations you need. It

should go without saying that dumping code into a **UIApplication** subclass is no better than dumping code into **AppDelegate**.

How to support pinch to zoom in a UIScrollView

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Making a scroll view zoom when you pinch is a multi-step approach, and you need to do all the steps in order for things to work correctly.

First, make sure your scroll view has a maximum zoom scale larger than the default of 1.0. You can change this in Interface Builder if you want, or use the **maximumZoomScale** property in code.

Second, make your view controller the delegate of your scroll view. Again, you can do this in Interface Builder by Ctrl-dragging from the scroll view to your view controller.

Third, make your view controller conform to the **UIScrollViewDelegate** protocol, then add the **viewForZooming(in:)** method, like this:

```
func viewForZooming(in scrollView: UIScrollView) -> UIView? {  
    return someView  
}
```

That's it for code, but make sure you create your layouts consistently – whether you use Auto Layout or not, you need to be careful to **follow Apple's instructions**.

How to support right-to-left languages

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

Hebrew, Arabic, Farsi, and more are all languages that use a right-to-left layout, and it doesn't take much work to make your iOS apps fit in more naturally for those languages. In fact, there

are four things you need to do to get most of the way there, and I want to walk through them briefly with some code.

First, make sure you use natural text alignment for your labels and text views. “Natural” automatically becomes either left aligned or right aligned depending on the user’s region, which means you don’t need to worry about. For example:

```
label.textAlignment = .natural
```

Second, use leading and trailing constraints rather than left and right, and again UIKit will automatically flip these when running on right-to-left devices:

```
label.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.leadingAnchor).isActive = true  
label.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:  
view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
```

Third, flip any images that need it. Most images should be fine without flipping, but if you have images that point to parts of your user interface then they should be flipped. This takes one line of code:

```
let flipped =  
originalImage.imageFlippedForRightToLeftLayoutDirection()
```

Note: that doesn’t actually flip the **UIImage**, but instead configures the image to be drawn flipped when it’s placed inside a **UIImageView**.

Finally, test your changes using a right-to-left region. The easiest way to do this is to go to the Product menu, hold down Alt, then click “Run...” to adjust your run schema. Now go to the Options tab and change Application Language from “System Language” to “Right-to-Left Pseudolanguage”. Now run your app in the simulator, and you should see your flipped layout working.

How to swipe to delete UITableViewCells

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

It takes just one method to enable swipe to delete in table views:

tableView(_:commit:forRowAt:). This method gets called when a user tries to delete one of your table rows using swipe to delete, but its very presence is what enables swipe to delete in the first place – that is, iOS literally checks to see whether the method exists, and, if it does, enables swipe to delete.

When you want to handle deleting, you have to do three things: first, check that it's a delete that's happening and not an insert (this is down to how you use the UI); second, delete the item from the data source you used to build the table; and third, call **deleteRows(at:)** on your table view.

It is crucial that you do those things in exactly that order. iOS checks the number of rows before and after a delete operation, and expects them to add up correctly following the change.

Here's an example that does everything correctly:

```
override func tableView(_ tableView: UITableView, commit
editingStyle: UITableViewCell.EditingStyle, forRowAt indexPath:
IndexPath) {
    if editingStyle == .delete {
        objects.remove(at: indexPath.row)
        tableView.deleteRows(at: [indexPath], with: .fade)
    } else if editingStyle == .insert {
        // Create a new instance of the appropriate class, insert
        // it into the array, and add a new row to the table view.
    }
}
```

How to take a photo using the camera and UIImagePickerController

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

UIKit has a built-in view controller designed to let the user take photos, crop them as needed, then load them directly into your app. Even better, it only takes a few lines of code to use!

First, make your view controller conform to both **UINavigationControllerDelegate**, and **UIImagePickerControllerDelegate**.

Second, add this code wherever you want to trigger the camera process:

```
let vc = UIImagePickerController()
vc.sourceType = .camera
vc.allowsEditing = true
vc.delegate = self
present(vc, animated: true)
```

The **sourceType** property is what directs the view controller to the camera rather than the user's saved image library.

Third, add the **didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo** method, which gets called by the image picker when an image was selected. You need to read it out of the info dictionary using the key **.editedImage**, but then you have a **UIImage** that you can do whatever you want with.

This example code should get you started:

```
func imagePickerController(_ picker: UIImagePickerController,
didFinishPickingMediaWithInfo info:
[UIImagePickerController.InfoKey : Any]) {
    picker.dismiss(animated: true)

    guard let image = info[.editedImage] as? UIImage else {
        print("No image found")
        return
    }

    // print out the image size as a test
```

```
    print(image.size)  
}
```

That's all the code needed to make the camera work, but there is one last change you need: reading images from the camera requires a new Info.plist key describing how you plan to use the data.

To add this, open your Info.plist file, right-click on some space below the rows, then choose Add Row. Give it the name “Privacy - Camera Usage Description”, then enter a description in the value area – this will be shown to users the first time you try to use the camera.

How to use Dynamic Type to resize your app's text

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Ever since iOS 7.0 users can set a system-wide preferred font size for all apps, but many programmers ignore this setting much to user's annoyance. You're not one of *those* developers, are you? Of course not! So here's how to honor a user's font settings using **UIFont**:

```
let headlineFont =  
    UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .headline)  
let subheadFont =  
    UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .subheadline)
```

And that's it! This technology is called Dynamic Type, and it's powerful because that code will return correctly sized fonts for the user's preference, which means your app's text will shrink or grow as needed.

Note that it is technically possible for users to change their Dynamic Type setting while your app is running. If you want to cover this corner case, use **NotificationCenter** to subscribe to the **UIContentSizeCategoryDidChange** notification then refresh your user interface if you receive it.

How to use **@IBInspectable** to adjust values in Interface Builder

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **@IBInspectable** keyword lets you specify that some parts of a custom **UIView** subclass should be configurable inside Interface Builder. Only some kinds of values are supported (booleans, numbers, strings, points, rects, colors and images) but that ought to be enough for most purposes.

When your app is run, the values that were set in Interface Builder are automatically set, just like any other IB value. Neat, huh?

Here's an example that creates a **GradientView** class. This wraps the **CAGradientLayer** class up in a **UIView** that you can place anywhere in your app. Even better, thanks to **@IBInspectable** you can customize the colors in your gradient right inside IB. Add this class to your project now:

```
@IBDesignable class GradientView: UIView {
    @IBInspectable var startColor: UIColor = UIColor.white
    @IBInspectable var endColor: UIColor = UIColor.white

    override class var layerClass: AnyClass {
        return CAGradientLayer.self
    }

    override func layoutSubviews() {
        (layer as! CAGradientLayer).colors = [startColor.cgColor,
endColor.cgColor]
    }
}
```

Now go to IB, drop a **UIView** on to your storyboard, then change its class to be **GradientView**. Once that's done, Xcode will compile your project automatically, and then inside the attributes inspector you'll see two color selectors for the start and end color.

Note: **@IBInspectable** frequently does not play nicely with type inference, which is why I've explicitly declared both the type (**UIColor**) and default value (**UIColor.white**).

How to use **SFSafariViewController** to show web pages in your app

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

If a user clicks a web link in your app, you used to have two options before iOS 9.0 came along: exit your app and launch the web page in Safari, or bring up a new web view controller that you've designed, along with various user interface controls. Exiting your app is rarely what users want, so unsurprisingly lots of app ended up creating mini-Safari experiences to browse inside their app.

As of iOS 9.0, Apple allows you to embed Safari right into your app, which means you get its great user interface, you get its access to stored user data, and you even get Reader Mode right out of the box. To get started, import the **SafariServices** framework into your view controller, like this:

```
import SafariServices
```

Now make your view controller conform to the **SFSafariViewControllerDelegate** protocol, then give it a try:

```
let urlString = "https://www.hackingwithswift.com"

if let url = URL(string: urlString) {
    let vc = SFSafariViewController(url: url,
entersReaderIfAvailable: true)
    vc.delegate = self

    present(vc, animated: true)
}
```

That's all it takes to launch Safari inside your app now – cool, huh? We need to assign ourselves as the delegate of the Safari view controller because when the user taps "Done" inside Safari we should dismiss it and take any other appropriate action.

To do that, add this method to your view controller:

```
func safariViewControllerDidFinish(_ controller:  
SFSafariViewController) {  
    dismiss(animated: true)  
}
```

How to use UIActivityIndicatorView to show a spinner when work is happening

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

If you need a simple visual way to show users that some activity is happening, **UIActivityIndicatorView** is the easiest approach. In fact, if you create a dedicated activity indicator view controller, you can cause the whole screen to dim without much code.

To try it out, create a new Cocoa Touch Class called SpinnerViewController, then give it this code:

```
import UIKit  
  
class SpinnerViewController: UIViewController {  
    var spinner = UIActivityIndicatorView(style: .whiteLarge)  
  
    override func loadView() {  
        view = UIView()  
        view.backgroundColor = UIColor(white: 0, alpha: 0.7)  
  
        spinner.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false  
        spinner.startAnimating()  
    }  
}
```

```

        view.addSubview(spinner)

        spinner.centerXAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.centerXAnchor).isActive = true
        spinner.centerYAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
view.centerYAnchor).isActive = true
    }
}

```

You can now use view controller containment to embed that inside your current view controller so that it disables your controls. Something like this ought to be enough to get you started:

```

func createSpinnerView() {
    let child = SpinnerViewController()

    // add the spinner view controller
    addChild(child)
    child.view.frame = view.frame
    view.addSubview(child.view)
    child.didMove(toParent: self)

    // wait two seconds to simulate some work happening
    DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() + 2) {
        // then remove the spinner view controller
        child.willMove(toParent: nil)
        child.view.removeFromSuperview()
        child.removeFromParent()
    }
}

```

How to use **UIKeyCommand** to add keyboard shortcuts

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Anyone who connects a keyboard to their iOS device is immediately able to take advantage of keyboard shortcuts – both at the system level and inside apps.

If you want your own apps to respond to shortcuts, as well as advertise those shortcuts to users, you need just one class: **UIKeyCommand**. You attach an array of these to each view controller that should respond to keyboard shortcuts, and iOS will take care of advertising and responding to them.

The basic use of **UIKeyCommand** is this:

```
let search = UIKeyCommand(input: "f", modifierFlags: .command,  
action: #selector(findFriends), discoverabilityTitle: "Find  
Friends")
```

That takes four parameters in total: the input string to read, modifier flags, a selector, and a discoverability title. Let's break them down...

First, the input string is the actual alphanumeric key that must be pressed in order to trigger your shortcut. You can specify literals here such as “f”, “t”, or “3”, or use constants such as **UIKeyInputUpArrow**, **UIKeyInputLeftArrow**, or **UIKeyInputEscape**.

Second, the modifier flags parameter accepts an option set of key modifiers. We're using **.command** above to make Cmd+F a shortcut, but we could easily have used **[.command, .shift]** to make Cmd+Shift+F a shortcut.

Third, the selector parameter determines what code is run when the shortcut is triggered – the code above will call a **findFriends()** method on your view controller when Cmd+F is pressed. Because this is called from the Objective-C runtime you'll need to mark it **@objc**, like this:

```
@objc func findFriends() {  
    // your code here  
}
```

Finally, the discoverability title is there to control what is shown to users. Because there's no natural on-screen place to discover keyboard shortcuts, iOS has a simple shortcut: users holding down the Cmd key will see an on-screen popup with your shortcuts and discoverability titles.

Once you've decided on your list of keyboard shortcuts, return them all from the **keyCommands** property of your view controller, like this:

```
override var keyCommands: [UIKeyCommand]? {
    return [
        UIKeyCommand(input: "f", modifierFlags: .command, action:
#selector(findFriends), discoverabilityTitle: "Find Friends")
    ]
}
```

iOS will automatically call that whenever the user holds down the Cmd key to show the shortcut list, or whenever they attempt to activate a shortcut. This means you can update it as often as you need, based on your app state:

```
override var keyCommands: [UIKeyCommand]? {
    if isAuthenticated {
        return [
            UIKeyCommand(input: "f", modifierFlags: .command,
action: #selector(findFriends), discoverabilityTitle: "Find
Friends")
        ]
    } else {
        return nil
    }
}
```

Note: don't try to override any built-in shortcuts, because iOS is always given the first opportunity to handle key commands – before they are routed to your app. So, built-in system events such as copy and paste will happen automatically even if you try to replace them.

How to use UIPickerView

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

The spinning, barrel-shaped picker view has been a hallmark component of iOS since the first iPhone, and it doesn't take much work for you to use in your own apps.

First, create and position a **UIPickerView** where you want it. This code creates one at the bottom of the screen:

```
let picker = UIPickerView()
picker.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
view.addSubview(picker)

picker.leadingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.leadingAnchor).isActive = true
picker.trailingAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.trailingAnchor).isActive = true
picker.bottomAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.bottomAnchor).isActive = true
```

Now decide what should be the data source and delegate for the picker view. Traditionally these are there to provide data (the data source) and respond to actions (the delegate), but **UIPickerView** gets these two confused so you really need both.

To make things easy here we're going to use your existing view controller for both data source and delegate, but you should move this code elsewhere in your own projects. So, start by adding both **UIPickerViewDataSource** and **UIPickerViewDelegate** to the conformance list for your view controller.

Finally, implement three methods: **numberOfComponents()** describes how many individual segments there are in the picker view, **numberOfRowsInComponent** describes how many rows each segment has, and **titleForRow** provides the title for each row in each segment.

Here's some example code to get you started:

```
func numberOfComponents(in pickerView: UIPickerView) -> Int {
    return 2
}

func pickerView(_ pickerView: UIPickerView,
numberOfRowsInComponent component: Int) -> Int {
    if component == 0 {
        return 10
    } else {
        return 100
    }
}

func pickerView(_ pickerView: UIPickerView, titleForRow row:
Int, forComponent component: Int) -> String? {
    if component == 0 {
        return "First \\" + (row) +
    } else {
        return "Second \\" + (row) +
    }
}
```

How to use UISearchController to let users enter search words

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

UISearchController is a small component designed to make it easy and consistent to add searching to any view controller. Adding it only takes a few small steps:

1. Embed your view controller in a navigation controller.
2. Add a conformance to **UISearchResultsUpdating**.

3. Create the search controller and assign it to your view controller.
4. Implement its sole required method: **updateSearchResults()**.

Let's go through them here. First, open Main.storyboard, select your view controller, then embed it in a navigation controller – go to the Editor menu and choose Embed In > Navigation Controller.

Second, modify your view controller's definition so that it includes a conformance for **UISearchResultsUpdating**.

Third, add some code to **viewDidLoad()** to create the search controller and assign it to the current view controller. The search controller actually belongs as a property of the navigation item of the view controller, which automatically places it inside your navigation bar when the view controller is displayed.

```
let search = UISearchController(searchResultsController: nil)
search.searchResultsUpdater = self
search.obscuresBackgroundDuringPresentation = false
search.searchBar.placeholder = "Type something here to search"
navigationItem.searchController = search
```

Finally, implement the **updateSearchResults()** method to update your search results. This method gets called every time the user types anything into the search bar, so it's your job to use their new text to filter your data however you want:

```
func updateSearchResults(for searchController:
UISearchController) {
    guard let text = searchController.searchBar.text else
    { return }
    print(text)
}
```

That's it!

How to use **UIStepper** to let users change number values

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

UIStepper is one of those controls that doesn't get used often, which is a shame – it's trivial to add, and helps users select a value more accurately than a **UISlider**.

Here's some code to help you try it out:

```
let stepper = UIStepper()
stepper.minimumValue = 0
stepper.maximumValue = 10
stepper.value = 5
```

That tells iOS to let the stepper move from 0 to 10 (inclusive), starting at 0. By default the **autorepeat** property of steppers is set to true, which means the user can press and hold to increment values rather than tapping repeatedly.

Next, add some code to position your stepper where you want it. This places it at the top of the safe area, aligned to the center:

```
stepper.translatesAutoresizingMaskIntoConstraints = false
view.addSubview(stepper)

stepper.topAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.topAnchor).isActive = true
stepper.centerXAnchor.constraint(equalTo:
    view.safeAreaLayoutGuide.centerXAnchor).isActive = true
```

Finally, connect an **@objc** method to the **valueChanged** event like this:

```
stepper.addTarget(self, action: #selector(stepperChanged),
for: .valueChanged)
```

How to use light text color in the status bar

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

As of iOS 7.0, all view controllers set their own status bar style by default, which means they can have black text or white text depending on what looks best for your view controller. If you want to have light text in the status bar, add this code to your view controller:

```
override var preferredStatusBarStyle: UIStatusBarStyle {  
    return .lightContent  
}
```

If you want to change the status bar color dynamically, you should call `setNeedsStatusBarAppearanceUpdate()` on your view controller, which will force `preferredStatusBarStyle` to be read again. Pro tip: you can put `setNeedsStatusBarAppearanceUpdate()` inside an animation block to have the change animate.

How to use view controller containment

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

View controller containment allows you to embed one view controller inside another, which can simplify and organize your code. It takes four steps:

1. Call `addChild()` on your parent view controller, passing in your child.
2. Set the child's frame to whatever you need, if you're using frames.
3. Add the child's view to your main view, along with any Auto Layout constraints.
4. Call `didMove(toParent:)` on the child, passing in your main view controller.

In Swift code it looks like this:

```
addChild(child)  
child.view.frame = frame
```

```
view.addSubview(child.view)
child.didMove(toParent: self)
```

When you're finished with it, the steps are conceptually similar but in reverse:

1. Call **willMove(toParent:)**, passing in **nil**.
2. Remove the child view from its parent.
3. Call **removeFromParent()** on the child.

In code, it's just three lines:

```
willMove(toParent: nil)
view.removeFromSuperview()
removeFromParent()
```

Just for convenience you might want to consider adding a small, private extension to **UIViewController** to do these tasks for you – they do need to be run in a precise order, which is easily done incorrectly.

Something like this ought to do it:

```
@nonobjc extension UIViewController {
    func add(_ child: UIViewController, frame: CGRect? = nil) {
        addChild(child)

        if let frame = frame {
            child.view.frame = frame
        }

        view.addSubview(child.view)
        child.didMove(toParent: self)
    }

    func remove() {
        willMove(toParent: nil)
```

```
    view.removeFromSuperview()
    removeFromSuperview()
}
}
```

That's marked `@nonobjc` so it won't conflict with any of Apple's own code, now or in the future.

Showing dictionary definitions using **UIReferenceLibraryViewController**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

UIKit has a built-in dictionary and a built-in way of showing definitions for that dictionary, all done using **UIReferenceLibraryViewController**. Before you try using it, you should call its **dictionaryHasDefinition()** method to make sure a definition exists, like this:

```
if
UIReferenceLibraryViewController.dictionaryHasDefinition(forTer
m: "Swift") {
    // code
}
```

If a definition exists, you create an instance of the view controller using the word you want to show, then present it as normal:

```
let referenceVC = UIReferenceLibraryViewController(term:
"Swift")
present(referenceVC, animated: true)
```

What are size classes?

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Size Classes are the iOS method of creating adaptable layouts that look great on all sizes and orientations of iPhone and iPad. For example, you might want to say that your UI looks mostly the same in portrait and landscape, but on landscape some extra information is visible. You could do this in code by checking for a change in the size of your view controller and trying to figure out what it means, but that's a huge waste of time – particularly now that iPad has multiple different sizes thanks to multitasking in iOS 9.

With Size Classes, you don't think about orientation or even device size. You care about whether you are running in a compact size or regular size, and iOS takes care of mapping that to various device sizes and orientations. iOS will also tell you when your size class changes so you can update your UI.

For example, an iPad app running full screen in portrait has regular horizontal and vertical size classes. In landscape, it also has regular horizontal and vertical size classes. If your app is used in iOS 9 multitasking, then its size class can be one of the following:

- If the apps are running with an even split in landscape, both have compact horizontal and regular vertical size classes.
- If the apps are running with an uneven split in landscape, the primary app has a regular horizontal class and the second has a compact horizontal size class. Both apps have regular vertical classes.
- If the apps are running with an uneven split in portrait, both apps have compact horizontal size classes and regular vertical size classes.

Size Classes can be implemented in code if you want, but it's much easier to use Interface Builder. The key is to change only the bits you have to – try to share as much of your user interface as possible!

What are the different UIStackView distribution types?

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

One of the most compelling reasons to upgrade to iOS 9.0 is the new **UIStackView** class it introduced, which offers a simplified way of doing layouts in iOS. To give you more control over how it arranges their subviews, stack views offer five different distribution types for you to try, and here's what they do:

- **Fill** makes one subview take up most of the space, while the others remain at their natural size. It decides which view to stretch by examining the content hugging priority for each of the subviews.
- **Fill Equally** adjusts each subview so that it takes up equal amount of space in the stack view. All space will be used up.
- **Fill Proportionally** is the most interesting, because it ensures subviews remain the same size relative to each other, but still stretches them to fit the available space. For example, if one view is 100 across and another is 200, and the stack view decides to stretch them to take up more space, the first view might stretch to 150 and the other to 300 – both going up by 50%.
- **Equal Spacing** adjusts the spacing between subviews without resizing the subviews themselves.
- **Equal Centering** attempts to ensure the centers of each subview are equally spaced, irrespective of how far the edge of each subview is positioned.

What does the message "Simulator user has requested new graphics quality: 100" mean?

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

Apple frequently leaves debugging messages in iOS simulator builds, which is both good and bad: it's good because sometimes the information is useful, but it's bad because more often than not it just causes unnecessary worries.

You can ignore this particular error if you want to; it's nothing to do with your code, it's just Apple's logging code pointing out that you have enabled a particular setting in the simulator.

If you desperately want to stop this error from appearing, open the Simulator on your Mac, go to the Debug menu, then choose Graphics Quality Override > Device Default. This message usually appears when you have it set to High Quality, which may cause performance degradation.

Alternatively, go to the Hardware menu and choose Erase All Content And Settings to clear the simulator back to its defaults.

What is a **UIViewController**

Availability: iOS 2 or later.

iOS developers often like to talk about the Model-View-Controller architecture (MVC), where every component in their code is either a Model, a View, or a Controller. This is the standard architecture on iOS, which makes it strange that one of the first types you meet is **UIViewController** – it has both “view” and “controller” in its name, so what is it?

Well, there is no single answer. In the early days of iPhones, **UIViewController** represented one screen of content. Your mailbox was one view controller, and when you tapped to read a message that was shown in a different view controller.

However, the story is more complex than that, because of view controller containment – you can put one view controller inside another, which helps break up your code. As a result, one screen of content might consist of four or five view controllers all working together.

The main (and inescapable) role of view controllers is to respond to view lifecycle events. That is, your view controller code will get called when your view is created, shown, hidden, and destroyed, so it’s down to you to write code to respond to those events properly.

Some people make their view controllers more view than controller (i.e., make it handle layout code and as little else as possible), some people make it more controller than view (i.e., put layout code into **UIView** subclasses and put glue code into their view controllers), and some people make it do both: they put all their view code and all their controller code in one place.

If you want to make your view controller more view than controller that's fine. If you want to make it more controller than view that's less fine, but it can still work. If you want to use it as both, chances are you'll stop using Model-View-Controller and start using Massive-View-Controller instead.

What is a segue?

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

Segues are visual connectors between view controllers in your storyboards, shown as lines between the two controllers. They allow you to present one view controller from another, optionally using adaptive presentation so iPads behave one way while iPhones behave another.

When a segue is triggered – perhaps through a button press or a table view selection – the **prepare(for:)** method will be called on your view controller, at which point you can configure your destination view controller by setting some properties.

For example, you might write something like this in response to a table view selection:

```
override func prepare(for segue: UIStoryboardSegue, sender:  
Any?) {  
    guard let selectedPath = tableView.indexPathForSelectedRow  
else { return }  
    if let target = segue.destination as? UserViewController {  
        target.selectedUser = selectedPath.row  
    }  
}
```

That finds the row that was tapped, typecasts the destination to be a **UserViewController**, then tells it which row was selected.

What is a view's intrinsic content size?

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

All views have an intrinsic content size, which refers to the amount of space the view needs for its content to appear in an ideal state. For example, the intrinsic content size of a **UILabel** will be the size of the text it contains using whatever font you have configured it to use.

Intrinsic content sizes are important because they allow views to have a natural width and height without us forcing one. For Auto Layout to work it must know where each view is positioned precisely: its X, Y, width, and height values. With intrinsic content size we can say “place this button 20 points from the top and center it horizontally” and that’s enough to form a complete layout – Auto Layout can calculate the rest based on the button’s intrinsic size.

Although Auto Layout does its best to give views the space they need based on their intrinsic content sizes, all views also have a content compression resistance priority and a content hugging priority that determine how much it fights to retain its intrinsic content size when available space is less than or greater than it needs, respectively.

What is an IndexPath?

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

Index paths describe an item’s position inside a table view or collection view, storing both its section and its position inside that section. For example, the first row in a table would have section 0, row 0, whereas the eighth row in the fourth section would have section 3, row 7.

You’ll be given index paths fairly frequently by iOS, for example when the user tapped on a row, or when UIKit needs to know whether a certain item can be edited.

When working with collection views, you should use the *item* number of an index path rather than its *row* number, because row numbers mean different things when multiple items can share the same row.

What is content compression resistance?

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

When Auto Layout has determined there isn't enough space to accommodate all your views at their natural size, it has to make a decision: one or more of those views needs to be squashed to make space for the others, but which one? That's where content compression resistance comes in: it's a value from 1 to 1000 that determines how happy you are for the view to be squashed if needed.

If you set a view's content compression resistance to be 1, it will be first in line to be squashed. If you set it to be 1000, it won't ever be squashed. The value is 750 by default, which means "I'd really prefer this not be squashed", but you might find you need to set it to be 751 or 749 on occasion, which means "I'd still really prefer this not to be squashed, but if there's no other choice..."

What is the UIAppearance proxy?

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

If you need to make broad changes to UIKit components, the UIAppearance proxy is your friend: you can treat it like an instance of any given UIKit type, except the changes you make there apply to all new instances of that type. Note: it applies to *new* instances of that, and won't change any *existing* instances you have created.

For example, if you want all navigation bars to have a red background color regardless of where they appear in your app, you could put this into the **didFinishLaunching** method of your app delegate:

```
UINavigationBar.appearance().barTintColor = .red
```

For more precise changes you can use **appearance(whenContainedInInstancesOf:)** and specify a container appearance proxy. For example, you might want to make bar button items

one color when they appear in navigation bars and another color when they appear in toolbars:

```
UIBarButtonItem.appearance(whenContainedInInstancesOf:  
[UINavigationBar.self]).tintColor = .green  
UIBarButtonItem.appearance(whenContainedInInstancesOf:  
[UIToolbar.self]).tintColor = .red
```

While that's easy to do, I hope you at least choose better colors!

What is the safe area layout guide?

Availability: iOS or later.

Before iOS 11 it was common to create views that went edge to edge on the screen, taking up all available space in the glass rectangle of the iOS display. However, from iOS 11 onwards Apple introduced the safe area layout guide, which is a feature that restricts the edges of views so they don't get clipped by the rounded corners and notch of the iPhone X.

You don't *need* to make your view fall inside the safe area, and in fact it's common to ignore this for background views that should fill the screen behind your content. For example, the built-in Weather app runs its background graphics edge to edge, then puts its main content inside the safe area.

If you use view controller containers such as **UINavigationController** and **UITabBarController** they will automatically keep your content clear of the safe area so you don't need to worry about it. Otherwise, you should switch all your Auto Layout constraints over to the safe area layout guide inside Interface Builder – IB will automatically generate backwards-compatible constraints for older versions of iOS.

What's the difference between frame and bounds?

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

All **UIView** subclasses have two properties that at first glance seem similar: **frame** and **bounds**. Both return a **CGRect** – a rectangle containing their X and Y position, plus their width and height – but that doesn't mean they are the *same*.

At its simplest, a view's bounds refers to its coordinates relative to its own space (as if the rest of your view hierarchy didn't exist), whereas its frame refers to its coordinates relative to its parent's space.

This means a few things:

1. If you create a view at X:0, Y:0, width:100, height:100, its **frame** and **bounds** are the same.
2. If you move that view to X:100, its frame will reflect that change but its bounds will not. Remember, the bounds is relative to the view's own space, and internally to the view nothing has changed.
3. If you transform the view, e.g. rotating it or scaling it up, the frame will change to reflect that, but the bounds still won't – as far as the view is concerned internally, it hasn't changed.

When you change the width or height of either **frame** or **bounds**, the other value is updated to match. Generally it's better to modify **bounds** plus **center** and **transform**, and let UIKit calculate the **frame** for you.

Why can I not register for push notifications?

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

When you register for push notifications, one of two methods ought to be called: **didRegisterForRemoteNotificationsWithDeviceToken** is called when everything worked correctly, and **didFailToRegisterForRemoteNotificationsWithError** is called if something went wrong.

First, ensure you're correctly registering for push notifications, like this:

```

UNUserNotificationCenter.current().requestAuthorization(options
: [.alert, .sound, .badge]) { granted, error in
    if let error = error {
        print("D'oh: \(error.localizedDescription)")
    } else {
        application.registerForRemoteNotifications()
    }
}

```

You should call that every time your app starts, because the user token can change, and the user can also adjust your app's permissions at any time.

Once you're sure you have registered for notifications, add these two methods to your app delegate:

```

func application(_ application: UIApplication,
didRegisterForRemoteNotificationsWithDeviceToken deviceToken:
Data) {
    print("Successfully registered for notifications!")
}

func application(_ application: UIApplication,
didFailToRegisterForRemoteNotificationsWithError error: Error)
{
    print("Failed to register for notifications: \
(error.localizedDescription)")
}

```

Both of those just print out the status of your push request, which should give you an idea of what's going on. The most common reasons push notification request fail are: 1) you're using the iOS simulator, which does not support push notifications, and 2) your user has denied permission for push messages.

System

How do you read from the command line?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you're working on a command-line app for macOS or Linux, you'll probably want to read and manipulate commands typed by the user. This is easy to do using the **readLine()** function, which reads one line of user input (everything until they hit return) and sends it back to you.

Note: it's possible for users to enter no input, which is different from an empty string. This means **readLine()** returns an optional string when you call it, where nil is used to represent "no input".

Here's some example code to get you started:

```
print("Please enter your name: ")

if let name = readLine() {
    print("Hello, \(name)!")
} else {
    print("Why are you being so coy?")
}

print("TTFN!")
```

When that example is run, you'll see the first **print()** message, then the program will pause until the user has entered some text and pressed return. If they entered any text at all, including an empty string, they'll see the "Hello" output. If they entered no text – try it yourself by pressing Ctrl+D to trigger an "end of file" signal – they'll get the other message. Regardless of what they press, they'll see the final "TTFN!" message before the program finishes.

It should go without saying that command-line input is not available on iOS. Maybe in iOS 15...

How to cache data using NSCache

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

Here's an easy win for you that will make your apps immediately much better: **NSCache** is a specialized class that behaves similarly to a mutable dictionary with one major difference: iOS will automatically remove objects from the cache if the device is running low on memory.

Helpfully, if the system does encounter memory pressure **NSCache** will automatically start to remove items without you knowing about it, which means you won't get a memory warning unless even more RAM needs to be cleared. It will also remove items intelligently, trying to keep as much cached as possible.

Here's how to use it, imagining a fictional class called **ExpensiveObjectClass** that you want to compute as infrequently as you can:

```
let cache = NSCache<NSString, ExpensiveObjectClass>()
let myObject: ExpensiveObjectClass

if let cachedVersion = cache.object(forKey: "CachedObject") {
    // use the cached version
    myObject = cachedVersion
} else {
    // create it from scratch then store in the cache
    myObject = ExpensiveObjectClass()
    cache.setObject(myObject, forKey: "CachedObject")
}
```

How to cancel a delayed perform() call

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

You can make a method call run after a number of seconds have elapsed using `perform(_ :withObject:afterDelay:)`, like this:

```
perform(#selector(yourMethodHere), with: nil, afterDelay: 1)
```

However, what if you change your mind, and decide you don't want `yourMethodHere()` to be called? As long as you act before that timer expires, you have two options: cancel that specific delayed call, or cancel all delayed calls.

To cancel that specific method call, you need to use the method `cancelPreviousPerformRequests(withTarget:)` on `NSObject`. Provide it with a target (where the method was going to be called), as well as the same selector and object you used when calling `perform()`, and it will cancel that delayed call.

For example:

```
// set up a delayed call...
perform(#selector(yourMethodHere), with: nil, afterDelay: 1)

// ...then immediately cancel it
NSObject.cancelPreviousPerformRequests(withTarget: self,
selector: #selector(yourMethodHere), object: nil)
```

Being able to filter the cancellation by both selector and object means you can be very specific: "cancel the printing call for this filename."

If you've made a number of delayed calls and want to cancel them all – very helpful if you're about to leave a view controller, for example, and want to abandon any queued work – you can use this method call instead:

```
NSObject.cancelPreviousPerformRequests(withTarget: self)
```

That will cancel every call that was queued up on `self`, regardless of which selectors and objects were used.

If you're making delayed calls on a specific object, just use that object in place of `self`. For

example:

```
myObj.perform(#selector(yourMethodHere), with: nil, afterDelay:  
1)  
NSObject.cancelPreviousPerformRequests(withTarget: myObj,  
selector: #selector(yourMethodHere), object: nil)
```

How to check whether your other apps are installed

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

iOS lets you check for the existence of other apps, but you do need to declare them in your Info.plist file, and you may need to provide an explanation to the App Review team if you try to query too many apps or apps that aren't yours.

The key here is to give each of your apps a custom URL scheme. So, your first app might use "myapp1://", your second app might use "myapp2://", and so on. You don't actually need to use these URLs, and they ought to be unique, so you should make them prefixed with your company name to be sure.

To try it out, right-click on your Info.plist file and choose Open As > Source Code. The file should end like this:

```
</dict>  
</plist>
```

I'd like you to paste this XML directly before those lines:

```
<key>LSApplicationQueriesSchemes</key>  
<array>  
    <string>myapp1</string>  
    <string>myapp2</string>  
</array>
```

That registers two URL schemes, “myapp1://” and “myapp2://”, with iOS, which means you can now try to read them.

With that done, you can now add code like this to check whether the system is able to respond to “myapp1://” URLs:

```
UIApplication.shared.canOpenURL(URL(string: "myapp1://test")!)
```

If that returns true it means the app responsible for “myapp1://” is installed on the system, which means you know for sure the user has that other app installed.

Note: Even though you own both apps and could easily have replicated this finding using server analytics, doing it client-side might seem sketchy to some users. Be sensible and have a clear, complete privacy policy that says exactly what you want do.

How to convert HTML to an NSAttributedString

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

You can create an **NSAttributedString** directly from HTML, including support for a wide range of formatting, using a special initializer and passing in

NSAttributedString.DocumentType.html for your document type.

For example, given the following HTML:

```
let html = """
<html>
<body>
<h1>Hello, world!</h1>
</body>
</html>
"""
```

You first need to convert that string into a **Data** instance, like this:

```
let data = Data(html.utf8)
```

You can now create an **NSAttributedString** from that. This is a *throwing* call because you might try to convert something that isn't valid, so we're going to use **try?** and wrap it in **if let**:

```
if let attributedString = try? NSAttributedString(data: data,
options: [.documentType: NSAttributedString.DocumentType.html],
documentAttributes: nil) {
    yourLabel.attributedText = attributedString
}
```

How to convert units using Unit and Measurement

Availability: iOS 10.0 or later.

iOS 10 introduced a new system for calculating distance, length, area, volume, duration, and many more measurements. Let's start with something simple. If you're six feet tall, you'd create a **Measurement** instance like this:

```
let heightFeet = Measurement(value: 6, unit: UnitLength.feet)
```

Note that Swift can't infer **.feet** to mean **UnitLength.feet** because there are lots of **Unit** subclasses as you'll see soon.

Once you have a measurement ready, you can convert it to other units like this:

```
let heightInches = heightFeet.converted(to: UnitLength.inches)
let heightSensible = heightFeet.converted(to:
UnitLength.meters)
```

You should see "72.0 in" and "1.8288 m" in your output, showing that the conversion process has worked.

The **UnitLength** class, like all unit subclasses, spans a huge range of units from old to

futuristic. For example, you can convert feet to astronomical units, which is equal to the average distance between the Earth and the Sun, or about 150 million kilometers:

```
let heightAUs = heightFeet.converted(to:  
UnitLength.astronomicalUnits)
```

Once you've used one unit, the rest work identically. Here are some more examples to get you started:

```
// convert degrees to radians  
let degrees = Measurement(value: 180, unit: UnitAngle.degrees)  
let radians = degrees.converted(to: .radians)  
  
// convert square meters to square centimeters  
let squareMeters = Measurement(value: 4, unit:  
UnitArea.squareMeters)  
let squareCentimeters =  
squareMeters.converted(to: .squareCentimeters)  
  
// convert bushels to imperial teaspoons  
let bushels = Measurement(value: 6, unit: UnitVolume.bushels)  
let teaspoons = bushels.converted(to: .imperialTeaspoons)
```

Honestly, I have no idea what the bushels to imperial teaspoons ratio is, but it's nice to be given the option!

How to copy objects in Swift using `copy()`

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

There are two main complex data types in Swift – objects and structs – and they do so many things similarly that you'd be forgiven for not being sure exactly where they differ. Well, one of the key areas is down to copying: two variables can point at the same object so that

changing one changes them both, whereas if you tried that with structs you'd find that Swift creates a full copy so that changing the copy does not affect the original.

Having lots of objects point at the same data can be useful, but frequently you'll want to modify *copies* so that modifying one object doesn't have an effect on anything else. To make this work you need to do three things:

- Make your class conform to **NSCopying**. This isn't strictly required, but it makes your intent clear.
- Implement the method **copy(with:)**, where the actual copying happens.
- Call **copy()** on your object.

Here's an example of a **Person** class that conforms fully to the **NSCopying** protocol:

```
class Person: NSObject, NSCopying {
    var firstName: String
    var lastName: String
    var age: Int

    init(firstName: String, lastName: String, age: Int) {
        self.firstName = firstName
        self.lastName = lastName
        self.age = age
    }

    func copy(with zone: NSZone? = nil) -> Any {
        let copy = Person(firstName: firstName, lastName: lastName, age: age)
        return copy
    }
}
```

Note that **copy(with:)** is implemented by creating a new **Person** object using the current person's information.

With that done, you can test out your copying like this:

```
let paul = Person(firstName: "Paul", lastName: "Hudson", age: 36)
let sophie = paul.copy() as! Person

sophie.firstName = "Sophie"
sophie.age = 6

print("\(paul.firstName) \(paul.lastName) is \(paul.age)")
print("\(sophie.firstName) \(sophie.lastName) is \(sophie.age)")
```

How to copy text to the clipboard using UIPasteboard

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

You can write to and read from the iOS clipboard by using the **UIPasteboard** class, which has a **generalPasteboard()** method that returns the shared system method of copying and pasting data between apps. Using this you can write text to the clipboard just like this:

```
let pasteboard = UIPasteboard.general
pasteboard.string = "Hello, world!"
```

To read text back from the clipboard, you should unwrap its optional value like this:

```
if let string = pasteboard.string {
    // text was found and placed in the "string" constant
}
```

How to create rich formatted text strings using NSAttributedString

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

Attributed strings are strings with formatting attached, which means fonts, colors, alignment, line spacing and more. They are supported in many places around iOS, which means you can assign a fully formatted string to a **UILabel** and have it look great with no further work.

Please keep in mind, when working with fonts it's preferable to use Dynamic Type where possible so that a user's font size settings are honored. The example code below creates an attributed string using the "Headline" Dynamic Type size, then colors it purple. That is then placed into a **UILabel** by setting its **attributedText** property:

```
let titleAttributes = [NSAttributedString.Key.font:  
UIFont.preferredFont(forTextStyle: .headline),  
NSAttributedString.Key.foregroundColor: UIColor.purple]  
  
let titleString = NSAttributedString(string: "Read all about  
it!", attributes: titleAttributes)  
yourLabel.attributedText = titleString
```

How to detect low power mode is enabled

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

When a user has enabled low-power mode you probably want to avoid doing CPU-intensive work: not only is the system less able to give you resources, but you always want to respect the user's wishes and help their battery last as long as possible.

There are two ways of checking for low-power mode: you can read a property whenever you need it, or register for a notification. First, here's an example with the property:

```
func doComplicatedWork() {  
    guard ProcessInfo.processInfo.isLowPowerModeEnabled == false  
    else { return }  
}
```

```
// continue doing complicated work here  
}
```

You can also register to be notified when the lower power mode state changes, like this:

```
NotificationCenter.default.addObserver(self, selector:  
#selector(powerStateChanged), name:  
Notification.Name.NSProcessInfoPowerStateDidChange, object:  
nil)
```

When that method is triggered, you can check the new value of **isLowPowerModeEnabled** to see what state the device is in:

```
@objc func powerStateChanged(_ notification: Notification) {  
    let lowerPowerEnabled =  
    ProcessInfo.processInfo.isLowPowerModeEnabled  
    // take appropriate action  
}
```

How to detect the dominant language of a text string

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

The **NSLinguisticTagger** class has dedicated code to help you identify the dominant language of a text string. Before I show you the code, there are three important provisos:

1. It detects the *dominant* language, which means if you provide it with text that contains more than one language it will return whichever one appears most often.
2. If you give it text where no identification can be made, e.g. some numbers or an empty string, it will return nil.
3. It is extraordinarily fast – you can feed it thousands of article-length strings a second and it will fly through them.

Here's an example to help you get started:

```
let text = "Ceci n'est pas une pipe"

if let language = NSLinguisticTagger.dominantLanguage(for:
text) {
    print(language)
} else {
    print("Unknown language")
}
```

When that code runs it will print “fr”, because the dominant language in the text is French.

How to detect when your app moves to the background

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

There are two ways to be notified when your app moves to the background: implement the **applicationWillResignActive()** method in your app delegate, or register for the **UIApplication.willResignActiveNotification** notification anywhere in your app. This particular notification is sent as soon as your app loses focus, meaning that it's triggered when the user taps the home button once (to return to the home screen) or double taps the home button (to enter multi-tasking).

If you want to go down the app delegate route, you'll find a stub for **applicationWillResignActive()** already in your AppDelegate.swift file. If you want to look for the notification, use this:

```
override func viewDidLoad() {
    super.viewDidLoad()
    let notificationCenter = NotificationCenter.default
    notificationCenter.addObserver(self, selector:
#selector(appMovedToBackground), name:
```

```
UIApplication.willResignActiveNotification, object: nil)  
}  
  
@objc func appMovedToBackground() {  
    print("App moved to background!")  
}
```

How to detect which country a user is in

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Being able to provide users with location-specific information immediately makes your app more useful, but asking for a precise location brings up a permission alert and might make them suspicious. Fortunately there's a coarse-grained way you can figure out a user's locate without asking for location permission: **Locale**.

A *locale* is a user's region setting on their device, and you can read it without asking for permission. For example, if the locale is en-US it means they speak English and are in the US; if it's fr-CA it means they speak French are in Canada. This is all wrapped up inside **Locale** and you can query various information from it, but for our simple purpose we're just going to ask what country the user is in:

```
let locale = Locale.current  
print(locale.regionCode)
```

Now, there is a catch, but this is actually a bonus feature in my eyes: if a user travels abroad, their device will still be configured for their home country, so an American visiting France will still say "US".

Yes, that means you can't use it for location information, but actually it works out better for a lot of apps – for example, why would an American want to see distances in meters rather than miles just because they are traveling?

How to find the path to a file in your bundle

Availability: iOS or later.

It's common to store resource data like text files and sound effects inside your bundle, but loading them must be done in a particular way to avoid problems.

Rather than try to figure out the layout of your bundle at runtime, the correct thing to do is call the **path(forResource:)** method if you're looking for a string path, or **url(forResource:)** if you're looking for a **URL**.

For example, these two lines find the path to input.txt inside the bundle, as both a string and a **URL**:

```
let stringPath = Bundle.main.path(forResource: "input", ofType: "txt")
let urlPath = Bundle.main.url(forResource: "input",
withExtension: "txt")
```

Obviously you only need one of those – if you get to choose then it's safer to go with the **URL**.

How to find the user's documents directory

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Every iOS app gets a slice of storage just for itself, meaning that you can read and write your app's files there without worrying about colliding with other apps. This is called the user's documents directory, and it's exposed both in code (as you'll see in a moment) and also through iTunes file sharing.

Unfortunately, the code to find the user's documents directory isn't very memorable, so I nearly

always use this helpful function – and now you can too!

```
func getDocumentsDirectory() -> URL {  
    let paths =  
    FileManager.default.urls(for: .documentDirectory,  
    in: .userDomainMask)  
    let documentsDirectory = paths[0]  
    return documentsDirectory  
}
```

How to format dates with an ordinal suffix using NumberFormatter's ordinalStyle

Availability: iOS 9 or later.

As of iOS 9.0, Apple introduced a simple way to make ordinal style numbers, which is a fancy way of saying 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 100th – the kind of numbers you normally write for dates, for example. This uses the **NumberFormatterStyle.ordinal** style of writing numbers with **NumberFormatter**, like this:

```
let formatter = NumberFormatter()  
formatter.numberStyle = .ordinal  
let first = formatter.string(from: 1)  
let second = formatter.string(from: 2)  
let tenth = formatter.string(from: 10)  
let oneThousandAndFirst = formatter.string(from: 1001)
```

How to generate a random identifier using UUID

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

A UUID is a *universally unique identifier*, which means if you generate a UUID right now using **UUID** it's guaranteed to be unique across all devices in the world. This means it's a great way to generate a unique identifier for users, for files, or anything else you need to reference individually – guaranteed.

Here's how to create a UUID as a string:

```
let uuid = UUID().uuidString
```

How to handle the HTTPS requirements in iOS with App Transport Security

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

iOS doesn't let you work with HTTP web data by default, because it's blocked by something called App Transport Security that effectively requires data to be transmitted securely. If possible, you should switch to HTTPS and use that instead, but if that's not possible for some reason – e.g. if you're working with a third-party website – then you need to tell iOS to make exceptions for you.

Note: the very fact that iOS calls these "exceptions" does imply the exception option may go away in the future. If you add any exceptions you are required to explain them to the app review team when you submit your app to the App Store.

Exceptions be defined per-site or globally, although if you're going to make exceptions obviously it's preferable to do it for individual sites. This is all set inside your application's Info.plist file, and this is one of the very few times when editing your plist as source code is faster than trying to use the GUI editor in Xcode. So, right-click on your Info.plist and choose Open As > Source Code.

Your plist should end like this:

```
</dict>
</plist>
```

Just before that, I'd like you to paste this:

```
<key>NSAppTransportSecurity</key>
<dict>
  <key>NSEExceptionDomains</key>
  <dict>
    <key>hackingwithswift.com</key>
    <dict>
      <key>NSIncludesSubdomains</key>
      <true/>
      <key>NSThirdPartyExceptionAllowsInsecureHTTPLoads</
key>
      <true/>
    </dict>
  </dict>
</dict>
</dict>
```

That requests an exception for the site **hackingwithswift.com** so that it can be loaded using regular HTTP rather than HTTPS. Note that I've set **NSIncludesSubdomains** to be **true** because the site redirects you to **www.hackingwithswift.com**, which is a subdomain.

Very observant readers might note that **hackingwithswift.com** actually supports HTTPS and thus doesn't need App Transport Security, but you do still need to point to **https://** otherwise the request will fail.

How to identify an iOS device uniquely with identifierForVendor

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

Early iOS releases gave every device a unique identifier, but this was soon abused by developers to identify individual users uniquely – something that Apple really dislikes. So, Apple removed the truly unique identifier and instead introduced an identifier for each vendor:

a UUID that's the same for all apps for a given developer for each user, but varies between developers and between devices.

That is, if a user has five of your apps installed and five of mine, your five will all share the same vendor identifier, and my five will all share the same vendor identifier, but our two identifiers will be different.

Here's how to use it:

```
if let uuid = UIDevice.current.identifierForVendor?.uuidString
{
    print(uuid)
}
```

How to insert images into an attributed string with **NSTextAttachment**

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you've ever tried to lay out multiple **UILabels** mixed in with **UIImageViews**, you'll know it's almost impossible to make them line up correctly even after you add dozens of Auto Layout rules.

If you are able to use it, there is a much simpler suggestion: **NSMutableAttributedString** and **NSTextAttachment**. Attributed strings are strings with formatting attached (bold, italics, alignment, colors, etc), but you can also attach images inside attributed strings, and they just get drawn right along with the text.

Here's an example to help you get started:

```
// create an NSMutableAttributedString that we'll append
// everything to
let fullString = NSMutableAttributedString(string: "Start of
text")
```

```

// create our NSTextAttachment
let image1Attachment = NSTextAttachment()
image1Attachment.image = UIImage(named: "awesomeIcon.png")

// wrap the attachment in its own attributed string so we can
// append it
let image1String = NSAttributedString(attachment:
    image1Attachment)

// add the NSTextAttachment wrapper to our full string, then
// add some more text.
fullString.append(image1String)
fullString.append(NSAttributedString(string: "End of text"))

// draw the result in a label
yourLabel.attributedText = fullString

```

Using this technique is much easier than Auto Layout, because iOS becomes responsible for drawing the image directly inside the string. This means if your user interface adjusts because of things like rotation or multi-tasking, the string – and its images – will redraw smoothly, with no further work from you.

How to load and save a struct in UserDefaults using Codable

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

The **Codable** protocol makes it easy to load and save native Swift types to JSON, and with a little typecasting you can get that data into **UserDefault**s so it's safe.

Here's some trivial **Codable** data we can work with:

```
struct Person: Codable {
```

```

    var name: String
}

let taylor = Person(name: "Taylor Swift")

```

To save that to **UserDefaults** you must first encode it as JSON using **JSONEncoder**, which will send back a **Data** instance you can send straight to **UserDefaults**. For example:

```

let encoder = JSONEncoder()
if let encoded = try? encoder.encode(taylor) {
    let defaults = UserDefaults.standard
    defaults.set(encoded, forKey: "SavedPerson")
}

```

Reading saved data back into a **Person** instance is a matter of converting from **Data** using a **JSONDecoder**, like this:

```

if let savedPerson = defaults.object(forKey: "SavedPerson") as?
Data {
    let decoder = JSONDecoder()
    if let loadedPerson = try? decoder.decode(Person.self, from:
savedPerson) {
        print(loadedPerson.name)
    }
}

```

How to make an action repeat using Timer

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Timers are a great way to run code on a repeating basis, and iOS has the **Timer** class to handle it for you. First, create a property of the type **Timer?**. For example:

```
var gameTimer: Timer?
```

You can then create that timer in somewhere like `viewDidLoad()` and tell it to execute every five seconds, like this:

```
gameTimer = Timer.scheduledTimer(timeInterval: 5, target: self,  
selector: #selector(runTimedCode), userInfo: nil, repeats:  
true)
```

The `runTimedCode` selector means that the timer will call a method named `runTimedCode()` every five seconds until the timer is terminated, so you'll need to replace that method name with whatever you want to call – and don't forget to mark it using `@objc`.

Important note: because your object has a property to store the timer, and the timer calls a method on the object, you have a strong reference cycle that means neither object can be freed. To fix this, make sure you invalidate the timer when you're done with it, such as when your view is about to disappear:

```
gameTimer?.invalidate()
```

How to make tappable links in `NSAttributedString`

Availability: iOS 6.0 or later.

You can make interactive hyperlinks in any attributed string, which in turn means you can add interactive hyperlinks to any UIKit control. If you're working with `UITextView` (which is likely, let's face it), you get basic hyperlinks just by enabling the "Links" data detector in Interface Builder, but that doesn't work for arbitrary strings – for example, maybe you want the words "tap here" to be interactive.

Here is a complete example of arbitrary hyperlinks using a `UITextView`. Make sure your text view has "Selectable" enabled, as this is required by iOS:

```
class ViewController: UIViewController, UITextViewDelegate {
```

```

@IBOutlet var textView: UITextView!

override func viewDidLoad() {
    let attributedString = NSMutableAttributedString(string:
"Want to learn iOS? You should visit the best source of free
iOS tutorials!")
    attributedString.addAttribute(.link, value: "https://
www.hackingwithswift.com", range: NSRange(location: 19, length:
55))

    textView.attributedText = attributedString
}

func textView(_ textView: UITextView, shouldInteractWith
URL: URL, in characterRange: NSRange, interaction:
UITextItemInteraction) -> Bool {
    UIApplication.shared.open(URL)
    return false
}
}

```

There are three important things to note about this technique.

First, your view controller should be set as the delegate for your text view in Interface Builder or in code.

Second, the tap cannot be very brief, which means quick taps are ignored by iOS. If you find this annoying you might consider something like this: <https://gist.github.com/benjaminbojko/c92ac19fe4db3302bd28>.

Third, this technique is easily used with custom URL schemes, e.g. **yourapp://**, which you can catch and parse inside **shouldInteractWith** to trigger your own behaviors.

How to make the device vibrate

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

All iPhones have a built-in motor to create vibration effects, and if you just want a quick vibration it takes just one line of code:

```
AudioServicesPlaySystemSound(kSystemSoundID_Vibrate)
```

You'll need to import the AVFoundation framework if you don't have it already.

That's not a particularly easy line of code to remember, so why not make it an extension on **UIDevice**?

```
extension UIDevice {
    static func vibrate() {
        AudioServicesPlaySystemSound(kSystemSoundID_Vibrate)
    }
}
```

Now you can just call **UIDevice.vibrate()** as needed.

How to make your app open with a custom URL scheme

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

Custom URL schemes allow your app to be launched from anywhere else in the system, but you can also use them to query which of your other apps are installed and even pass data.

To register your custom URL scheme, go to your project settings, select your target, then go to the Info tab. Underneath the rows from your Info.plist file are Document Types, Exported UTIs, Imported UTIs, and URL Types – you need to open that last disclosure indicator.

There are a selection of properties you can add for each URL type you add, but really you only

need two: an identifier that is unique to your app and that URL, plus the URL scheme that should be used. For identifier enter “com.yourcompany.yourapp.yoururl”, e.g. com.apple.pages.open, and for URL schemes enter just the part you want before “://”, e.g. you should enter “myapp” if you want to use “myapp://”.

That’s enough to make your app launch when that URL is triggered, so now you just need to respond to a URL. iOS will call a particular method on your app delegate whenever a URL is passed in by the system, so you’ll probably want to send that on to a view controller of your choosing.

Here’s some code to print out the URL:

```
func application(_ app: UIApplication, open url: URL, options: [UIApplication.OpenURLOptionsKey : Any] = [:]) -> Bool {
    print(url)
    return true
}
```

How to open a URL in Safari

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you want the user to exit your app and show a website in Safari, it’s just one line of code in Swift. I’ll make it three here because I’ll create the URL in the code too, then safely unwrap it:

```
if let url = URL(string: "https://www.hackingwithswift.com") {
    UIApplication.shared.open(url)
}
```

It's worth adding that you have the option of using **SFSafariViewController** inside your app, which recreates the entire Safari experience right inside your app. See Hacking with Swift project 32 for a tutorial on how to do this.

How to parse JSON using JSONSerialization

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

If you want to parse JSON by hand rather than using **Codable**, iOS has a built-in alternative called **JSONSerialization** and it can convert a JSON string into a collection of dictionaries, arrays, strings and numbers in just a few lines of code.

In the example below, I create a dummy piece of JSON that contains three names in an array cunningly called “names”. This then gets sent to **JSONSerialization** (by converting it into a **Data** object, which is how **JSONSerialization** likes to receive its content), and I conditionally pull out and print the **names** array:

```
let str = "{\"names\": [\"Bob\", \"Tim\", \"Tina\"]}"
let data = Data(str.utf8)

do {
    // make sure this JSON is in the format we expect
    if let json = try JSONSerialization.jsonObject(with: data,
options: []) as? [String: Any] {
        // try to read out a string array
        if let names = json["names"] as? [String] {
            print(names)
        }
    }
} catch let error as NSError {
    print("Failed to load: \(error.localizedDescription)")
}
```

There are a couple of things that might confuse you there. First, because parsing JSON will fail if the JSON isn't valid, you need to use try/catch and have some sort of error handling. Second, you need to typecast my example JSON to be a dictionary of type **[String: Any]** so that you can start working with your JSON values. Third, you don't know for sure that any values exist inside the JSON, so you need to conditionally check for and unwrap the **names** value.

How to pass data between two view controllers

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you have a value in one view controller and want to pass it to another, there are two approaches: for passing data forward you should communicate using properties, and for passing data backwards you can either use a delegate or a block.

Passing data forward is used when you want to show some information in a detail view controller. For example, view controller A might contain a list of names that the user can select, and view controller B might show some detailed information on a single name that the user selected. In this case, you would create a property on B like this:

```
class ViewControllerB: UIViewController {
    var selectedName: String = "Anonymous"
}
```

How you set that property depends on how are you showing the detail view controller. For example, if you're using a **UINavigationController** and want to push the new view controller onto the stack, you would write this:

```
let viewControllerB = ViewControllerB()
viewControllerB.selectedName = "Taylor Swift"
navigationController?.pushViewController(viewControllerB,
animated: true)
```

If you're using segues, you'll want to use code like this instead:

```
override func prepare(for segue: UIStoryboardSegue, sender:
Any?) {
    if segue.identifier == "showDetail" {
        if let indexPath = self.tableView.indexPathForSelectedRow
{
```

```

        let controller = segue.destination as! ViewControllerB
        controller.selectedName = objects[indexPath.row]
    }
}
}

```

To pass data back, the most common approach is to create a delegate property in your detail view controller, like this:

```

class ViewControllerB: UIViewController {
    var selectedName: String = "Anonymous"
    weak var delegate: ViewControllerA!
}

```

When creating your detail view controller, make sure you set up its **delegate** property, like this:

```

let viewControllerB = ViewControllerB()
viewControllerB.selectedName = "Taylor Swift"
viewControllerB.delegate = self
navigationController?.pushViewController(viewControllerB,
animated: true)

```

With this set up complete, you can now create a method in your master view controller that should be called by the detail view controller. For example, you might have something like this:

```

func updatedSelectedName(newName: String) {
    // do something with newName
}

```

How to post messages using NotificationCenter

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

iOS notifications are a simple and powerful way to send data in a loosely coupled way. That is, the sender of a notification doesn't have to care about who (if anyone) receives the notification, it just posts it out there to the rest of the app and it could be picked up by lots of things or nothing depending on your app's state.

As a basic example, you might want various parts of your app to do some work when the user logs in – you might want some views to refresh, you might want a database to update itself, and so on. To do this, just post a notification name like this:

```
let nc = NotificationCenter.default  
nc.post(name: Notification.Name("UserLoggedIn"), object: nil)
```

Note: it is preferable, for type safety, to define your notification names as static strings that belong to a class or struct or other global form so that you don't make a typo and introduce bugs.

To register to catch a notification being posted, use this:

```
nc.addObserver(self, selector: #selector(userLoggedIn), name:  
Notification.Name("UserLoggedIn"), object: nil)
```

That will call a **userLoggedIn()** method when your notification is posted.

How to read names in a string using NSLinguisticTagger

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

Foundation has a built-in class to parse strings of text, and it includes some useful options to extract names of people, places, organizations, and more.

To try it out, consider this string:

```
let text = "Apple Computer was established in Cupertino by
```

Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, and Ronald Wayne.”

That contains a company name, a place name, and three names of people all in one, and we can use **NSLinguisticTagger** to pull them all out.

First you create a linguistic tagger and tell it to look for the names of things inside that text string:

```
let tagger = NSLinguisticTagger(tagSchemes: [.nameType],  
options: 0)  
tagger.string = text
```

Next you create the range to scan. This is done using the older **NSRange** type, like this:

```
let range = NSRange(location: 0, length: text.utf16.count)
```

Third, you tell **NSLinguisticTagger** what it should look for and how it should scan. One useful option here is **.joinNames**, which means it will return “Steve Jobs” as a single name rather than as two individual names:

```
let options: NSLinguisticTagger.Options =  
[.omitPunctuation, .omitWhitespace, .joinNames]  
let tags: [NSLinguisticTag] =  
[.personalName, .placeName, .organizationName]
```

Finally, you tell **NSLinguisticTagger** to enumerate the tags in the input string, filter out any that aren’t in the **tags** array we’re looking for, convert the **NSRange** back to a Swift range, then print out each match:

```
tagger.enumerateTags(in: range, unit: .word, scheme: .nameType,  
options: options) { tag, tokenRange, stop in  
    if let tag = tag, tags.contains(tag) {  
        if let range = Range(tokenRange, in: text) {  
            let name = text[range]  
            print("\u{00a0}(name)\u{00a0}: \u{00a0}(tag)\u{00a0}")
```

```
        }
    }
}
```

That will find the company, organization, and three people names in our string – nice!

How to read the contents of a directory using FileManager

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

If you want to work with files **FileManager** almost certainly has the answer, and it's no different in this case: it has a method called **contentsOfDirectory(atPath:)** that lists all the files in a specific directory. For example, we could have it list all the files in our app's resource directory like this:

```
let fm = FileManager.default
let path = Bundle.main.resourcePath!

do {
    let items = try fm.contentsOfDirectory(atPath: path)

    for item in items {
        print("Found \(item)")
    }
} catch {
    // failed to read directory – bad permissions, perhaps?
}
```

In this particular case the **try** should never fail, but you should still have the **catch** block in there just in case.

How to read your app's version from your Info.plist file

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

All iOS apps must store an app version number in their Info.plist file, but there's no build-in way to get that as a string you can use in your code.

Fortunately, we can write a small extension to **UIApplication** that reads the Info.plist file and returns a version number automatically. This might not exist for some reason, so we're going to make a static variable that returns an optional string in case there was a problem reading it.

Here's the code:

```
extension UIApplication {
    static var appVersion: String? {
        return Bundle.main.object(forInfoDictionaryKey:
            "CFBundleShortVersionString") as? String
    }
}
```

How to run code after a delay using **asyncAfter()** and **perform()**

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

There are two ways to run code after a delay using Swift: GCD and **perform(_:with:afterDelay:)**, but GCD has the advantage that it can run arbitrary blocks of code, whereas the **perform()** method runs methods.

So, using GCD we can write something that runs code after a half-second delay:

```
DispatchQueue.main.asyncAfter(deadline: .now() + 0.5) {
    // your code here
}
```

An alternative option is to use **perform(_:with:afterDelay:)**, which lets you specify a method to call after a certain time has elapsed.

To call the **authenticate()** method after 1 second, you would use this code:

```
perform(#selector(authenticate), with: nil, afterDelay: 1)
```

Note: any method called using **perform(_:with:afterDelay:)** must be marked with the **@objc** attribute.

How to run code asynchronously using GCD **async()**

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

iOS gives you two ways to run code asynchronously: GCD and **performSelector(inBackground:)**. The first option looks like this:

```
DispatchQueue.global(qos: .userInitiated).async { [unowned self] in
    self.yourCodeHere()
}
```

The **.userInitiated** quality of service setting is the highest priority after **userInteractive**. You can also use **utility** (lower priority) or **.background** (lowest priority.)

The second option looks like this:

```
performSelector(inBackground: #selector(yourCodeHere), with:
nil)
```

You'll need to replace **yourCodeHere** with the name of an actual method. If you want to pass a parameter, make sure and use "yourCodeHere:" and provide a value for the **with** parameter.

How to run code at a specific time

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You can use **perform(_:with:afterDelay:)** to run a method after a certain number of seconds have passed, but if you want to run code at a specific time – say at exactly 4pm – then you should use **Timer** instead. This class is great for executing code repeatedly at a specific time interval, but it's also great for running code at an exact time that you specify.

This is accomplished using a **Timer** constructor that accepts an **Date** for when the timer should fire. You can make this date however you want, which is what makes this approach so flexible.

As a simple example, this will create a timer that calls a **runCode()** method in five seconds:

```
let date = Date().addingTimeInterval(5)
let timer = Timer(fireAt: date, interval: 0, target: self,
selector: #selector(runCode), userInfo: nil, repeats: false)
RunLoop.main.add(timer, forMode: .common)
```

Notice how you can specify a **interval** parameter? That's for when you set **repeats** to be **true**. If you have a **Date** 5 seconds from now and an **interval** of 1 (after setting **repeat** to be true!), it means "call **runCode()** after five seconds, then every one second after that."

How to run code on the main thread using GCD **async()**

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

Swift offers you two ways to run code on the main thread: GCD and **performSelector(onMainThread:)**. The first option looks like this:

```
DispatchQueue.main.async { [unowned self] in
    self.yourCodeHere()
}
```

The second option looks like this:

```
performSelector(onMainThread: #selector(yourCodeHere), with:  
nil, waitUntilDone: false)
```

The GCD option (the first one) has the advantage that you can write your code inline, whereas the second one requires a dedicated method you can call.

How to run code when your app is terminated

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you need to execute code when your app isn't running, there are several options open to you depending on what you're trying to do.

- Background fetch will let your app run in the background for about 30 seconds at scheduled intervals. The goal of this is to fetch data and prepare your UI for when the app runs next.
- Push notifications let your app fetch fresh data from your server. You can make a message appear on the device if you want, but it's not required – silent push notifications let you skip that part.
- Local notifications let you display an alert to the user, along with any media attachments you want and some options for the user to select from. If they choose those options then your app can be launched in the foreground or background to handle them.

I want to show you how to use background fetch, which is both the most powerful but also the most unreliable of the three options.

It's powerful because it lets you request that your app be launched in the background after a set time has passed. For example, you might say "launch my app every hour," so that you can fetch new stories for your user to read when they launch their app next. This effectively means your app is already up to date when it gets launched next, rather than the user having to wait

for the data refresh to happen after it launches.

So, your app can launch itself in the background spontaneously – sounds great, right? Well, there are significant downsides you need to be aware of, which is why background fetch can be simultaneously the most powerful but also the most unreliable of options for background tasks.

The downsides are:

1. The time you request is advisory, which means if you request 30 minutes you can't expect your app to be run in exactly 30 minutes.
2. It can be disabled or restricted on a per-app level, or disabled system wide if the device has entered low-power mode.
3. iOS attempts to monitor when apps are commonly launched and will attempt to adjust background fetch to match real world usage.
4. The system evaluates how you use your background fetch time and will adjust how likely your app is to run again based on what you do.

Each of those bear more explanation, so I want to elaborate just a little before giving you some code.

When it comes to requesting a time, you have two options: specify a value in seconds (e.g. 86400 is more or less one day), or provide the special value

UIApplicationBackgroundFetchIntervalMinimum, which literally means “as often as possible.”

The problem is that many apps are likely to have background fetch enabled, all with different timers being triggered by the system. So, to reduce battery usage iOS will batch requests: if your app is due to refresh in 28 minutes and another is due to refresh in 29 minutes, the system is likely to move things around so they can both be run in 29 minutes.

Similarly, the system will adjust your background fetch requests based on what the user actually does with your app. For example, if the user always checks your app at 8am every morning, iOS should in theory be likely to trigger a background fetch shortly before. If they never check your app during the night, presumably because they are asleep, iOS should in theory not schedule your background fetch during that period.

Now, I said “in theory” both times because we don’t really know – Apple doesn’t publish specifics here, other than to say that iOS does perform some user monitoring to adapt itself.

As well as monitoring the user, iOS also monitors your code. Here’s a quote from Apple’s own documentation:

Apps that download small amounts of content quickly, and accurately reflect when they had content available to download, are more likely to receive execution time in the future than apps that take a long time to download their content or that claim content was available but then do not download anything.

So, if you abuse the system you’ll get run less often, but if you’re a good citizen then you’ll be called more often – or at least more like what you requested in the first place.

OK, that’s enough explanation of the benefits and problems of background fetch – let’s look at how you actually make it happen.

First, go to your project’s settings and choose the Capabilities tab. You need to enable the Background Modes capability, then check the box marked Background Fetch. This modifies your app’s Info.plist file to add the “fetch” background mode that enables all the following functionality.

Second, tell iOS how often you want background fetch to happen. This is usually done inside the **didFinishLaunchingWithOptions** method in AppDelegate.swift, like this:

```
application.setMinimumBackgroundFetchInterval(1800)
```

That requests 1800 seconds between updates, which is 30 minutes. Note that this is a *minimum* amount of time between updates, not a *precise* amount of time between updates.

You can and should adjust this from anywhere in your app based on user preferences. For example, if the user requests updates as often as possible, you might run code like this:

```
UIApplication.shared.setMinimumBackgroundFetchInterval(UIApplication.backgroundFetchIntervalMinimum)
```

Now that you've requested a background fetch, it's time to write some code to run when that fetch actually happens. This is done by implementing the

performFetchWithCompletionHandler method in your app delegate, and calling its completion handler to tell iOS the result of your data fetch.

When you call the completion handler iOS expects to be told how your fetch went, and there are three possible values you can send back: new data was received, no new data was available, or the fetch failed. Again, iOS expects you to be honest here – don't try to lie and say new data was available when you didn't actually fetch anything, somehow hoping it means you'll get called again.

Obviously I don't know how your app fetches its data, but I'm going to provide some example code to get you started. In this example, **fetchSomeData()** will return **nil** if the fetch failed, but if it succeeded will send back some data with its **newData** property set to either true or false so we can accurately report back to iOS.

Put this method inside AppDelegate.swift:

```
func application(_ application: UIApplication,
performFetchWithCompletionHandler completionHandler: @escaping
(UIBackgroundFetchResult) -> Void) {
    // fetch data from internet now
    guard let data = fetchSomeData() else {
        // data download failed
        completionHandler(.failed)
        return
    }

    if data.isNew {
        // data download succeeded and is new
        completionHandler(.newData)
    } else {
        // data downloaded succeeded and is not new
        completionHandler(.noData)
    }
}
```

```
}
```

Now, this should set your mind thinking that if your fetch fails too often or if you return `.noData` too often, iOS might reduce the frequency of your background fetches. Again, though, please remember that the system does monitor your usage, so you might get penalized if you attempt to abuse this system.

Now that you have implemented the code to run your fetches, there are two **UIApplication** properties that you might want to check.

First, **backgroundRefreshStatus** will tell you whether background fetch is available to use, denied by the user, or restricted by some external force – i.e., not available, and can't *be* enabled by the user. You can check it like this:

```
if application.backgroundRefreshStatus == .available {  
    // yay!  
}
```

You can and should try disabling background refresh yourself in order to ensure your app behaves well. To try this out, go to the Settings app, then choose General > Background App Refresh, and toggle the switch next to your app. You can also try enabling low-power mode by going to Settings > Battery and enabling the Low Power Mode switch.

Second, the **applicationState** property will tell you whether your app is currently running in the background. Ideally you'll use this to limit the amount of work you do, because again iOS is watching you and it's important to play nicely. You can check it like this:

```
if application.applicationState == .background {  
    // run important background tasks  
}
```

That's all the code you need to support background app refresh, so now it's just down to you to test that everything works well. If you're patient you can just sit and wait until iOS triggers your fetch code, but a much better option is to trigger a background fetch on demand.

Xcode has an option for this built right in, so go ahead and launch your app and normal then go to the Debug menu and choose Simulate Background Fetch. That will run a background fetch even if your app is currently in the foreground, allowing you to ensure everything works as intended.

An alternative is to run your whole app as if it were a background launch, which is an option you can enable for your launch schemes. To try this out, hold down the Alt key then go to the Product menu and choose “Run...”. This will let you edit the “Run” schema for your app, and you should see “Launch due to a background fetch event” as one of the checkboxes there.

When you check that box and click Run, you’ve modified the Run schema so that your app is *always* run as a background fetch – even next time when you just click play or press Cmd+R. You’ll probably want to leave that box unchecked most of the time!

How to save and load objects with **NSKeyedArchiver** and **NSKeyedUnarchiver**

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You can write any kind of object to disk as long as it supports the **NSCoding** protocol – which includes strings, arrays, dictionaries, **UIView**, **UIColor** and more right out of the box. To write to disk, use this:

```
let randomFilename = UUID().uuidString
let fullPath =
    getDocumentsDirectory().appendingPathComponent(randomFilename)

do {
    let data = try NSKeyedArchiver.archivedData(withRootObject:
        somethingToSave, requiringSecureCoding: false)
    try data.write(to: fullPath)
} catch {
    print("Couldn't write file")
```

```
}
```

That call to `getDocumentsDirectory()` is a small helper function I frequently use to write files to disk:

```
func getDocumentsDirectory() -> URL {
    let paths =
FileManager.default.urls(for: .documentDirectory,
in: .userDomainMask)
    return paths[0]
}
```

When you want to read your object back you need to use `unarchiveObject(withFile:)`, but be warned: the file might not exist or might not be unarchivable, so this method returns an optional value that you need to unwrap carefully.

For example, if you want to unarchive an array of strings, you would use this code:

```
do {
    if let loadedStrings = try
NSKeyedUnarchiver.unarchiveTopLevelObjectWithData(data) as?
[String] {
        savedArray = loadedStrings
    }
} catch {
    print("Couldn't read file.")
}
```

How to save user settings using UserDefaults

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

All iOS apps have a built in data dictionary that stores small amounts of user settings for as

long as the app is installed. This system, called **UserDefaults** can save integers, booleans, strings, arrays, dictionaries, dates and more, but you should be careful not to save too much data because it will slow the launch of your app.

Here's an example of setting some values:

```
let defaults = UserDefaults.standard
defaults.set(25, forKey: "Age")
defaults.set(true, forKey: "UseTouchID")
defaults.set(CGFloat.pi, forKey: "Pi")

defaults.set("Paul Hudson", forKey: "Name")
defaults.set(Date(), forKey: "LastRun")
```

When you set values like that, they become permanent – you can quit the app then re-launch and they'll still be there, so it's the ideal way to store app configuration data. As an advance warning, you might find some old tutorials recommend calling the **synchronize()** method to force your data to save, but Apple has asked us not to do that for some years now.

As mentioned, you can use **UserDefaults** to store arrays and dictionaries, like this:

```
let array = ["Hello", "World"]
defaults.set(array, forKey: "SavedArray")

let dict = [ "Name": "Paul", "Country": "UK" ]
defaults.set(dict, forKey: "SavedDict")
```

When it comes to reading data back, it's still easy but has an important proviso: **UserDefaults** will return a default value if the setting can't be found. You need to know what these default values are so that you don't confuse them with real values that you set. Here they are:

- **integer(forKey:)** returns an integer if the key existed, or 0 if not.
- **bool(forKey:)** returns a boolean if the key existed, or false if not.
- **float(forKey:)** returns a float if the key existed, or 0.0 if not.
- **double(forKey:)** returns a double if the key existed, or 0.0 if not.

- `object(forKey:)` returns **AnyObject?** so you need to conditionally typecast it to your data type.

With that in mind, you can read values back like this:

```
let age = defaults.integer(forKey: "Age")
let useTouchID = defaults.bool(forKey: "UseTouchID")
let pi = defaults.double(forKey: "Pi")
```

When retrieving objects, the result is optional. This means you can either accept the optionality, or typecast it to a non-optional type and use the nil coalescing operator to handle missing values. For example:

```
let savedArray = defaults.object(forKey: "SavedArray") as?
[String] ?? [String]()
```

How to send notifications asynchronously using NotificationQueue

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

Any notifications posted using `NotificationCenter` are delivered *synchronously*, which means all observers get notified simultaneously and execute all their code before control gets passed back to the poster of the notification.

While that's often what you want, sometimes it can be problematic because processing repeated notifications during busy periods can slow your app down. Fortunately, Apple gives us an alternative in the shape of **NotificationQueue**: an asynchronous system that queues up notifications at different urgencies, and can even coalesce similar messages to avoid repetition.

You can try it out using this code:

```
let notification = Notification(name:
Notification.Name("MyValueChanged"))
NotificationQueue.default.enqueue(notification,
```

```
postingStyle: .whenIdle, coalesceMask: .none, forModes: nil)
```

That will enqueue the “MyValueChanged” notification to be delivered when your app is idle, and without coalescing. You can also use **.asap** for your posting style to deliver in the next run loop, and **.now**, which will cause the notification to be delivered synchronously.

The reason the **.now** posting style is important is because of the ability of **NotificationQueue** to *coalesce* notifications – i.e., join them together. If you specify **.onName** for the **coalesceMask** property it will automatically merge any notifications of the same name, which stops observers being overloaded by repeated notifications.

How to set local alerts using UNNotificationCenter

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Local notifications are messages that appear on the user's lock screen when your app isn't running. The user can then swipe to unlock their device and go straight to your app, at which point you can act on the notification.

All this is done using the User Notifications framework, so import that now:

```
import UserNotifications
```

To begin with, you need to ask for permission in order to show messages on the lock screen. Here's how that's done:

```
let center = UNUserNotificationCenter.current()

center.requestAuthorization(options: [.alert, .badge, .sound])
{ (granted, error) in
    if granted {
        print("Yay!")
    } else {
        print("D'oh")
    }
}
```

```
    }
}
```

That will show an alert to the user asking them if they want to let you show notifications. When it comes to scheduling a notification, you need to choose a trigger (when to show) and content (what to show), then combine them together into a single request.

Here's the code required to show a local notification:

```
func scheduleNotification() {
    let center = UNUserNotificationCenter.current()

    let content = UNMutableNotificationContent()
    content.title = "Late wake up call"
    content.body = "The early bird catches the worm, but the
second mouse gets the cheese."
    content.categoryIdentifier = "alarm"
    content.userInfo = [ "customData": "fizzbuzz" ]
    content.sound = UNNotificationSound.default

    var dateComponents = DateComponents()
    dateComponents.hour = 10
    dateComponents.minute = 30
    let trigger =
        UNTimeIntervalNotificationTrigger(timeInterval: 5, repeats:
            false)

    let request = UNNotificationRequest(identifier:
        UUID().uuidString, content: content, trigger: trigger)
    center.add(request)
}
```

The **trigger** constant is being created using a time interval, which means this notification will appear five seconds after you schedule it.

If you want a specific time, use **UNCalendarNotificationTrigger** instead, like this:

```
var dateComponents = DateComponents()
dateComponents.hour = 10
dateComponents.minute = 30
let trigger = UNCalendarNotificationTrigger(dateMatching:
dateComponents, repeats: true)
```

That will show an alert at 10:30am every day, because its **repeats** property is set to true.

The notification request code above also set a **userInfo** property on the notification, which is a dictionary where you can store any kind of context data you want. This dictionary gets given back to you when the user unlocks their device using your notification, so you can act on the alert in a meaningful way.

If you want to attach custom buttons to your notification, you need to use the **UNNotificationAction** class, then register various actions against a category string. We used the category identifier string of “alarm” above, so we could attach a button to that category like this:

```
func registerCategories() {
    let center = UNUserNotificationCenter.current()
    center.delegate = self

    let show = UNNotificationAction(identifier: "show", title:
    "Tell me more...", options: .foreground)
    let category = UNNotificationCategory(identifier: "alarm",
    actions: [show], intentIdentifiers: [])

    center.setNotificationCategories([category])
}
```

Note that that code sets **self** to be the delegate for the notification center, so you’ll need to make your view controller conform to the **UNUserNotificationCenterDelegate** protocol.

When a message comes in, your delegate will get notified and you can take the appropriate action. We gave the “Tell me more...” button the identifier “show”, so that’s what will be passed to us if the user taps that button. Alternatively, we’ll be sent **UNNotificationDefaultActionIdentifier** to mean “the user swiped to unlock using our notification.”

Here’s some code handling both options:

```
func userNotificationCenter(_ center: UNUserNotificationCenter,  
didReceive response: UNNotificationResponse,  
withCompletionHandler completionHandler: @escaping () -> Void)  
{  
    // pull out the buried userInfo dictionary  
    let userInfo =  
        response.notification.request.content.userInfo  
  
    if let customData = userInfo["customData"] as? String {  
        print("Custom data received: \(customData)")  
  
        switch response.actionIdentifier {  
        case UNNotificationDefaultActionIdentifier:  
            // the user swiped to unlock  
            print("Default identifier")  
  
        case "show":  
            // the user tapped our "show more info..." button  
            print("Show more information...")  
            break  
  
        default:  
            break  
        }  
    }  
}
```

```
// you must call the completion handler when you're done
completionHandler()
}

}
```

That code also pulls out the **CustomField1** value that was set in the **userInfo** earlier.

How to show the price of an SKProduct

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

StoreKit products come with **price** and **priceLocale** property, but it takes a little effort to combine those two together in order to show a user-friendly price in your interface.

Fortunately, one small extension to **SKProduct** will provide you with a **localizedPrice** property you can use to do that work for you:

```
extension SKProduct {
    var localizedPrice: String {
        let formatter = NumberFormatter()
        formatter.numberStyle = .currency
        formatter.locale = priceLocale
        return formatter.string(from: price)!
    }
}
```

How to spell out numbers using NumberFormatter's spellOut style

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

iOS makes it easy to convert numbers like 10 or 100 into their written equivalents: "ten" and "one hundred", and it even handles other languages. For example, to convert the number 556 into "five hundred fifty-six", you would use this code:

```
let formatter = NumberFormatter()
formatter.numberStyle = .spellOut
let english = formatter.string(from: 556)
```

If you wanted to get that in Spanish, you would set a locale like this:

```
formatter.locale = Locale(identifier: "es_ES")
let spanish = formatter.string(from: 556)
```

Running that code would make the **english** constant equal to **five hundred fifty-six** and the **spanish** constant equal to **quinientos cincuenta y seis**.

How to stop the screen from going to sleep

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

You can stop the iOS screen sleeping by using the **isIdleTimerDisabled** property of your application. When set to true, this means the screen will never dim or go to sleep while your app is running, so be careful – you don't want to waste your user's battery life!

Here's an example:

```
UIApplication.shared.isIdleTimerDisabled = true
```

How to store UserDefaults options in iCloud

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

iOS has a built-in iCloud sync system called **NSUbiquitousKeyValueStore**, but to be honest it's pretty unpleasant to work with. Fortunately, other developers have written simple wrappers around it so that you can forget about iCloud and focus on the interesting things instead – i.e., the rest of your app.

One such example is called **MKiCloudSync** and it's **available from here**. It's open source and so easy to use you literally don't notice that it's there once you've added it to your app – it just silently syncs your **UserDefaults** values to and from iCloud.

To use it, **go here** and click Download Zip. Inside the zip file you'll find **MKiCloudSync.h** and **MKiCloudSync.m**, and you should drag them both into your Xcode project. Xcode will ask you if you want to create an Objective-C bridging header, and you should click "Create Bridging Header" - this is required because MKiCloudSync is written in Objective-C rather than Swift.

To actually use the library, open your new bridging header (it'll be called something like YourProject-Bridging-Header.h) and add this:

```
#import "MKiCloudSync.h"
```

Now open your AppDelegate.swift file, find the **didFinishLaunchingWithOptions** method, and add this line to it:

```
MKiCloudSync.start(withPrefix: "sync")
```

The "sync" part is important, because changes are you won't want to sync *everything* to iCloud. With that prefix, MKiCloudSync will copy to iCloud only **UserDefaults** keys that start with **sync** – you can now choose what you want to sync just by naming your keys appropriately.

There is one final, important thing to do: you need to enable iCloud for your app. This is done inside the Capabilities tab of your target's settings – find iCloud, then flick its switch to be On.

How to synchronize code to drawing using CADisplayLink

Availability: iOS 3.1 or later.

Lots of beginners think **Timer** is a great way to handle running apps or games so that update code is executed every time the screen is redrawn. Their logic is simple: update the app every

60th of a second and you're perfectly placed for smooth redraws.

The problem is, they are forgetting that **Timer** doesn't offer precise firing and can drift earlier or later than requested updates, and also has no idea about screen redraws and so could happily fire 10ms after a screen redraw just happened – and when you're working to 16.666ms frames, 10ms is a long time!

A smarter and faster solution is the **CADisplayLink** class, which automatically calls a method you define as soon as a screen redraw happens, so you always have maximum time to execute your update code. It's extremely simple to use – here's an example to get you started:

```
let displayLink = CADisplayLink(target: self, selector:  
#selector(update))  
displayLink.add(to: .current, forMode: .common)
```

That will call a method called **update()** every 60th of a second by default. You can see it in action with this method stub:

```
@objc func update() {  
    print("Updating!")  
}
```

How to use Core Motion to read accelerometer data

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

Core Motion makes it ridiculously easy to read the accelerometer from iPhones and iPads, and it even takes care of managing how the accelerometer and gyroscope work together to report orientation. To get started import the Core Motion framework like this:

```
import CoreMotion
```

Now create a property that can store a **CMMotionManager**, like this:

```
var motionManager: CMMotionManager!
```

When you're ready to start reading accelerometer data (this will be inside **viewDidLoad()** for most people), go ahead and create your motion manager then call its **startAccelerometerUpdates()** method:

```
motionManager = CMMotionManager()
motionManager.startAccelerometerUpdates()
```

Finally, read the accelerometer data as often as you want. It's optional, though, so make sure you unwrap it carefully.

For example, if you want to change the gravity of a SpriteKit physics world so that tipping your device makes things roll around, you'd look for something like this in your **update()** method:

```
if let accelerometerData = motionManager.accelerometerData {
    physicsWorld.gravity = CGVector(dx:
accelerometerData.acceleration.y * -50, dy:
accelerometerData.acceleration.x * 50)
}
```

How to use Core Spotlight to index content in your app

Availability: iOS 9.0 or later.

One particularly popular feature in iOS 9.0 is the ability to have your app's content appear inside the iOS Spotlight search so that users can search it alongside their other device content.

First up, add these two imports to your class:

```
import CoreSpotlight
import MobileCoreServices
```

Now I'm going to give you the code to handle indexing an item, and for this we'll create a method called **idxItem()** that takes three parameters: the title of the item, a description string for the item, plus a unique identifier. What that unique identifier is depends on your project, but it should be a string. Here's the method:

```
func indexItem(title: String, desc: String, identifier: String)
{
    let attributeSet =
    CSSearchableItemAttributeSet(itemContentType: kUTTypeText as
String)
    attributeSet.title = title
    attributeSet.contentDescription = desc

    let item = CSSearchableItem(uniqueIdentifier: "\\\n(identifier)", domainIdentifier: "com.hackingwithswift",
attributeSet: attributeSet)
    CSSearchableIndex.default().indexSearchableItems([item])
    { error in
        if let error = error {
            print("Indexing error: \(error.localizedDescription)")
        } else {
            print("Search item successfully indexed!")
        }
    }
}
```

That wraps the title and description up inside a **CSSearchableItemAttributeSet**, which in turn goes inside a **CSSearchableItem**, and from there to Spotlight to index. If you have several items to index you can have them processed all at once and it works faster.

Note that you should change **domainIdentifier** to your own domain, e.g. **com.yoursite**.

Now that your item is indexed, it will be available in Spotlight searches immediately. If a user finds one of your index items and taps it, your app will get launched and you should be able to pull out the unique identifier of the item that was tapped – this tells you what item was tapped

so that you can take appropriate action.

Put this code inside your app delegate, along with an import for CoreSpotlight:

```
func application(_ application: UIApplication, continue userActivity: NSUserActivity, restorationHandler: @escaping ([UIUserActivityRestoring]?) -> Void) -> Bool {
    if userActivity.activityType == CSSearchableItemActionType {
        if let uniqueIdentifier = userActivity.userInfo?[CSSearchableItemActivityIdentifier] as? String {
            doSomethingCoolWith(uniqueIdentifier)
        }
    }
}

return true
}
```

That's it!

For the sake of completeness, here's how you remove an item from the Spotlight index:

```
func deindexItem(identifier: String) {
    CSSearchableIndex.default().deleteSearchableItems(withIdentifiers: ["\(\identifier)"]) { error in
        if let error = error {
            print("Deindexing error: \(error.localizedDescription)")
        } else {
            print("Search item successfully removed!")
        }
    }
}
```

How to use Touch ID to authenticate users by fingerprint

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Touch ID is an easy and secure way for users to authenticate themselves, so it's no surprise that it's caught on so quickly among apps. Authenticating with Touch ID automatically uses the fingerprints registered by the user when they set up Touch ID, and you never have access to those fingerprints, which means it's both low-friction and extra-secure.

To get started, you need to import the LocalAuthentication framework like this:

```
import LocalAuthentication
```

The actual act of authenticating users has a number of possible results, and you need to catch them all:

- The user might not have a Touch ID-capable device.
- The user might have a Touch ID-capable device, but might not have configured it.
- The user failed to authenticate, perhaps because they asked to enter a passcode rather than use Touch ID.

Note that Apple insists that your app provide a passcode method of authentication as a back up. More annoyingly, you need to request and store this passcode yourself – it's not even done by Apple using the system unlock code!

Asking for and setting a passcode is easy enough, so I'll leave that to you. The important bit is asking for Touch ID authentication, which is done using this code:

```
func authenticateUser() {  
    let context = LAContext()  
    var error: NSError?  
  
    if  
        context.canEvaluatePolicy(.deviceOwnerAuthenticationWithBiometrics, error: &error) {
```

```

let reason = "Identify yourself!"

context.evaluatePolicy(.deviceOwnerAuthenticationWithBiometrics
, localizedReason: reason) {
    [unowned self] success, authenticationError in

        DispatchQueue.main.async {
            if success {
                self.runSecretCode()
            } else {
                let ac = UIAlertController(title:
"Authentication failed", message: "Sorry!",
preferredStyle: .alert)
                ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK",
style: .default))
                self.present(ac, animated: true)
            }
        }
    }
} else {
    let ac = UIAlertController(title: "Touch ID not
available", message: "Your device is not configured for Touch
ID.", preferredStyle: .alert)
    ac.addAction(UIAlertAction(title: "OK", style: .default))
    present(ac, animated: true)
}
}
}

```

How to use multithreaded operations with OperationQueue

Availability: iOS 4.0 or later.

There are lots of ways to work with Grand Central Dispatch (GCD) on iOS, but **OperationQueue** is particularly powerful because it lets you control precisely how many simultaneous operations can run and what quality of service you need, while also letting you schedule work using closures. You can even ask the operation queue to wait until all its operations are finished, which makes scheduling easier.

If you had an array of images you needed to process then save somewhere, you might normally write a loop like this:

```
for image in images {  
    process(image)  
}
```

However, that's single-threaded – it can only use one of the available CPU cores. With only a small change you can get the same behavior working across multiple cores, and the operation queue will wait until it's all complete so it doesn't change the meaning of your code:

```
let queue = OperationQueue()  
  
for image in images {  
    queue.addOperation {  
        self.process(image)  
    }  
}  
  
queue.waitUntilAllOperationsAreFinished()
```

You can add as many operations as you want, but they don't all get executed at the same time. Instead, **OperationQueue** limits the number of operations based on system conditions – if it's a more powerful device that isn't doing much right now, you'll get more operations than a less powerful device or a device that's busy with other work.

You can override this behavior if you need something specific:

```
queue.maxConcurrentOperationCount = 4
```

And if you ever need to stop all operations that have yet to be started, call **cancelAllOperations()** on your queue, like this:

```
queue.cancelAllOperations()
```

That won't cancel any operations that are currently in flight.

Measuring execution speed using **CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()**

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

It's often important to know at runtime how long it took for some code to run. For example, you might want to make sure your game's AI takes at least two seconds to think before making its move, so that players don't get confused when there's no thinking time.

iOS comes with a built-in function called **CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()**, which reads the current system time measured as seconds since January 1st 2001. It's sent back as a **Double**, so you get sub-second accuracy as best as the system stores it.

To use the function, call it once before your work, then again after, and subtract the after from the before to get the difference, like this:

```
let start = CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()
// run your work
let diff = CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent() - start
print("Took \(diff) seconds")
```

NSTextEffectLetterpressStyle: How to add a letterpress effect to text

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

You can add a subtle embossing effect to any text in your app using **NSAttributedString** and **NSTextEffectLetterpressStyle**. As an example, this code creates an attributed string using 24-point Georgia Bold in red, with Apple's letterpress effect applied, then writes it into a label:

```
let attrs = [NSAttributedString.Key.foregroundColor:  
    UIColor.red,  
    NSAttributedString.Key.font: UIFont(name: "Georgia-  
Bold", size: 24)!,  
    NSAttributedString.Key.textEffect:  
    NSAttributedString.TextEffectStyle.letterpressStyle as NSString  
]  
  
let string = NSAttributedString(string: "Hello, world!",  
    attributes: attrs)  
yourLabel.attributedText = string
```

What is the first responder?

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Most of UIKit has a concept of *responders* baked deep into the system, but it's not common you need to work with it directly. It's Apple's implementation of a design pattern called the Chain of Responsibility: UIKit asks one component if it can respond to an action, but if it can't it gets passed to another component, and if that can't respond then it gets passed on and on until something *can* respond – it's a chain of responders.

The *first responder* is whatever control is currently ready to respond to actions. In UIKit this is usually the control that has activated the keyboard and is receiving input. If you want that text control to stop waiting for input – which in turn dismisses the keyboard – you should call its **resignFirstResponder()** method, which passes the first responder baton to the next waiting component.

The responder chain is how events bubble upwards on Apple platforms: **touchesBegan()** might

be implemented on a view, on its view controller, on a parent view controller, or even higher up, but it will always be triggered somewhere when it happens.

Arrays

How do you create multi-dimensional arrays?

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Creating an array that holds strings is as simple as writing **[String]**, but what about creating an array where each item is an array of strings – an array of arrays? This is called a multi-dimensional array, because if you were to draw its contents on paper it would look like a grid rather than a line.

In Swift, creating a multi-dimensional array is just a matter of adding another set of brackets. For example, to turn our **[String]** array into an array of arrays, you would just write **[[String]]**. But be careful: arrays are **value types**, which means if you add an array to another array, then modify it, only one of the two copies will be changed.

The code below demonstrates creating an array of arrays, where each inner array holds strings. It also demonstrates the value type situation that might catch you out:

```
// this is our array of arrays
var groups = [[String]]()

// we create three simple string arrays for testing
var groupA = ["England", "Ireland", "Scotland", "Wales"]
var groupB = ["Canada", "Mexico", "United States"]
var groupC = ["China", "Japan", "South Korea"]

// then add them all to the "groups" array
groups.append(groupA)
groups.append(groupB)
groups.append(groupC)
```

```

// this will print out the array of arrays
print("The groups are:", groups)

// we now append an item to one of the arrays
groups[1].append("Costa Rica")
print("\nAfter adding Costa Rica, the groups are:", groups)

// and now print out groupB's contents again
print("\nGroup B still contains:", groupB)

```

That last `print()` statement will still print out "Canada, Mexico, United States" because of array's value type behavior: we modified the copy of the array that was inside `groups`, not `groupB`.

How to count objects in a set using `NSCountedSet`

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

One of my favorite little gems in Cocoa Touch is called `NSCountedSet`, and it's the most efficient way to count objects in a set. Here's the code:

```

let set = NSCountedSet()
set.add("Bob")
set.add("Charlotte")
set.add("John")
set.add("Bob")
set.add("James")
set.add("Sophie")
set.add("Bob")

print(set.count(for: "Bob"))

```

Now to how it works: a *set* is like an array, except each item can appear only once. If we used an array in the above code, it would contain seven objects: three Bobs, one Charlotte, one John, one James and one Sophie. If we used a Swift set in the above code, it would contain four objects: one Bob, one Charlotte, one John, one James and one Sophie – the set ensures each item appears only once.

Now for the twist: **NSCountedSet** works similar to a set insofar as each object can appear only once, but it keeps track of how many times each item was added and removed. So, our counted set will have four objects in (like it would if it were a regular set), but **NSCountedSet** has a **count(for:)** method that will report back that Bob was added three times.

How to enumerate items in an array

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

There several ways to loop through an array in Swift, but using the **enumerated()** method is one of my favorites because it iterates over each of the items while also telling you the items's position in the array.

Here's an example:

```
let array = ["Apples", "Peaches", "Plums"]

for (index, item) in array.enumerated() {
    print("Found \(item) at position \(index)")
}
```

That will print "Found Apples at position 0", "Found Peaches at position 1", and "Found Plums at position 2".

How to find an item in an array using **firstIndex(of:)**

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

The **firstIndex(of:)** method tells you the index of an element in an array if it exists, or returns nil otherwise. Because it's an optional value, you need to unwrap it carefully or at least check the result, like this:

```
let array = ["Apples", "Peaches", "Plums"]

if let index = array.firstIndex(of: "Peaches") {
    print("Found peaches at index \(index)")
}
```

Note: in earlier versions of Swift this method was called **index(of:)**.

How to join an array of strings into a single string

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you have an array of strings and want to merge all the elements together into a single string, it's just one line of code in Swift.

For example, this joins array elements with a comma:

```
let array = ["Andrew", "Ben", "John", "Paul", "Peter", "Laura"]
let joined = array.joined(separator: ", ")
```

The result is that **joined** is set to "Andrew, Ben, John, Paul, Peter, Laura".

How to loop through an array in reverse

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

If you want to read through an array in reverse, you should use the **reversed()** method. You

can use this as part of the regular fast enumeration technique if you want, which would give you code like this:

```
let array = ["Apples", "Peaches", "Plums"]

for item in array.reversed() {
    print("Found \(item)")
}
```

You can also reverse an enumerated array just by appending the method call, like this:

```
for (index, item) in array.reversed().enumerated() {
    print("Found \(item) at position \(index)")
}
```

Note that whether you call **reversed()** then **enumerated()** or vice versa matters! In the above code, enumerate will count upwards, but if you use **array.enumerated().reversed()** it will count backwards.

How to loop through items in an array

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

Swift offers a selection of ways to loop through an array, but the easiest and fastest is known as fast enumeration and looks like this:

```
let array = ["Apples", "Peaches", "Plums"]

for item in array {
    print("Found \(item)")
}
```

That will print "Found Apples", "Found Peaches" then "Found Plums" to the Xcode console.

Each time the loop goes around, one item is read from the array and placed into the constant **item** – and note that *is* a constant, so don't try to change it.

How to randomize the order of an array: **shuffle()** and **shuffled()**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Swift has built-in methods for shuffling arrays: **shuffle()** and **shuffled()**, depending on whether you want the shuffling to happen in place or not.

For example:

```
var albums = [ "Red" , "1989" , "Reputation" ]  
  
// shuffle in place  
albums.shuffle()  
  
// get a shuffled array back  
let shuffled = albums.shuffled()
```

How to shuffle an array using **arc4random_uniform()**

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Modern Swift code will use Swift's own **shuffle()** and **shuffled()** methods, but sometimes you might find code that does it by hand using **arc4random_uniform()** or similar.

Nate Cook wrote a simple **shuffle()** extension to arrays that implements the Fisher-Yates shuffle algorithm in Swift. Here's the code:

```
extension Array {  
    mutating func customShuffle() {
```

```

        for i in 0 ..< (count - 1) {
            let j = Int(arc4random_uniform(UInt32(count - i))) + i
            swapAt(i, j)
        }
    }
}

```

How to sort an array using sort()

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

All arrays have built-in **sort()** and **sorted()** methods that can be used to sort the array, but they are subtly different.

If the array is simple you can just call **sort()** directly, like this, to sort an array in place:

```

var names = ["Jemima", "Peter", "David", "Kelly", "Isabella"]
names.sort()

```

If you have a custom struct or class and want to sort them arbitrarily, you should call **sort()** using a trailing closure that sorts on a field you specify. Here's an example using an array of custom structs that sorts on a particular property:

```

struct User {
    var firstName: String
}

var users = [
    User(firstName: "Jemima"),
    User(firstName: "Peter"),
    User(firstName: "David"),
    User(firstName: "Kelly"),
    User(firstName: "Isabella")
]

```

```
]  
  
users.sort {  
    $0.firstName < $1.firstName  
}
```

If you want to return a sorted array rather than sort it in place, use **sorted()** like this:

```
let sortedUsers = users.sorted {  
    $0.firstName < $1.firstName  
}
```

How to tell if an array contains an object

Availability: iOS 7.0 or later.

It's easy to find out whether an array contains a specific value, because Swift has a **contains()** method that returns true or false depending on whether that item is found. For example:

```
let array = ["Apples", "Peaches", "Plums"]  
  
if array.contains("Apples") {  
    print("We've got apples!")  
} else {  
    print("No apples here — sorry!")  
}
```

That example array does indeed contain "Apples" so that code will print "We've got apples!" to the Xcode console.

CALayer

How to add a border outline color to a UIView

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

All **UIView** subclasses have a built-in way to draw a border around them using their underlying **CALayer**. For example, to draw a 10-point red border around a view, you'd use this:

```
yourView.layer.borderWidth = 10  
yourView.layer.borderColor = UIColor.red.cgColor
```

Note that you need to use the **CGColor** property of your **UIColor** in order for this to work. Adding a border to a view even works if you also round the corners of your view – it's very flexible!

How to change a view's anchor point without moving it

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Every **UIView** has an anchor point, which is the point around which animations take place. Usually this is the center of the view – X:0.5 Y:0.5 – which means if you rotate a view it will spin around its center.

If you wanted the view to rotate around its top corner, as if someone had driven a nail into that point and you were spinning the view around that corner rather than the center, you can change the anchor point using the **layer.anchorPoint** property.

However, there's a problem: changing the anchor point also changes the point where the view's position is calculated, which means changing the anchor point also moves the view's position.

So, if you want to change a view's anchor point *without* moving it, here's a little extension to do just that:

```

extension UIView {
    func setAnchorPoint(_ point: CGPoint) {
        var newPoint = CGPoint(x: bounds.size.width * point.x, y:
        bounds.size.height * point.y)
        var oldPoint = CGPoint(x: bounds.size.width *
        layer.anchorPoint.x, y: bounds.size.height *
        layer.anchorPoint.y);

        newPoint = newPoint.applying(transform)
        oldPoint = oldPoint.applying(transform)

        var position = layer.position

        position.x -= oldPoint.x
        position.x += newPoint.x

        position.y -= oldPoint.y
        position.y += newPoint.y

        layer.position = position
        layer.anchorPoint = point
    }
}

```

If you want to see that in action, here's some code to create a blue **UIView** then animate it rotating around its top-left corner:

```

let box = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: 50, y: 50, width: 256,
height: 256))
box.backgroundColor = .blue
view.addSubview(box)

box.setAnchorPoint(CGPoint(x: 0, y: 0))

```

```
UIView.animate(withDuration: 3) {  
    box.transform = CGAffineTransform(rotationAngle: .pi)  
}
```

How to create a marching ants effect using lineDashPhase

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

“Marching ants” is the informal name used for animation of a selection: you see a dashed line around whatever you selected, and the dashes slowly move around the selection to show that it’s active.

iOS can achieve most of this effect for you when you’re using a **CAShapeLayer**. To try it out, first create a shape layer with a dashed stroke like this:

```
let layer = CAShapeLayer()  
let bounds = CGRect(x: 50, y: 50, width: 250, height: 250)  
layer.path = UIBezierPath(roundedRect: bounds,  
byRoundingCorners: .allCorners, cornerRadii: CGSize(width: 20,  
height: 20)).cgPath  
layer.strokeColor = UIColor.black.cgColor  
layer.fillColor = nil  
layer.lineDashPattern = [8, 6]  
view.layer.addSublayer(layer)
```

Now you need to create a **CABasicAnimation** to animate the **lineDashPhase** property.

Annoyingly, the **lineDashPattern** – the part that describes the way the dashed are drawn – is actually an array of **NSNumber** so we need to boil it down to an integer with code like this:

```
layer.lineDashPattern?.reduce(0) { $0 - $1.intValue } ?? 0
```

With the line dash pattern used above – 8, 6 – that will result in **toValue** being set to 14.

Here's the animation you need to give the above shape layer a marching ants effect:

```
let animation = CABasicAnimation(keyPath: "lineDashPhase")
animation.fromValue = 0
animation.toValue = layer.lineDashPattern?.reduce(0) { $0 -
$1.intValue } ?? 0
animation.duration = 1
animation.repeatCount = .infinity
layer.add(animation, forKey: "line")
```

I used `.infinity` for the repeat count so that it lasts forever.

How to create keyframe animations using CAKeyframeAnimation

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Keyframe animations offer extraordinary power for developers because they let you set multiple values and have iOS animate between them over times you specify. There are three components: a key path (the property to animate), an array of values (the value you want to use for that property), and an array of key times (when that value should be used for the property).

The number of key times needs to match the number of values, because each value is applied in order when its key time is reached. In the example code below, a view will be moved down 300 points then back to its starting point over 2 seconds. It's important that you understand the key times and duration are separate: the key times should be between 0 and 1, where 0 means "the start of the animation" and 1 means "the end of the animation."

```
let animation = CAKeyframeAnimation()
animation.keyPath = "position.y"
animation.values = [0, 300, 0]
animation.keyTimes = [0, 0.5, 1]
animation.duration = 2
animation.isAdditive = true
```

```
vw.layer.add(animation, forKey: "move")
```

Because the animation is marked as additive, it means that 300 is relative to its starting position.

We can use key frame animations to create a simple shake effect that moves a view left and right across a brief animation. This will use additive animations again because we want to specify relative values (move to the left and right a bit) rather than absolute values:

```
func shakeView(vw: UIView) {  
    let animation = CAKeyframeAnimation()  
    animation.keyPath = "position.x"  
    animation.values = [0, 10, -10, 10, -5, 5, -5, 0]  
    animation.keyTimes = [0, 0.125, 0.25, 0.375, 0.5, 0.625,  
    0.75, 0.875, 1]  
    animation.duration = 0.4  
    animation.isAdditive = true  
  
    vw.layer.add(animation, forKey: "shake")  
}
```

How to draw color gradients using CAGradientLayer

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

I love **CAGradientLayer** because it takes just four lines of code to use, and yet looks great because it quickly and accurately draws smooth color gradients use Core Graphics. Here's a basic example:

```
let layer = CAGradientLayer()  
layer.frame = CGRect(x: 64, y: 64, width: 160, height: 160)  
layer.colors = [UIColor.red.cgColor, UIColor.black.cgColor]
```

```
view.layer.addSublayer(layer)
```

Note that you need to fill in an array of **colors** that will be used to draw the gradient. You can provide more than one if you want to, at which point you will also need to fill in the **locations** array to tell **CAGradientLayer** where each color starts and stops. Note that you need to specify your colors as **CGColor** and not **UIColor**.

If you want to make your gradient work in a different direction, you should set the **startPoint** and **endPoint** properties. These are both **CGPoint**s where the X and Y values are between 0 and 1, where 0 is one edge and 1 is the opposite edge. The default start point is X 0.5, Y 0.0 and the default end point is X 0.5, Y 1.0, which means both points are in the center of the layer, but it starts at the top and ends at the bottom.

You might be interested to know that **CAGradientLayer** happily works with translucent colors, meaning that you can make a gradient that fades out.

How to draw shapes using **CAShapeLayer**

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

There are lots of **CALayer** subclasses out there, but **CAShapeLayer** is one of my favorites: it provides hardware-accelerated drawing of all sorts of 2D shapes, and includes extra functionality such as fill and stroke colors, line caps, patterns and more.

To get you started, this uses **UIBezierPath** to create a rounded rectangle, which is then colored red using **CAShapeLayer**. Remember, **CALayer** sits underneath UIKit, so you need to use **CGColor** rather than **UIColor**.

```
let layer = CAShapeLayer()
layer.path = UIBezierPath(roundedRect: CGRect(x: 64, y: 64,
width: 160, height: 160), cornerRadius: 50).cgPath
layer.fillColor = UIColor.red.cgColor
view.layer.addSublayer(layer)
```

How to emit particles using CAEmitterLayer

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

Believe it or not, iOS has a built-in particle system that works great in all UIKit apps and is immensely customizable. To get started you need to create a **CAEmitterLayer** object and tell it how to create particles: where it should create them, how big the emitter should be, and what types of particles should exist.

The "type of particles" part is handled by **CAEmitterCell**, which covers details like how fast to create, how long they should live, whether they should spin and/or fade out, what texture to use, and more. You can add as many **CAEmitterCells** to a **CAEmitterLayer** as you need.

Here's some example code to get you started. This creates particles of three different colors, all falling and spinning down from the top of the screen. The image "particle_confetti" is just a small white triangle that I drew by hand – you should replace that with something more interesting.

```
func createParticles() {
    let particleEmitter = CAEmitterLayer()

    particleEmitter.emitterPosition = CGPoint(x: view.center.x,
y: -96)
    particleEmitter.emitterShape = .line
    particleEmitter.emitterSize = CGSize(width:
view.frame.size.width, height: 1)

    let red = makeEmitterCell(color: UIColor.red)
    let green = makeEmitterCell(color: UIColor.green)
    let blue = makeEmitterCell(color: UIColor.blue)

    particleEmitter.emitterCells = [red, green, blue]
```

```

        view.layer.addSublayer(particleEmitter)
    }

func makeEmitterCell(color: UIColor) -> CAEmitterCell {
    let cell = CAEmitterCell()
    cell.birthRate = 3
    cell.lifetime = 7.0
    cell.lifetimeRange = 0
    cell.color = color.cgColor
    cell.velocity = 200
    cell.velocityRange = 50
    cell.emissionLongitude = CGFloat.pi
    cell.emissionRange = CGFloat.pi / 4
    cell.spin = 2
    cell.spinRange = 3
    cell.scaleRange = 0.5
    cell.scaleSpeed = -0.05

    cell.contents = UIImage(named: "particle_confetti")?.cgImage
    return cell
}

```

How to make a UIView fade out

Availability: iOS 3.0 or later.

All views naturally fill the space assigned to them, but using **CAGradientLayer** as a mask view you can force a view to fade out at its edges.

To try it out, first create a test view with some obvious content like a background color:

```
let maskedView = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: 50, y: 50, width: 256,
height: 256))
```

```
maskedView.backgroundColor = .blue
```

The next step is to create a **CAGradientLayer** at the same size as the view you want to mask:

```
let gradientMaskLayer = CAGradientLayer()
gradientMaskLayer.frame = maskedView.bounds
```

Now for the important part: to make the gradient work you need to use a clear color where nothing should be shown (where your view should be invisible) and white where the view should shine through fully.

By default **GAGradientLayer** spaces out its colors so they appear at equal distances, but we're going to tell it to put the first color at 0, the second color at 0.1 (10% of the way in), the third color at 0.9 (90% of the way in), then the last color at 1 (the end). This 80% of our view is shown with full opacity:

```
gradientMaskLayer.colors = [UIColor.clear.cgColor,
    UIColor.white.cgColor, UIColor.white.cgColor,
    UIColor.clear.cgColor]
gradientMaskLayer.locations = [0, 0.1, 0.9, 1]
```

Finally, you just need to add that mask to your view, then add the whole thing to a parent view so it can be shown:

```
maskedView.layer.mask = gradientMaskLayer
view.addSubview(maskedView)
```

How to make a UIView glow using shadowColor

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

All views can have shadows thanks to the **CALayer** behind them, but you can use that same property to create glow effects. For example, this creates a 128x128 view then gives it a 20-

point yellow glow:

```
let vw = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: 100, y: 100, width: 128,  
height: 128))  
vw.backgroundColor = .white  
  
vw.layer.shadowOffset = .zero  
vw.layer.shadowColor = UIColor.yellow.cgColor  
vw.layer.shadowRadius = 20  
vw.layer.shadowOpacity = 1  
vw.layer.shadowPath = UIBezierPath(rect: vw.bounds).cgPath
```

Bright glows work best on a dark background, so try making your main view black:

```
view.backgroundColor = .black
```

How to make a shape draw itself using strokeEnd

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

iOS makes it easy to draw shapes using **CAShapeLayer**, but you also get the ability to adjust *how* shapes are drawn. By manipulating the **strokeStart** and **strokeEnd** properties you can make shapes draw themselves on the screen: you can present a half-drawn star, or a three-quarters drawn circle, for example.

However, as clever as that is what's *really* neat is being able to animate the drawing process. To try it out, first create a **CAShapeLayer** with a stroke that's visible, like this one:

```
let layer = CAShapeLayer()  
let bounds = CGRect(x: 50, y: 50, width: 250, height: 250)  
layer.path = UIBezierPath(roundedRect: bounds,  
byRoundingCorners: .allCorners, cornerRadii: CGSize(width: 20,  
height: 20)).cgPath  
layer.strokeColor = UIColor.black.cgColor
```

```
layer.fillColor = nil  
layer.lineDashPattern = [8, 6]  
view.layer.addSublayer(layer)
```

Now create and add a **CABasicAnimation** to adjust the **strokeEnd** property:

```
let animation = CABasicAnimation(keyPath: "strokeEnd")  
animation.fromValue = 0  
animation.toValue = 1  
animation.duration = 2  
animation.autoreverses = true  
animation.repeatCount = .infinity  
layer.add(animation, forKey: "line")
```

I made that animate from 0 (not drawn) to 1 (fully drawn) over two seconds, but also made it reverse at the end and repeat infinite times.

How to round only specific corners using **maskedCorners**

Availability: iOS 11.0 or later.

You can set the **cornerRadius** property of any **UIView** to have its edges rounded, but by default that rounds all corners at the same time. If you want only *some* corners to be rounded, you should set the layer's **maskedCorners** property to be an array of the corners you want – it's an option set, so you can set one or many depending on your needs.

For example, this code rounds the top-left and bottom-right corners of a view, leaving the other two square:

```
let redBox = UIView(frame: CGRect(x: 100, y: 100, width: 128,  
height: 128))  
redBox.backgroundColor = .red  
redBox.layer.cornerRadius = 25
```

```
redBox.layer.maskedCorners =  
[.layerMinXMinYCorner, .layerMaxXMaxYCorner]  
view.addSubview(redBox)
```

How to round the corners of a UIView

Availability: iOS 3.2 or later.

All **UIView** subclasses have the ability to round their corners thanks to their underlying **CALayer** – that's the bit that handles the actual drawing of your views. To round the corners of a view, use this code:

```
yourView.layer.cornerRadius = 10
```

The number you specify is how far the rounding should go, measured in points. So if you have a view that's 100x100 points and give it a **cornerRadius** property of 50, it will look like a circle.

Note that some types of view don't have **clipsToBounds** enabled by default, which means their corners will not round until you enable this property.

What is CALayer?

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

All **UIView** subclasses have a **layer** property, which is responsible for drawing their contents efficiently. These layers are powered by Core Animation, which handles all the drawing and animation that UIKit requests. The layer is separate from the view because drawing is separate from placement – you can move a **UIView** around freely, change its **alpha**, add or remove it all you want, and so on, but that doesn't affect the underlying way it's *drawn*.

Although most views use a plain **CALayer** behind them, there are specialized subclasses that

do more advanced things. **CATiledLayer** is responsible for tiling images in the way you see in the Maps app, **CAEmitterLayer** handles creating particles, **CAGradientLayer** draws color gradients, and more – there's a selection depending on your need.

Broadly speaking, iOS developers mostly work with **CALayer** through the **layer** property of their views – things like rounding corners, adding borders, and drawing shadows can all be done there.

UIColor

How to convert a HTML name string into a UIColor

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

HTML color names let you use familiar titles like "steel blue" and "mint cream" rather than hex values, but sadly these standardized names aren't available in iOS – or at least not by default. Fortunately, it's easy to add an extension to **UIColor** that maps these names to hexadecimal color values, then add another extension to convert hex colors to **UIColors**.

Here's the code:

```
extension UIColor {
    public convenience init?(hexString: String) {
        let r, g, b, a: CGFloat

        if hexString.hasPrefix("#") {
            let start = hexString.index(hexString.startIndex,
                offsetBy: 1)
            let hexColor = hexString.substring(from: start)

            if hexColor.count == 8 {
                let scanner = Scanner(string: hexColor)
                var hexNumber: UInt64 = 0
```

```

        if scanner.scanHexInt64(&hexNumber) {
            r = CGFloat((hexNumber & 0xff000000) >> 24) /
255
            g = CGFloat((hexNumber & 0x00ff0000) >> 16) /
255
            b = CGFloat((hexNumber & 0x0000ff00) >> 8) / 255
            a = CGFloat(hexNumber & 0x000000ff) / 255

            self.init(red: r, green: g, blue: b, alpha: a)
            return
        }
    }
}

return nil
}

public convenience init?(name: String) {
let allColors = [
    "aliceblue": "#F0F8FFFF",
    "antiquewhite": "#FAEBD7FF",
    "aqua": "#00FFFFFF",
    "aquamarine": "#7FFFDD4FFF",
    "azure": "#F0FFFFFF",
    "beige": "#F5F5DCFF",
    "bisque": "#FFE4C4FF",
    "black": "#000000FF",
    "blanchedalmond": "#FFEBCDDFFF",
    "blue": "#0000FFFF",
    "blueviolet": "#8A2BE2FF",
    "brown": "#A52A2AFF",
    "burlywood": "#DEB887FF",
    "cadetblue": "#5F9EA0FF",
    "chartreuse": "#7FFF00FF",

```

```
"chocolate": "#D2691EFF",
"coral": "#FF7F50FF",
"cornflowerblue": "#6495EDFF",
"cornsilk": "#FFF8DCFF",
"crimson": "#DC143CFF",
"cyan": "#00FFFFFF",
"darkblue": "#00008BFF",
"darkcyan": "#008B8BFF",
"darkgoldenrod": "#B8860BFF",
"darkgray": "#A9A9A9FF",
"darkgrey": "#A9A9A9FF",
"darkgreen": "#006400FF",
"darkkhaki": "#BDB76BFF",
"darkmagenta": "#8B008BFF",
"darkolivegreen": "#556B2FFF",
"darkorange": "#FF8C00FF",
"darkorchid": "#9932CCFF",
"darkred": "#8B0000FF",
"darksalmon": "#E9967AFF",
"darkseagreen": "#8FBBC8FFFF",
"darkslateblue": "#483D8BFF",
"darkslategray": "#2F4F4FFF",
"darkslategrey": "#2F4F4FFF",
"darkturquoise": "#00CED1FF",
"darkviolet": "#9400D3FF",
"deeppink": "#FF1493FF",
"deepskyblue": "#00BFFFFFF",
"dimgray": "#696969FF",
"dimgrey": "#696969FF",
"dodgerblue": "#1E90FFFF",
"firebrick": "#B22222FF",
"floralwhite": "#FFFCAF0FF",
"forestgreen": "#228B22FF",
"fuchsia": "#FF00FFFFFF",
```

```
"gainsboro": "#DCDCDCFF",
"ghostwhite": "#F8F8FFFF",
"gold": "#FFD700FF",
"goldenrod": "#DAA520FF",
"gray": "#808080FF",
"grey": "#808080FF",
"green": "#008000FF",
"greenyellow": "#ADFF2FFF",
"honeydew": "#F0FFF0FF",
"hotpink": "#FF69B4FF",
"indianred": "#CD5C5CFF",
"indigo": "#4B0082FF",
"ivory": "#FFFFFF0FF",
"khaki": "#F0E68CFF",
"lavender": "#E6E6FAFF",
"lavenderblush": "#FFF0F5FF",
"lawngreen": "#7CFC00FF",
"lemonchiffon": "#FFFACDFF",
"lightblue": "#ADD8E6FF",
"lightcoral": "#F08080FF",
"lightcyan": "#E0FFFFFF",
"lightgoldenrodyellow": "#FAFAD2FF",
"lightgray": "#D3D3D3FF",
"lightgrey": "#D3D3D3FF",
"lightgreen": "#90EE90FF",
"lightpink": "#FFB6C1FF",
"lightsalmon": "#FFA07AFF",
"lightseagreen": "#20B2AAFF",
"lightskyblue": "#87CEFAFF",
"lightslategray": "#778899FF",
"lightslategrey": "#778899FF",
"lightsteelblue": "#B0C4DEFF",
"lightyellow": "#FFFFE0FF",
"lime": "#00FF00FF",
```

```
"limegreen": "#32CD32FF",
"linen": "#FAF0E6FF",
"magenta": "#FF00FFFF",
"maroon": "#800000FF",
"mediumaquamarine": "#66CDAAFF",
"mediumblue": "#0000CDFF",
"mediumorchid": "#BA55D3FF",
"mediumpurple": "#9370D8FF",
"mediumseagreen": "#3CB371FF",
"mediumslateblue": "#7B68EEFF",
"mediumspringgreen": "#00FA9AFF",
"mediumturquoise": "#48D1CCFF",
"mediumvioletred": "#C71585FF",
"midnightblue": "#191970FF",
"mintcream": "#F5FFF4FF",
"mistyrose": "#FFE4E1FF",
"moccasin": "#FFE4B5FF",
"navajowhite": "#FFDEADFF",
"navy": "#000080FF",
"oldlace": "#FDF5E6FF",
"olive": "#808000FF",
"olivedrab": "#6B8E23FF",
"orange": "#FFA500FF",
"orangered": "#FF4500FF",
"orchid": "#DA70D6FF",
"palegoldenrod": "#EEE8AAFF",
"palegreen": "#98FB98FF",
"paleturquoise": "#AFEEEEFF",
"palevioletred": "#D87093FF",
"papayawhip": "#FFEFDD5FF",
"peachpuff": "#FFDAB9FF",
"peru": "#CD853FFF",
"pink": "#FFC0CBFF",
"plum": "#DDA0DDFF",
```

```

    "powderblue": "#B0E0E6FF",
    "purple": "#800080FF",
    "rebeccapurple": "#663399FF",
    "red": "#FF0000FF",
    "rosybrown": "#BC8F8FFF",
    "royalblue": "#4169E1FF",
    "saddlebrown": "#8B4513FF",
    "salmon": "#FA8072FF",
    "sandybrown": "#F4A460FF",
    "seagreen": "#2E8B57FF",
    "seashell": "#FFF5EEFF",
    "sienna": "#A0522DFF",
    "silver": "#C0C0C0FF",
    "skyblue": "#87CEEBFF",
    "slateblue": "#6A5ACdff",
    "slategray": "#708090FF",
    "slategrey": "#708090FF",
    "snow": "#FFFafaff",
    "springgreen": "#00FF7FFF",
    "steelblue": "#4682B4FF",
    "tan": "#D2B48cff",
    "teal": "#008080FF",
    "thistle": "#D8bfd8FF",
    "tomato": "#FF6347FF",
    "turquoise": "#40E0D0FF",
    "violet": "#EE82EEFF",
    "wheat": "#F5DEB3FF",
    "white": "#FFFFFFFF",
    "whitesmoke": "#F5F5F5FF",
    "yellow": "#FFFF00FF",
    "yellowgreen": "#9ACD32FF"
]

let cleanedName = name.replacingOccurrences(of: " ",
```

```

with: "") .lowercased()

    if let hexString = allColors[cleanedName] {
        self.init(hexString: hexString)
    } else {
        return nil
    }
}
}

```

With that done, here's how you create a color:

```
let steelBlue = UIColor(name: "steel blue")
```

How to convert a hex color to a UIColor

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Here's a simple extension to **UIColor** that lets you create colors from hex strings. The new method is a failable initializer, which means it returns nil if you don't specify a color in the correct format. It should be a # symbol, followed by red, green, blue and alpha in hex format, for a total of nine characters. For example, #ffe700ff is gold.

Here's the code:

```

extension UIColor {
    public convenience init?(hex: String) {
        let r, g, b, a: CGFloat

        if hex.hasPrefix("#") {
            let start = hex.index(hex.startIndex, offsetBy: 1)
            let hexColor = String(hex[start...])

```

```

        if hexColor.count == 8 {
            let scanner = Scanner(string: hexColor)
            var hexNumber: UInt64 = 0

            if scanner.scanHexInt64(&hexNumber) {
                r = CGFloat((hexNumber & 0xff000000) >> 24) /
255
                g = CGFloat((hexNumber & 0x00ff0000) >> 16) /
255
                b = CGFloat((hexNumber & 0x0000ff00) >> 8) / 255
                a = CGFloat(hexNumber & 0x000000ff) / 255

                self.init(red: r, green: g, blue: b, alpha: a)
                return
            }
        }

        return nil
    }
}

```

If you wanted it always to return a value, change **init?** to be **init** then change the **return nil** line at the end to be **return UIColor.black** or whatever you'd like the default value to be.

To use the extension, write code like this:

```
let gold = UIColor(hex: "#ffe700ff")
```

How to create custom colors using UIColor RGB and hues

Availability: iOS 2.0 or later.

Although there are quite a few built-in `UIColor`s, you'll want to create your own very frequently. This can be done in a number of ways, but the most common is specifying individual values for red, green, blue and alpha, like this:

```
let col1 = UIColor(red: 1, green: 0, blue: 0, alpha: 1)
```

Each of those numbers need to be between 0 and 1.

An alternative way is to specify color values as hue, saturation and brightness, or HSB. Hue is a value between 0 and 1 on a color wheel, where 0 and 1 are both red. Saturation is how deep the color should be (so 0 is just gray) and brightness is how light the shade should be.

Here's how it's done:

```
let col2 = UIColor(hue: 0, saturation: 0.66, brightness: 0.66,
alpha: 1)
let col3 = UIColor(hue: 0.25, saturation: 0.66, brightness:
0.66, alpha: 1)
let col4 = UIColor(hue: 0.5, saturation: 0.66, brightness:
0.66, alpha: 1)
let col5 = UIColor(hue: 0.75, saturation: 0.66, brightness:
0.66, alpha: 1)
```

The advantage to using HSB rather than RGB is that you can generate very similar colors by keeping the saturation and brightness constant and changing only the hue – the code above generates some nice pastel shades of red, green, cyan and magenta, for example.

How to read the red, green, blue, and alpha color components from a `UIColor`

Availability: iOS 5.0 or later.

Creating a `UIColor` from red, green, blue, and alpha (RGBA) is easy enough:

```
let color = UIColor(red: 0.8, green: 0.1, blue: 0.5, alpha: 1)
```

But when you want to read those values back, you need to do a little more work. **UIColor** has a built-in method called **getRed()**, which unpacks the RGBA values into variable floats – you need to create four variables first, then pass them in by reference:

```
var red: CGFloat = 0
var green: CGFloat = 0
var blue: CGFloat = 0
var alpha: CGFloat = 0

color.getRed(&red, green: &green, blue: &blue, alpha: &alpha)
```

When that runs, **red** will have 0.8, **green** will have 0.1, and so on.

Because this is a pain to use you might find it best to wrap it up in an extension:

```
extension UIColor {
    var rgba: (red: CGFloat, green: CGFloat, blue: CGFloat,
alpha: CGFloat) {
        var red: CGFloat = 0
        var green: CGFloat = 0
        var blue: CGFloat = 0
        var alpha: CGFloat = 0
        getRed(&red, green: &green, blue: &blue, alpha: &alpha)

        return (red, green, blue, alpha)
    }
}
```

Now you can use **color.rgba** to get back a tuple of all four color values.

How to use an image for your background color with **UIColor(patternImage:)**

Availability: iOS 8.0 or later.

Nearly all subclasses of **UIView** can have their background color adjusted, but often you'll find you want to use an image rather than a flat color.

Well, this is actually significantly easier than you think: you can wrap any **UIImage** inside a **UIColor**, and use it anywhere you want to set a background color – or indeed *any* kind of color, even for text. If the image is too small for the space you're drawing it will automatically be tiled, meaning that it will be repeated both horizontally and vertically until the space is filled.

To try it out, load a **UIImage** into your app then add this line of code to a view controller:

```
view.backgroundColor = UIColor(patternImage: yourImage)
```