# JAVASCRIPT PITFALLS

# Agenda

- ☐ Understand the major differences between popular static languages (C++/C#/Java) and JavaScript
- ☐ Variables
- ☐ Arrays
- ☐ Functions
- ☐ Objects
- ☐ Modules

# JavaScript is dynamic

- You don't specify the data type of a variable when you declare it

- The same variable can point to different data types

- We use <span style="color:red">var</span> to declare a variable

- A variable has a scope
  - Global variables should be avoided (like in any other object oriented language)

```javascript
var answer = 42;
answer = "Meaning of life";
```

# Declaring Variables

☐ Case sensitive

☐ $ and _ are valid variable names

◻ And common

☐ Cannot use reserved keywords

☐ Usually, camel case convention

```
$(function () {
    var res = _.map([1, 2, 3], function (num) {
        return num * 2;
    });
});
```

☐ Do you like above code ?

# Implicit Variable Declaration

- You can write into a variable even when this variable was not declared before

- Don't do this !

- In this case a global variable is created

```
function () {
    global = 12;
    var local = "abc";
}

alert(local);
```

# Automatic Initialization

- □ Like other modern programming languages, JavaScript supports automatic initialization

- □ The value of uninitialized variable is <span style="color:red">undefined</span>
  - ◻ Not the same as <span style="color:red">null</span> value

```javascript
var num;

console.log(num == undefined);
```

# Undeclared Variable

☐ You cannot read a value of undeclared variable

```
try {
    if (xxx == 10) {
    }
}
catch (e) {
    console.log(e.message);
}
```

☐ You can ask for the typeof of an undeclared variable

```
console.log(typeof xxx);
```

⟹ "undefined"

# Window is the Global Scope

- Every global variable is a property of a global object named <span style="color:red">window</span>

```javascript
var num = 10;
console.log(window.num); //prints 10

window.num = 11;
console.log(num); // prints 11
```

- Objects in JavaScript are dynamic → Global scope is dynamic ☺
  - See next slides about objects

# Built-in types

- JavaScript supports only the following types:
  - number
  - boolean
  - string
  - function
  - object
  - undefined
- Given a variable you can use the keyword <span style="color:red">typeof</span> to read it's runtime type

# Built-in types

```javascript
console.log(typeof 1); // number
console.log(typeof 1.2); // number
console.log(typeof "abc"); // string
console.log(typeof "abc"[0]); // string
console.log(typeof true); // boolean
console.log(typeof function () { }); // function
console.log(typeof {}); // object
console.log(typeof null); // object
console.log(typeof new Date()); // object
console.log(typeof window); // object
console.log(typeof undefined); // undefined
console.log(typeof blabla); // undefined
```

# Value vs. Reference type

- Same concept as in Java/C#
- Built-in data types are grouped into
  - Reference types (object, array and function)
  - Value types (others …)
- A reference is implemented as a pointer
  - Points to an object that resides inside the heap
  - Many references can point to the same object
- A value can only copied
  - You cannot get the address of value

# Number

- There is no distinction between integer and double
- All type of numbers are represented as 64bit floating point values
  - $10/3 = 3.3333$ not 3
- parseInt can be used to parse a string into a number. In case of failure NaN is returned

```javascript
var str = document.getElementById("firstName").value;
if (isNaN(parseInt(str))) {
    alert("Please enter a number");
}
```

# String (1)

- ☐ String contains any Unicode character

- ☐ No character type
  - ☐ str[0] is also a string !!!

- ☐ String literal can be expressed using " or '

```
var str = "ABC";
var str = 'ABC';
```

- ☐ Strings are immutable
  - ☐ Allows for runtime optimization

```
var str = "ABC";
str[0] = "X";
```

str is still
"ABC"

# String (2)

**14**

- Should we use " or ' when writing string literals?
  - Probably a matter of style
  - Programmers with C++\Java\C# background tend to use double quotes
  - Veteran Web Programmers tend to use single quote
- You should be aware of the following
  - JSON requires double quotes
  - HTML/XML attributes are usually expressed using double quotes
    - Therefore, when building XML fragments at runtime it is easier to use single quote for the whole string literal

# String's useful methods

- **charAt** – Returns the character at the specified index

- **charCodeAt** – Returns the Unicode value

- **indexOf** – Returns the position

- **match** – Matching a regular expression

- **trim** – Removes whitespaces from both sides

- **split** – Splits a string into an array of substrings

- More …

# Undefined

□ A special data type

□ Has only one value named <span style="color:red">undefined</span>

□ The value <span style="color:red">undefined</span> is important concept in JavaScript

□ You may encounter it during several scenarios

- Uninitialized variable

- A function without a return value

- A function parameter that was not specified by the caller

- A non existent object property

- A non initialized array index

# Comparison Operators

☐ JavaScript has both strict and abstract comparisons

☐ A strict comparison is only true if the operands are the same type

☐ Abstract comparison converts the operands to the same type before making the comparison

```
console.log(0 == false);
console.log(2 == "2");
console.log(undefined == null);
```

```
console.log(0 === false);
console.log(2 === "2");
console.log(undefined === null);
```

# Data Type Conversion

- Data types are converted automatically as needed during script execution

- Operator + may convert numeric values to strings

```
var num = 10;
alert(num + "0");
```
➡ 100

- Other operators may convert string values to numeric

```
var num = 10;
alert(num * "2");
```
➡ 20

# Conversion Tricks

□ Some JavaScript programmers use operators + and * to convert data types

□ Convert string to number

```javascript
var str = document.getElementById("firstName").value;
if (isNaN(str * 1)) {
    alert("Please enter a number");
}
```

□ Convert number to string

```javascript
var num = 10;
console.log(num + "");
```

# Logical Operators

- Typically used with Boolean values
  - In that case, they return a Boolean value
  - Behavior is consistent with other static programming languages (C++/Java/C#)
- May be used with non Boolean values
  - In that case, they return a non-Boolean value

alert("dog" || "cat") ➡ "dog"

alert("dog" && "cat") ➡ "cat"

# Array

- Array is created using the following syntax
  - []
  - new Array

Preferred

```
var arr = [];
var arr = [1,2,3];
```
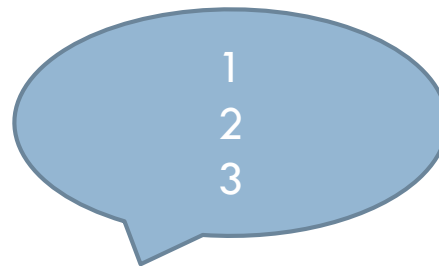
Less common

```
var arr = new Array();
var arr = new Array(10); // length is 10
var arr = new Array(10, 2); // length is 2
```

# Iterating an Array

- ☐ Straight forward

- ☐ Use a running index and the length property

```
var arr = [1, 2, 3];

for (var i = 0; i < arr.length; i++) {
    console.log(arr[i]);
}
```

1
2
3

# Array is dynamic

□ New elements can be added/deleted at runtime

  □ In contrast to static languages

□ The property length is automatically being updated

```
var arr = [];
arr.push(10); // add last
arr.pop(); // remove last
arr.splice(arr.length-1, 1); // remove last
arr[10] = 10; // never throws an exception
arr.length = 2; // resize
arr.shift(); // remove first
arr.splice(0, 1); // remove first
```

# Useful Array's Methods

- □ concat - Joins two or more arrays, and returns a copy of the joined arrays
- □ indexOf - Search the array for an element and returns its position
- □ join - Joins all elements of an array into a string
- □ sort - Sorts the elements of an array
- □ toString - Converts an array to a string, and returns the result

# Object

- A container of keys and values

- The key must be of type string

- Has built-in methods

- Creating empty object is easy

```
var obj = {};
alert(typeof obj);
```

➡ "object"

Less common
```
var obj = new Object();
alert(typeof obj);
```

➡ "object"

# Initializing an Object

- An object can be initialized at declaration

- A.K.A object literal syntax (the basis for JSON)

```
var obj = {
    id: 123,
    name: "Udi",
    email: "udi@gmail.com"
};
```

Less common

```
var obj = {
    "id": 123,
    "name": "Udi",
    "email": "udi@gmail.com"
};
```

# Object is dynamic

☐ Properties can be added/removed after creation

```
var obj = {};
obj.name = "Ori";
obj["name"] = "Ori";
```

☐ Removing a property

```
delete obj["name"];
delete obj.name;
```

☐ Accessing non existent property yields the value undefined

# Object Content

☐ The for…in statement allows you to iterate over all object's properties

```
var obj = {
    "id": 123,
    "name": "Roni",
    "email": "roni@gmail.com"
};

for (var key in obj) {
    var value = obj[key];
    console.log(key + " = " + value);
}
```

```
id = 123
name = roni
email = roni@gmail.com
```

# Object's built-in methods

- hasOwnProperty - Returns a Boolean indicating whether an object contains the specified property as a direct property of that object and not inherited through the prototype chain

- toString - Returns a string representation of the object

- valueOf - Returns the primitive value of the specified object

- More …

# Array is an Object

- You can act on a array is if it was an object (it is !)
- Not recommended
- What is the expected output?

```javascript
var arr = [1, 2, 3];
arr.name = "Ori";

for (var i = 0; i < arr.length; i++) {
    console.log(arr[i]);
}

for (var key in arr) {
    console.log(arr[key]);
}
```

# Function

- More than just a method …

  - The basic for advanced JavaScript techniques

- Declaring a function

```
function add(num1, num2) {
    return num1 + num2;
}
```

- Calling a function is also straightforward

```
var res = add(num1, num2);
```

# Pass by value

- JavaScript only supports "pass by value" mechanism
- The parameter being sent to a function is copied
  - Whether it is a reference or a value

```javascript
var str = "ABC";

function modify(str) {
    str = "XXX";
}

console.log(str);
```

# Where to declare variables ?

- ☐ A variable is accessibly inside its surrounding function

- ☐ Even before point of declaration

- ☐ Therefore many JavaScript programmers declare all variables at the beginning of the method

```javascript
var num = 11;

function doSomething() {
    console.log(num);
    var num = 10;
}

doSomething();
```

# Overloading

- ☐ JavaScript does not support Overloading

- ☐ Last method wins

- ☐ You can simulate it

```javascript
var ERR = "ERR";
var WRN = "WRN";
var MSG = "MSG";

function log(type, message) {
    if (message == undefined) {
        message = type;
        type = MSG;
    }

    console.log(type + " " + message);
}
```

```javascript
log(ERR, "Internal Error");
log("Connecting to server");
```

# Function – The Dark Side

□ A function is an object

```
function f() {
    var num = 10;
}

f.num = 10;
```

□ Has built-in properties and methods

```
function f(input) {
    console.log(f.name); // the name of the method
    console.log(f.length); // number of parameters
    console.log(f.toString()); //function source code
    console.log(f.arguments); // available only during execution
    console.log(f.caller.name); // available only during execution
}
```

# Function – Indirect Invocation

- A function can be invoked using special syntax

```
function f(name) {
    console.log("Hello " + name);
 }


f.call({}, "Ori");
f.apply({}, ["Ori"]);
```

- Although not intuitive, above syntax is quite common
- Mainly, when doing Object Oriented JavaScript

# Function creates a Scope

- Function creates a new scope which is isolated from outer scope

- Outer scope cannot access local variables of a function

```
var num = 20;

function f() {
    var num = 10;

    console.log(num); // yields 10
}

f();

console.log(f.num); // yields undefined
```

# Closure

- Inner function may access the local variables of the outer function
  - Even after outer function completes execution
- Allows us to simulate stateful function

```javascript
function getCounter() {
    var num = 0;
    function f() {
        ++num;
        console.log("Num is " + num);
    }
    return f;
}
```

```javascript
var counter = getCounter();
counter();
counter();
```

# Function inside an Object

□ An object can contain functions

```
var obj = {
    id: 123,
    dump: function() {
        console.log("dumping: " + this.id);
    }
};

obj.dump();
```

□ Feels like OOP

□ The keyword this is used for accessing other properties (see next slide)

# The this keyword

□ Available only inside a function

□ Points to the object that this function is being invoked on

```
var obj = {
    id: 123,
    dump: function() {
        console.log(this.id);
    }
 };


obj.dump();
```

□ Global function points to the window object

# Apply & Call - Recap

☐ You can control the value of this using apply and call methods

```javascript
var obj = {
    id: 123
};

function dump() {
    console.log(this.id);
}

dump.call(obj);
```

# Self Executing Function

- A function can declared without a name

- Since no name exist no one can invoked it

- Except the code that declared it

- A.K.A self executing function

```
(function () {
    //  External code has no access to these variables
    var url = "http://www.google.com";
    var productKey = "ABC";
})();
```

# Sending Parameters

☐ Think about the $ sign

☐ Usually it points to jQuery global object

☐ But how can we ensure that?

■ There might be a case were additional 3$^{rd}$ party library overrides it

```javascript
(function ($) {
    $.ajax({
        url: "www.google.com",
        type: "GET",
    });
})(jQuery);
```

# Module Pattern

- Arrange your JavaScript code into modules
- Each module is surrounded with self executing function thus hiding all local variables and functions
- Peek the ones that should be public (sparsely)

```javascript
var Server = (function () {
    var baseUrl = "http://www.google.com";

    function httpGet(relativeUrl) {
        $.ajax(...);
    }

    return {
        httpGet: httpGet,
    };
})();
```

# Summary

- JavaScript is simple but powerful
  - Small amount of built-in types
  - Implicit conversion
  - No character data type
  - No integer data type
- Function is the basis for advanced JavaScript coding
- Arrange your code into modules