A **CAPTCHA** (an [acronym](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acronym) for "**C**ompletely **A**utomated **P**ublic [**T**uring test](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turing_test) to tell **C**omputers and **H**umans **A**part") is a type of [challenge-response](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Challenge-response_authentication) test used in [computing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computing) to determine whether or not the user is human.

The term was coined in 2003 by [Luis von Ahn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luis_von_Ahn), [Manuel Blum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manuel_Blum), Nicholas J. Hopper, and [John Langford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Langford_(computer_scientist)).[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CAPTCHA#cite_note-abhl-1) The most common type of CAPTCHA was first invented in 1997 by Mark D. Lillibridge, [Martin Abadi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Abadi), [Krishna Bharat](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krishna_Bharat), and [Andrei Z. Broder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrei_Broder). This form of CAPTCHA requires that the user type the letters of a distorted image, sometimes with the addition of an obscured sequence of letters or digits that appears on the screen. Because the test is administered by a computer, in contrast to the standard Turing test that is administered by a human, a CAPTCHA is sometimes described as a [reverse Turing test](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reverse_Turing_test). This term is ambiguous because it could also mean a Turing test in which the participants are both attempting to prove they are the computer.

This user identification procedure has received many criticisms, especially from disabled people, but also from other people who feel that their everyday work is slowed down by distorted words that are illegible even for users with no disabilities at all.[[2]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CAPTCHA#cite_note-2)

public class **StickyCaptchaServlet**

extends javax.servlet.http.HttpServlet

Builds a CAPTCHA and stores it in the session. This is intended to prevent bots from simply reloading the page and getting new images until one is generated which they can successfully parse. Removal of the session attribute CaptchaServletUtil.NAME will force a new Captcha to be added to the session. (Obviously, this is not a perfect solution as session IDs can simply not be passed.) The size of the image is by default 200x50. This can be customized using the captcha-height and captcha-width init parameters in web.xml. By default the CAPTCHA will expire after 600000ms. This can be overridden using thettl init parameter, in milliseconds. An example showing all parameters:

<servlet>

<servlet-name>StickyCaptcha</servlet-name>

<servlet-class>nl.captcha.servlet.StickyCaptchaServlet</servlet-class>

<init-param>

<param-name>captcha-width</param-name>

<param-value>400</param-value>

</init-param>

<init-param>

<param-name>captcha-height</param-name>

<param-value>200</param-value>

</init-param>

<init-param>

<param-name>ttl</param-name>

<param-value>900000</param-value>

</init-param>

</servlet>

Since the constructed image is a PNG the servlet mapping should be defined something like this:

<servlet-mapping>

<servlet-name>StickyCaptcha</servlet-name>

<url-pattern>/stickyCaptcha.png</url-pattern>

</servlet-mapping>