# 04 Testing and Debugging

## Types of Error

**Syntactic** – basic error that prevents your program from compiling, e.g. missing semicolon; typically easier to fix

**Semantic/Logical** – error that occurs after compilation and while your program is running, e.g. null pointer reference exception; typically harder to fix

### Minimizing Errors

* Develop your program from the simplest class to the most complex class.
* Develop each class one property/method at a time – write code & test each time you add a new property/method
* Test each class you go

Objective is to spend about 50% coding and 50% testing

**Example: Slider class**

A slider is a GUI control that lets the user slide a marker in order to select a value in a range between min and max.

What are the properties?

minValue, maxValue, size/position on screen, colour, currentValue

What are methods?

* must be able to draw itself
* must respond to mouse click interactions (click, drag, etc)

How to develop this class?

* first focus on the appearance – code properties and a draw() method so that the slider can draw itself
* next focus on the user interaction – add properties and methods to handle the user interaction

## Method Design

A method or class can be used in two main ways:

**Normal** – occurs when the method/class is used correctly, e.g. sqrt(9)

**Erroneously** – occurs when the method/class is used incorrectly, e.g. sqrt(-1)

We can also add a third type of use:

**Boundary** – occurs when the method/class is used at the boundary between normal and erroneous behaviour, e.g. sqrt(0), sqrt(-0.000000001), sqrt(0.000001)

*What should your method do in each situation?*

## Testing

After deciding what your method should do, write the method, then *test* it by repeatedly running your program with different inputs.

Example: the setValue() method of the Slider class:

Normal case 1:

Slider slider = new Slider();

slider.minValue = 0;

slider.maxValue = 100;

slider.setValue(50);

Normal case 2:

Slider slider = new Slider();

slider.minValue = -10;

slider.maxValue = 20;

slider.setValue(1);

Normal case 3:

Slider slider = new Slider();

slider.minValue = 0;

slider.maxValue = 255;

slider.setValue(254);

Erroneous case 1:

Slider slider = new Slider();

slider.minValue = 0;

slider.maxValue = 255;

slider.setValue(288);

Erroneous case 2:

Slider slider = new Slider();

slider.minValue = -100;

slider.maxValue = 100;

slider.setValue(-36535353);

Boundary case 1:

Slider slider = new Slider();

slider.minValue = -100;

slider.maxValue = 100;

slider.setValue(-100);

Boundary case 2:

Slider slider = new Slider();

slider.minValue = 0;

slider.maxValue = 255;

slider.setValue(-255);

Does the method work in all situations as expected?

**Additional boundary cases** -- values just above our below the boundary between correct/erroneous behaviour also qualify as boundary cases and should be tested, e.g. if maxValue=1000 then good boundary cases are setValue(999), setValue(1000) and setValue(1001).

FYI here is the implementation of setValue():

public void setValue(float val) {

if (val<minValue) currentValue = minValue;

else if (val>maxValue) currentValue = maxValue;

else currentValue=val;

}

## Testing Processing’s Builtin Functions

**rect() function**

* normal behaviour occurs when width>=0 and height>=0;
* erroneous case occurs when width or height are negative;
* boundary case is where width or height is zero.

Processing draws rectangles when the width or height are negative, but this behaviour is not documented in the online reference:

<http://processing.org/reference/rect_.html>

Not clear what happens!

**PVector’s add() method**

* normal behaviour occurs when add() is passed a created PVector
* erroneous behaviour (null pointer exception) occurs when add() is passed null

### Debugging

Having found some incorrect behavior, how to locate the error(s)?

**Strategy 1** – if there are more than one errors, target the *first* error. Why? The first error may be causing the rest of the errors.

**Strategy 2** – add a debug flag to your program.

final boolean DEBUG = true;

void setup() {

/\* do stuff \*/

}

when you want to check something by printing it to the console, use if statements, e.g.:

public void setValue(float val) {

if (val<minValue) currentValue = minValue;

else if (val>maxValue) currentValue = maxValue;

else currentValue=val;

if (DEBUG) {

println("setValue() called with val="+val+

", resulting in currentValue set"+

" to "+currentValue);

}

}

which results in, for example:

setValue() called with val=50, resulting in currentValue being set to 50

setValue() called with val=2000, resulting in currentValue being set to 100

setValue() called with val=-10000000, resulting in currentValue being set to 0

**Strategy 3** – add a toString() method to your class and use it.

Example:

class Slider{

/\* stuff \*/

public String toString() {

String result = "This is a Slider";

result+="\nminValue = "+minValue;

result+="\nmaxValue = "+maxValue;

result+="\ncurrentValue = "+currentValue;

result+="\nx = "+x;

result+="\ny = "+y;

result+="\nsize = "+size;

result+="\ncolour = "+colour;

return result;

}

}

In the setup():

redSlider=createSlider(150,200,#FF0000);

if (DEBUG) println( redSlider );

resulting in this console output:

This is a Slider

minValue = 0.0

maxValue = 255.0

currentValue = 0.0

x = 150.0

y = 200.0

size = 200.0

colour = -65536

**Strategy 4** – use a HUD

Processing calls draw() sixty times a second which may produce too much console output using the other methods. An alternative is to draw your debug output instead of printing it:

// A HUD method to assist debugging

void drawHUD() {

textAlign(CENTER, CENTER);

fill(255);

text("red="+redSlider.currentValue, 100, 500);

text("blue="+blueSlider.currentValue, 300, 500);

text("green="+greenSlider.currentValue, 500, 500);

}

void draw(){

/\* draw everything \*/

// Draw the HUD

drawHUD();  
}