

Memory Debugging Tips 'n' Tricks

Problems

Retain Cycles

closures

delegates

Abandoned Memory

global memory keeping a strong reference to something it shouldn't

Tools

Visual Memory Debugger

Left pane shows all objects in memory and how many instances are currently alive.

You can filter it down to just the objects from your project with the icon in the bottom right of the pane that looks like a "new document" icon. That is also a text box down there in which you can just filter the list down by name. There's another button in there with an ! on it, that filters the list to just objects that are leaked.

Selecting an instance shows it in the graph in the center.

Center pane shows the memory graph of the selected object, allowing you to see all of the objects that currently have strong references to the object.

Inspector on the right shows back trace for selected object, which can be clicked on to go to that line of code in your project!

Memory Usage Graph in Debug Session Pane

Keep an eye on this while debugging in general. If you know your memory footprint's normal size, then when it's larger than normal, you'll know you have a problem to investigate.

Solutions

Retain Cycles

Capture Groups

Can be applied to any object being captured by a closure (but usually it's just self)

[weak self] - for when the closure might exist and run after self has been deallocated

basically makes self an optional in the closure

[unowned self] - for when the closure can't be run unless self still exists

basically makes self an implicitly unwrapped optional in the closure

Declare delegate properties as weak vars. This requires the protocol to have the `class` limiter, so that only reference types can implement it.

Abandoned Memory

Use the tools to find where the errant strong references are coming from and make them weak references.

If you're not finding the issue with the above tools, some strategically placed print statements in `deinit`'s might help.