

Mastering

Swift 5

Fifth Edition

Deep dive into the latest edition of the Swift programming language



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Jon Hoffman

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BIRMINGHAM - MUMBAI

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With this being the fifth edition of the Mastering Swift book, I would like to thank everyone who has given me encouragement, positive feedback, and constructive criticism through the years. That includes my family, friends, co-workers, and everyone at Packt.

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Currently, he spends much of his time exploring Machine Learning as a skill to complement his software development efforts.

Vinod has also been a technical reviewer for Object-Oriented Programming with Swift, Hands-On Full-Stack Development with Swift, and Multiplayer Game Development with HTML5.

I'd like to thank my wife, Shruti, for her constant support, encouragement, and vanguard thoughts.

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Preface

Swift is a general-purpose programming language that takes a modern approach to development. It was first introduced by Apple at the **Worldwide Developers Conference (WWDC)** in 2014. Five years later, they released version 5 of Swift.

Swift 5 offers many enhancements and improvements to the Swift language with the biggest being ABI stability. Some of the other improvements are the ability to create raw strings, handling of future enum cases, and added `isMultiple(of:)` to integers just to name a few.

Who this book is for

This book is for the developer who wants to dive into the newest version of Swift. If you are a developer that learns best by looking at, and working with code, then this book is for you. A basic understanding of Apple's tools is beneficial but not mandatory.

What this book covers

Chapter 1, *Taking the First Steps with Swift*, will introduce you to the Swift programming language and discuss what inspired Apple to create Swift. We'll also go over the basic syntax of Swift and how to use Playgrounds to experiment and test Swift code.

Chapter 2, *Learning about Variables, Constants, Strings and Operators* will introduce you to variables and constants in Swift and when to use them. There will be brief overviews of the most common variable types with examples on how to use them. This chapter concludes by showing examples of how to use the most common operators in the Swift language.

Chapter 3, *Optional Types*, will explain what optional types really are, what are the various ways to unwrap them, and optional chaining. For a developer who is just learning Swift, optional types can be one of the more confusing items to learn. This chapter will give you a good understanding of what Optionals are and how to use them.

Chapter 4, *Using Swift Collections* will explain Swift's array, set, and dictionary collection types and show examples on how to use them. By the end of this chapter you will have a full understanding of the collection types in Swift.

Chapter 5, *Control Flow*, will show you how to use Swift's control flow statements. These include looping, conditional, and control transfer statements.

Chapter 6, *Functions*, will show you how to define and use functions in your applications.

Chapter 7, *Classes, Structures, and Protocols* is dedicated to Swift's classes and structures. We'll look at what makes them similar and what makes them different. We'll also look at access controls and object-oriented design.

Chapter 8, *Using Protocols and Protocol Extensions* will cover both protocols and protocol extensions in detail since protocols are very important to the Swift language, and having a solid understanding of them will help us write flexible and reusable code.

Chapter 9, *Protocol Oriented Design* will cover the best practices of protocol oriented design with Swift. It will be a brief overview of what is covered in my protocol-oriented programming book.

Chapter 10, *Generics* will explain how Swift implements generics. Generics allow us to write very flexible and reusable code that avoids duplication.

Chapter 11, *Availability and Error Handling* will cover error handling in depth as well as the availability feature. Error handling is the process of responding to and recovering from error conditions.

Chapter 12, *Custom Subscripting* will discuss how we can use custom subscripts in our classes, structures, and enumerations. Subscripts in Swift can be used to access elements in a collection.

Chapter 13, *Working with Closures* will teach us how to define and use closures in our code. We will conclude this chapter with a section on how to avoid strong reference cycles with closures.

Chapter 14, *Concurrency and Parallelism in Swift* will show how to use both grand central dispatch and operation queues to add concurrency and parallelism to our applications. Understanding and knowing how to add concurrency and parallelism to our apps can significantly enhance the user experience.

Chapter 15, *Custom Types* will cover some advance techniques that the reader can use in their applications like copy-on-write and implementing the equatable protocol. The information covered in this chapter is also covered in the Swift protocol-oriented programming book published by Packt.

Chapter 16, *Memory Management* will cover how Automatic Reference Counting (ARC) works, why value types are faster than reference types, strong retain cycles, weak vs strong references.

Chapter 17, *Swift Formatting and Style Guider* will define a style guide for the Swift language that can be used as a template for enterprise developers who need to create a style guide.

Chapter 18, *Adopting Design Patterns in Swift* will show you how to implement some of the more common design patterns in Swift. A design pattern identifies a common software development problem and provides a strategy for dealing with it. The information covered in this chapter is also covered in the Swift protocol-oriented programming book published by Packt.

To get the most out of this book

This book assumes no knowledge of the Swift programming language or any other language. All code examples have been tested using Xcode 10.2 on a Mac however they should work using Swift on Linux as well.

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Conventions used

There are a number of text conventions used throughout this book.

CodeInText: Indicates code words in text, database table names, folder names, filenames, file extensions, pathnames, dummy URLs, user input, and Twitter handles. Here is an example: "The `if` statement will check a conditional statement and, if it is `true`, it will execute the block of code. This statement takes the following format."

A block of code is set as follows:

```
var message: String = "My String"  
message = nil)
```

Bold: Indicates a new term, an important word, or words that you see onscreen. For example, words in menus or dialog boxes appear in the text like this. Here is an example: "The first thing we need to do is start Xcode. Once Xcode has started, we can select the **Get started with a playground** option, as shown in the following screenshot".

Warnings or important notes appear like this.



Tips and tricks appear like this.



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1

Taking the First Steps with Swift

Ever since I was 12 years old and wrote my first program in the BASIC programming language, I have been passionate about programming. Even as I became a professional programmer, programming remained more of a passion than a job, but in the years preceding the first release of Swift, that passion had waned. I was unsure why I was losing that passion. I attempted to recapture it with some of my side projects, but nothing really brought back the excitement that I used to have. Then, something amazing happened: Apple announced Swift in 2014. Swift is such an exciting and progressive language that it has brought a lot of that passion back and made programming fun again. With official versions of Swift available for the Linux platform, and unofficial versions for Windows and the ARM platform, learning and using Swift is becoming available to people outside the Apple ecosystem. This is really an exciting time to be learning the Swift language.

In this chapter, you will learn about the following topics:

- What is Swift?
- What are some of the features of Swift? What are playgrounds?
- How to use playgrounds
- What are the basic syntaxes of the Swift language?

What is Swift?

Swift is a programming language that was introduced by Apple at the **World Wide Developers Conference (WWDC)** in 2014. Swift was arguably the most significant announcement at WWDC 2014 and very few people, including Apple insiders, were aware of the project's existence prior to it being announced.

It was amazing, even by Apple's standards, that they could keep Swift a secret for as long as they did and that no one suspected they were going to announce a new development language. At WWDC 2015, Apple made another big splash when they announced Swift 2. Swift 2 was a major enhancement to the Swift language. During that conference, Chris Lattner said that a lot of the enhancements were based on direct feedback that Apple received from the development community. It was also announced that Swift would become an open-source project. In my opinion, this was the most exciting announcement of WWDC 2015.

In December 2015, Apple officially released Swift as open-source with the <https://swift.org/> site, which is dedicated to the open-source Swift community. The Swift repository is located on Apple's GitHub page (<http://github.com/apple>). The Swift evolution repository (<https://github.com/apple/swift-evolution>) tracks the evolution of Swift by documenting the proposed changes. A list of which proposals were accepted and which were rejected can be found in the evolution repository. In addition to these resources, Apple has moved away from using mailing lists as the primary form of communication with the Swift community, and has set up Swift forums (<https://forums.swift.org>).

Swift 3, which was released in 2016, was a major enhancement to the Swift language that was not source-compatible with previous releases of the Swift language. It contained fundamental changes to the language itself and to the Swift standard library. One of the main goals of Swift 3 was to be source-compatible across all platforms, so the code that was written for one platform would be compatible with all other platforms. This means that the code we develop for macOS should work on Linux.

In September 2017, Swift 4 was released. One of the primary goals of the Swift 4 compiler is to be source-compatible with Swift 3. This will allow us to compile both Swift 3 and Swift 4 projects with the Swift 4 compiler. Apple has established a community-owned source-compatibility test suite that will be used to regression test changes to the compiler.

Projects that are added to the test suite will be periodically built against the latest development version of Swift to help understand the impact of the changes being made to Swift. You can find the Swift source compatibility page here: <https://swift.org/source-compatibility/>.

One of the original goals of Swift 4 was to stabilize the Swift **Application Binary Interface (ABI)**. The main benefit of a stable ABI is to allow us to distribute frameworks in a binary format across multiple versions of Swift. If a stable ABI is in place, we would be able to build a framework with the Swift 4 compiler and have it work with applications that were written in future versions of Swift. This feature ended up being deferred to Swift 5.

Now that Apple has released Swift 5, the ABI has been declared stable for all Apple platforms. You can read Swift's ABI Stability Manifesto here: <https://github.com/apple/swift/blob/master/docs/ABIStabilityManifesto.md>. As development for Swift on other platforms, such as Linux, matures, the Swift Core team has said that they will evaluate stabilizing the ABI for those platforms as well. A stable ABI means that a library that is compiled for one version of Swift, let's say Swift 5, will theoretically work with future versions of Swift without having to be recompiled.

The last version of the Mastering Swift series was released when Swift 4.0 was released. Since that time, there have been numerous enhancements to the Swift language with two major versions, Swift 4.2 and Swift 5, being released. Throughout this book, we will see how to use a number of these enhancements.

The development of Swift was started in 2010 by Chris Lattner. He implemented much of the basic language structure when only a few people were aware of its existence. It wasn't until late 2011 that other developers began to contribute to Swift. In July 2013, it became a major focus of the Apple Developer Tools group.

Chris started working at Apple in the summer of 2005. He held several positions within the Developer Tools group and was the director and architect of that group when he left Apple in 2017. On his home page (<http://www.nondot.org/sabre/>), he notes that Xcode's playground (we'll talk more about playgrounds a little later in this chapter) became a personal passion of his because it makes programming more interactive and approachable. If you are using Swift on the Apple platform, you will be using playgrounds a lot as a test and experimentation platform. You can also use Swift Playgrounds on the iPad.

There are a lot of similarities between Swift and Objective-C. Swift adopts the readability of Objective-C's named parameters and dynamic object model. When we refer to Swift as having a dynamic object model, we are referring to the ability for types to change at runtime. This includes adding new (custom) types and changing/extending the existing types.

While there are a lot of similarities between Swift and Objective-C, there are significant differences between them as well. Swift's syntax and formatting are a lot closer to Python than Objective-C, but Apple did keep the curly brackets. I know Python people would disagree with me, and that is all right because we all have different opinions, but I like the curly brackets. Swift actually requires the curly brackets for control statements, such as `if` and `while`, which eliminates bugs, such as the `goto fail` in Apple's SSL library.

Swift features

When Apple first introduced Swift, it said that *Swift is Objective-C without the C*. This really only tells us half of the story. Objective-C is a superset of C and provides object-oriented capabilities and a dynamic runtime to the C language. This meant that with Objective-C, Apple needed to maintain compatibility with C, which limited the enhancements it could make to the Objective-C language. As an example, Apple could not change how the `switch` statement functioned and has still maintained compatibility with the C language.

Since Swift does not need to maintain the same C compatibility as Objective-C, Apple was free to add any feature/enhancement to the language. This allowed Apple to include the best features from many of today's most popular and modern languages, such as Objective-C, Python, Java, Ruby, C#, and Haskell.

The following chart shows a list of some of the most exciting enhancements that Swift offers compared to the Objective-C language:

Swift feature	Description
Type inference	Swift can automatically deduce the type of a variable or constant, based on the initial value.
Generics	Generics allow us to write code only once to perform identical tasks for different types of object.
Collection mutability	Swift does not have separate objects for mutable or non-mutable containers. Instead, you define mutability by defining the container as a constant or variable.
Closure syntax	Closures are self-contained blocks of functionality that can be passed around and used in our code.
Optionals	Optionals define a variable that might not have a value.
Switch statement	The Switch statement has been drastically improved. This is one of my favorite improvements.
Tuples	Functions can have multiple return types using tuples.
Operator overloading	Classes can provide their own implementation of existing operators.
Enumerations with associated values	In Swift, we can do a lot more than just define a group of related values with enumerations.
Protocols and protocol-oriented Design	Apple introduced the protocol-oriented programming paradigm with Swift version 2. This is a new way of not only writing applications but also changing how we think about programming.

Before we begin our journey into the wonderful world of Swift development, let's take a detour and visit a place that I have loved ever since I was a kid: the playground.

Playgrounds

When I was a kid, the best part of the school day was going to the playground. It really did not matter what we were playing as long as we were on the playground. When Apple introduced playgrounds as part of Xcode 6, I was excited just by the name, but I wondered whether Apple would be able to make its playgrounds as fun as the playgrounds of my youth. While Apple's playgrounds might not be as fun as playing kickball when I was nine years old, it definitely brings a lot of fun back to experimenting and playing with code.

Playgrounds are also available for the iPad. While we are not going to cover the iPad version specifically in this section, the iPad version is a great way to experiment with the Swift language and is a great way to get children interested in programming.

Getting started with playgrounds

Playgrounds are interactive work environments that let us write code and see the results immediately as changes are made to the code. This means that playgrounds are a great way to learn and experiment with Swift. Now that we can use Swift Playgrounds on the iPad, we do not even need to have a computer in front of us to experiment with Swift.



If you are using Swift on the Linux platform, you will not have playgrounds available, but you can use the **Read-Evaluate-Print-Loop (REPL)** shell to experiment with Swift without compiling your code. If you are using Swift on something other than a macOS computer or the iPad, you can safely skip this section.

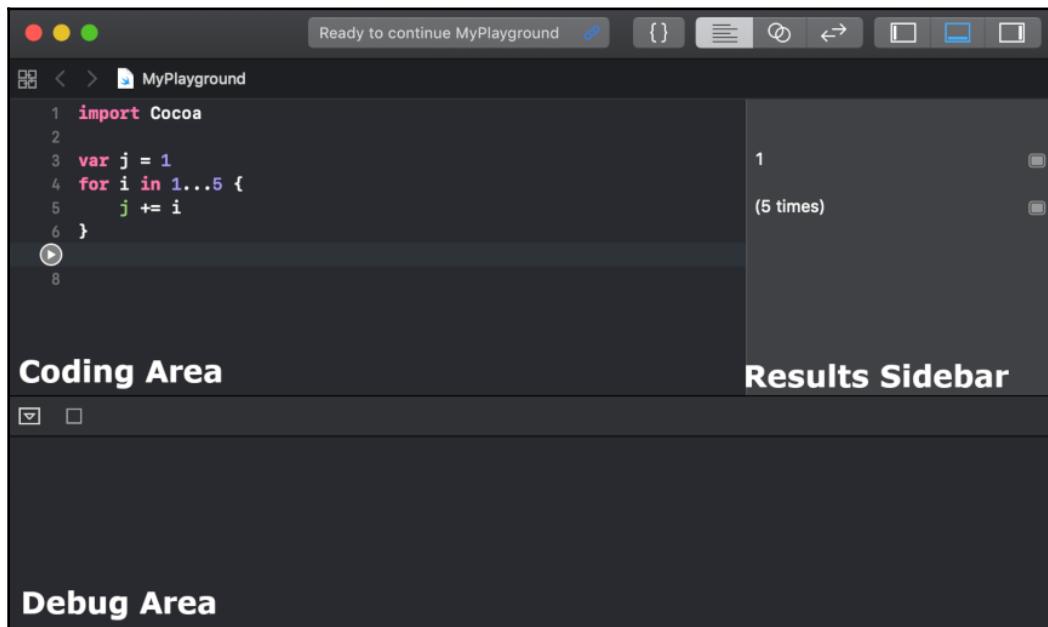
Playgrounds also make it incredibly easy to try out new APIs, prototype new algorithms, and demonstrate how code works. We will be using playgrounds throughout this book to show how our sample code works. Therefore, before we really get into Swift development, let's spend some time learning about, and getting comfortable with, playgrounds.

Do not worry if the Swift code does not make a lot of sense right now; as we proceed through this book, the code that we use in the following examples will begin to make sense. We are simply trying to get a feel for playgrounds right now.

A playground can have several sections, but the three that we will be using extensively in this book are the following:

- **Coding Area:** This is where you enter your Swift code.
- **Results Sidebar:** This is where the results of your code are shown. Each time you type in a new line of code, the results are re-evaluated, and the **Results Sidebar** is updated with the new results.
- **Debug Area:** This area displays the output of the code, and it can be very useful for debugging.

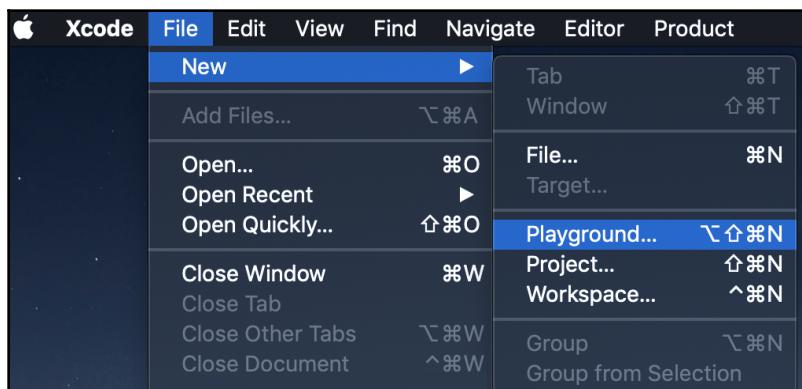
The following screenshot shows how these sections are arranged in a playground:



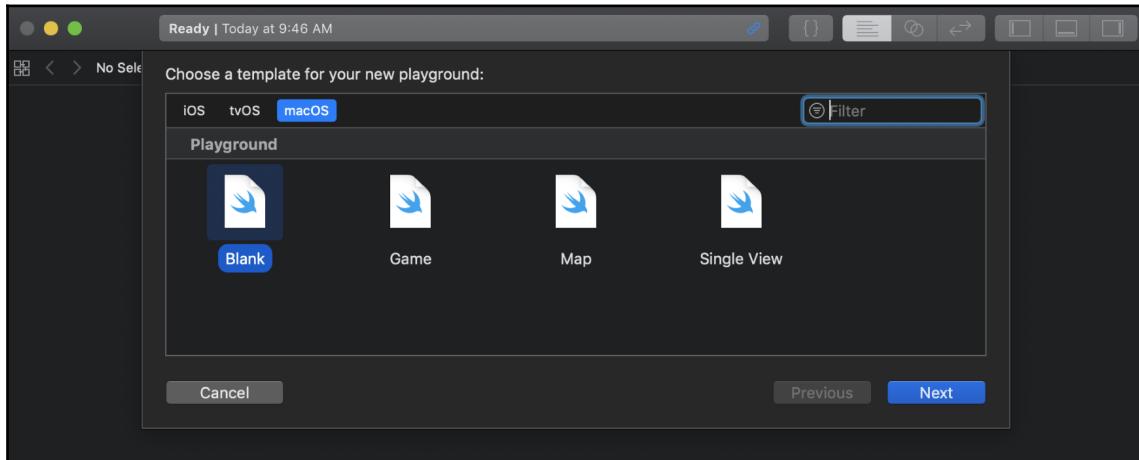
Let's start a new playground. The first thing we need to do is start Xcode. Once Xcode has started, we can select the **Get started with a playground** option, as shown in the following screenshot:



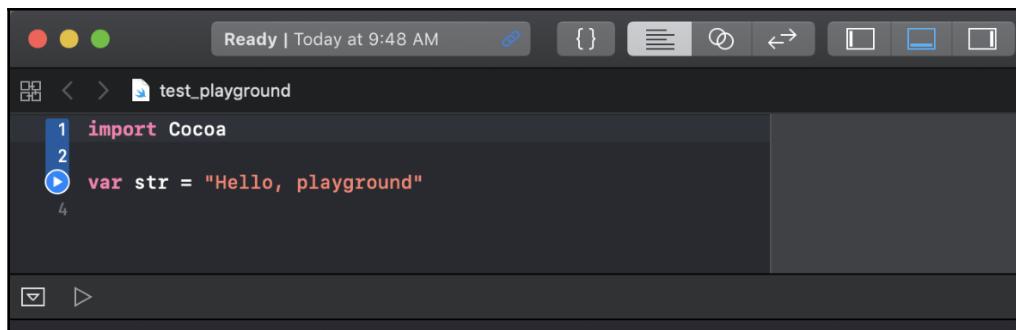
Alternatively, we can navigate to the **Playground...** by going to **File | New** from the top menu bar, as shown in the following screenshot:



Next, we should see a screen similar to the following screenshot. This screen lets us name our playground and select whether the playground is an *iOS*, *tvOS*, or *macOS* playground. For most of the examples in this chapter, it is safe to assume that you can select any of the OS options unless it is otherwise noted. You can also select a template to use. For the examples in this book, we will be using the Blank template for all of our code:



Finally, we are asked for the location in which to save our playground. After we select the location, the playground will open and look similar to the following screenshot:



In the preceding screenshot, we can see that the coding area of the playground looks similar to the coding area for an Xcode project. What is different here is the sidebar on the right-hand side. This sidebar is where the results of our code are shown. The code in the previous screenshot imports the Cocoa framework since it is a macOS playground. If it were an iOS playground, it would import the UIKit framework instead.

If your new playground does not open the debug area, you can open it manually by pressing the *shift + command + Y* keys together. You can also close the debug area by pressing *shift + command + Y* again. Later in this chapter, we will see why the debug area is so useful. Another way to open or close the debug area is to click on the button that looks like an upside-down triangle in a box that is on the border between the debug area and the coding area.

iOS, tvOS, and macOS playgrounds

When you start a new iOS or tvOS playground, the playground imports the UIKit framework. This gives us access to the UIKit framework, which provides the core infrastructure for iOS and tvOS applications. When we start a new macOS playground, the playground imports the Cocoa framework.

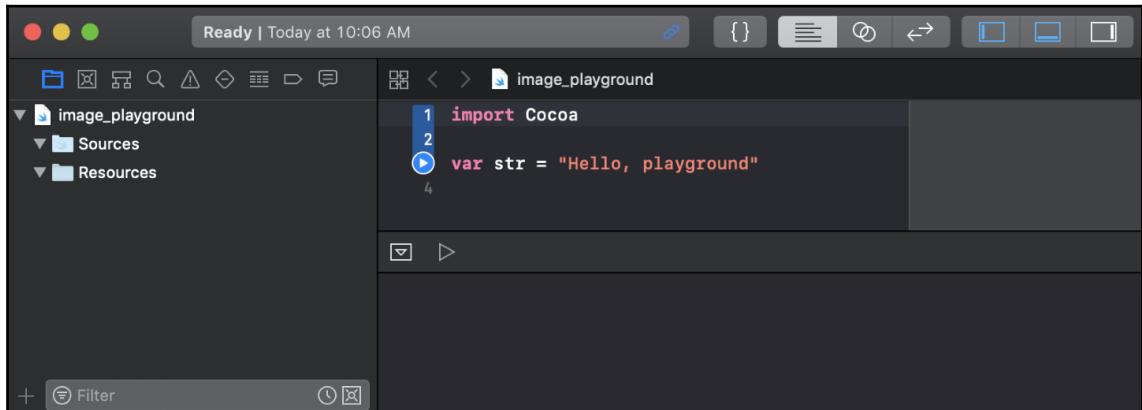
What the last paragraph means is that, if we want to experiment with specific features of either UIKit or Cocoa, we will need to open the correct playground. As an example, if we have an iOS playground open and we want to create an object that represents a color, we would use a `UIColor` object. If we had a macOS playground open, we would use an `NSColor` object to represent a color.

Showing images in a playground

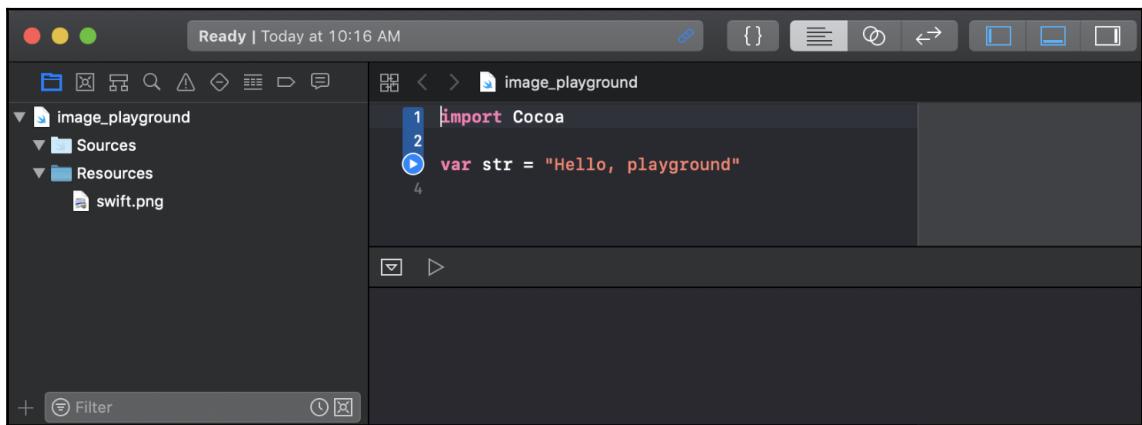
It is very easy to receive the results of our code as text within the results sidebar of a playground; however, they can also do a lot more than just work with text. We can display other items, such as images and graphs. Let's look at how we would show an image in a playground. The first thing we need to do is to load the image into the resource directory of our playground.

The following steps show how to load an image into the resource directory:

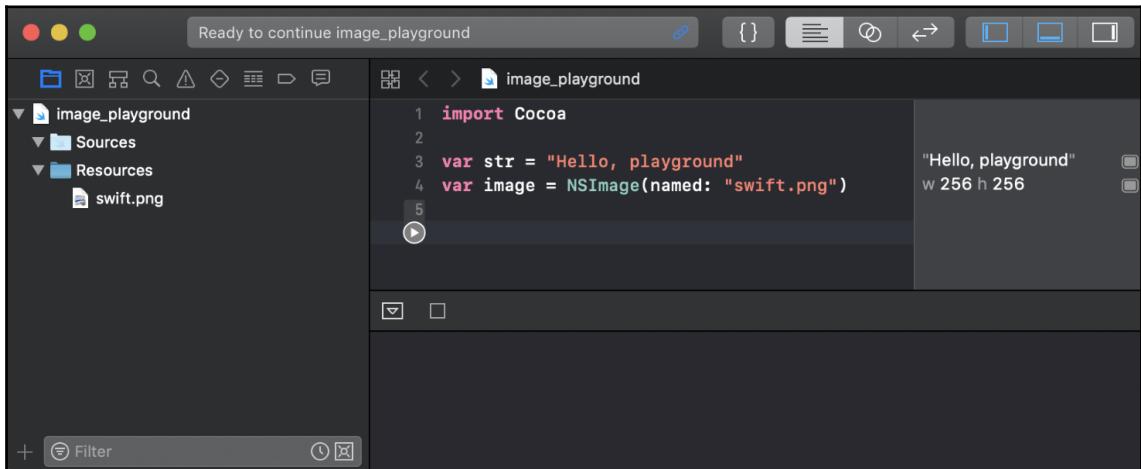
1. Show the project navigator sidebar. To do this, in the top menu bar, navigate to **View | Navigators | Show Project Navigator** or use the *command + 1* keyboard shortcut. The project navigator looks similar to this:



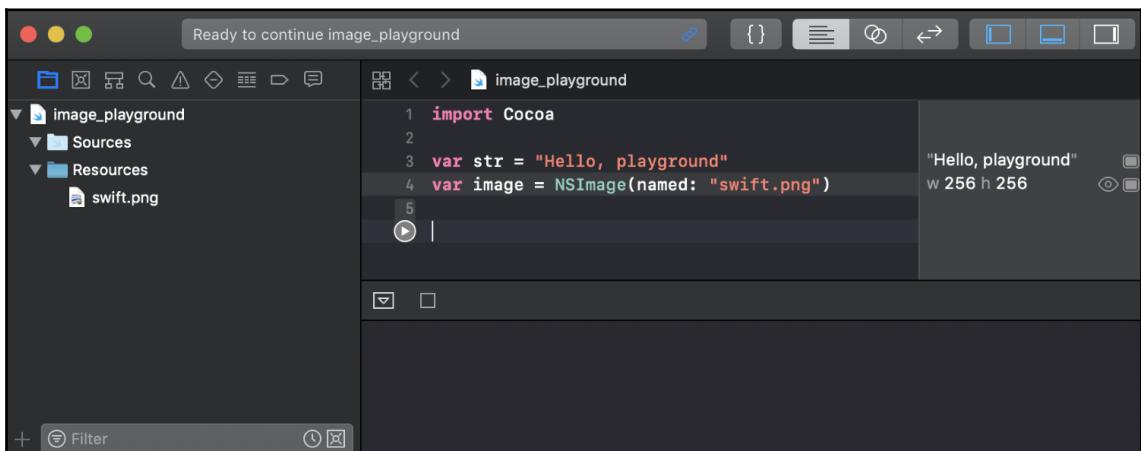
2. In the **Project Navigator**, drag the image into the **Resources** folder so that we can access it from our code. Once we drag the image file over it and drop it, it will appear in the **Resources** folder, as shown here:



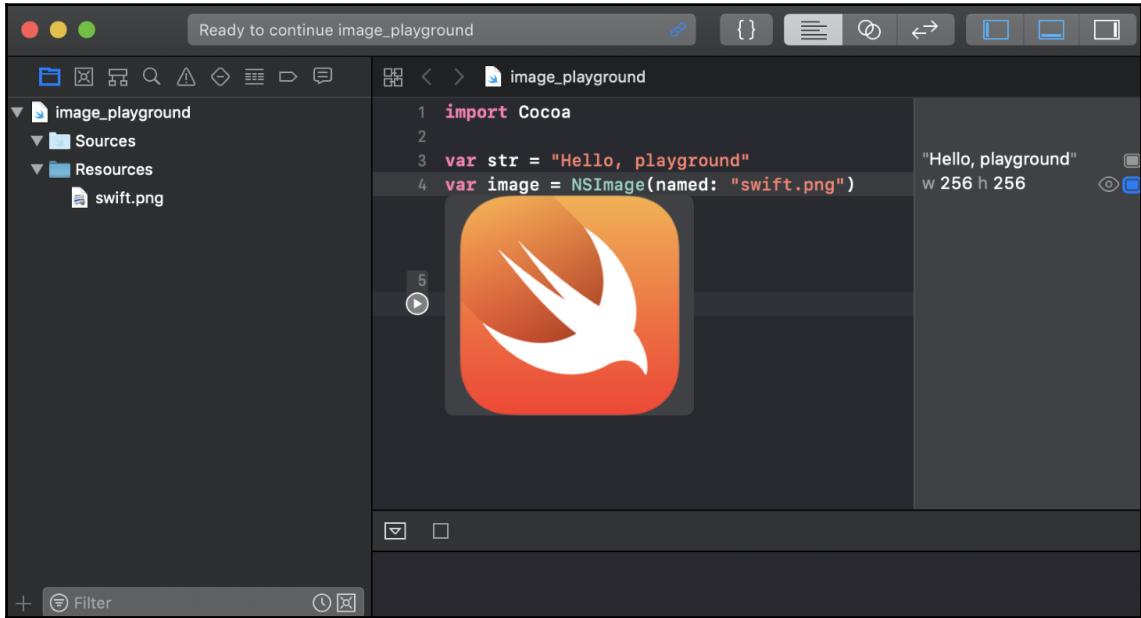
3. Let's access the image that is in our **Resources** folder within our code. The following screenshot shows how we would do this. At this time, the code that was used to access the image is not as important as knowing how to access resources within a playground:



4. To view the image, we need to hover our cursor in the **Results Sidebar** over the section that shows the width and height of the image. In our example, the width and height section shows **w 256 h 256**. Once we hover the mouse pointer over the width and height, we should see two symbols next to the width and height. One looks like an eye and the other is a box. The following screenshot shows these:



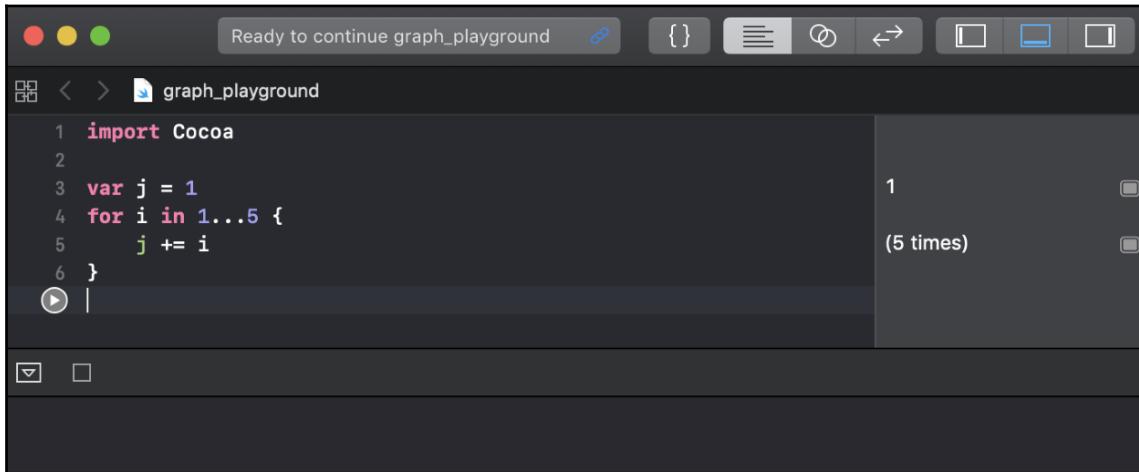
5. We can press either of the symbols to show the image. The one that looks like a box within a box will display the image within the playground's code section, while the one that looks like an eye will pop the image up outside the playground. The following screenshot shows what it looks like if we display the image within the playground:



Having the ability to create and display graphs can be very useful when we want to see the progression of our code. Let's look at how we can create and display graphs in a playground.

Creating and displaying graphs in playgrounds

Creating and displaying graphs is really useful when we are prototyping new algorithms because it allows us to see the value of a variable throughout the course of our calculations. To see how graphing works, look at the following playground:



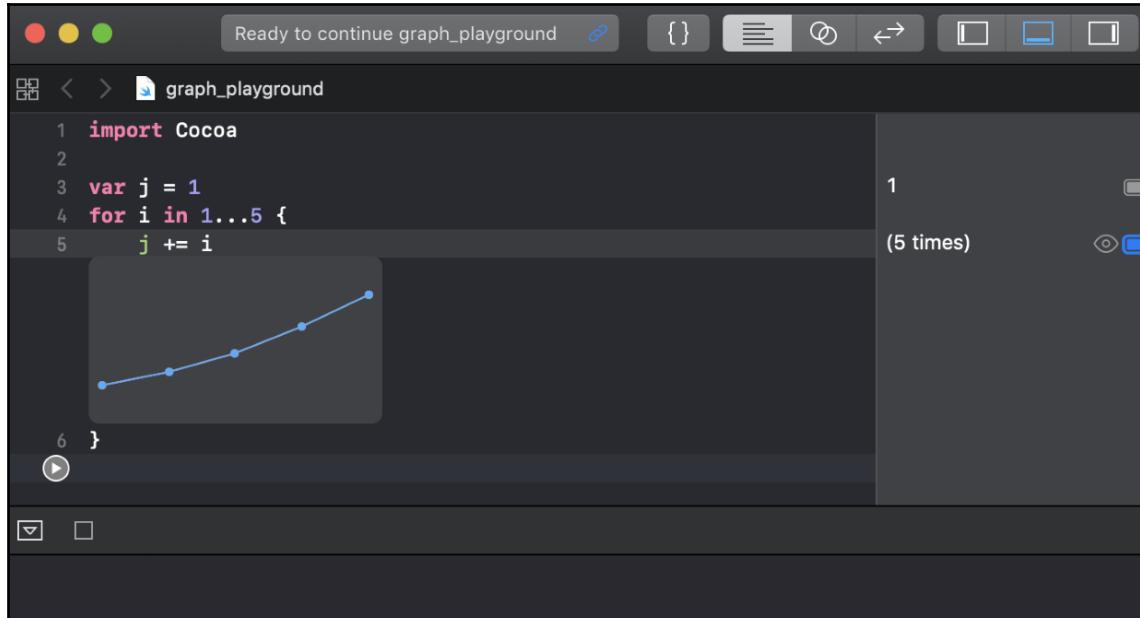
The screenshot shows a Swift playground window titled "graph_playground". The code in the playground is as follows:

```
1 import Cocoa
2
3 var j = 1
4 for i in 1...5 {
5     j += i
6 }
```

On the right side of the screen, there is a graph visualization. The vertical axis has a single tick mark labeled "1". The horizontal axis has five tick marks labeled "(5 times)". A blue line connects the points (1, 1), (2, 3), (3, 6), (4, 10), and (5, 15), representing the cumulative sum of integers from 1 to 5.

In this playground, we set the `j` variable to 1. Next, we create a `for` loop that assigns numbers 1 through 5 to the `i` variable. At each step in the `for` loop, we set the value of the `j` variable to the current value of `j` multiplied by `i`. The graph shows the values of the `j` variable at each step of the `for` loop. We will be covering `for` loops in detail later in this book.

To bring up the graph, click on the symbol that is shaped like a circle with a dot in it. We can then move the timeline slider to see the values of the `j` variable at each step of the `for` loop. The following playground shows what the graph should look like:



What playgrounds are not

There is a lot more that we can do with playgrounds, and we have only scratched the surface in our quick introduction here. Before we leave this brief introduction, let's take a look at what playgrounds are not so that we can better understand when not to use playgrounds:

- **Playgrounds should not be used for performance testing:** The performance you see from any code that is run in a Playground is not representative of how fast the code will run when it is in your project
- **Playgrounds do not support on-device execution:** You cannot run the code that is present in a playground as an external application or on an external device

Swift language syntax

If you are an Objective-C developer, and you are not familiar with modern languages such as Python or Ruby, the code in the previous screenshots may have looked pretty strange. The Swift language syntax is a huge departure from Objective-C, which was based largely on Smalltalk and C.

The Swift language uses modern concepts and syntax to create very concise and readable code. There is also a heavy emphasis on eliminating common programming mistakes. Before we get into the Swift language itself, let's look at some of the basic syntax of the Swift language.

Comments

Writing comments in Swift code is a little different from writing comments in Objective-C code. We can still use the double slash // for single-line comments and the /* and */ for multiline comments; however, if we want to use the comments to also document our code, we need to use the triple slash (///) or multiline comment block.



Xcode will also auto-generate a comment template based on your signature of the method/function by highlighting it and pushing *command + option+ /* together.

To document our code, we generally use fields that Xcode recognizes. These fields are as follows:

- **Parameter:** When we start a line with `parameter {param name} :`, Xcode recognizes this as the description of a parameter
- **Return:** When we start a line with `return :`, Xcode recognizes this as the description of the return value
- **Throws:** When we start a line with `throws :`, Xcode recognizes this as the description of any errors that this method may throw

The following playground shows examples of both single-line and multiline comments and how to use the comment fields:

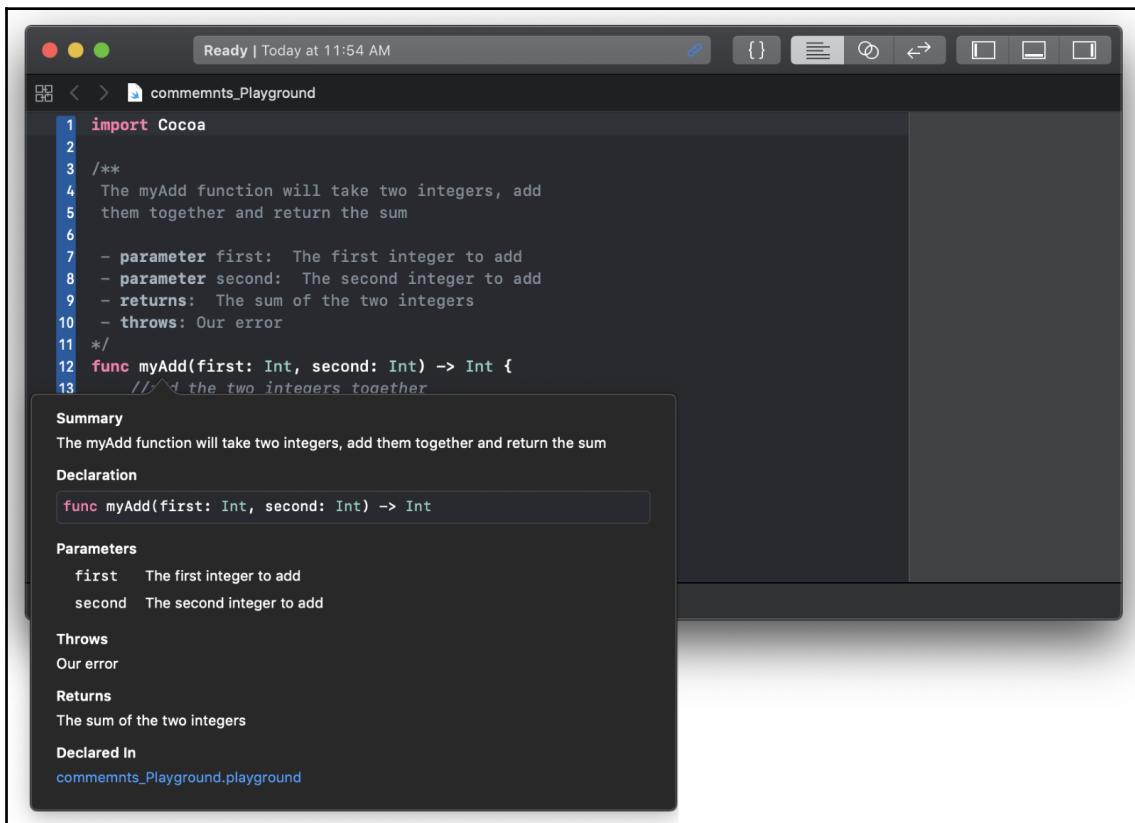
The screenshot shows a Xcode playground window titled "commemnts_Playground". The window has a dark theme. At the top, there's a toolbar with icons for file operations, a link, and other utilities. The main area contains the following Swift code:

```
1 import Cocoa
2
3 /**
4  The myAdd function will take two integers, add
5  them together and return the sum
6
7 - parameter first: The first integer to add
8 - parameter second: The second integer to add
9 - returns: The sum of the two integers
10 - throws: Our error
11 */
12 func myAdd(first: Int, second: Int) -> Int {
13     //add the two integers together
14     let sum: Int = first+second
15     return sum
16 }
17
18 myAdd(first: 5, second: 10)
19
20
21
22 /// The myAdd2 function will take two integers, add
23 /// them together and return the sum
24 ///
25 /// - parameter first: The first integer to add
26 /// - parameter second: The second integer to add
27 /// - returns: The sum of the two integers
28 /// - throws: Our error
29
30 func myAdd2(first: Int, second: Int) -> Int {
31     //add the two integers together
32     let sum: Int = first+second
33     return sum
34 }
35
36 myAdd2(first: 5, second: 10)
37
```

The code illustrates different commenting styles: standard multi-line `/* ... */` comments, single-line `//` comments, and Xcode-specific multi-line `///` comments which provide documentation for the functions.

To write good comments, I would recommend using single-line comments within a function to give quick one-line explanations of your code. We then use multiline comments outside functions and classes to explain what the function and class do. The preceding playground shows a good way to use comments. By using proper documentation, as we did in the preceding screenshot, we can use the documentation feature within Xcode. If we hold down the option key and then click on the function name anywhere in our code, Xcode will display a popup with the description of the function.

The following screenshot shows what that popup would look like:



We can see that the documentation contains five fields. These fields are as follows:

- **Declaration**: This is the function's declaration.
- **Description**: This is the description of the function as it appears in the comments Parameters. The parameter descriptions are prefixed with the **Parameters**: tag in the comment section.

- **Throws:** The throws description is prefixed with the `Throws` tag and describes what errors are thrown by the methods.
- **Returns:** The return description is prefixed with the `Returns:` tag in the comment section.
- **Declared In:** This is the file that the function is declared in so that we can easily find it.

There are significantly more fields that we can add to our comments. You can find the complete list on Apple's site:

https://developer.apple.com/library/content/documentation/Xcode/Reference/xcode_markup_formatting_ref/MarkupFunctionality.html.



If you are developing for the Linux platform, I would still recommend using Apple's documentation guidelines because, as other Swift IDEs are developed, I believe they will support the same guidelines.

Semicolons

You may have noticed, from the code samples so far, that we are not using semicolons at the end of lines. The semicolons are optional in Swift; therefore, both lines in the following playground are valid in Swift:

The screenshot shows an Xcode playground window titled "test". The code area contains the following:

```
1 import Cocoa
2
3 var str = "Hello, playground"
4
5 print("Hello World!")
6 print("Hello World!");
7
8
```

The output pane shows three lines of text:

```
Hello, playground
Hello World!
Hello World!
```

For style purposes, it is strongly recommended that you do not use semicolons in your Swift code. If you are really set on using semicolons, be consistent and use them on every line of code; however, there is no warning if you forget them.



I will stress this again: it is recommended that you do not use semicolons in Swift.

Parentheses

In Swift, parentheses around conditional statements are optional; for example, both `if` statements in the following playground are valid:

A screenshot of an Xcode playground window titled "test". The code area contains the following Swift code:

```
1 import Cocoa
2
3 var x = 1
4
5 if x == 1 {
6     print("x == 1")
7 }
8
9 if (x == 1) {
10    print("x == 1")
11 }
```

The output area shows three lines of text:

```
1
"x == 1\n"
"x == 1\n"
```

Below the code and output areas, the playground interface includes standard Xcode controls like run, stop, and step, along with a preview pane showing a small image of the output.

For style purposes, it is recommended that you do not include parentheses in your code unless you have multiple conditional statements on the same line. For readability purposes, it is good practice to put parentheses around the individual conditional statements that are on the same line.

Curly brackets

In Swift, unlike most other languages, the curly bracket is required after conditional or loop statements. This is one of the safety features that is built into Swift. Arguably, there have been numerous security bugs that may have been prevented if the developer had used curly brackets. These bugs could have also been prevented by other means, such as unit testing and code reviews, but requiring developers to use curly brackets, in my opinion, is a good security standard.

The following playground shows you the error you get if you forget to include curly brackets:

A screenshot of a Mac OS X desktop showing a Swift playground window titled "test". The playground contains the following code:

```
1 import Cocoa
2
3 let x = 1
4
5 //Valid
6 if x == 1 {
7     print("x == 1")
8 }
9
10 //Not Valid
11 if x == 1
12 print("x == 1")
```

An error message is displayed in the status bar: "The playground could not continue running because the playground source did not compile successfully." A specific error is highlighted in red at line 11, column 10: "Expected '{' after 'if' condition". The terminal output at the bottom shows the error: "error: test.playground:11:10: error: expected '{' after 'if' condition".

An assignment operator does not return a value

In most other languages, the following line of code is valid, but it probably isn't what the developer meant to do:

```
if (x = 1) {}
```

In Swift, this statement is not valid. Using an assignment operator (=) in a conditional statement (if, while, and guard) will throw an error. This is another safety feature built into Swift. It prevents the developer from forgetting the second equals sign (=) in a comparison statement. This error is shown in the following playground:

The screenshot shows a Swift playground window titled "test". The code is as follows:

```
1 import Cocoa
2
3 var i = 1
4
5 if i = 1 {
6     print("HI")
7 }
8
9 while i = 1 {
10    print("HI")
11    i = 2
12 }
```

Two errors are highlighted with red boxes and arrows:

- Line 5: `if i = 1 {` → `Use of '=' in a boolean context, did you mean '=='?`
- Line 9: `while i = 1 {` → `Use of '=' in a boolean context, did you mean '=='?`

The output pane shows the results of the print statements:

```
1
"HI\n"
2
```

The error messages at the bottom of the playground window are:

```
error: test.playground:9:9: error: use of '=' in a boolean context, did you mean '=='?
while i = 1 {
    ~ ^ ~
    ==

```

Spaces are optional in conditional and assignment statements

For both conditional (if and while) and assignment (=) statements, the white spaces are optional. Therefore, in the following playground, both the `i` and the `j` blocks of code are valid:

The screenshot shows a Swift playground window titled "test". The code in the playground is as follows:

```
1 import Cocoa
2
3 //The i block
4 var i=1
5 if i==1 {
6     print("HI")
7 }
8
9 //The j block
10 var j = 1
11 if j == 1 {
12     print("HI")
13 }
```

The output pane shows two rows of results:

Line	Output
1	"HI\n"
1	"HI\n"

The playground interface includes standard Xcode-like controls for running, stopping, and navigating code.

For style purposes, I recommend adding the white spaces as the `j` block shows (for readability) but, as long as you pick one style and are consistent, either style is acceptable.

Hello World

All good computer books that are written to teach a computer language have a section that shows the user how to write a Hello World application. This book is no exception. In this section, we will show you how to write two different Hello World applications.

Our first Hello World application will be a traditional Hello World application that simply prints Hello World to the console. Let's begin by creating a new playground and naming it Chapter_1_Hello_World.

In Swift, to print a message to the console, we use the `print()` function. In its most basic form, we would use the `print` function to print out a single message, as shown in the following code:

```
print("Hello World")
```

Usually, when we use the `print()` function, we want to print more than just static text. We can include the value of variables and/or constants by using string interpolation or by separating the values within the `print()` function with commas. String interpolation uses a special sequence of characters, `\()`, to include the value of variables and/or constants in the string. The following code shows how to do this:

```
var name = "Jon"
var language = "Swift"

var message1 = " Welcome to the wonderful world of "
var message2 = "\(name), Welcome to the wonderful world of \(language) !"

print(message2)
print(name, message1, language, "!")
```

We can also define two parameters in the `print` function that change how the message is displayed in the console. These parameters are the **separator** and **terminator** parameters. The **separator** parameter defines a string that is used to separate the values of the variables/constants in the `print()` function. By default, the `print()` function separates each variable/constant with a space. The **terminator** parameter defines what character is put at the end of the line. By default, the newline character is added at the end of the line.

The following code shows how we would create a comma-separated list that does not have a newline character at the end:

```
var name1 = "Jon"
var name2 = "Kim"
var name3 = "Kailey"
var name4 = "Kara"

print(name1, name2, name3, name4, separator:", ", terminator:"")
```

There is one other parameter that we can add to our `print()` function: the `to:` parameter. This parameter will let us redirect the output of the `print()` function. In the following example, we redirect the output to a variable named `line`:

```
var name1 = "Jon"
var name2 = "Kim"
var name3 = "Kailey"
var name4 = "Kara"

var line = ""

print(name1, name2, name3, name4, separator:", ", terminator:"", to:&line)
print(line)
```

Previously, the `print()` function was simply a useful tool for basic debugging, but now, with the new, enhanced `print()` function, we can use it for a lot more.

Summary

We began this chapter with a discussion on the Swift language and gave a brief history about it. We also mentioned some of the changes that will be present in Swift 5. We then showed you how to start and use playgrounds to experiment with Swift programming. We also covered the basic Swift language syntax and discussed proper language styles. This chapter concluded with two Hello World examples.

In the next chapter, we will see how to use variables and constants in Swift. We will also look at the various data types and how to use operators in Swift.

2

Learning about Variables, Constants, Strings, and Operators

The first program I ever wrote was written in the BASIC programming language and was the typical Hello World application. This application was exciting at first, but the excitement of printing static text wore off pretty quickly. For my second application, I used BASIC's input command to ask the user for a name and then printed out a custom hello message with the name they entered. At the age of 12, it was pretty cool to display Hello Han Solo. This application led me to create numerous Mad Lib-style applications that prompted the user for various words and then put those words into a story that was displayed after the user had entered all the required words. These applications introduced me to, and taught me, the importance of variables. Every useful application I've created since then has used variables.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What are variables and constants?
- What is the difference between explicit and inferred typing?
- What are numeric, string, and Boolean types?
- Explaining how enumerations work in Swift
- Explaining how Swift's operators work

Constants and variables

Constants and variables associate an identifier (such as `myName` or `currentTemperature`) with a value of a particular type (such as the `String` or `Integer` type), where the identifier can be used to retrieve the value. The difference between a constant and a variable is that a variable can be updated or changed, while a constant cannot be changed once a value is assigned to it.

Constants are good for defining values that you know will never change, like the temperature that water freezes at or the speed of light. Constants are also good for defining a value that we use many times throughout our application, such as a standard font size or the maximum number of characters in a buffer. There will be numerous examples of constants throughout this book, and it is recommended that we use constants rather than variables whenever possible.

Variables tend to be more common in software development than constants. This is mainly because developers tend to prefer variables over constants. In Swift, the compiler will warn us if we declare a variable whose value never changes. We can make useful applications without using constants (although it is good practice to use them); however, it is almost impossible to create a useful application without variables.



The use of constants is encouraged in Swift. If we do not expect or want a value to change, we should declare it as a constant. This adds a very important safety constraint to our code that ensures that the value never changes.

You can use almost any character in the naming/identifier of a variable or constant (even Unicode characters); however, there are a few rules that you must follow:

- An identifier must not contain any whitespace
- It must not contain any mathematical symbols or arrows
- An identifier must not contain private-use or invalid Unicode characters
- It must not contain line- or box-drawing characters
- It must not start with a number, but it can contain numbers
- If you use a Swift keyword as an identifier, surround it with back ticks; using a Swift keyword as an identifier is strongly discouraged

Keywords are words that are used by the Swift programming language. Some examples of keywords that you will see in this chapter are `var` and `let`. You should avoid using Swift keywords as identifiers to avoid confusion when reading your code.

Defining constants and variables

Constants and variables must be defined prior to using them. To define a constant, you use the `let` keyword, and to define a variable, you use the `var` keyword. The following code shows how to define both constants and variables:

```
// Constants
let freezingTemperatureOfWaterCelsius = 0
let speedOfLightKmSec = 300000

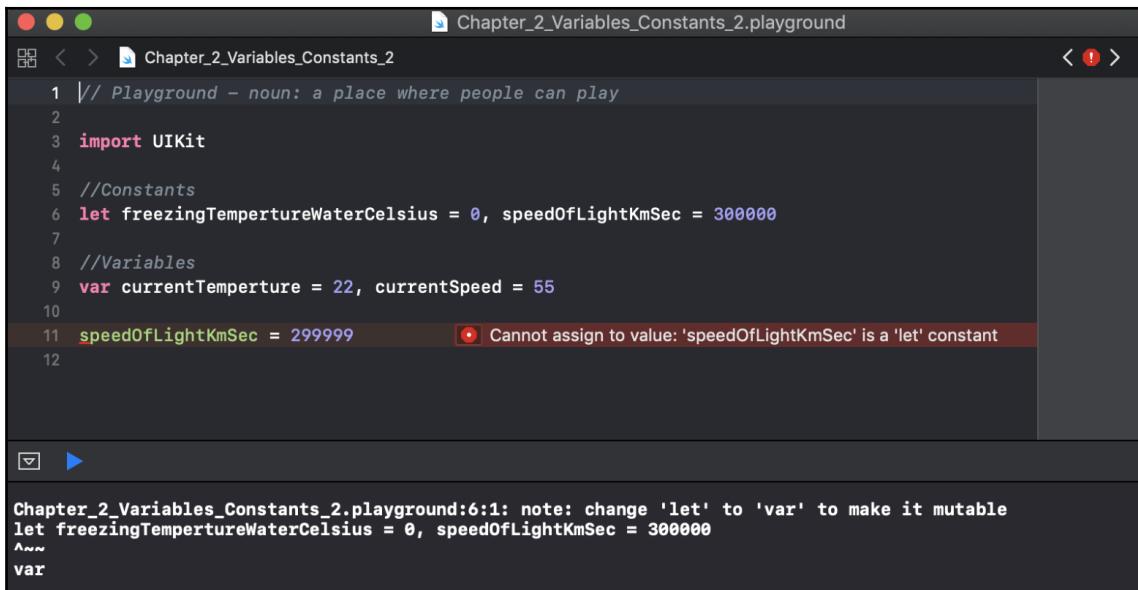
// Variables
var currentTemperature = 22
var currentSpeed = 55
```

We can declare multiple constants or variables in a single line by separating them with a comma. For example, we could shrink the preceding four lines of code down to two lines, as shown here:

```
// Constants
let freezingTempertureOfWaterCelsius = 0, speedOfLightKmSec = 300000

// Variables
var currentTemperture = 22, currentSpeed = 55
```

We can change the value of a variable to another value of a compatible type; however, as we noted earlier, we cannot change the value of a constant. Let's look at the following playground. Can you tell what is wrong with the code from the error message that is shown?



The screenshot shows a Xcode playground window titled "Chapter_2_Variables_Constants_2.playground". The code is as follows:

```
1 // Playground - noun: a place where people can play
2
3 import UIKit
4
5 //Constants
6 let freezingTemperatureWaterCelsius = 0, speedOfLightKmSec = 300000
7
8 //Variables
9 var currentTemperture = 22, currentSpeed = 55
10
11 speedOfLightKmSec = 299999
```

A red error bar highlights the assignment statement on line 11: `speedOfLightKmSec = 299999`. The error message "Cannot assign to value: 'speedOfLightKmSec' is a 'let' constant" is displayed next to it.

Below the code editor, the terminal output shows:

```
Chapter_2_Variables_Constants_2.playground:6:1: note: change 'let' to 'var' to make it mutable
let freezingTemperatureWaterCelsius = 0, speedOfLightKmSec = 300000
^~~
var
```

Did you figure out what was wrong with the code? Any physicist can tell you that we cannot change the speed of light, and in our code, `speedOfLightKmSec` is a constant, so we cannot change it here either. When we attempted to change the `speedOfLightKmSec` constant, an error was thrown. We are able to change the value of `highTemperature` without an error because it is a variable. We have mentioned the difference between variables and constants a couple of times because it is a very important concept to grasp, especially when we move on to define mutable and immutable collection types in [Chapter 4, Using Swift Collections](#).



A mutable type/collection is a type or collection that can be changed like a variable. An immutable type/collection is a type or collection that cannot be changed.

Type safety

Swift is a type-safe language, which means we are required to define the types of the values we are going to store in a variable. We will get an error if we attempt to assign a value to a variable that is of the wrong type. The following playground shows what happens if we attempt to put a string value into a variable that expects integer values:

We will go over the most popular types later in this chapter.

A screenshot of an Xcode playground window titled "type_safty_Playground". The code is as follows:

```
1 import Cocoa
2
3 var integerVar = 10
4 integerVar = "My String"    ⚡ Cannot assign value of type 'String' to type 'Int'
```

The line "integerVar = "My String"" is highlighted with a red background and a red exclamation mark icon. A tooltip message "Cannot assign value of type 'String' to type 'Int'" appears to the right of the assignment operator. The status bar at the top shows "Ready | Today at 4:14 PM".

Swift performs a type check when it compiles code, and so it will flag any mis-matched types with an error. The error message in this playground explains quite clearly that we are trying to insert a string value into an integer variable.

How does Swift know that the constant `integerVar` is of the `Integer` type? Swift uses type inference to figure out the appropriate type. Let's look at what type inference is.

Type inference

Type inference allows us to omit the variable type when the variable is defined with an initial value. The compiler will infer the type based on that initial value. For example, in Objective-C, we would define an integer like this:

```
int myInt = 1
```

This tells the compiler that the `myInt` variable is of the `int` type, and the initial value is the number `1`. In Swift, we would define the same integer as this:

```
var myInt = 1
```

Swift infers that the variable type is an integer because the initial value is an integer. Let's look at a couple more examples:

```
var x = 3.14           // Double type
var y = "Hello"        // String type
var z = true            // Boolean type
```

In the preceding example, the compiler will correctly infer that variable `x` is a `Double`, variable `y` is a `String`, and variable `z` is a `Boolean`, based on their initial values.

Explicit types

Type inference is a very nice feature in Swift, and is one that you will probably get used to very quickly. However, there are times when we would like to explicitly define a variable's type. For example, in the preceding example, the variable `x` is inferred to be `Double`, but what if we wanted the variable type to be `Float`? We can explicitly define a variable type like this:

```
var x:Float = 3.14
```

Notice the `Float` declaration (the colon and the word `Float`) after the variable identifier. This tells the compiler to define this variable to be of the `Float` type and gives it an initial value of `3.14`. When we define a variable in this manner, we need to make sure that the initial value is of the same type that we are defining the variable to be. If we try to give a variable an initial value that is of a different type than we are defining it as, we will receive an error. As an example, the following line will throw an error because we are explicitly defining the variable to be that of the `Float` type, even though we are trying to put a `String` value in it:

```
var x: Float = "My str"
```

We will need to explicitly define the variable type if we are not setting an initial value. For example, the following line of code is invalid because the compiler does not know what type to set the variable `x` to:

```
var x
```

If we use this code in our application, we will receive a **Type annotation missing in pattern** error. If we are not setting an initial value for a variable, we are required to define the type like this:

```
var x: Int
```

Now that we have seen how to explicitly define a variable type, let's look at some of the most commonly used types.

Numeric types

Swift contains many of the standard numeric types that are suitable for storing various integer and floating-point values. Let's start off by looking at the integer type.

Integer types

An integer is a whole number and can be either signed (positive, negative, or zero) or unsigned (positive or zero). Swift provides several integer types of different sizes. The following chart shows the value ranges for the different integer types on a 64-bit system:

Type	Minimum	Maximum
Int8	-128	127
Int16	-32,768	32,767
Int32	-2,147,483,648	2,147,483,647
Int64	- 9,223,372,036,854,775,808	9,223,372,036,854,775,807
Int	- 9,223,372,036,854,775,808	9,223,372,036,854,775,807
UInt8	0	255
UInt16	0	65,535
UInt32	0	4,294,967,295
UInt64	0	18,446,744,073,709,551,615
UInt	0	18,446,744,073,709,551,615

Unless there is a specific reason to define the size of an integer, I would recommend using the standard `Int` or `UInt` types. This will save you from needing to convert between different types of integers later.

In Swift, the integer type and other numerical types are actually named types, and are implemented in the Swift standard library using structures. This gives us a consistent mechanism for memory management of all the data types, as well as properties that we can access. For the preceding chart, I retrieved the minimum and maximum values of each integer type using the `min` and `max` properties of the integer types. Look at the following playground to see how I retrieved the values:

```
Ready to continue Int_Playground
```

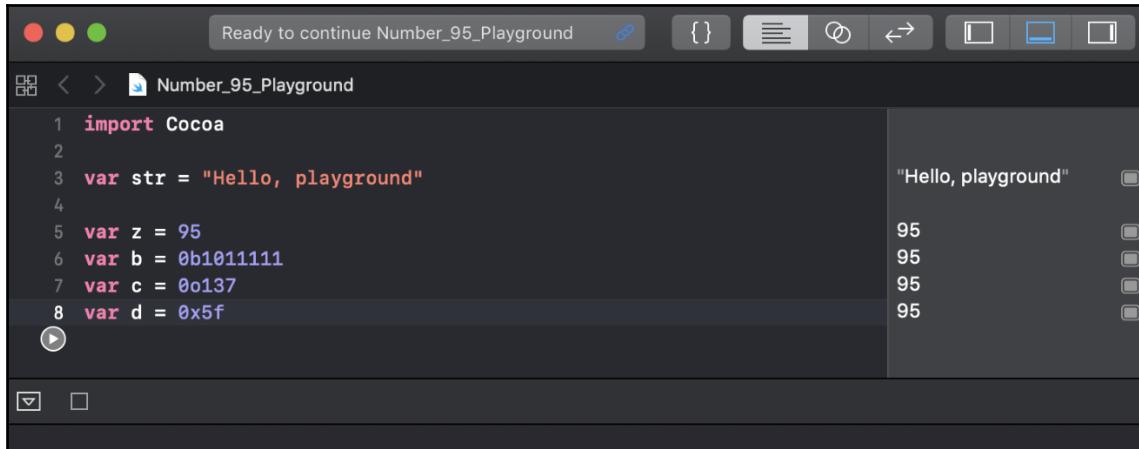
```
1 import Cocoa
2
3 print("UInt8 max \(UInt8.max)")
4 print("UInt8 min \(UInt8.min)")
5
6 print("UInt16 max \(UInt16.max)")
7 print("UInt16 min \(UInt16.min)")
8
9 print("UInt32 max \(UInt32.max)")
10 print("UInt32 min \(UInt32.min)")
11
12 print("UInt64 max \(UInt64.max)")
13 print("UInt64 min \(UInt64.min)")
14
15 print("UInt max \(UInt.max)")
16 print("UInt min \(UInt.min)")
17
18 print("Int8 max \(Int8.max)")
19 print("Int8 min \(Int8.min)")
20
21 print("Int16 max \(Int16.max)")
22 print("Int16 min \(Int16.min)")
23
24 print("Int32 max \(Int32.max)")
25 print("Int32 min \(Int32.min)")
26
27 print("Int64 max \(Int64.max)")
28 print("Int64 min \(Int64.min)")
29
30 print("Int max \(Int.max)")
31 print("Int min \(Int.min)")
```

"UInt8 max 255\n"
"UInt8 min 0\n"
"UInt16 max 65535\n"
"UInt16 min 0\n"
"UInt32 max 4294967295\n"
"UInt32 min 0\n"
"UInt64 max 18446744073709551615\n"
"UInt64 min 0\n"
"UInt max 18446744073709551615\n"
"UInt min 0\n"
"Int8 max 127\n"
"Int8 min -128\n"
"Int16 max 32767\n"
"Int16 min -32768\n"
"Int32 max 2147483647\n"
"Int32 min -2147483648\n"
"Int64 max 9223372036854775807\n"
"Int64 min -9223372036854775808\n"
"Int max 9223372036854775807\n"
"Int min -9223372036854775808\n"

Integers can also be represented as binary, octal, and hexadecimal numbers. We just need to add a prefix to the number to tell the compiler which base the number should be in. The prefix takes the form of a zero, followed by the base specifier. The following chart shows the prefix for each numerical base:

Base	Prefix
Decimal	None
Binary	0b
Octal	0o
Hexadecimal	0x

The following playground shows how the number 95 is represented in each of the numerical bases:



Swift also allows us to insert arbitrary underscores in our numeric literals. This can improve the readability of our code without changing the underlying value. As an example, if we were defining the speed of light, which is constant, we could define it like this:

```
let speedOfLightKmSec = 300_000
```

The Swift compiler will ignore these underscores and interpret this value as if the underscores were not there.

One of the new features of Swift 5 is the `isMultiple(of:)` method, which was added to the integer type. This method allows us to check if one number is the multiple of another number. Prior to Swift 5, we would have used the following code:

```
let number = 4

if number % 2 == 0 {
    print("Even")
} else {
    print("Odd")
}
```

Now, with Swift 5, we can use the `isMultiple(of:)` method like this:

```
let number = 4

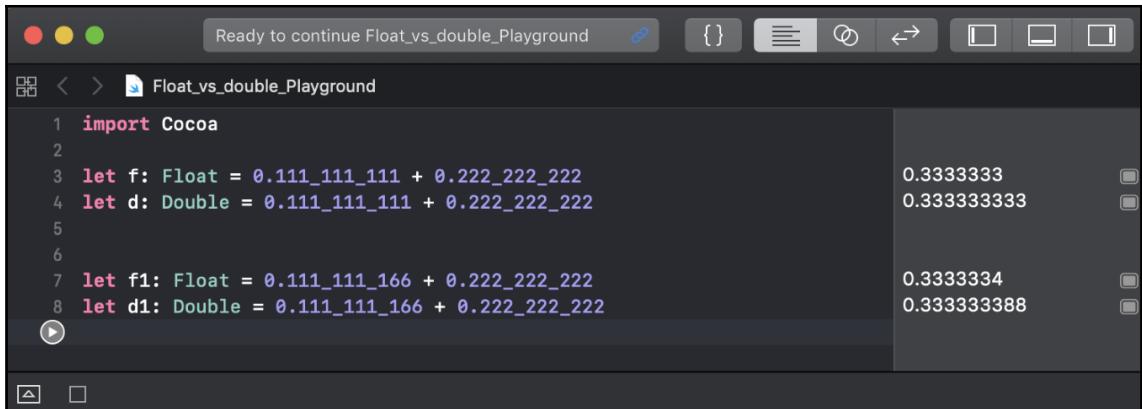
if number.isMultiple(of: 2) {
    print("Even")
} else {
    print("Odd")
}
```

This makes our code much easier to read and understand. Now let's look at floating-point and Double types.

Floating-point and Double values

A floating-point number is a number with a decimal component. There are two standard floating-point types in Swift: `Float` and `Double`. The `Float` type represents a 32-bit floating-point number, while the `Double` type represents a 64-bit floating-point number. Swift also supports an extended floating-point type: `Float80`. The `Float80` type is an 80-bit floating-point number.

It is recommended that we use the `Double` type over the `Float` type unless there is a specific reason to use the latter. The `Double` type has a precision of at least 15 decimal digits, while the `Float` type's precision can be as small as six decimal digits. Let's look at an example of how this can affect our application without us knowing it. The following screenshot shows the results if we add two decimal numbers together using both a `Float` type and a `Double` type:



The screenshot shows an Xcode playground window titled "Float_vs_double_Playground". The code compares the addition of two floating-point numbers using both the `Float` and `Double` types. The results show significant differences in precision.

Variable Type	Value	Result
<code>Float</code>	<code>0.111_111_111 + 0.222_222_222</code>	0.3333333
<code>Double</code>	<code>0.111_111_111 + 0.222_222_222</code>	0.333333333
<code>Float</code>	<code>0.111_111_166 + 0.222_222_222</code>	0.33333334
<code>Double</code>	<code>0.111_111_166 + 0.222_222_222</code>	0.333333388

As we can see from the preceding screenshot, the first two decimal numbers that we are adding contain nine digits past the decimal point; however, the results in the `Float` type only contain seven digits, while the results in the `Double` type contain the full nine digits. The loss of precision can cause issues if we are working with currency or other numbers that need accurate calculations as we can see when we compare the results in the second set of numbers.

What if we have two variables, where one is an integer and the other is a double? Do you think we can add them as the following code shows?

```
var a: Int = 3
var b: Double = 0.14
var c = a + b
```

If we put the preceding code into a playground, we would receive the following error:

```
operator '+' cannot be applied to operands of type Int and Double
```

This error lets us know that we are trying to add two different types of numbers, which is not allowed. To add an integer and a double type together, we need to convert the integer value into a double value. The following code shows how to do this:

```
var a: Int = 3
var b: Double = 0.14
var c = Double(a) + b
```

Notice how we use the `Double()` function to initialize a `Double` value with the integer value. All numeric types in Swift have an initializer to do these types of conversion. These initializers are called convenience initializers, similar to the `Double()` function shown in the preceding code sample. For example, the following code shows how you can initialize a `Float` or `UInt16` value with an integer value:

```
var intVar = 32
var floatVar = Float(intVar)
var uint16Var = UInt16(intVar)
```

Generally, when we are adding two different types together, we will want to convert the number with the least floating point precision, like an integer or float, to the type with the highest precision, like a double.

The Boolean type

Boolean values are often referred to as logical values because they can be either `true` or `false`. Swift has a built-in Boolean type that accepts one of the two built-in Boolean constants: `true` and `false`.

Boolean constants and variables can be defined like this:

```
let swiftIsCool = true
var itIsRaining = false
```

Boolean values are especially useful when working with conditional statements, such as the `if`, `while`, and `guard` statements. For example, what do you think this code would do?

```
let isSwiftCool = true
let isItRaining = false
if isSwiftCool {
    print("YEA, I cannot wait to learn it")
}
if isItRaining {
    print("Get a rain coat")
}
```

If you answered that this code would print out `YEA, I cannot wait to learn it`, then you would be correct. This line is printed out because the `isSwiftCool` Boolean type is set to `true`. As the `isItRaining` variable is set to `false`, the `Get a rain coat` message is not printed.

In previous versions of Swift, if we wanted to toggle the value of a Boolean type, we would have used the following code:

```
isItRaining = !isItRaining
```

Starting with Swift 4.2, we can use the `toggle()` method like this:

```
isItRaining.toggle()
```

This made our code much easier to read and understand.

The String type

A string is an ordered collection of characters, such as `Hello` or `Swift`, and is represented by the `String` type. We have seen several examples of strings in this book, and therefore the following code should look familiar. This code shows how to define two strings:

```
var stringOne = "Hello"  
var stringTwo = " World"
```

We can also create a string using a multiline string literal. The following code shows how we can do that:

```
var multiLine = """  
This is a multiline string literal.  
This shows how we can create a string over multiple lines.  
"""
```

Notice that we put three double quotes around the multiline string. We can use quotes in our multiline string to quote specific text. The following code shows how to do this:

```
var multiLine = """  
This is a multiline string literal.  
This shows how we can create a string over multiple lines.  
Jon says, "multiline string literals are cool"  
"""
```

Since a string is an ordered collection of characters, we can iterate through each character of a string. The following code shows how to do this:

```
var stringOne = "Hello"  
for char in stringOne {  
    print(char)  
}
```

The preceding code will display the results that are shown in the following screenshot:

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

```
1 import Cocoa
2
3 var stringOne = "Hello"
4 for char in stringOne {
5     print(char)
6 }
7
8 stringOne.map {
9     print($0)
10 }
```

The playground's output pane shows three rows of results:

- "Hello" (5 times)
- [(), (), (), (), ()] (5 times)
- H
e
l
l
o
H
e
l
l
o

We can also use the `map()` function, as shown in the previous screenshot, of the `String` type to retrieve each character, as shown in the following code:

```
stringOne.map {
    print($0)
}
```

We will look at the `map()` method and how it works later on in this book.

There are two ways in which we can add one string to another. We can concatenate them or include them in-line. To concatenate two strings, we can use the `+` or `+=` operators. The following code shows both ways in which we can concatenate two strings. The first example appends `stringB` to the end of `stringA`, and the results are put into the new `stringC` variable. The second example appends `string` directly to the end of `stringA` without creating a new string:

```
var stringC = stringA + stringB
stringA += string
```

To include a string in-line with another string, we use a special sequence of characters: `\()`. The following code shows how to include a string interpolation with another string:

```
var stringA = "Jon"  
var stringB = "Hello \(stringA)"
```

In the previous example, `stringB` will contain the message `Hello Jon`, because Swift will replace the `\(stringA)` sequence of characters with the value of the `stringA` variable.

Starting with Swift 5, we have the ability to create raw strings. In previous versions of Swift, if we wanted to include quotes or backslashes in a string, we had to *escape* it out using a backslash, as shown in the following code:

```
let str = "The main character said \"hello\\\""
```

With a raw string, the double quotes and backslashes are treated as part of the string literal, and so we do not need to escape them. The following example shows how to do this:

```
let str1 = #"The main character said "hello"#
```

Notice the hashtag and double quotes at the start and end of the string. That tells Swift that this is a raw string. This makes it much easier to read what the string actually contains. If we want to append another string in-line, as we did previously, we would use the `\#()` character sequence. The following code illustrates this:

```
let ans = 42  
var str2 = #"The answer is \#(ans)"#
```

The result of this code would be a `str2` variable containing the following string: **The answer is 42**.

In Swift, we define the mutability of variables and collections by using the `var` and `let` keywords. If we define a string as a variable using `var`, the string is mutable, meaning that we can change and edit the value. If we define a string as a constant using `let`, the string is immutable, meaning that we cannot change or edit the value once it is set. The following code shows the difference between a mutable and an immutable string:

```
var x = "Hello"  
let y = "HI"  
var z = " World"  
  
//This is valid because x is mutable  
x += z  
  
//This is invalid because y is not mutable.  
y += z
```

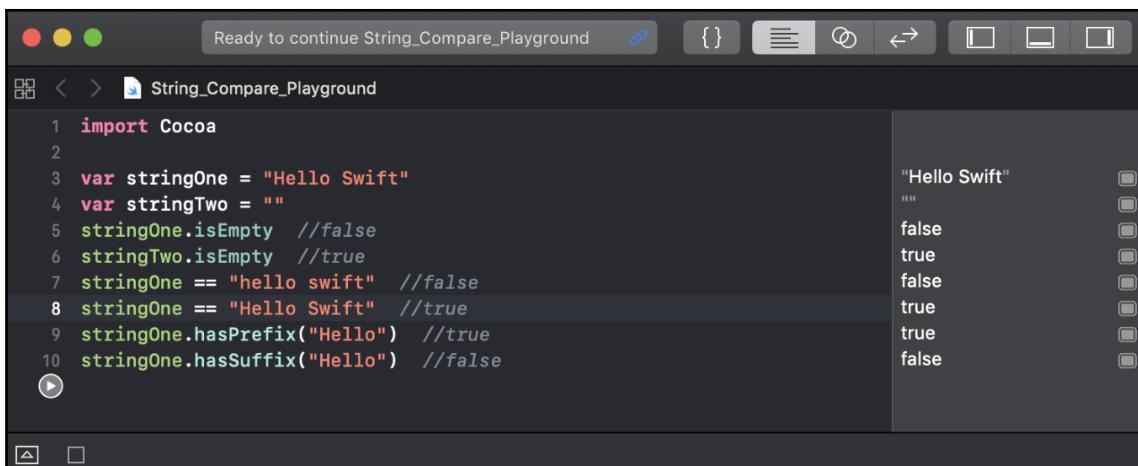
Strings in Swift have two methods that can convert the case of the string. These methods are `lowercased()` and `uppercased()`. The following example demonstrates these methods:

```
var stringOne = "hElLo"  
print("Lowercase String: \(stringOne.lowercased())")  
print("Uppercase String: \(stringOne.uppercased())")
```

If we run this code, the results will be as follows:

```
Lowercase String: hello  
Uppercase String: HELLO
```

Swift provides four ways to compare a string; these are string equality, prefix equality, suffix equality, and `isEmpty`. The following example demonstrates these ways:



The `isEmpty()` method checks to see if the string contains any characters or not. The string equality (`==`) checks to see if the characters (which are case-sensitive) in the two strings are the same. The prefix and suffix equality checks to see if the string starts with or ends with a specific string. The prefix and suffix equality is case-sensitive as well.

We can replace all the occurrences of a target string with another string. This is done with the `replacingOccurrences(of:, with:)` method. The following code demonstrates this:

```
var stringOne = "one,to,three,four"  
var stringTwo = stringOne.replacingOccurrences(of: "to", with: "two")  
print(stringTwo)
```

The preceding example will print `one, two, three, four` to the screen because we are replacing all the occurrences of `to` with `two` in the `stringOne` variable.

We can also retrieve substrings and individual characters from our strings; however, when we retrieve a substring from a string, the substring is an instance of the `Substring` type and not the `String` type. The `Substring` type contains most of the same methods as the `String` type, so you can use them in a similar way. Unlike `String` types, however, they are meant to be used only for short periods of time, only while we are working with the value. If you need to use a `Substring` type for a long period of time, you should convert it into a `String` type. The following example shows how we can work with substrings:

```
var path = "/one/two/three/four"

//Create start and end indexes
let startIndex = path.index(path.startIndex, offsetBy: 4)
let endIndex = path.index(path.startIndex, offsetBy: 14)

let sPath = path[startIndex ..< endIndex] //returns the "/two/three"
//convert the substring to a string
let newStr = String(sPath)

path[..
```

In the preceding example, we use the subscript path to retrieve the substring between a start and end index. The indices are created with the `index(_; offsetBy:)` function. The first property in the `index(_; offsetBy:)` function gives the index of where we wish to start, and the `offsetBy` property tells us how much to increase the index by.

The `path[.. line creates a substring from the beginning of the string to the index and the path[endIndex...] line creates a substring from the index to the end of the string. We then use the last property to get the last character of the string and the first property to get the first character.`



The `..<>` operator that we saw in the previous example is known as a half-open range operator. We will look at the different range operators at the end of this chapter.

We can retrieve the number of characters in a string by using the count property. The following example shows how you can use this function:

```
var path = "/one/two/three/four"  
var length = path.count
```

This completes our whirlwind tour of strings. We went through these properties and functions very quickly, but we will be using strings extensively throughout this book, so there will be a lot of code to help you get familiar with them.

Tuples

Tuples group multiple values into a single compound type. These values are not required to be of the same type.

The following example shows how to define a tuple:

```
var team = ("Boston", "Red Sox", 97, 65, 59.9)
```

In the preceding example, an unnamed tuple was created that contains two strings, two integers, and one double. The values of the tuple can be decomposed into a set of variables, as shown in the following example:

```
var team = ("Boston", "Red Sox", 97, 65, 59.9)  
var (city, name, wins, losses, percent) = team
```

In the preceding code, the city variable will contain Boston, the name variable will contain Red Sox, the wins variable will contain 97, the losses variable will contain 65, and finally the percent variable will contain 59.9.

The values of the tuple can also be retrieved by specifying the location of the value. The following example shows how we can retrieve values by their location:

```
var team = ("Boston", "Red Sox", 97, 65, 59.9)  
var city = team.0  
var name = team.1  
var wins = team.2  
var losses = team.3  
var percent = team.4
```

Naming tuples, known as named tuples, allows us to avoid the decomposition step. A named tuple associates a name (key) with each element of the tuple. The following example shows how to create a named tuple:

```
var team = (city:"Boston", name:"Red Sox", wins:97, losses:65,  
percent:59.9)
```

Values from a named tuple can be accessed using the dot syntax. In the preceding code, we will access the `city` element of the tuple like this: `team.city`. In the preceding code, the `team.city` element will contain `Boston`.

Tuples are incredibly useful and can be used for all sorts of purposes. I have found that they are very useful for replacing classes and structures that are designed to simply store data and do not contain any methods. They are also very useful for returning multiple values, of different types, from a function. Now, let's look at enumerations.

Enumerations

Enumerations (also known as enums) are a special data type that enables us to group related types together and use them in a type-safe manner. Enumerations in Swift are not tied to integer values as they are in other languages, such as C or Java. In Swift, we are able to define an enumeration with a type (string, character, integer, or floating-point) and then define its actual value (known as the raw value). Enumerations also support features that are traditionally only supported by classes, such as computed properties and instance methods. We will discuss these advanced features in depth in [Chapter 7, Classes, Structures, and Protocols](#). In this section, we will look at the traditional features of enumerations.

We will define an enumeration that contains a list of `Planets`, like this:

```
enum Planets {  
    case mercury  
    case venus  
    case earth  
    case mars  
    case jupiter  
    case saturn  
    case uranus  
    case neptune  
}
```



Note: When defining the enumeration type, the name of the enumeration should be upper case like other types; however, the member values can be upper or lower case.

The values defined in an enumeration are considered to be the member values (or simply the members) of the enumeration. In most cases, you will see the member values defined like it is in the preceding example because it is easy to read; however, there is a shorter version. This shorter version lets us define multiple members in a single line, separated by commas, as the following example shows:

```
enum Planets {  
    case mercury, venus, earth, mars, jupiter  
    case saturn, uranus, neptune  
}
```

We can then use the `Planets` enumeration like this:

```
var planetWeLiveOn = Planets.earth  
var furthestPlanet = Planets.neptune
```

The type for the `planetWeLiveOn` and `furthestPlanet` variables is inferred when we initialize the variable with one of the member values of the `Planets` enumeration. Once the variable type is inferred, we can then assign a new value without the `Planets` prefix, as shown here:

```
planetWeLiveOn = .mars
```

We can compare an enumeration value using the traditional equals (`==`) operator or use a `switch` statement.



Note: We will learn about the Swift `switch` statement in Chapter 5, *Control Flow*, later in this book. For now, we wanted to illustrate its use with the enumeration type.

The following example shows how to use the `equals` operator and the `switch` statement with an enum:

```
// Using the traditional == operator  
if planetWeLiveOn == .earth {  
    print("Earth it is")  
}  
  
// Using the switch statement  
switch planetWeLiveOn {
```

```
case .mercury:  
    print("We live on Mercury, it is very hot!")  
case .venus:  
    print("We live on Venus, it is very hot!")  
case .earth:  
    print("We live on Earth, just right")  
case .mars:  
    print("We live on Mars, a little cold")  
default:  
    print("Where do we live?")  
}
```

Enumerations can come prepopulated with raw values, which are required to be of the same type. The following example shows how to define an enumeration with string values:

```
enum Devices: String {  
    case MusicPlayer = "iPod"  
    case Phone = "iPhone"  
    case Tablet = "iPad"  
}  
  
print("We are using an \Devices.Tablet.rawValue")
```

The preceding example creates an enumeration with three types of device. We then use the `rawValue` property to retrieve the stored value for the `Tablet` member of the `Devices` enumeration. This example will print a message saying, `We are using an iPad`.

Let's create another `Planets` enumeration, but this time, assign numbers to the members, as follows:

```
enum Planets: Int {  
    case mercury = 1  
    case venus  
    case earth  
    case mars  
    case jupiter  
    case saturn  
    case uranus  
    case neptune  
}  
print("Earth is planet number \Planets.earth.rawValue")
```

The big difference between these last two enumerations examples is that in the second example, we only assign a value to the first member (`mercury`). If integers are used for the raw values of an enumeration, then we do not have to assign a value to each member. If no value is present, the raw values will be auto-incremented.

In Swift, enumerations can also have associated values. Associated values allow us to store additional information, along with member values. This additional information can vary each time we use the member. It can also be of any type, and the types can be different for each member. Let's look at how we might use associate types by defining a `Product` enumeration, which contains two types of products:

```
enum Product {
    case Book(Double, Int, Int)
    case Puzzle(Double, Int)
}

var masterSwift = Product.Book(49.99, 2017, 310)
var worldPuzzle = Product.Puzzle(9.99, 200)

switch masterSwift {
    case .Book(let price, let year, let pages):
        print("Mastering Swift was published in \\\(year) for the
              price of \\(price) and has \\(pages) pages")
    case .Puzzle(let price, let pieces):
        print("Mastering Swift is a puzzle with \\(pieces) and
              sells for \\(price)")
}
switch worldPuzzle {
    case .Book(let price, let year, let pages):
        print("World Puzzle was published in \\\(year) for the price of
              \\(price) and has \\(pages) pages")
    case .Puzzle(let price, let pieces):
        print("World Puzzle is a puzzle with \\(pieces) and sells
              for \\(price)")
}
```

In the preceding example, we begin by defining a `Product` enumeration with two members: `Book` and `Puzzle`. The `Book` member has associated values of the `Double`, `Int`, and `Int` types, while the `Puzzle` member has associated values of the `Double` and `Int` types. Notice that we are using named associated types where we assign a name for each associated type. We then create two products, `masterSwift` and `worldPuzzle`. We assign the `masterSwift` variable a value of `Product.Book` with the associated values of `49.99`, `2017`, and `310`. We then assign the `worldPuzzle` variable a value of `Product.Puzzle` with the associated values of `9.99` and `200`.

We can then check the `Products` enumeration using a `switch` statement, as we did in an earlier example. We then extract the associated values within the `switch` statement. In this example, we extracted the associated values as constants with the `let` keyword, but you can also extract the associated values as variables with the `var` keyword.

If you put the previous code into a playground, the following results will be displayed:

```
"Master Swift was published in 2017 for the price of 49.99 and  
has 310 pages"  
"World Puzzle is a puzzle with 200 and sells for 9.99"
```

In future chapters in this book, we will look at additional features of enumerations and see why they can be so powerful. We have used operators in a number of examples. Let's take a closer look at them.

Operators

An operator is a symbol or combination of symbols that we can use to check, change, or combine values. We have used operators in most of the examples so far in this book, but we did not specifically call them operators. In this section, we will show you how to use most of the basic operators that Swift supports.

Swift supports most standard C operators and also improves on some of them to eliminate several common coding errors. For example, the assignment operator does not return a value, which prevents it from being used where we are meant to use the equality operator, which is two equal signs (`==`).

Let's look at the operators in Swift.

Assignment operator

The assignment operator initializes or updates a variable. Here is a prototype:

```
var A = var B
```

Here is an example:

```
let x = 1  
var y = "Hello"  
a = b
```

Comparison operators

The comparison operator returns a Boolean value of `true` if the statement is true or a Boolean value of `false` if the statement is not true.

Here are some prototypes:

```
Equality:  
    varA == varB  
Not equal:  
    varA != varB  
Greater than:  
    varA > varB  
Less than:  
    varA < varB  
Greater than or equal to:  
    varA >= varB  
Less than or equal to:  
    varA <= varB
```

Here are some examples:

```
2 == 1 //false, 2 does not equal 1  
2 != 1 //true, 2 does not equal 1  
2 > 1 //true, 2 is greater than 1  
2 < 1 //false, 2 is not less than 1  
2 >= 1 //true, 2 is greater or equal to 1  
2 <= 1 //false, 2 is not less or equal to 1
```

Arithmetic operators

The arithmetic operators perform the four basic mathematical operations. Here are some prototypes:

```
Addition:  
    varA + varB  
Subtraction:  
    varA - varB  
Multiplication:  
    varA * varB  
Division:  
    varA / varB
```

Here are some examples:

```
var x = 4 + 2          //x will equal 6
var x = 4 - 2          //x will equal 2
var x = 4 * 2          //x will equal 8
var x = 4 / 2          //x will equal 2
var x = "Hello " + "world" //x will equal "Hello World"
```

Remainder operator

The remainder operator calculates the remainder if the first operand is divided by the second operand. In other languages, this is sometimes referred to as the modulo or modulus operator.

Here is a prototype:

```
varA % varB
```

Here is an example:

```
var x = 10 % 3          //x will equal 1
var x = 10 % 2.6         //x will equal 2.2
```

Compound assignment operators

The compound assignment operators combine an arithmetic operator with an assignment operator.

Here are some prototypes:

```
varA += varB
varA -= varB
varA *= varB
varA /= varB
```

Here are some examples:

```
var x = 6
x += 2    //x now is 8
x -= 2    //x now is 4
x *= 2    //x now is 12
x /= 2    //x now is 3
```

Closed range operator

The closed range operator defines a range that runs from the first number to the second number. The numbers are separated by three dots.

Here is a prototype:

(a...b)

Here is an example. Note that we will cover the `for` loop in Chapter 5, *Control Flow*:

```
for i in 1...3 {  
    print("Number: \\" + i + "\")  
}
```

This example would print out the following:

```
Number: 1  
Number: 2  
Number: 3
```

Half open range operator

The half open range operator defines a range that runs from the first number to one, minus the second number. The numbers are separated by two dots and the less than sign.

Here is a prototype:

(a..<b)

Here is a example:

```
for i in 1..<3 {  
    print("Number: \\" + i + "\")  
}
```

This example would print out the following:

```
Number: 1  
Number: 2
```



Notice that in the closed range operator, the line `Number: 3` was printed out, but with the half open range operator, it wasn't.

There are also one-side range operators that we use with arrays. We will look at those in Chapter 4, *Using Swift Collections*.

Ternary conditional operator

The ternary conditional operator assigns a value to a variable based on the evaluation of a comparison operator or Boolean value.

Here is a prototype:

```
(boolValue ? valueA : valueB)
```

Here is an example:

```
var x = 2
var y = 3
var z = (y > x ? "Y is greater" : "X is greater") //z equals "Y is greater"
```

Logical NOT operator

The logical NOT operator inverts a Boolean value. Here is a prototype:

```
varA = !varB
```

Here is an example:

```
var x = true
var y = !x      //y equals false
```

Logical AND operator

The logical AND operator returns `true` if both operands are `true`; otherwise, it returns `false`.

Here is a prototype:

```
varA && varB
```

Here is an example:

```
var x = true
var y = false
var z = x && y //z equals false
```

Logical OR operator

The logical OR operator returns `true` if either of the operands are true. Here is a prototype:

```
varA || varB
```

Here is an example:

```
var x = true
var y = false
var z = x||y //z is true
```

For those who are familiar with the C language, or similar languages, these operators should look pretty familiar. For those of you who aren't that familiar with the C operators, rest assured that, once you begin using them frequently, they will become second nature.

Summary

In this chapter, we covered topics ranging from variables and constants to data types and operators. The items in this chapter will act as the foundation for every application that you write; therefore, it is important to understand the concepts we discussed here.

In this chapter, we have seen that we should prefer constants to variables when the value is not going to change. Swift will give you a compile time warning if you set but never change a variable's value. We also saw that we should prefer type inference over declaring a type.

Numeric and string types, which are implemented as primitives in other languages, are named types that are implemented with structures in Swift. In future chapters, you will see why this is important. One of the most important things to remember from this chapter is that, if a variable contains a `nil` value, you must declare it as an optional.

In the next chapter, we will look at the Swift optional types. The optional type in Swift can be one of the hardest concepts to grasp if you are used to languages that don't use them.

3 Optional Types

When I first started using Swift, the concept that I had the most trouble understanding was optional types. Coming from an Objective-C, C, Java, and Python background, I was able to relate most of Swift's features to how things worked in one of the other languages that I knew, but optionals were different. When Swift was first announced, there really was nothing like optionals in the other languages that I used, so it took a lot of reading to fully understand them.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What are optional types?
- Why do we need optional types in Swift?
- How to unwrap an optional?
- What is optional binding?
- What is optional chaining?

Introducing optionals

When we declare variables in Swift, they are by default non-optional, which means that they must contain a valid, non-nil value. If we try to set a non-optional variable to `nil`, it will result in an error.

For example, the following code will throw an error when we attempt to set the `message` variable to `nil` because it is a non-optional type:

```
var message: String = "My String"  
message = nil
```

It is very important to understand that `nil` in Swift is very different from `nil` in Objective-C or other C-based languages. In these languages, `nil` is a pointer to a non-existent object; however, in Swift a `nil` value is the absence of a value. This concept is very important to fully understand optionals in Swift.

A variable defined as an optional can contain a valid value or it can indicate the absence of a value. We indicate the absence of a value by assigning it a special `nil` value. Optionals of any type can be set to `nil`, whereas in Objective-C, only objects can be set to `nil`.

To really understand the concept behind optionals, let's look at a line of code that defines an optional:

```
var myString: String?
```

The question mark at the end indicates that the `myString` variable is an optional. We read this line of code as saying that the `myString` variable is an optional type, which may contain a value of the string type or may contain no value. How this line is written is very important in understanding how optionals work.

Optionals are a special type in Swift. When we defined the `myString` variable, we actually defined it as an optional type. To understand this, let's look at some more code:

```
var myString1: String?  
var myString2: Optional<String>
```

These two declarations are equivalent. Both lines declare an optional type that may contain a string type or may lack a value. In Swift, we can think of the absence of a value as being set to `nil`, but always remember that this is different than setting something to `nil` in Objective-C. In this book, when we refer to `nil`, we are referring to how Swift uses `nil` and not how Objective-C uses `nil`.

The optional type is an enumeration with two possible values, `None` and `Some (T)`, where `T` is the generic associated value of the appropriate type. We will discuss Generics in Chapter 10, *Generics*. If we set the optional to `nil`, it will have a value of `None`, and if we set a value, the optional will have a value of `Some` with an associated value of the appropriate type. In Chapter 2, *Learning about Variables, Constants, Strings and Operators*, we explained that an enumeration in Swift may have associated values. Associated values allow us to store additional information along with the enumeration's member values.

Internally, an optional is defined as follows:

```
enum Optional<T> {  
    case None  
    case Some (T)  
}
```

Here, `T` is the type to associate with the optional. The `T` symbol is used to define a generic and can be used to represent any type.

The need for optional types in Swift

Now, the burning question: why does Swift need optionals? To understand this question, we should examine what problems optionals are designed to solve.

In most languages, it is possible to create a variable without giving it an initialized value. For example, in Objective-C, both of these lines of code are valid:

```
int i;  
MyObject *m;
```

Now, let's say that the `MyObject` class, written in Objective-C, has the following method:

```
- (int)myMethodWithValue:(int)i {  
    return i*2;  
}
```

This method takes the value passed in from the `i` parameter, multiplies it by two, and returns the results. Let's try to call this method using the following code:

```
MyObject *m;  
 NSLog(@"%@", [m myMethodWithValue:5]);
```

Our first thought might be that this code would display `Value: 10`, since we are passing the value of 5 to a method that doubles the value passed in; however, this would be incorrect. In reality, this code would display `Value: 0` because we did not initialize the `m` object prior to using it.

When we forget to initialize an object or set a value for a variable, we can get unexpected results at runtime, as we just demonstrated. The unexpected results can be, at times, very difficult to track down.

With optionals, Swift is able to detect problems such as this at compile-time and alert us before it becomes a runtime issue. If we expect a variable or object to always contain a value prior to using it, we will declare the variable as a non-optional (this is the default declaration). Then we will receive an error if we try to use it prior to initializing it. Let's look at an example of this. The following code would display an error because we are attempting to use a non-optional variable prior to initializing it:

```
var myString: String  
print(myString)
```

If a variable is declared as an optional, it is good programming practice to verify that it contains a valid value before attempting to use it. We should only declare a variable as an optional if there is a valid reason for the variable to contain no value. This is the reason Swift declares variables as non-optional by default.

Now that we have a better understanding of what optionals are and what types of problems they are designed to solve, let's look at how to use them.

Defining an optional

One thing to keep in mind is that the type we define in the variable's declaration is actually the associated value in the optional enumeration. The following code shows us how we would typically declare an optional:

```
var myOptional: String?
```

This code declares an optional variable that might contain a string or might contain no value. When a variable such as this is declared, by default it is set to `nil`.

Using optionals

The key to using optionals is to always verify that they contain a valid value prior to accessing them. We use the term **unwrapping** to refer to the process of retrieving a value from an optional.

Forced unwrapping of an optional

To unwrap or retrieve the value of an optional, we place an exclamation mark (!) after the variable name. This is called forced unwrapping. Forced unwrapping, in this manner, is very dangerous and should be used only if we are certain that the variable contains a non-`nil` value. Otherwise, if it does contain a `nil` value, we will get a runtime error and the application will crash.

When we use the exclamation point to unwrap an optional, we are telling the compiler that we know the optional contains a value, so go ahead and give it to us. Let's look at how to do this:

```
var myString1: String?  
myString1 = "test"  
var test: String = myString1!
```

This code will work as we expect it to, where the `test` variable will contain the "test" string; however, if the line that set the `myString1` optional to `test` were removed, we would receive a runtime error when the application is run. Note that the compiler will not alert us to an issue because we are using the exclamation point to unwrap the optional, therefore, the compiler assumes that we know what we are doing and will happily compile the code for us. We should verify that the `myString1` optional contains a valid value prior to unwrapping it. The following example is one way to do this:

```
var myString1: String?  
myString1 = "test"  
if myString1 != nil {  
    var test = myString1!  
}
```

Now, if the line that sets the `myString1` optional to `test` were removed, we would not receive a runtime error because we only unwrap the `myString1` optional if it contains a valid (non-nil) value.

Unwrapping optionals, as we just described, is not optimal, and it is not recommended that optionals be unwrapped in this manner. We can combine verification and unwrapping in one step, called **optional binding**.

Optional binding

Optional binding is the recommended way to unwrap an optional. With optional binding, we perform a check to see whether the optional contains a valid value and, if so, unwrap it into a temporary variable or constant. This is all performed in one step.

Optional binding is performed with the `if` or `while` conditional statements. It takes the following format if we want to put the value of the optional in a constant:

```
if let constantName = optional {  
    statements  
}
```

If we need to put the value in a variable, instead of a constant, we can use the `var` keyword, as shown in the following example:

```
if var variableName = optional {  
    statements  
}
```

The following example shows how to perform optional binding:

```
var myString3: String?  
myString3 = "Space, the final frontier"  
if let tempVar = myString3 {  
    print(tempVar)  
} else {  
    print("No value")  
}
```

In the example, we define the `myString3` variable as an optional type. If the `myString3` optional contains a valid value, the new variable, named `tempVar`, is set to that value and is printed to the console. If the `myString3` optional does not contain a value, **No value** is printed to the console.

We are able to use optional binding to unwrap multiple optionals within the same optional binding line. For example, if we had three optionals named `optional1`, `optional2`, and `optional3`, we could use the following code to attempt to unwrap all three at once:

```
if let tmp1 = optional1, let tmp2 = optional2, let tmp3 = optional3 {  
}
```

If any of the three optionals are `nil`, the whole optional binding statement fails. It is also perfectly acceptable with optional binding to assign the value to a variable of the same name. The following code illustrates this:

```
if let myOptional = myOptional {  
    print(myOptional)  
} else {  
    print("myOptional was nil")  
}
```

One thing to note is that the temporary variable is scoped only for the conditional block and cannot be used outside it. To illustrate the scope of the temporary variable, let's take a look at the following code:

```
var myOptional: String?  
myOptional = "test"  
if var tmp = myOptional {  
    print("Inside: \(tmp)")  
}  
// This next line will cause a compile time error  
print("Outside: \(tmp)")
```

This code would not compile because the `tmp` variable is only valid within the conditional block and we are attempting to use it outside the block.

Using optional binding is a lot cleaner and easier than manually verifying that the optional has a value and using forced unwrapping to retrieve the value of the optional.

Optional types with tuples

We can define a whole tuple as an optional or any of the elements within a tuple as an optional. It is especially useful to use optionals with tuples when we return a tuple from a function or method. This allows us to return part (or all) of the tuple as `nil`. The following example shows how to define a tuple as an optional, and also how to define individual elements of a tuple as optional types:

```
var tuple1: (one: String, two: Int)?
var tuple2: (one: String, two: Int?)
```

The first line defines the whole tuple as an optional type. The second line defines the second value within the tuple as an optional, while the first value is a non-optional.

Optional chaining

Optional chaining allows us to call properties, methods, and subscripts on an optional that might be `nil`. If any of the chained values return `nil`, the return value will be `nil`. The following code gives an example of optional chaining using a fictitious `car` object. In this example, if either the `car` or `tires` optional variables are `nil`, the `tireSize` variable will be `nil`, otherwise the `tireSize` variable will be equal to the `tireSize` property:

```
var tireSize = car?.tires?.tireSize
```

We will look at optional chaining again in Chapter 7, *Classes, Structures, and Protocols*.

The nil coalescing operator

The nil coalescing operator is similar to the ternary operator that we discussed in Chapter 2, *Learning about Variables, Constants, Strings, and Operators*. The ternary operator assigns a value to a variable, based on the evaluation of a comparison operator or a Boolean value. The nil coalescing operator attempts to unwrap an optional, and if it contains a value, it will return that value, or a default value, as shown in the following code, if the optional is `nil`.

Let's look at a prototype for the nil coalescing operator:

```
optionalA ?? defaultValue
```

In this example, we demonstrate the nil coalescing operator when the optional contains a nil and also when it contains a value:

```
var defaultName = "Jon"

var optionalA: String?
var optionalB: String?

optionalB = "Buddy"

var nameA = optionalA ?? defaultName
var nameB = optionalB ?? defaultName
```

In this example, we begin by initializing our `defaultName` variable to `Jon`. We then define two optionals, named `optionalA` and `optionalB`. The `optionalA` variable will be set to `nil`, while the `optionalB` variable is set to `Buddy`.

The nil coalescing operator is used in the final two lines. Since the `optionalA` variable contains a `nil`, the `nameA` variable will be set to the value of the `defaultName` variable, which is `Jon`. The `nameB` variable will be set to the value of the `optionalB` variable since it contains a value.

The nil coalescing operator is shorthand for using the ternary operator as follows:

```
var nameC = optionalA != nil ? optionalA! : defaultName
```

As we can see, the nil coalescing operator is much cleaner and easier to read than the equivalent ternary operator.

Summary

While the concept of optional types, as used in the Swift language, might seem a little confusing at first, the more you use them the more they will make sense. One of the biggest advantages with optional types is we get additional compile-time checks that alert us if we forget to initialize non-optionals prior to using them.

In this chapter, we described what optionals actually are and how they are defined internally in the Swift language. It is important to understand this concept because optionals are used a lot in Swift and knowing how they work internally will help you to use them properly. We will see additional examples of optionals later in this book.

In the next chapter, we will look at how to use collections.

4

Using Swift Collections

Once I got past the basic *Hello, World!* beginner applications, I quickly began to realize the shortcomings of variables, especially with the Mad Libs-style applications that I was starting to write. These applications requested that the user enter numerous strings, which resulted in the creation of separate variables for each input field that the user entered.

Having all these separate variables quickly became cumbersome. I remember talking to a friend about this, and he asked me why I was not using arrays. At that time, I was not familiar with arrays, so I asked him to show me what they were. Even though he had a TI-99/4A and I had a Commodore Vic-20, the concept of arrays was the same. Even today, the arrays found in modern development languages have the same basic concepts as the arrays I used on my Commodore Vic-20. While it is definitely possible to create a useful application without using collections, such as arrays, when used properly, collections make application development significantly easier.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What an array is in Swift and how to use it?
- What a dictionary is in Swift and how to use it?
- What a set is in
- Swift and how to use it?

Swift collection types

A collection groups multiple items into a single unit. Swift provides three native collection types. These collection types are arrays, sets, and dictionaries. *Arrays* store data in an ordered collection, *sets* are unordered collections of unique values, and *dictionaries* are unordered collections of key-value pairs. In an array, we access the data by the location or index in the array, whereas in a set we usually iterate through the collection, and dictionaries are accessed using a unique key.

The data stored in a Swift collection must be of the same type. This means, as an example, that we are unable to store a string value in an array of integers. Since Swift does not allow us to mismatch data types in a collection, we can be certain of the data type when we retrieve elements from a collection. This is another feature that, on the surface, might seem like a shortcoming, but actually helps eliminate common programming mistakes.



Having a collection that contains arbitrary data types usually leads to problems. If this kind of collection is required, you should reconsider your design. Later in this chapter, we will see how to use the `Any` and `AnyObject` aliases, but we should avoid this wherever possible.

Mutability

For those who are familiar with Objective-C, you will know that there are different classes for mutable and immutable collections. For example, to define a mutable array, we use the `NSMutableArray` class, and to define an immutable array, we use the `NSArray` class. Swift is a little different, because it does not contain separate classes for mutable and immutable collections. Instead, we define whether a collection is constant (immutable) or variable (mutable) by using the `let` and `var` keywords. This should seem familiar by now since we define constants with the `let` keyword and variables with the `var` keyword.



It is a good practice to create immutable collections unless there is a specific need to change the objects within the collection. This allows the compiler to optimize performance.

Let's begin our tour of collections by looking at the most common collection type: the array type.

Arrays

Arrays are a very common component of modern programming languages and can be found in virtually all modern programming languages. In Swift, an array is an ordered list of objects of the same type.

When an array is created, we must declare the type of data that can be stored in it by explicit type declaration or through type inference. Typically, we only explicitly declare the data type of an array when we are creating an empty array. If we initialize an array with data, the compiler uses type inference to infer the data type for the array.

Each object in an array is called an **element**. Each of these elements is stored in a set order and can be accessed by searching for its location (index) in the array.

Creating and initializing arrays

We can initialize an array with an array literal. An array literal is a set of values that prepopulates the array. The following example shows how to define an immutable array of integers using the `let` keyword:

```
let arrayOne = [1, 2, 3]
```

If we need to create a mutable array, we will use the `var` keyword to define the array, as we did with standard variables. The following example shows how to define a mutable array:

```
var arrayTwo = [4, 5, 6]
```

In the preceding two examples, the compiler inferred the type of values stored in the array by looking at the type of values stored in the array literal. If we want to create an empty array, we need to explicitly declare the type of values to store in the array. There are two ways to declare null arrays in Swift. The following examples show how to declare an empty mutable array that can be used to store integers:

```
var arrayThree = [Int]()
var arrayThree: [Int] = []
```

In the preceding examples, we created arrays with integer values, and the majority of the array examples in this chapter will also use integer values; however, we can create arrays in Swift with any type. The only rule is that, once an array is defined as containing a particular type, all the elements in the array must be of that type. The following example shows how we can create arrays of various data types:

```
var arrayOne = [String]()
var arrayTwo = [Double]()
var arrayThree = [MyObject]()
```

Swift provides special type aliases for working with nonspecific types. These aliases are `AnyObject` and `Any`. We can use these aliases to define arrays whose elements are of different types, like this:

```
var myArray: [Any] = [1, "Two"]
```

The `AnyObject` aliases can represent an instance of any class type, while the `Any` aliases can represent an instance of the instance of any type, including function types. We should use the `Any` and `AnyObject` aliases only when there is an explicit need for this behavior. It is always better to be specific about the types of data our collections contain.



If there is a need to mix types in a single collection, consider using a tuple.

An array can also be initialized to a certain size with all the elements set to a predefined value. This can be very useful if we want to create an array and prepopulate it with default values. The following example defines an array with 7 elements, with each element containing the number 3:

```
var arrayFour = [Int](repeating: 3, count: 7)
```

While the most common arrays are one-dimensional arrays, multidimensional arrays can also be created. A multidimensional array is really nothing more than an array of arrays. For example, a two-dimensional array is an array of arrays, while a three-dimensional array is an array of arrays of arrays. The following examples show the two ways to create a two-dimensional array in Swift:

```
var multiArrayOne = [[1,2],[3,4],[5,6]]  
var multiArrayTwo = [[Int]]()
```

Accessing the array element

The subscript syntax is used to retrieve values from an array. Subscript syntax, for an array, is where a number appears between two square brackets, and that number specifies the location (index) within the array of the element we wish to retrieve. The following example shows how to retrieve elements from an array using the subscript syntax:

```
let arrayOne = [1,2,3,4,5,6]  
print(arrayOne[0]) //Displays '1'  
print(arrayOne[3]) //Displays '4'
```

In the preceding code, we begin by creating an array of integers that contains six numbers. We then print out the value at indexes 0 and 3.



One important fact to note is that indices in Swift arrays start with the number zero. This means that the first item in an array has an index of 0. The second item in an array has an index of 1.

If we want to retrieve an individual value within a multidimensional array, we need to provide a subscript for each dimension of the array. If we do not provide a subscript for each dimension, we will retrieve an array rather than an individual value within the array. The following example shows how we can define a two-dimensional array and retrieve an individual value within the two dimensions:

```
let multiArray = [[1,2],[3,4],[5,6]]  
let arr = multiArray[0]           //arr contains the array [1,2]  
let value = multiArray[0][1]      //value contains 2
```

In the preceding code, we begin by defining a two-dimensional array. When we retrieve the value at index 0 of the first dimension (`multiArray[0]`), we retrieve the array `[1,2]`. When we retrieve the value at index 0 of the first dimension and index 1 of the second dimension (`multiArray[0][1]`), we retrieve the integer 2.

We can retrieve the first and last elements of an array using the `first` and `last` properties. The `first` and `last` properties return an optional value, since the values may be nil if the array is empty. The following example shows how to use these properties to retrieve the first and last elements of both a one-dimensional and a multidimensional array:

```
let arrayOne = [1,2,3,4,5,6]  
let first = arrayOne.first    //first contains  
    let last = arrayOne.last   //last contains 6  
  
let multiArray = [[1,2],[3,4],[5,6]]  
let arrFirst1 = multiArray[0].first      //arrFirst1 contains 1  
let arrFirst2 = multiArray.first        //arrFirst2 contains [1,2]  
let arrLast1 = multiArray[0].last       //arrLast1 contains 2  
let arrLast2 = multiArray.last         //arrLast2 contains [5,6]
```

Counting the elements of an array

At times, it is essential to know the number of elements in an array. The array type in Swift contains a read-only `count` property. The following example shows how to use this property to retrieve the number of elements in both single-dimensional and multidimensional arrays:

```
let arrayOne = [1,2,3]  
let multiArrayOne = [[3,4],[5,6],[7,8]]
```

```
print(arrayOne.count)           //Displays 3
print(multiArrayOne.count)      //Displays 3 for the three arrays
print(multiArrayOne[0].count)    //Displays 2 for the two elements
```

The value that is returned by the `count` property is the number of elements in the array, and not the largest valid index of the array. For nonempty arrays, the largest valid index is the number of elements in the array minus 1. This is because the first element of the array has an index number of 0. As an example, if an array has two elements, the valid indexes are 0 and 1, while the `count` property would return 2. This is illustrated with the following code:

```
let arrayOne = [0,1]
print(arrayOne[0])           //Displays 0
print(arrayOne[1])           //Displays 1
print(arrayOne.count)         //Displays 2
```

If we attempt to retrieve an element from an array that is outside the range of the array, the application will throw an **array index out of range** error. Therefore, if we are unsure of the size of an array, it is a good practice to verify that the index is not outside the range of the array. The following examples illustrate this concept:

```
//This example will throw an array index out of range error
let arrayOne = [1,2,3,4]
print(arrayOne[6])

//This example will not throw an array index out of range error
let arrayTwo = [1,2,3,4]
if (arrayTwo.count > 6) {
    print(arrayTwo[6])
}
```

In the preceding code, the first block would throw an **array index out of range** error because we are attempting to access the value from the `arrayOne` array at index 6; however, there are only 4 elements in the array. The second example would not throw the error because we are checking whether the `arrayTwo` array contains more than six elements before trying to access the element at the sixth index.

Is the array empty?

To check whether an array is empty (does not contain any elements), we use the `isEmpty` property. This property will return `true` if the array is empty and `false` if it is not. The following example shows how to check whether an array is empty:

```
var arrayOne = [1,2]
```

```
var arrayTwo = [Int]()
arrayOne.isEmpty      //Returns false because the array is not empty
arrayTwo.isEmpty      //Returns true because the array is empty
```

Shuffling an array

An array can be very easily shuffled using the `shuffle()` and `shuffled()` methods. This can be very useful if we are creating a game, such as a card game, where the array contains the 52 cards in the deck. To shuffle the array in place, the `shuffle()` method can be used; to put the shuffled results in a new array, leaving the original array untouched, the `shuffled()` method would be used. The following examples show this:

```
var arrayOne = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]
arrayOne.shuffle()
let shuffledArray = arrayOne.shuffled()
```

Appending to an array

A static array is somewhat useful but having the ability to add elements dynamically is what makes arrays really useful. To add an item to the end of an array, we can use the `append` method. The following example shows how to append an item to the end of an array:

```
var arrayOne = [1, 2]
arrayOne.append(3)    //arrayOne will now contain 1, 2 and 3
```

Swift also allows us to use the addition assignment operator (`+=`) to append an array to another array. The following example shows how to use the addition assignment operator to append an array to the end of another array:

```
var arrayOne = [1, 2]
arrayOne += [3, 4]    //arrayOne will now contain 1, 2, 3 and 4
```

The way you append an element to the end of an array is really up to you. Personally, I prefer the assignment operator because, to me, it is a bit easier to read, but we will be using both in this book.

Inserting a value into an array

We can insert a value into an array by using the `insert` method. The `insert` method will move all the items up one spot, starting at the specified index, to make room for the new element, and then insert the value into the specified index. The following example shows how to use this method to insert a new value into an array:

```
var arrayOne = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
arrayOne.insert(10, at: 3) //arrayOne now contains 1, 2, 3, 10, 4 and 5
```



You cannot insert a value that is outside the current range of the array. Attempting to do so will throw an **Index out of range** exception. For example, in the preceding code, if we attempt to insert a new integer at index 10, we will receive an **Index out of range exception** error because `arrayOne` contains only five elements. The exception to this is that we can insert an item directly after the last element, however, it is recommended that we use the `append` function to append an item to avoid errors.

Replacing elements in an array

We use the subscript syntax to replace elements in an array. Using the subscript, we pick the element of the array we wish to update and then use the assignment operator to assign a new value. The following example shows how we will replace a value in an array:

```
var arrayOne = [1, 2, 3]
arrayOne[1] = 10      //arrayOne now contains 1, 10, 3
```



You cannot update a value that is outside the current range of the array. Attempting to do so will throw the same **Index out of range** exception that was thrown when we tried to insert a value outside the range of the array.

Removing elements from an array

There are three methods that we can use to remove one or all of the elements in an array. These methods are `removeLast()`, `remove(at:)`, and `removeAll()`. The following example shows how to use the three methods to remove elements from the array:

```
var arrayOne = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
arrayOne.removeLast()        //arrayOne now contains 1, 2, 3 and 4
arrayOne.remove(at:2)        //arrayOne now contains 1, 2 and 4
arrayOne.removeAll()        //arrayOne is now empty
```

The `removeLast()` and `remove(at:)` methods will also return the value of the element being removed. Therefore, if we want to know the value of the item that was removed, we can rewrite the `remove(at:)` and `removeLast()` lines to capture the value, as shown in the following example:

```
var arrayOne = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
var removed1 = arrayOne.removeLast() //removed1 contains the value 5
var removed = arrayOne.remove(at: 2) //removed contains the value 3
```

Merging two arrays

To create a new array by adding two arrays together, we use the addition (+) operator. The following example shows how to use the addition (+) operator to create a new array that contains all the elements of two other arrays:

```
let arrayOne = [1, 2]
let arrayTwo = [3, 4]
var combined = arrayOne + arrayTwo //combine contains 1, 2, 3 and 4
```

In the preceding code, `arrayOne` and `arrayTwo` are left unchanged, while the `combined` array contains the elements from `arrayOne`, followed by the elements from `arrayTwo`.

Retrieving a subarray from an array

We can retrieve a subarray from an existing array by using the subscript syntax with a range operator. The following example shows how to retrieve a range of elements from an existing array:

```
let arrayOne = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
var subArray = arrayOne[2...4] //subArray contains 3, 4 and 5
```

The operator (three periods) is known as a two-sided range operator. The range operator, in the preceding code, says that I want all the elements from 2 to 4 inclusively (elements 2 and 4 as well as what is between them). There is another two-sided range operator, ..<, known as the half-open range operator. The half-open range operator functions the same as the previous range operator, however, it excludes the last element. The following example shows how to use the ..< operator:

```
let arrayOne = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
var subArray = arrayOne[2..<4] //subArray contains 3 and 4
```

In the preceding example, the subarray will contain two elements: 3 and 4. A two-sided range operator has numbers on either side of the operator. In Swift, we are not limited to two-sided range operators; we can also use one-sided range operators. The following examples show how we can use one-sided range operators:

```
let arrayOne = [1,2,3,4,5]
var a = arrayOne[..<3]      //subArray contains 1, 2 and 3
var b = arrayOne[...3]      //subArray contains 1, 2, 3 and 4
var c = arrayOne[2...]      //subArray contains 3, 4 and 5
```

The one-sided range operators were added in version 4 of the Swift language.

Making bulk changes to an array

We can use the subscript syntax with a range operator to change the values of multiple elements. The following example shows how to do this:

```
arrayOne[1...2] = [12,13] //arrayOne contains 1,12,13,4 and 5
```

In the preceding code, the elements at indices 1 and 2 will be changed to the numbers 12 and 13; therefore, `arrayOne` will contain 1, 12, 13, 4, and 5.

The number of elements that you are changing in the range operator does not need to match the number of values that you are passing in. Swift makes bulk changes by first removing the elements defined by the range operator and then inserting the new values. The following example demonstrates this concept:

```
var arrayOne = [1,2,3,4,5]
arrayOne[1...3] = [12,13] //arrayOne now contains 1, 12, 13 and 5
```

In the preceding code, the `arrayOne` array starts with five elements. We then replace the range of elements 1 to 3 inclusively. This causes elements 1 through 3 (which is three elements) to be removed from the array first. After those three elements are removed, then the two new elements (12 and 13) are added to the array, starting at index 1. After this is complete, `arrayOne` will contain four elements: 1, 12, 13, and 5. Using the same logic, we can also add more elements than we remove. The following example illustrates this:

```
var arrayOne = [1,2,3,4,5]
arrayOne[1...3] = [12,13,14,15]
//arrayOne now contains 1, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 5 (six elements)
```

In the preceding code, `arrayOne` starts with five elements. We then say that we want to replace the range of elements 1 through 3 inclusively. As in the previous example, this causes elements 1 to 3 (three elements) to be removed from the array. We then add four elements (12, 13, 14, and 15) to the array, starting at index 1. After this is complete, `arrayOne` will contain six elements: 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 5.

Algorithms for arrays

Swift arrays have several methods that take a closure as the argument. These methods transform the array in a way defined by the code in the closure. Closures are self-contained blocks of code that can be passed around, and are similar to blocks in Objective-C and lambdas in other languages. We will discuss closures in depth in [Chapter 13, Working with Closures](#). For now, the goal is to become familiar with how the algorithms work in Swift.

Sort

The `sort` algorithm sorts an array in place. This means that, when the `sort()` method is used, the original array is replaced with the sorted one. The closure takes two arguments (represented by `$0` and `$1`), and it should return a Boolean value that indicates whether the first element should be placed before the second element. The following code shows how to use the `sort` algorithm:

```
var arrayOne = [9, 3, 6, 2, 8, 5]
arrayOne.sort() { $0 < $1 }
//arrayOne contains 2, 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9
```

The preceding code will sort the array in ascending order. We know this because the rule will return true if the first number (`$0`) is less than the second number (`$1`). Therefore, when the `sort` algorithm begins, it compares the first two numbers (9 and 3) and returns `true` if the first number (9) is less than the second number (3). In our case, the rule returns `false`, so the numbers are reversed. The algorithm continues sorting in this manner until all of the numbers are sorted in the correct order.

The preceding example sorted the array in a numerically-increasing order; if we wanted to reverse the order, we would reverse the arguments in the closure. The following code shows how to reverse the sort order:

```
var arrayOne = [9, 3, 6, 2, 8, 5]
arrayOne.sort() { $1 < $0 }
//arrayOne contains 9, 8, 6, 5, 3 and 2
```

When we run this code, `arrayOne` will contain the 9, 8, 6, 5, 3, and 2 elements.

The preceding code can be simplified by using the `sort(by:)` method and passing in a greater than or less than operator, as shown in the following code:

```
var arrayTwo = [9, 3, 6, 2, 8, 5]
arrayTwo.sort(by: <)
```

In the preceding code, by using the less than operator, the array is sorted in ascending order. If we'd used the greater than operator, the array would have been sorted in descending order.

Sorted

While the `sort` algorithm sorts the array in place (replaces the original array), the `sorted` algorithm does not change the original array; it instead creates a new array with the sorted elements from the original array. The following example shows how to use the `sorted` algorithm:

```
var arrayOne = [9, 3, 6, 2, 8, 5]
let sorted = arrayOne.sorted(){ $0 < $1 }
//sorted contains 2,3,5,6,8 and 9
//arrayOne contains 9,3,6,2,8 and 5
```

After we run this code, `arrayOne` will contain the original unsorted array (9, 3, 6, 2, 8, and 5) and the `sorted` array will contain the new sorted array (2, 3, 5, 6, 8, and 9).

Filter

The `filter` algorithm will return a new array by filtering the original array. This is one of the most powerful array algorithms and may end up being the one you use the most. If you need to retrieve a subset of an array based on a set of rules, I recommend using this algorithm rather than trying to write your own method to filter the array.

The closure takes one argument, and it should return a Boolean `true` if the element should be included in the new array, as shown in the following code:

```
var arrayOne = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9]
let filtered = arrayOne.filter{$0 > 3 && $0 < 7}
//filtered contains 4,5 and 6
```

In the preceding code, the rule that we are passing to the algorithm returns true if the number is greater than 3 and less than 7; therefore, any number that is greater than 3 and less than 7 is included in the new filtered array.

This next example shows how we can retrieve a subset of cities that contain the letter o in their name:

```
var city = ["Boston", "London", "Chicago", "Atlanta"]
let filtered = city.filter{$0.range(of:"o") != nil}
//filtered contains "Boston", "London" and "Chicago"
```

In the preceding code, we use the `range(of:)` method to return `true` if the string contains the letter o. If the method returns `true`, the string is included in the `filtered` array.

Map

While the filter algorithm is used to select only certain elements of an array, map is used to apply logic to all elements in the array. The following example shows how to use the map algorithm to divide each number by 10:

```
var arrayOne = [10, 20, 30, 40]
let applied = arrayOne.map{ $0 / 10}
//applied contains 1,2,3 and 4
```

In the preceding code, the new array contains the numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4, which is the result of dividing each element of the original array by 10.

The new array created by the map algorithm is not required to contain the same element types as the original array; however, all the elements in the new array must be of the same type. In the following example, the original array contains integer values, but the new array created by the map algorithm contains string elements:

```
var arrayOne = [1, 2, 3, 4]
let applied = arrayOne.map{ "num:\($0)"}
//applied contains "num:1", "num:2", "num:3" and "num:4"
```

In the preceding code, we created an array of strings that appends the numbers from the original array to the `num:` string.

Count

We can use the count algorithm to count the number of items in the array that matches a rule. For example, if we had an array that contains the grades from a test, we could use the count algorithm to count how many of the grades were greater than or equal to 90, like this:

```
let arrayOne = [95, 90, 75, 80, 60]
let count = arrayOne.count{ $0 >= 90 }
```

As we did with the filter algorithm, we can use methods from the array type, such as the `range(of:)` method from the string type. For example, rather than return a subset of cities that contain the letter o in their name, as we did in the filter algorithm, we can count the cities like this:

```
var city = ["Boston", "London", "Chicago", "Atlanta"]
let count1 = city.count{$0.range(of:"o") != nil}
```

In the preceding count, the `count1` constant will contain 3.

forEach

We can use the `forEach` algorithm to iterate over a sequence. The following example shows how we would do this:

```
var arrayOne = [10, 20, 30, 40]
arrayOne.forEach{ print($0) }
```

This example will print the following results to the console:

```
10
20
30
40
```

While using the `forEach` algorithm is very easy, it does have some limitations. The recommended way to iterate over an array is to use the `for-in` loop, which we will see in the next section.

Iterating over an array

We can iterate over all elements of an array, in order, with a `for-in` loop. The `for-in` loop will execute one or more statements for each element of the array. We will discuss the `for-in` loop in greater detail in Chapter 5, *Control Flow*. The following example shows how we would iterate over the elements of an array:

```
var arrayOne = ["one", "two", "three"]
for item in arrayOne {
    print(item)
}
```

In the preceding example, the `for-in` loop iterates over the array and executes the `print(item)` line for each element in the array. If we run this code, it will display the following results in the console:

```
one
two
three
```

There are times when we would like to iterate over an array, as we did in the preceding example, but we would also like to know the index, as well as the value of the element. To do this, we can use the `enumerated` method of an array, which returns a tuple for each item in the array that contains both the index and value of the element. The following example shows how to use this function:

```
var arrayOne = ["one", "two", "three"]
for (index,value) in arrayOne.enumerated() {
    print("\(index) \(value)")
}
```

The preceding code will display the following results in the console:

```
0 one
1 two
2 three
```

Now that we have introduced arrays in Swift, let's move on to dictionaries.

Dictionaries

While dictionaries are not as commonly used as arrays, they have additional functionality that makes them incredibly powerful. A dictionary is a container that stores multiple key-value pairs, where all the keys are of the same type and all the values are of the same type. The key is used as a unique identifier for the value. A dictionary does not guarantee the order in which the key-value pairs are stored since we look up the values by the key rather than by the index of the value.

Dictionaries are good for storing items that map to unique identifiers, where the unique identifier should be used to retrieve the item. Countries with their abbreviations are a good example of items that can be stored in a dictionary. In the following chart, we show countries with their abbreviations as key-value pairs:

Key	Value
US	United States
IN	India
UK	United Kingdom

Creating and initializing dictionaries

We can initialize a dictionary using a dictionary literal, similarly to how we initialized an array with the array literal. The following example shows how to create a dictionary using the key-value pairs in the preceding chart:

```
let countries = ["US":"UnitedStates", "IN":"India", "UK":"UnitedKingdom"]
```

The preceding code creates an immutable dictionary that contains each of the key-value pairs in the chart we saw before. Just like the array, to create a mutable dictionary we will need to use the `var` keyword in place of `let`. The following example shows how to create a mutable dictionary that contains the countries:

```
var countries = ["US":"UnitedStates", "IN":"India", "UK":"UnitedKingdom"]
```

In the preceding two examples, we created a dictionary where the key and value were both strings. The compiler inferred that the key and value were strings because that was the type of the keys and values used to initiate the dictionary. If we wanted to create an empty dictionary, we would need to tell the compiler what the key and value types are. The following examples create various dictionaries with different key-value types:

```
var dic1 = [String:String]()  
var dic2 = [Int:String]()  
var dic3 = [String:MyObject]()  
var dic4: [String:String] = [:]  
var dic5: [Int:String] = [:]
```



If we want to use a custom object as the key in a dictionary, we will need to make the custom object conform to the **Hashable** protocol from Swift's standard library. We will discuss protocols extensively later in this book, but for now just understand that it is possible to use custom objects as a key in a dictionary.

Accessing dictionary values

We use the subscript syntax to retrieve the value for a particular key. If the dictionary does not contain the key we are looking for, the dictionary will return nil; therefore, the variable returned from this lookup is an optional variable. The following example shows how to retrieve a value from a dictionary using its key in the subscript syntax:

```
let countries = ["US":"United States", "IN":"India", "UK":"UnitedKingdom"]  
var name = countries["US"]
```

In the preceding code, the `name` variable will contain the United States string.

Counting the key or values in a dictionary

We use the `count` property of the dictionary to get the number of key-value pairs in the dictionary. The following example shows how to use this property:

```
let countries = ["US":"United States", "IN":"India", "UK":"United Kingdom"]  
var cnt = countries.count //cnt contains 3
```

In the preceding code, the `cnt` variable will contain the number 3 since there are 3 key-value pairs in the dictionary.

Is the dictionary empty?

To test whether the dictionary contains any key-value pairs, we can use the `isEmpty` property. This property will return `false` if the dictionary contains one or more key-value pairs and `true` if it is empty. The following example shows us how to use this property to determine whether our dictionary contains any key-value pairs:

```
let countries = ["US":"United States", "IN":"India", "UK":"United Kingdom"]
var empty = countries.isEmpty
```

In the preceding code, the `isEmpty` property returned `false` as there are three key-value pairs in the dictionary.

Updating the value of a key

To update the value of a key in a dictionary, we can use either the subscript syntax or the `updateValue(_:, forKey:)` method. The `updateValue(_:, forKey:)` method has an additional feature that the subscript syntax doesn't: it returns the original value associated with the key prior to changing the value. The following example shows how to use both the subscript syntax and the `updateValue(_:, forKey:)` method to update the value of a key:

```
var countries = ["US":"United States", "IN":"India", "UK":"United Kingdom"]

countries["UK"] = "Great Britain"
//The value of UK is now set to "Great Britain"

var orig = countries.updateValue("Britain", forKey: "UK")
//The value of UK is now set to "Britain"
//The orig variable equals "Great Britain"
```

In the preceding code, we use the subscript syntax to change the value associated with the UK key from United Kingdom to Great Britain. The original value of United Kingdom was not saved prior to replacing it. We then used the `updateValue(_:, forKey:)` method to change the value associated with the UK key from Great Britain to Britain. With the `updateValue(_:, forKey:)` method, the original value of Great Britain is assigned to the `orig` variable, prior to changing the value in the dictionary.

Adding a key-value pair

To add a new key-value pair to a dictionary, we can use the subscript syntax or the same `updateValue(_:, forKey:)` method that we used to update the value of a key. If we use the `updateValue(_:, forKey:)` method and the key is not currently present in the dictionary, this method will add a new key-value pair and return nil. The following example shows how to use both the subscript syntax and the `updateValue(_:, forKey:)` method to add a new key-value pair to a dictionary:

```
var countries = ["US":"United States", "IN":"India", "UK":"United Kingdom"]
countries["FR"] = "France" //The value of "FR" is set to "France"

var orig = countries.updateValue("Germany", forKey: "DE")
//The value of "DE" is set to "Germany" and orig is nil
```

In the preceding code, the `countries` dictionary starts with three key-value pairs and we then add a fourth key-value pair (FR/France) to the dictionary using the subscript syntax. We use the `updateValue(_:, forKey:)` method to add a fifth key-value pair (DE/Germany) to the dictionary. The `orig` variable is set to `nil` because the `countries` dictionary did not contain a value associated with the DE key.

Removing a key-value pair

There may be times when we need to remove values from a dictionary. There are three ways to achieve this: the subscript syntax, the `removeValue(forKey:)` method, or the `removeAll()` method. The `removeValue(forKey:)` method returns the value of the key prior to removing it. The `removeAll()` method removes all the elements from the dictionary. The following example shows how to use all three methods to remove key-value pairs from a dictionary:

```
var countries = ["US":"United States", "IN":"India", "UK":"United Kingdom"]
countries["IN"] = nil //The "IN" key/value pair is removed

var orig = countries.removeValue(forKey: "UK")
//The "UK" key value pair is removed and orig contains "United Kingdom"

countries.removeAll()
//Removes all key/value pairs from the countries dictionary
```

In the preceding code, the `countries` dictionary starts off with three key-value pairs. We then set the value associated with the `IN` key to `nil`, which removes the key-value pair from the dictionary. We use the `removeValue(forKey:)` method to remove the key associated with the `UK` key. Prior to removing the value associated with the `UK` key, the `removeValue(forKey:)` method saves the value in the `orig` variable. Finally, we use the `removeAll()` method to remove all the remaining key-value pairs in the `countries` dictionary.

Now let's look at the set type.

Set

The set type is a generic collection that is similar to the array type. While the array type is an ordered collection that may contain duplicate items, the set type is an unordered collection where each item must be unique.

Like the key in a dictionary, the type stored in an array must conform to the **Hashable** protocol. This means that the type must provide a way to compute a hash value for itself. All of Swift's basic types, such as `String`, `Double`, `Int`, and `Bool`, conform to this protocol and can be used in a set by default.

Let's look at how we would use the set type.

Initializing a set

There are a couple of ways to initialize a set. Just like the array and dictionary types, Swift needs to know what type of data is going to be stored in it. This means that we must either tell Swift the type of data to store in the set or initialize it with some data so that it can infer the data type.

Just like the array and dictionary types, we use the `var` and `let` keywords to declare whether the set is mutable:

```
//Initializes an empty set of the String type
var mySet = Set<String>()

//Initializes a mutable set of the String type with initial values
var mySet = Set(["one", "two", "three"])

//Creates a immutable set of the String type.
let mySet = Set(["one", "two", "three"])
```

Inserting items into a set

We use the `insert` method to insert an item into a set. If we attempt to insert an item that is already in the set, the item will be ignored. Here are some examples of inserting items into a set:

```
var mySet = Set<String>() mySet.insert("One")
mySet.insert("Two")
mySet.insert("Three")
```

The `insert()` method returns a tuple that we can use to verify that the value was successfully added to the set. The following example shows how to check the returned value to see whether it was added successfully:

```
var mySet = Set<String>() mySet.insert("One")
mySet.insert("Two")
var results = mySet.insert("One")
if results.inserted {
    print("Success")
} else {
    print("Failed")
}
```

In this example, `Failed` would be printed to the console since we are attempting to add the `One` value to the set when it is already in the set.

Determining the number of items in a set

We can use the `count` property to determine the number of items in a set. Here is an example of how to use this method:

```
var mySet = Set<String>() mySet.insert("One")
mySet.insert("Two")
mySet.insert("Three")
print("\(mySet.count) items")
```

When executed, this code will print the message `3 items` to the console because the set contains three items.

Checking whether a set contains an item

We can verify whether a set contains an item by using the `contains()` method, as shown here:

```
var mySet = Set<String>() mySet.insert("One")
mySet.insert("Two")
mySet.insert("Three")
var contain = mySet.contains("Two")
```

In the preceding example, the `contain` variable is set to `true` because the set contains the `Two` string.

Iterating over a set

We can use the `for-in` statement to iterate over the items in a set as we did with arrays. The following example shows how we would iterate through the items in a set:

```
for item in mySet {
    print(item)
}
```

The preceding example will print out each item in the set to the console.

Removing items in a set

We can remove a single item or all the items in a set. To remove a single item, we would use the `remove()` method and, to remove all the items, we would use the `removeAll()` method. The following example shows how to remove items from a set:

```
//The remove method will return and remove an item from a set
var item = mySet.remove("Two")

//The removeAll method will remove all items from a set
mySet.removeAll()
```

Set operations

Apple has provided four methods that we can use to construct a set from two other sets. These operations can be performed in place, on one of the sets, or used to create a new set. These operations are as follows:

- **Union and formUnion:** These create a set with all the unique values from both sets.
- **Subtracting and subtract:** These create a set with values from the first set that are not in the second set.
- **Intersection and formIntersection:** These create a set with values that are common to both sets.
- **SymmetricDifference and formSymmetricDifference:** These create a new set with values that are in either set, but not in both sets.

Let's look at some examples and see the results that can be obtained from each of these operations. For all the examples of set operations, we will be using the following two sets:

```
var mySet1 = Set(["One", "Two", "Three", "abc"])
var mySet2 = Set(["abc", "def", "ghi", "One"])
```

The first example will use the `union` method. This method will take the unique values from both sets to make another set:

```
var newSetUnion = mySet1.union(mySet2)
```

The `newSetUnion` variable will contain the following values: One, Two, Three, abc, def, and ghi. We can use the `formUnion` method to perform the `union` function in place without creating a new set:

```
mySet1.formUnion(mySet2)
```

In this example, the `mySet1` set will contain all the unique values from the `mySet1` and `mySet2` sets.

Now let's look at the `subtract` and `subtracting` methods. These methods will create a set with the values from the first set that are not in the second set:

```
var newSetSubtract = mySet1.subtracting(mySet2)
```

In this example, the `newSetSubtract` variable will contain the `Two` and `Three` values because those are the only two values that are not also in the second set.

We use the `subtract` method to perform the subtraction function in place without creating a new set:

```
mySet1.subtract(mySet2)
```

In this example, the `mySet1` set will contain the `Two` and `Three` values because those are the only two values that are not in the `mySet2` set.

Now let's look at the `intersection` method, which creates a new set from the values that are common between the two sets:

```
var newSetIntersect = mySet1.intersection(mySet2)
```

In this example, the `newSetIntersect` variable will contain the `One` and `abc` values since they are the values that are common between the two sets.

We can use the `formIntersection()` method to perform the intersection function in place without creating a new set:

```
mySet1.formIntersection(mySet2)
```

In this example, the `mySet1` set will contain the `One` and `abc` values since they are the values that are common between the two sets.

Finally, let's look at the `symmetricDifference()` methods. These methods will create a new set with values that are in either set, but not in both:

```
var newSetExclusiveOr = mySet1.symmetricDifference(mySet2)
```

In this example, the `newSetExclusiveOr` variable will contain the `Two`, `Three`, `def`, and `ghi` values.

To perform this method in place, we use the `fromSymmetricDifference()` method:

```
mySet1.formSymmetricDifference(mySet2)
```

These four operations (union, subtraction, intersection, and symmetric difference) add functionality that is not present with arrays. Combined with faster lookup speeds, as compared to an array, the set type can be a very useful alternative when the order of the collection is not important and the instances in the collection must be unique.

Summary

In this chapter, we covered Swift collections. Having a good understanding of the native collection types of Swift is essential to architecting and developing applications in Swift since all but the most basic applications use them.

The three Swift collection types are arrays, sets, and dictionaries. Arrays store data as an ordered collection. Sets store data as an unordered collection of unique values. Dictionaries store data in an unordered collection of key-value pairs.

In the next chapter, we will look how to use Swift's control flow statements.

5

Control Flow

Every month, while I was learning BASIC programming on my Vic-20, I would read several of the early computer magazines, such as *Byte Magazine*. I remember one particular review that I read for a game called *Zork*. While *Zork* was not a game that was available for my Vic-20, the concept of the game fascinated me because I was really into sci-fi and fantasy. I remember thinking how cool it would be to write a game like that, so I decided to figure out how to do it. One of the biggest concepts that I had to grasp at that time was how to control the flow of the application depending on the user's actions.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What conditional statements are and how to use them
- What loops are and how to use them
- What control transfer statements are and how to use them

What have we learned so far?

Up to this point, we have been laying the foundation for writing applications with Swift. While it is possible to write a very basic application with what we have learned so far, it will be difficult to write a useful application using only what we've covered in the first four chapters.

Starting with this chapter, we will begin to move away from the foundations of the Swift language and begin to learn the building blocks of application development with Swift. In this chapter, we will go over control flow statements. To become a master of the Swift programming language, it is important that you fully understand and comprehend the concepts that are discussed in this chapter.

Before we cover control flow and functions, let's take a look at how curly brackets and parentheses are used in Swift.

Curly brackets

In Swift, unlike other C-like languages, curly brackets are required for conditional statements and loops. In other C-like languages, if there is only one statement to execute for a conditional statement or a loop, curly brackets around that line are optional. This has led to numerous errors and bugs, such as Apple's `goto fail` bug. When Apple was designing Swift, they decided to introduce the use of curly brackets, even when there was only one line of code to execute. Let's take a look at some code that illustrates this requirement. This first example is not valid in Swift because it is missing the curly brackets; however, it will be valid in most other languages:

```
if (x > y)  
    x=0
```

In Swift, you are required to have the curly brackets, as illustrated in the following example:

```
if (x > y) {  
    x=0  
}
```

Parentheses

Unlike other C-like languages, the parentheses around conditional expressions in Swift are optional. In the preceding example, we put parentheses around the conditional expression, but they are not required. The following example will be valid in Swift, but not valid in most C-like languages:

```
if x > y {  
    x=0  
}
```

Control flow

Control flow, also known as the flow of control, refers to the order in which statements, instructions, or functions are executed within an application. Swift supports most of the familiar control flow statements that are used in C-like languages. These include loops (including `while`), conditional statements (including `if`, `switch`, and `guard`), and the transfer of control statements (including `break` and `continue`). It is worth noting that Swift does not include the traditional C `for` loop and, rather than the traditional `do-while` loop, Swift has the `repeat-while` loop.

In addition to the standard C control flow statements, Swift has also included statements such as the `for-in` loop and enhanced some of the existing statements, such as the `switch` statement.

Let's begin by looking at conditional statements in Swift.

Conditional statements

A conditional statement will check a condition and execute a block of code only if the condition is `true`. Swift provides both the `if` and `if...else` conditional statements. Let's take a look at how to use these conditional statements to execute blocks of code if a specified condition is `true`.

The `if` statement

The `if` statement will check a conditional statement and, if it is `true`, it will execute the block of code. This statement takes the following format:

```
if condition {  
    block of code  
}
```

Now, let's take a look at how to use the `if` statement:

```
let teamOneScore = 7  
let teamTwoScore = 6  
if teamOneScore > teamTwoScore {  
    print("Team One Won")  
}
```

In the preceding example, we begin by setting the `teamOneScore` and `teamTwoScore` constants. We then use the `if` statement to check whether the value of `teamOneScore` is greater than the value of `teamTwoScore`. If the value is greater, we print `Team One Won` to the console. When this code is run, we will indeed see that `Team One Won` is printed to the console, but if the value of `teamTwoScore` is greater than the value of `teamOneScore`, nothing will be printed. This is not the best way to write an application, as we want the user to know which team has actually won. The `if...else` statement can help us with this problem.

Conditional code execution with the `if...else` statement

The `if...else` statement will check a conditional statement and, if it is `true`, it will execute a block of code. If the conditional statement is not `true`, it will execute a separate block of code; this statement takes the following format:

```
if condition {  
    block of code if true  
} else {  
    block of code if not true  
}
```

Let's now modify the preceding example to use the `if...else` statement to tell the user which team has won:

```
let teamOneScore = 7  
let teamTwoScore = 6  
if teamOneScore > teamTwoScore{  
    print("Team One Won")  
} else {  
    print("Team Two Won")  
}
```

This new version will print out `Team One Won` if the value of `teamOneScore` is greater than the value of `teamTwoScore`; otherwise, it will print out the message, `Team Two Won`.

This fixes one problem with our code, but what do you think the code will do if the value of `teamOneScore` is equal to the value of `teamTwoScore`? In the real world, we would see a tie, but in the preceding code, we would print out `Team Two Won`, which would not be fair to team one. In cases like this, we can use multiple `else if` statements and an `else` statement at the end to act as the default path if no conditional statements are met.

This is illustrated in the following code sample:

```
let teamOneScore = 7
let teamTwoScore = 6
if teamOneScore > teamTwoScore {
    print("Team One Won")
} else if teamTwoScore > teamOneScore {
    print("Team Two Won")
} else {
    print("We have a tie")
}
```

In the preceding code, if the value of `teamOneScore` is greater than the value of `teamTwoScore`, we print `Team One Won` to the console. We then have an `else if` statement, which means that the conditional statement is only checked if the first `if` statement returns `false`. Finally, if both of the `if` statements return `false`, the code in the `else` block is called and `We have a tie` is printed to the console.

This is a good time to point out that it is not good practice to have numerous `else if` statements stacked up, as demonstrated in the previous example. It is better to use the `switch` statement, which we will explore later in this chapter.

The guard statement

In Swift, and most modern languages, our conditional statements tend to focus on testing whether a condition is `true`. As an example, the following code tests to see whether the `x` variable is greater than `10` and, if so, we will perform some kind of function. If the condition is `false`, we handle the following error condition:

```
var x = 9
if x > 10 {
    // Functional code here
} else {
    // Do error condition
}
```

This type of code embeds our functional code within our checks and tucks the error conditions away at the end of our functions, but what if that is not what we really want? Sometimes, it might be nice to take care of our error conditions at the beginning of the function. In our simple example, we can easily check whether `x` is less than or equal to `10` and, if so, it will perform the error condition. Not all conditional statements are that easy to rewrite, especially items such as optional binding.

In Swift, we have the `guard` statement. This statement focuses on performing a function if a condition is `false`; this allows us to trap errors and perform the error conditions early in our functions. We can rewrite our previous example using the `guard` statement, as follows :

```
var x = 9
guard x > 10 else {
    // Do error condition return
}
//Functional code here
```

In this new example, we check to see whether the `x` variable is greater than `10`, and if not, we perform the error condition. If the variable is greater than `10`, the code continues. You will notice that we have a `return` statement embedded within the `guard` condition. The code within the `guard` statement must contain a transfer of control statement; this is what prevents the rest of the code from executing. If we forget the transfer of control statement, Swift will show a compile time error. We will look at transfer of control statements a little later in this chapter.

Let's take a look at some more examples of the `guard` statement. The following example shows how we can use the `guard` statement to verify that an optional contains a valid value:

```
func guardFunction(str: String?) {
    guard let goodStr = str else {
        print("Input was nil")
        return
    }
    print("Input was \(goodStr)")
}
```

In this example, we create a function named `guardFunction()` that accepts an optional that contains a string or `nil` value. We then use the `guard` statement with optional binding to verify that the string optional is not `nil`. If it does contain `nil`, then the code within the `guard` statement is executed and the `return` statement is used to exit the function. The great thing about using the `guard` statement with optional binding is that the new variable is within the scope of the rest of the function, rather than just within the scope of the optional binding statement.

A conditional statement checks the condition once and, if the condition is met, it executes the block of code. However, what if we wanted to continuously execute the block of code until a condition is met? For this, we use the `for-in` loop statement.

The for-in loop

While Swift does not offer the standard C-based `for` loop, it does have the `for-in` loop. The standard C-based `for` loop was removed from the Swift language in Swift 3 because it was rarely used. You can read the full proposal to remove this loop on the Swift evolution site at <https://github.com/apple/swift-evolution/blob/master/proposals/7-remove-c-style-for-loops.md>. The `for-in` statement is used to execute a block of code for each item in a range, collection, or sequence.

Using the for-in loop

The `for-in` loop iterates over a collection of items or a range of numbers, and executes a block of code for each item in the collection or range. The format for the `for-in` statement is as follows:

```
for variable in collection/range {  
    block of code  
}
```

As we can see in the preceding code, the `for-in` loop has two sections:

- **Variable:** This variable will change each time the loop executes and will hold the current item from the collection or range
- **Collection/range:** This is the collection or range to iterate through

Let's take a look at how to use the `for-in` loop to iterate through a range of numbers:

```
for index in 1...5 {  
    print(index)  
}
```

In the preceding example, we iterated over a range of numbers from 1 to 5 and printed each of the numbers to the console. This loop used the closed range operator (...) to give the loop a range to iterate through. Swift also provides the half-open range operator (..<>) and the one-sided range operators that we saw in the previous chapter.

Now, let's take a look at how to iterate over an array with the `for-in` loop:

```
var countries = ["USA", "UK", "IN"]  
for item in countries {  
    print(item)  
}
```

In the preceding example, we iterated through the `countries` array and printed each element of the array to the console. As you can see, iterating through an array with the `for-in` loop is safer, cleaner, and a lot easier than using the standard C-based `for` loop. Using the `for-in` loop prevents us from making common mistakes, such as using the less than or equal to (`<=`) operator rather than the less than (`<`) operator in our conditional statement.

Let's take a look at how to iterate over a dictionary with the `for-in` loop:

```
var dic = ["USA": "United States", "UK": "United Kingdom", "IN": "India"]

for (abbr, name) in dic {
    print("\(abbr) -- \(name)\n")
}
```

In the preceding example, we used the `for-in` loop to iterate through each key-value pair of the dictionary. In this example, each item in the dictionary is returned as a `(key,value)` tuple. We can decompose `(key,value)` tuple members as named constants within the body of the loop. One thing to note is that since a dictionary does not guarantee the order that items are stored in, the order that they are iterated through may not be the same as the order in which they were inserted.

Now, let's take a look at another type of loop, the `while` loop.

The `while` loop

The `while` loop executes a block of code until a condition is met. Swift provides two forms of the `while` loop; these are the `while` and `repeat-while` loops. In Swift 2.0, Apple replaced the `do-while` loop with the `repeat-while` loop. The `repeat-while` loop functions in the same way as the `do-while` loop did. Swift uses the `do` statement for error handling.

We use `while` loops when the number of iterations to perform is not known and is usually dependent on some business logic. A `while` loop is used when you want to run a loop zero or more times, while a `repeat-while` loop is used when you want to run the loop one or more times.

Using the while loop

The `while` loop starts by evaluating a conditional statement and then repeatedly executes a block of code while the conditional statement is `true`. The format for the `while` statement is as follows:

```
while condition {  
    block of code  
}
```

Let's take a look at how to use a `while` loop. In the following example, the `while` loop will continue to execute the block of code while the randomly-generated number is less than 7. In this example, we are using the `arc4random_uniform()` function to generate a random number between 0 and 9:

```
var ran = 0  
while ran < 7 {  
    ran = Int.random(in: 1..  
    <20)  
}
```

In the preceding example, we began by initializing the `ran` variable to 0. The `while` loop then checks this variable and, if the value is less than 7, a new random number between 0 and 19 is generated. The `while` loop will continue to loop while the randomly-generated number is less than 7. Once the randomly-generated number is equal to or greater than 7, the loop will exit.

In the preceding example, the `while` loop checked the conditional statement prior to generating a new random number. But, what if we don't want to check the conditional statement prior to generating a random number? We could generate a random number when we first initialize the variable, but that means we need to duplicate the code that generates the random numbers, and duplicating code is never an ideal solution. It is preferable to use the `repeat-while` loop instead.

Using the repeat-while loop

The difference between the `while` and `repeat-while` loops is that the `while` loops check the conditional statement prior to executing the block of code for the first time; therefore, all the variables in the conditional statements need to be initialized prior to executing the `while` loop.

The `repeat-while` loop will run through the loop block prior to checking the conditional statement for the first time. This means that we can initialize the variables in the conditional block of code. The use of the `repeat-while` loop is preferred when the conditional statement is dependent on the code in the loop block. The `repeat-while` loop takes the following format:

```
repeat {  
    block of code  
} while condition
```

Let's look at this specific example by creating a `repeat-while` loop where we initialize the variable that we are checking within the loop block:

```
var ran: Int  
repeat {  
    ran = Int.random(in: 1..>20)  
} while ran < 4
```

In the preceding example, we defined the `ran` variable as an integer; however, we did not initialize it until we entered the loop block and generated a random number. If this is attempted with the `while` loop (leaving the `ran` variable uninitialized), we will receive a `using` variable before being initialized as an exception.

Earlier, we mentioned that the `switch` statement is preferred over using multiple `else if` blocks. Let's see how we can use the `switch` statement.

The switch statement

The `switch` statement takes a value, compares it to several possible matches, and executes the appropriate block of code based on the first successful match. The `switch` statement is an alternative to using multiple `else if` statements when there could be several possible matches. The `switch` statement takes the following format:

```
switch value {  
    case match1:  
        block of code  
    case match2:  
        block of code  
        //as many cases as needed  
    default:  
        block of code  
}
```

Unlike most other languages, in Swift, the `switch` statement, does not fall through to the next case statement; therefore, we do not need to use a `break` statement to prevent this fall through. This is another safety feature that has been built into Swift, as one of the most common programming mistakes regarding the `switch` statement made by beginner programmers is to forget the `break` statement at the end of the `case` statement. Let's take a look at how to use the `switch` statement:

```
var speed = 300000000
switch speed {
    case 300000000:
        print("Speed of light")
    case 340:
        print("Speed of sound")
    default:
        print("Unknown speed")
}
```

In the preceding example, the `switch` statement took the value of the `speed` variable and compared it to the two `case` statements. If the value of `speed` matches either `case`, it will print out the speed. If it does not find a match, it will print out the `Unknown speed` message.

Every `switch` statement must have a match for all the possible values. This means that, unless we are matching against an enumeration that has a defined number of values, each `switch` statement must have a `default` case. Let's take a look at a case where we do not have a `default` case:

```
var num = 5
switch num {
    case 1 :
        print("number is one")
    case 2 :
        print("Number is two")
    case 3 :
        print("Number is three")
}
```

If we put the preceding code into a Playground and attempt to compile the code, we will receive a `switch must be exhaustive, consider adding a default clause` error. This is a compile time error, and therefore, we will not be notified until we attempt to compile the code.

It is possible to include multiple items in a single case. To do this, we need to separate the items with a comma. Let's take a look at how we use the `switch` statement to tell us whether a character is a vowel or a consonant:

```
var char : Character = "e"
switch char {
    case "a", "e", "i", "o", "u":
        print("letter is a vowel")
    case "b", "c", "d", "f", "g", "h", "j", "k", "l", "m", "n", "p",
        "q", "r", "s", "t", "v", "w", "x", "y", "z":
        print("letter is a consonant")
    default:
        print("unknown letter")
}
```

We can see in the preceding example that each case has multiple items. Commas separate these items and the `switch` statement attempts to match the `char` variable to each item listed in the `case` statements.

It is also possible to check the value of a `switch` statement to see whether it is included in a range. To do this, we use one of the range operators in the `case` statement, as shown in the following example:

```
var grade = 93
switch grade {
    case 90...100:
        print("Grade is an A")
    case 80...89:
        print("Grade is a B")
    case 70...79:
        print("Grade is an C")
    case 60...69:
        print("Grade is a D")
    case 0...59:
        print("Grade is a F")
    default:
        print("Unknown Grade")
}
```

In the preceding example, the `switch` statement took the `grade` variable, compared it with the ranges in each `case` statement, and printed out the appropriate grade.

In Swift, any `case` statement can contain an optional `where` clause, which provides an additional condition that needs validating. Let's say that, in our preceding example, we have students who are receiving special assistance in class and we wanted to define a grade of D for them as a range from 55 to 69. The following example shows how we can do this:

```
var studentId = 4
var grade = 57
switch grade {
    case 90...100:
        print("Grade is an A")
    case 80...89:
        print("Grade is a B")
    case 70...79:
        print("Grade is an C")
    case 55...69 where studentId == 4:
        print("Grade is a D for student 4")
    case 60...69:
        print("Grade is a D")
    case 0...59:
        print("Grade is a F")
    default:
        print("Unknown Grade")
}
```

One thing to bear in mind with the `where` expression is that Swift will attempt to match the value starting with the first `case` statement and working its way down, checking each `case` statement in order. This means that, if we put the `case` statement with the `where` expression after the grade F case statement, then the `case` statement with the `where` expression will never be reached. This is illustrated in the following example:

```
var studentId = 4
var grade = 57
switch grade {
    case 90...100:
        print("Grade is an A")
    case 80...89:
        print("Grade is a B")
    case 70...79:
        print("Grade is an C")
    case 60...69:
        print("Grade is a D")
    case 0...59:
        print("Grade is a F")
        //The following case statement would never be reached because
        //the grades would always match one of the previous two
    case 55...69 where studentId == 4:
        print("Grade is a D for student 4")
```

```
    default:  
        print("Unknown Grade")  
}
```



If you are using the `where` clause, a good rule of thumb is to always put the `case` statements with the `where` clause before any similar `case` statements without the `where` clause.

Switch statements are also extremely useful for evaluating enumerations. Since an enumeration has a finite number of values, if we provide a `case` statement for all the values in the enumeration, we do not need to provide a `default` case. The following example demonstrates how we can use a `switch` statement to evaluate an enumeration:

```
enum Product {  
    case Book(String, Double, Int)  
    case Puzzle(String, Double)  
}  
var order = Product.Book("Mastering Swift 4", 49.99, 2017)  
switch order {  
    case .Book(let name, let price, let year):  
        print("You ordered the book \u2028(name): \u2028(year) for \u2028(price)")  
    case .Puzzle(let name, let price):  
        print("You ordered the Puzzle \u2028(name) for \u2028(price)")  
}
```

In this example, we began by defining an enumeration named `Product` with two values, each with the associated values. We then created an `order` variable of the `product` type and used the `switch` statement to evaluate it.

When using a `switch` statement with enumerations, we must have a `case` statement for all possible values or a `default` statement. Let's take a look at some additional code that illustrates this:

```
enum Planets {  
    case Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter  
    case Saturn, Uranus, Neptune  
}  
  
var planetWeLiveOn = Planets.Earth  
  
// Using the switch statement  
switch planetWeLiveOn {  
    case .Mercury:  
        print("We live on Mercury, it is very hot!")  
    case .Venus:
```

```
    print("We live on Venus, it is very hot!")
case .Earth:
    print("We live on Earth, just right")
case .Mars:
    print("We live on Mars, a little cold")
case .Jupiter, .Saturn, .Uranus, .Neptune:
    print("Where do we live?")
}
```

In this sample code, we have a `case` statement that will handle each planet in the `Planets` enumeration. We can also add a `default` statement to handle any additional planets if they are added in later. However, it is recommended that if a `switch` statement uses a `default` case with an enumeration, then we use the `@unknown` attribute, as follows:

```
switch planetWeLiveOn {
    case .Mercury:
        print("We live on Mercury, it is very hot!")
    case .Venus:
        print("We live on Venus, it is very hot!")
    case .Earth:
        print("We live on Earth, just right")
    case .Mars:
        print("We live on Mars, a little cold")
    case .Jupiter, .Saturn, .Uranus, .Neptune:
        print("Where do we live?")
    @unknown default:
        print("Unknown planet")
}
```

This will always throw a warning to remind us that if we add a new planet to the `Planet` enumeration, then we need to handle that new planet in this part of the code.

Switch on tuples

We can also use the `switch` statement with tuples; let's take a look at how to do this:

```
let myDog = ("Maple", 4)

switch myDog {
case ("Lily", let age):
    print("Lily is my dog and is \$(age)")
case ("Maple", let age):
    print("Maple is my dog and is \$(age)")
case ("Dash", let age):
    print("Dash is my dog and is \$(age)")
default:
```

```
        print("unknown dog")
    }
```

In this code, we created a tuple named `myDog` that contained the name of my dog and her age. We then used the `switch` statement to match the name (the first element of the tuple) and a `let` statement to retrieve the age. In this example, the message, `Maple is my dog and is 4`, will be printed to the screen.

We can also use the underscore (wildcard) and range operators with tuples in the `case` statement, as shown in the following example:

```
switch myDog { case(_, 0...1): print("Your dog is a puppy") case(_, 2...7):
print("Your dog is middle aged") case(_, 8...): print("Your dog is getting old")
default: print("Unknown") }
```

In this example, the underscore will match any name, while the range operators will look for the age of the dog. In this example, since `Maple` is four years old, the message, `Your dog is middle aged`, will be printed to the screen.

Match on wildcard

In Swift, we can also combine the underscore (wildcard) with the `where` statement. This is illustrated in the following example:

```
let myNumber = 10
switch myNumber {
    case _ where myNumber.isMultiple(of: 2):
        print("Multiple of 2")
    case _ where myNumber.isMultiple(of: 3):
        print("Multiple of 3")
    default:
        print("No Match")
}
```

In this example, we create an integer variable named `myNumber` and use the `switch` statement to determine whether the value of the variable is a multiple of 2 or 3. Notice the `case` statement starts off with an underscore followed by the `where` statement. The underscore will match all the values of the variable, and then the `where` statement is called to see if it matches the rule defined within it.

Using case and where statements with conditional statements

As we saw in the last section, the `case` and `where` statements within a `switch` statement can be very powerful. Using `case` and `where` statements within our conditional statements can also make our code much smaller and easier to read. Conditional statements, such as `if`, `for`, and `while`, can also make use of the `where` and `case` keywords. Let's take a look at some examples, starting off with using the `where` statement to filter the results in a `for-in` loop.

Filtering with the where statement

In this example, we will take an array of integers and print out only multiples of 3. However, before we look at how to filter the results with the `where` statement, let's take a look at how to do this without the `where` statement:

```
for number in 1...30 {  
    if number % 3 == 0 {  
        print(number)  
    }  
}
```

In this example, we use a `for-in` loop to cycle through the numbers 1 to 30. Within the `for-in` loop, we use an `if` conditional statement to filter out multiples of 3. In this simple example, the code is relatively easy to read, but let's examine how we can use the `where` statement to use fewer lines of code and make them easier to read:

```
for number in 1...30 where number % 3 == 0 {  
    print(number)  
}
```

We still have the same `for-in` loop as in the previous example. However, we have now put the `where` statement at the end; therefore, we only loop through numbers that are multiples of 3. Using the `where` statement shortens our example by two lines and makes it easier to read, because the `where` clause is on the same line as the `for-in` loop, rather than being embedded in the loop itself.

Now, let's look at how we could filter with the `for-case` statement.

Filtering with the `for-case` statement

In this next example, we will use the `for-case` statement to filter through an array of tuples and print out only the results that match our criteria. The `for-case` example is very similar to using the `where` statement where it is designed to eliminate the need for an `if` statement within a loop to filter the results. In this example, we will use the `for-case` statement to filter through a list of World Series winners and print out the year(s) that a particular team won the World Series:

```
var worldSeriesWinners = [
    ("Red Sox", 2004),
    ("White Sox", 2005),
    ("Cardinals", 2006),
    ("Red Sox", 2007),
    ("Phillies", 2008),
    ("Yankees", 2009),
    ("Giants", 2010),
    ("Cardinals", 2011),
    ("Giants", 2012),
    ("Red Sox", 2013),
    ("Giants", 2014),
    ("Royals", 2015)
]

for case let ("Red Sox", year) in worldSeriesWinners {
    print(year)
}
```

In this example, we created an array of tuples named `worldSeriesWinners`, where each tuple in the array contained the name of the team and the year that they won the World Series. We then use the `for-case` statement to filter through the array and only print out the years that the Red Sox won the World Series. The filtering is done within the `case` statement, where `("Red Sox", year)` states that we want all the results that have the `Red Sox` string in the first item of the tuple, and the value of the second item in the `year` constant. The `for-in` loop then loops through the results of the `case` statement, printing out the value of the `year` constant.

The `for-case-in` statement also makes it very easy to filter out the `nil` values in an array of optionals; let's look at an example of this:

```
let myNumbers: [Int?] = [1, 2, nil, 4, 5, nil, 6]

for case let .some(num) in myNumbers {
    print(num)
}
```

In this example, we created an array of optionals named `myNumbers` that could contain either an integer value or `nil`. As we saw in [Chapter 3, Optional Types](#), an optional is internally defined as an enumeration, as shown in the following code:

```
enum Optional < Wrapped > {
    case none,
    case some(Wrapped)
}
```

If an optional is set to `nil`, it will have a value of `none`, but if it is not `nil`, it will have a value of `some`, with an associated type of the actual value. In our example, when we filter for `.some(num)`, we are looking for any optional that has a non-nil value. As shorthand for `.some()`, we could use the question mark (?) symbol, as we will see in the following example. This example also combines the `for-case-in` statement with a `where` statement to perform additional filtering:

```
let myNumbers: [Int?] = [1, 2, nil, 4, 5, nil, 6]

for case let num? in myNumbers where num < 3 {
    print(num)
}
```

This example is the same as the previous example, except that we have put the additional filtering in the `where` statement. In the previous example, we looped through all of the non-nil values; however, in this example, we have looped through the non-nil values that are greater than 3. Let's examine how we do this same filtering without the `case` or `where` statements:

```
let myNumbers: [Int?] = [1, 2, nil, 4, 5, nil, 6]

for num in myNumbers {
    if let num = num {
        if num < 3 {
            print(num)
        }
    }
}
```

Using the `for-case-in` and `where` statements can greatly reduce the number of lines that are needed. It also makes our code much easier to read because all the filtering statements are on the same line.

Let's take a look at one more filtering example. This time, we will look at the `if-case` statement.

Using the `if-case` statement

Using the `if-case` statement is very similar to using the `switch` statement. Most of the time, the `switch` statement is preferred when we have over two cases that we are trying to match, but there are instances where the `if-case` statement is needed. One of those times is when we are only looking for one or two possible matches, and we do not want to handle all the possible matches; let's take a look at an example of this:

```
enum Identifier {
    case Name(String)
    case Number(Int)
    case NoIdentifier
}

var playerIdentifier = Identifier.Number(2)
if case let .Number(num) = playerIdentifier {
    print("Player's number is \(num)")
}
```

In this example, we created an enumeration named `Identifier` that contains three possible values: `Name`, `Number`, and `NoIdentifier`. We then created an instance of the `Identifier` enumeration named `playerIdentifier`, with a value of `Number` and an associated value of 2. We then used the `if-case` statement to see if the `playerIdentifier` had a value for `Number` and if so, we printed a message to the console.

Just like the `for-case` statement, we can perform additional filtering with the `where` statement. The following example uses the same `Identifier` enumeration that we used in the previous example:

```
var playerIdentifier = Identifier.Number(2)

if case let .Number(num) = playerIdentifier, num == 2 {
    print("Player is either XanderBogarts or Derek Jeter")
}
```

In this example, we have used the `if-case` statement to see if the `playerIdentifier` had a value of `Number`, but we also added the `where` statement to see if the associated value was equal to 2. If so, we identified the player as either `XanderBogarts` or `Derek Jeter`.

As we saw in our examples, using the `case` and `where` statements with our conditional statements can reduce the number of lines that are needed to perform certain types of filtering. It can also make our code easier to read. Now let's take a look at control transfer statements.

Control transfer statements

Control transfer statements are used to transfer control to another part of the code. Swift offers six control transfer statements; these are `continue`, `break`, `fallthrough`, `guard`, `throws`, and `return`. We will look at the `return` statement in Chapter 6, *Functions*, and will discuss the `throws` statement in Chapter 11, *Availability and Error Handling*. The remaining control transfer statements will be discussed in this section.

The `continue` statement

The `continue` statement tells a loop to stop executing the code block and to go to the next iteration of the loop. The following example shows how we can use this statement to print out only the odd numbers in a range:

```
for i in 1...10 {
    if i % 2 == 0 {
```

```
        continue
    }
    print("\\"(i) is odd")
}
```

In the preceding example, we looped through a range from 1 to 10. For each iteration of the `for-in` loop, we used the remainder (%) operator to see whether the number was odd or even. If the number is even, the `continue` statement tells the loop to immediately go to the next iteration of the loop. If the number is odd, we print that the number is odd and then move on. The output of the preceding code is as follows:

```
1 is odd
3 is odd
5 is odd
7 is odd
9 is odd
```

Now let's take a look at the `break` statement.

The break statement

The `break` statement immediately ends the execution of a code block within the control flow. The following example demonstrates how to break out of a `for-in` loop when we encounter the first even number:

```
for i in 1...10 {
    if i % 2 == 0 {
        break
    }
    print("\\"(i) is odd")
}
```

In the preceding example, we loop through the range from 1 to 10. For each iteration of the `for-in` loop, we use the remainder (%) operator to see whether the number is odd or even. If the number is even, we use the `break` statement to immediately exit the loop. If the number is odd, we print out that the number is odd, and then go to the next iteration of the loop. The preceding code has the following output:

```
1 is odd
```

The `fallthrough` statement

In Swift, the `switch` statement does not fall through like other languages; however, we can use the `fallthrough` statement to force them to fall through. The `fallthrough` statement can be very dangerous because, once a match is found, the next case defaults to true and that code block is executed. This is illustrated in the following example:

```
var name = "Jon"
var sport = "Baseball"
switch sport {
    case "Baseball":
        print("\(name) plays Baseball")
        fallthrough
    case "Basketball":
        print("\(name) plays Basketball")
        fallthrough
    default:
        print("Unknown sport")
}
```

When this code is run, the following results are printed to the console:

```
Jon plays Baseball
Jon plays Basketball
Unknown sport
```

I recommend that you be very careful about using the `fallthrough` statement. Apple purposely disabled falling through on the `case` statement to avoid the common errors that programmers make. By using the `fallthrough` statement, you could introduce these errors back into your code.

Summary

In this chapter, we covered control flow and functions in Swift. It is essential that you understand the concepts in this chapter before moving ahead. Every application that we write, beyond the simple Hello World applications, will rely very heavily on control flow statements and functions.

Control flow statements are used to make decisions within our application, and functions are used to group our code into sections that are reusable and organized.

6

Functions

When I first learned to program with the Basic programming language, my first few programs were written in one long block of code. I quickly realized that I was repeating the same code over and over, and thought that there must be a better way to do this, which was when I learned about subroutines and functions. Functions are one of the key concepts that you need to understand in order to write good code.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What are functions?
- How to return values from a function
- How to use parameters in a function
- What are Variadic parameters?
- What are inout parameters?

In Swift, a function is a self-contained block of code that performs a specific task. Functions are generally used to logically break our code into reusable named blocks. The function's name is used to call the function.

When we define a function, we can also optionally define one or more parameters (also known as arguments). Parameters are named values that are passed into the function by the code that calls it. These parameters are generally used within the function to perform the task of the function. We can also define default values for the parameters to simplify how the function is called.

Every Swift function has a type associated with it. This type is referred to as the return type and it defines the types of data returned from the function to the code that called it. If a value is not returned from a function, the return type is Void.

Let's look at how to define functions in Swift.

Using a single parameter function

The syntax that's used to define a function in Swift is very flexible. This flexibility makes it easy for us to define simple C-style functions, or more complex functions, with local and external parameter names, which we will see later in this chapter. Let's look at some examples of how to define functions. The following example accepts one parameter and does not return any value back to the code that called it:

```
func sayHello(name: String) -> Void {  
    let retString = "Hello " + name  
    print(retString)  
}
```

In the preceding example, we defined a function named `sayHello()` that accepted one parameter, named `name`. Inside the function, we printed out a greeting to the name of the person. Once the code within the function is executed, the function exits, and control is returned back to the code that called it. Rather than printing out the greeting, we could return it to the code that called it by adding a return type, as follows:

```
func sayHello2(name: String) ->String {  
    let retString = "Hello " + name  
    return retString  
}
```

The `-> string` defines that the return type associated with the function is a string. This means that the function must return an instance of the `String` type to the code that calls it. Inside the function, we build a string constant, named `retString`, with the greeting message and then return it using the `return` statement.

Calling a Swift function is a similar process to calling functions or methods in other languages, such as C or Java. The following example shows how to call the `sayHello(name:)` function, which prints the greeting message to the screen:

```
sayHello(name: "Jon")
```

Now, let's look at how to call the `sayHello2(name:)` function, which returns a value back to the code that called it:

```
var message = sayHello2(name: "Jon")  
print(message)
```

In the preceding example, we called the `sayHello2(name:)` function and inputted the value that was returned in the `message` variable. If a function defines a return type as the `sayHello2(name:)` function does, it must return a value of that type to the code that called it. Therefore, every possible conditional path within the function must end by returning a value of the specified type. This does not mean that the code that called the function is required to retrieve the returned value. As an example, both lines in the following snippet are valid:

```
sayHello2(name:"Jon")
var message = sayHello2(name:"Jon")
```

If you do not specify a variable for the return value to go into, the value is dropped. When the code is compiled, you will receive a warning if a function returns a value and you do not put it into a variable or a constant. You can avoid this warning by using an underscore, as shown in the following example:

```
_ = sayHello2(name:"Jon")
```

The underscore tells the compiler that you are aware of the return value, but you do not want to use it. Using the `@discardableResult` attribute when declaring a function will also silence the warning. This attribute is used as follows:

```
@discardableResult func sayHello2(name: String) ->String {
    let retString = "Hello " + name
    return retString
}
```

Let's look at how we would define multiple parameters for our functions.

Using a multi-parameter function

We are not limited to just one parameter with our functions; we can also define multiple parameters. To create a multi-parameter function, we list the parameters in the parentheses and separate the parameter definitions with commas. Let's look at how to define multiple parameters in a function:

```
func sayHello(name: String, greeting: String) {
    print("\(greeting) \(name)")
}
```

In the preceding example, the function accepts two arguments: `name` and `greeting`. We then print a greeting to the console using both parameters.

Calling a multi-parameter function is a little different from calling a single-parameter function. When calling a multi-parameter function, we separate the parameters with commas. We also need to include the parameter name for all the parameters. The following example shows how to call a multi-parameter function:

```
sayHello(name: "Jon", greeting: "Bonjour")
```

We do not need to supply an argument for each parameter of the function if we define default values. Let's look at how to configure default values for our parameters.

Defining a parameter's default values

We can define default values for any parameter by using the equals to operator (=) within the function definition when we declare the parameters. The following example shows how to declare a function with a parameter's default values:

```
func sayHello(name: String, greeting: String = "Bonjour") {  
    print("\(greeting) \(name)")  
}
```

In the function declaration, we have defined one parameter without a default value (name: String) and one parameter with a default value (greeting: String = "Bonjour"). When a parameter has a default value declared, we are able to call the function with or without setting a value for that parameter. The following example shows how to call the sayHello() function without setting the greeting parameter, and also how to call it when you do set the greeting parameter:

```
sayHello(name: "Jon")  
sayHello(name: "Jon", greeting: "Hello")
```

In the sayHello(name: "Jon") line, the function will print out the message Bonjour Jon since it uses the default value for the greeting parameter. In the sayHello(name: "Jon", greeting: "Hello") line, the function will print out the message Hello Jon since we have overridden the default value for the greeting parameter.

We can declare multiple parameters with default values and override only the ones we want by using the parameter names. The following example shows how we would do this by overriding one of the default values when we call it:

```
func sayHello(name: String = "Test", name2: String = "Kim", greeting:  
String = "Bonjour") {  
    print("\(greeting) \(name) and \(name2)")  
}  
  
sayHello(name:"Jon", greeting: "Hello")
```

In the preceding example, we declared a function with three parameters, each with a default value. We then called the function, leaving the `name2` parameter with its default value, while overriding the default values for the remaining two parameters.

The preceding example will print out the message Hello Jon and Kim.

Returning multiple values from a function

There are a couple of ways to return multiple values from a Swift function. One of the most common ways is to put the values into a collection type (an array or dictionary) and then return the collection. The following example shows how to return a collection type from a Swift function:

```
func getNames() -> [String] {  
    var retArray = ["Jon", "Kim", "Kailey", "Kara"]  
    return retArray  
}  
  
var names = getNames()
```

In the preceding example, we declared the `getNames()` function with no parameters and a return type of `[String]`. The return type of `[String]` specifies the return type to be an array of string types.

In the preceding example, our array could only return string types. If we needed to return numbers with our strings, we could return an array of the `Any` type and then use typecasting to specify the object type. However, this would not be a good design for our application, as it would be prone to errors. A better way to return values of different types would be to use a tuple type.

When we return a tuple from a function, it is recommended that we use a named tuple to allow us to use the dot syntax to access the returned values. The following example shows how to return a named tuple from a function and access the values from the named tuple that is returned:

```
func getTeam() -> (team:String, wins:Int, percent:Double) {  
    let retTuple = ("Red Sox", 99, 0.611)  
    return retTuple  
}  
  
var t = getTeam()  
print("\(t.team) had \(t.wins) wins")
```

In the preceding example, we defined the `getTeam()` function, which returned a named tuple that contains three values: `String`, `Int`, and `Double`. Within the function, we created the tuple that we were going to return. Notice that we did not need to define the tuple that we were going to return as a named tuple, as the value types within the tuple matched the value types in the function definition. We can now call the function as we would any other function, and use the dot syntax to access the values of the tuple that is returned. In the preceding example, the code would print out the following line:

```
Red Sox had 99 wins  
Returning optional values
```

In the previous sections, we returned non-nil values from our function; however, that is not always what we need our code to do. What happens if we need to return a nil value from a function? The following code would not be valid and would cause a `nil is incompatible with return type String` exception:

```
func getName() ->String {  
    return nil  
}
```

This code throws an exception because we have defined the return type as a `String` value, but we are attempting to return a nil value. If there is a reason to return nil, we need to define the return type as an optional type to let the code calling it know that the value may be nil. To define the return type as an optional type, we use the question mark (?) in the same way as we did when we defined a variable as an optional type. The following example shows how to define an optional return type:

```
func getName() ->String? {  
    return nil  
}
```

The preceding code would not cause an exception.

We can also set a tuple as an optional type, or any value within a tuple as an optional type. The following example shows how we would return a tuple as an optional type:

```
func getTeam2(id: Int) -> (team:String, wins:Int, percent:Double)? {  
    if id == 1 {  
        return ("Red Sox", 99, 0.611)  
    }  
    return nil  
}
```

In the following example, we could return a tuple as it was defined within our function definition or nil; either option is valid. If we needed an individual value within our tuple to be nil, we would need to add an optional type within our tuple. The following example shows how to return a value of nil within the tuple:

```
func getTeam() -> (team:String, wins:Int, percent:Double?) {  
    let retTuple: (String, Int, Double?) = ("Red Sox", 99, nil)  
    return retTuple  
}
```

In the preceding example, we set the percent value to either Double or nil.

Adding external parameter names

In the preceding examples in this section, we defined the parameters' names and value types in the same way we would define parameters in C code. In Swift, we are not limited to this syntax as we can also use external parameter names.

External parameter names are used to indicate the purpose of each parameter when we call a function. An external parameter name for each parameter needs to be defined in conjunction with its local parameter name. The external parameter name is added before the local parameter name in the function definition. The external and local parameter names are separated by a space.

Let's look at how to use external parameter names. But before we do, let's review how we have previously defined functions. In the following two examples, we will define a function without external parameter names, and then redefine it with external parameter names:

```
func winPercentage(team: String, wins: Int, loses: Int) -> Double{  
    return Double(wins) / Double(wins + loses)  
}
```

In the preceding example, the `winPercentage()` function accepted three parameters. These parameters were `team`, `wins`, and `loses`. The `team` parameter should be of the `String` type, and the `wins` and `loses` parameters should be of the `int` type. The following line of code shows how to call the `winPercentage()` function:

```
var per = winPercentage(team: "Red Sox", wins: 99, loses: 63)
```

Now, let's define the same function with external parameter names:

```
func winPercentage(baseballTeam team: String, withWins wins: Int, andLoses losses: Int) -> Double {  
    return Double(wins) / Double(wins + losses)  
}
```

In the preceding example, we redefined the `winPercentage()` function with external parameter names. In this redefinition, we have the same three parameters: `team`, `wins`, and `loses`. The difference is how we define the parameters. When using external parameters, we define each parameter with both an external parameter name and a local parameter name separated by a space. In the preceding example, the first parameter had an external parameter name of `baseballTeam` and an internal parameter name of `team`.

When we call a function with external parameter names, we need to include the external parameter names in the function call. The following code shows how to call this function:

```
var per = winPercentage(baseballTeam:"Red Sox", withWins:99, andLoses:63)
```

While using external parameter names requires more typing, it does make your code easier to read. In the preceding example, it is easy to see that the function is looking for the name of a baseball team, the second parameter is the number of wins, and the last parameter is the number of losses.

Using variadic parameters

A **variadic** parameter is one that accepts zero or more values of a specified type. Within the function's definition, we define a variadic parameter by appending three periods (...) to the parameter's type name. The values of a variadic parameter are made available to the function as an array of the specified type. The following example shows how we would use a variadic parameter with a function:

```
func sayHello(greeting: String, names: String...) {  
    for name in names {  
        print("\(greeting) \(name)")  
    }  
}
```

In the preceding example, the `sayHello()` function takes two parameters. The first parameter is of the `String` type, which is the greeting to use. The second parameter is a variadic parameter of the `String` type, which is the names to send the greeting to. Within the function, a variadic parameter is an array that contains the type specified; therefore, in our example, the `names` parameter is an array of `String` values. In this example, we used a `for-in` loop to access the values within the `names` parameter.

The following line of code shows how to call the `sayHello()` function with a variadic parameter:

```
sayHello(greeting:"Hello", names: "Jon", "Kim")
```

The preceding line of code will print a greeting to each of the names, as shown here:

```
Hello Jon  
Hello Kim
```

Inout parameters

If we want to change the value of a parameter and we want those changes to persist once the function ends, we need to define the parameter as an `inout` parameter. Any changes made to an `inout` parameter are passed back to the variable that was used in the function call.

Two things to keep in mind when we use `inout` parameters are that these parameters cannot have default values and that they cannot be variadic parameters.

Let's look at how to use the `inout` parameters to swap the values of two variables:

```
func reverse(first: inout String, second: inout String) {  
    let tmp = first  
    first = second  
    second = tmp  
}
```

This function will accept two parameters and swap the values of the variables that are used in the function call. When we make the function call, we put an ampersand (&) in front of the variable name, indicating that the function can modify its value. The following example shows how to call the `reverse` function:

```
var one = "One"  
var two = "Two"  
reverse(first: &one, second: &two)  
print("one: \(one) two: \(two)")
```

In the preceding example, we set variable `one` to a value of `one` and variable `two` to a value of `Two`. We then called the `reverse()` function with the `one` and `two` variables. Once the `reverse()` function has returned, the variable named `one` will contain the value `Two`, while the variable named `two` will contain the value `One`.

Two things to note about `inout` parameters: a variadic parameter cannot be an `inout` parameter and an `inout` parameter cannot have a default value.

Omitting argument labels

All of the functions in this chapter have used labels when passing arguments into the functions. If we do not want to use a label, we can omit it by using an underscore. The following example illustrates this:

```
func sayHello(_ name: String, greeting: String) {  
    print("\(greeting) \(name)")  
}
```

Notice the underscore prior to the name label in the parameter list. This indicates that the name label should not be used when calling this function. Now, we are able to call this function without using the name label:

```
sayHello("Jon", greeting: "Hi")
```

This call would print out Hi Jon.

Putting it all together

To reinforce what we have learned in this chapter, let's look at one more example. For this example, we will create a function that will test to see whether a string value contains a valid IPv4 address. An IPv4 address is the address assigned to a computer that uses the **Internet Protocol (IP)** to communicate. An IP address consists of four numeric values that range from 0-255, separated by a dot (period). The following is the code example of a valid IP address, that is, 10.0.1.250:

```
func isValidIP(ipAddr: String?) ->Bool {  
  
    guard let ipAddr = ipAddr else {  
        return false  
    }  
    let octets = ipAddr.split { $0 == "."}.map{String($0)}  
    guard octets.count == 4 else {  
        return false  
    }  
    for octet in octets {  
        guard validOctet(octet: octet) else {  
            return false  
        }  
    }  
    return true  
}
```

Since the sole parameter in the `isValidIp()` function is an optional type, the first thing we do is verify that the `ipAddR` parameter is not nil. To do this, we use a `guard` statement with optional binding. If the optional binding fails, we return a Boolean false value because nil is not a valid IP address.

If the `ipAddr` parameter contains a non-nil value, we split the string into an array of strings, using the dots as delimiters. Since an IP address is supposed to contain four numbers separated by a dot, we use the `guard` statement again to check whether the array contains four elements. If it does not, we return `false` because we know that the `ipAddr` parameter did not contain a valid IP address.

Then, we loop through the values in the array that we created by splitting the original `ipAddr` parameter at the dots and passing the values to the `validOctet()` function. If all four values are verified by the `validOctet()` function, we have a valid IP address and we return a Boolean `true` value; however, if any of the values fail the `validOctet()` function, we return a Boolean `false` value. Now, let's look at the code for the `validOctet()` function:

```
func validOctet(octet: String) ->Bool {  
    guard let num = Int(octet), num >= 0 && num < 256 else {  
        return false  
    }  
    return true  
}
```

The `validOctet()` function has one `String` parameter, named `octet`. This function will verify that the `octet` parameter contains a numeric value between 0 and 255; if it does, the function will return a Boolean `true` value. Otherwise, it will return a Boolean `false` value.

Summary

In this chapter, we covered what functions are and how to use them. You will use functions in every serious application that you write. In the next chapter, we will look at classes and structures. Classes and structures can contain functions, but these functions are known as methods.

7

Classes, Structures, and Protocols

The first programming language that I learned was BASIC. It was a good language to begin programming with, but once I traded in my Commodore Vic-20 for a PCjr (yes, I had a PCjr and I really enjoyed it), I realized that there were other, more advanced languages out there, and I spent a lot of time learning Pascal and C. It wasn't until I started college that I heard the term *object-oriented programming language*. At that time, object-oriented programming languages were so new that there were no real courses on them, but I was able to experiment a little with C++. After I graduated, I left object-oriented programming behind, and it really wasn't until several years later, when I started to experiment with C++ again, that I really discovered the power and flexibility of object-oriented programming. In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What are classes and structures?
- How to add properties and property observers to classes and structures
- How to add methods to classes and structures
- How to add initializers to classes and structures
- How and when to use access controls
- How to create a class hierarchy
- How to extend a class

What are classes and structures?

In Swift, classes and structures are very similar. If we really want to master Swift, it is very important to not only understand what makes classes and structures so similar, but to also understand what sets them apart, because they are the building blocks of our applications. Apple describes them as follows:

Classes and structures are general-purpose, flexible constructs that become the building blocks of your program's code. You define properties and methods to add functionality to your classes and structures by using the already familiar syntax of constants, variables, and functions.

Let's begin by taking a quick look at some of the similarities between classes and structures.

Similarities between classes and structures

In Swift, classes and structures are more similar than they are in other languages, such as Objective-C. The following is a list of some of the features that classes and structures share:

- **Properties:** These are used to store information in our classes and structures
- **Methods:** These provide functionality for our classes and structures
- **Initializers:** These are used when initializing instances of our classes and structures
- **Subscripts:** These provide access to values using the subscript syntax
- **Extensions:** These help extend both classes and structures

Now, let's take a quick look at some of the differences between classes and structures.

Differences between classes and structures

While classes and structures are very similar, there are also several very important differences. The following is a list of some of the differences between classes and structures in Swift:

- **Type:** A structure is a value type, while a class is a reference type
- **Inheritance:** A structure cannot inherit from other types, while a class can
- **Deinitializers:** Structures cannot have custom deinitializers, while a class can

Throughout this chapter, we will be emphasizing the differences between classes and structures to help us understand when to use each. Before we really dive into classes and structures, let's look at the difference between value types (structures) and reference types (classes). To fully understand when to use classes and structures and how to properly use them, it is important to understand the difference between value and reference types.

Value versus reference types

Structures are value types. When we pass instances of a structure within our application, we pass a copy of the structure and not the original structure. Classes are reference types; therefore, when we pass an instance of a class within our application, a reference to the original instance is passed. It is very important to understand this difference. We will give a very high-level view here and will provide additional details in [Chapter 16, Memory Management](#). When we pass structures within our application, we are passing copies of the structures and not the original structures. Since the function gets its own copy of the structure, it can change it as needed without affecting the original instance of the structure. When we pass an instance of a class within our application, we are passing a reference to the original instance of the class. Since we're passing the instance of the class to the function, the function is getting a reference to the original instance; therefore, any changes made within the function will remain once the function exits. To illustrate the difference between value and reference types, let's look at a real-world object: a book. If we have a friend who wants to read *Mastering Swift 5*, we could either buy them their own copy or share ours. If we bought our friend their own copy of the book, any notes they made within the book would remain in their copy of the book and would not be reflected in our copy. This is how passing by value works with structures and variables. Any changes that are made to the structure or variable within the function are not reflected in the original instance of the structure or variable. If we share our copy of the book, any notes they made within the book would stay in the book when they return it to us. This is how passing by reference works. Any changes that are made to the instance of the class remains when the function exits.

Creating a class or structure

We use the same syntax to define classes and structures. The only difference is that we define a class using the `class` keyword and a structure using the `struct` keyword. Let's look at the syntax that's used to create both classes and structures:

```
class MyClass {  
    // MyClass definition
```

```
}

struct MyStruct {
    // MyStruct definition
}
```

In the preceding code, we define a new class named `MyClass` and a new structure named `MyStruct`. This effectively creates two new Swift types named `MyClass` and `MyStruct`. When we name a new type, we want to use the standard naming convention set by Swift, where the name is in camel case, with the first letter being uppercase. This is also known as `PascalCase`. Any method or property defined within the class or structure should also be named using camel case, with the first letter being uppercase. Empty classes and structures are not that useful, so let's look at how we can add properties to our classes and structures.

Properties

Properties associate values with a class or a structure. There are two types of properties:

- **Stored properties:** These will store variable or constant values as part of an instance of a class or structure. Stored properties can also have property observers that can monitor the property for changes and respond with custom actions when the value of the property changes.
- **Computed properties:** These do not store a value themselves but instead retrieve and possibly set other properties. The value returned by a computed property can also be calculated when it is requested.

Stored properties

A stored property is a variable or constant that is stored as part of an instance of a class or structure. These are defined with the `var` and `let` keywords, just like normal variables and constants. In the following code, we will create a structure named `MyStruct` and a class named `MyClass`. The structure and the class both contain two stored properties, `c` and `v`. The stored property, `c`, is a constant because it is defined with the `let` keyword, and `v` is a variable because it is defined with the `var` keyword. Let's look at the following code:

```
struct MyStruct {
    let c = 5
    var v = ""
}
```

```
class MyClass {  
    let c = 5  
    var v = ""  
}
```

As we can see from the preceding example, the syntax to define a stored property is the same for both classes and structures. Let's look at how we would create an instance of both the structure and class. The following code creates an instance of the `MyStruct` structure, named `myStruct`, and an instance of the `MyClass` class, named `myClass`:

```
var myStruct = MyStruct()  
var myClass = MyClass()
```

One of the differences between structures and classes is that, by default, a structure creates an initializer that lets us populate the stored properties when we create an instance of the structure. Therefore, we could also create an instance of `MyStruct` like this:

```
var myStruct = MyStruct(v: "Hello")
```

In the preceding example, the initializer is used to set the `v` variable, and the `c` constant will still contain the number 5, which is defined in the structures. If we did not give the constant an initial value, as shown in the following example, the default initializer would be used to set the constant as well:

```
struct MyStruct {  
    let c: Int  
    var v = ""  
}
```

The following example shows how the initializer for this new structure would work:

```
var myStruct = MyStruct(c: 10, v: "Hello")
```

This allows us to define a constant where we set the value when we initialize the class or structure at runtime, rather than hardcoding the value of the constant within the type. The order in which the parameters appear in the initializer is the order in which we defined them. In the previous example, we defined the `c` constant first, therefore, it is the first parameter in the initializer. We defined the `v` parameter next, therefore, it is the second parameter in the initializer. To set or read a stored property, we use the standard dot syntax. Let's look at how we would set and read stored properties in Swift:

```
var x = myClass.c  
myClass.v = "Howdy"
```

In the first line of code, we read the `c` property and store it into a variable named `x`. In the second line of code, we set the `v` property to the `Howdy` string. Before we move on to computed properties, let's create both a structure and class that will represent an employee. We will be using and expanding these throughout this chapter to show how classes and structures are similar, and how they differ:

```
struct EmployeeStruct {  
    var firstName = ""  
    var lastName = ""  
    var salaryYear = 0.0  
}  
  
class EmployeeClass {  
    var firstName = ""  
    var lastName = ""  
    var salaryYear = 0.0  
}
```

The employee structure is named `EmployeeStruct`, and the employee class is named `EmployeeClass`. Both the class and structure have three stored properties: `firstName`, `lastName`, and `salaryYear`. Within the structure and class, we can access these properties by using the name of the property and the `self` keyword. Every instance of a structure or class has a property named `self`. This property refers to the instance itself; therefore, we can use it to access the properties within the instance. The following examples show how we can access the properties with the `self` keyword within the instance of the structure or class:

```
self.firstName = "Jon"  
self.lastName = "Hoffman"
```

Computed properties

Computed properties are properties that do not have backend variable, which are used to store the values associated with the property. The values of a computed property are usually computed when code requests it. You can think of a computed property as a function disguised as a property. Let's look at how we would define a read-only computed property:

```
var salaryWeek: Double {  
    get{  
        return self.salaryYear/52  
    }  
}
```

To create a read-only computed property, we begin by defining it as if it were a normal variable with the `var` keyword, followed by the variable name, colon, and the variable type. What comes next is different; we add a curly bracket at the end of the declaration and then define a getter method, which is called when the value of our computed property is requested. In this example, the getter method divides the current value of the `salaryYear` property by 52 to get the employee's weekly salary.

We can simplify the definition of the read-only computed property by removing the `get` keyword, as shown in the following example:

```
var salaryWeek: Double {  
    return self.salaryYear/52  
}
```

Computed properties are not limited to being read-only; we can also write to them. To enable the `salaryWeek` property to be writeable, we will add a setter method. The following example shows how we add a setter method that will set the `salaryYear` property, based on the value being passed into the `salaryWeek` property:

```
var salaryWeek: Double {  
    get {  
        return self.salaryYear/52  
    }  
    set (newSalaryWeek) {  
        self.salaryYear = newSalaryWeek*52  
    }  
}
```

We can simplify the setter definition by not defining a name for the new value. In this case, the value will be assigned to a default variable named `newValue`, as shown in the following example:

```
var salaryWeek: Double {  
    get{  
        return self.salaryYear/52  
    }  
    set{  
        self.salaryYear = newValue*52  
    }  
}
```

The `salaryWeek` computed property, as written in the preceding examples, could be added to either the `EmployeeClass` class or the `EmployeeStruct` structure without any modifications. Let's see how we can do this by adding the `salaryWeek` property to our `EmployeeClass` class:

```
class EmployeeClass {  
    var firstName = ""  
    var lastName = ""  
    var salaryYear = 0.0  
  
    var salaryWeek: Double {  
        get{  
            return self.salaryYear/52  
        }  
        set(newSalaryWeek) {  
            self.salaryYear = newSalaryWeek*52  
        }  
    }  
}
```

Now, let's look at how we can add the `salaryWeek` computed property to the `EmployeeStruct` structure:

```
struct EmployeeStruct {  
    var firstName = ""  
    var lastName = ""  
    var salaryYear = 0.0  
  
    var salaryWeek: Double {  
        get{  
            return self.salaryYear/52  
        }  
        set(newSalaryWeek) {  
            self.salaryYear = newSalaryWeek*52  
        }  
    }  
}
```

As we can see, the class and structure definitions are the same so far, except for the initialClass or struct keywords that are used to define them. We read and write to a computed property exactly as we would to a stored property. Code that is external to the class or structure should not be aware that the property is a computed property. Let's see this in action by creating an instance of the EmployeeStruct structure:

```
var f = EmployeeStruct(firstName: "Jon", lastName: "Hoffman",
    salaryYear: 39_000)
print(f.salaryWeek) //prints 750.00 to the console
f.salaryWeek = 1000
print(f.salaryWeek) //prints 1000.00 to the console
print(f.salaryYear) //prints 52000.00 to the console
```

The preceding example starts off by creating an instance of the EmployeeStruct structure with the salaryYear value being set to 39,000. Next, we print the value of the salaryWeek property to the console. This value is currently 750.00. We then set the salaryWeek property to 1,000.00 and print out both the salaryWeek and salaryYear properties to the console. The values of the salaryWeek and salaryYear properties are now 1,000.00 and 52,000, respectively. As we can see, in this example, setting either the salaryWeek or salaryYear property changes the values returned by both. Computed properties can be very useful for offering different views of the same data. For example, if we had a value that represented the length of something, we could store the length in centimeters and then use computed properties that calculate the values for meters, millimeters, and kilometers. Now, let's look at property observers.

Property observers

Property observers are called every time the value of the property is set. We can add property observers to any non-lazy stored property. We can also add property observers to any inherited stored or computed property by overriding the property in the subclass, which we will look at the *Overriding properties* section. There are two property observers that we can set in Swift: willSet and didSet. The willSet observer is called right before the property is set, and the didSet observer is called right after the property is set. One thing to note about property observers is that they are not called when the value is set during initialization. Let's look at how we can add a property observer to the salary property of our EmployeeClass class and EmployeeStruct structure:

```
var salaryYear: Double = 0.0 {
    willSet(newSalary) {
        print("About to set salaryYear to \(newSalary)")
    }
    didSet {
        print("Just set salaryYear to \(salaryYear)")
    }
}
```

```
        if salaryWeek > oldValue {
            print("\(firstName) got a raise.")
        }else {
            print("\(firstName) did not get a raise.")
        }
    }
}
```

When we add a property observer to a stored property, we need to include the type of the value being stored within the definition of the property. In the preceding example, we did not need to define our `salaryYear` property as a `Double` type; however, when we add property observers, the definition is required. After the property definition, we define the `willSet` observer, which simply prints out the new value that the `salaryYear` property will be set to. We also define a `didSet` observer, which will check whether the new value is greater than the old value, and if so, it will print out that the employee got a raise; otherwise, it will print out that the employee did not get a raise. As with the getter method with computed properties, we do not need to define the name for the new value of the `willSet` observer. If we do not define a name, the new value is put in a constant named `newValue`. The following example shows how we can rewrite the previous `willSet` observer without defining a name for the new value:

```
willSet {
    print("About to set salaryYear to \(newValue)")
}
```

As we have seen, properties are mainly used to store information associated with a class or structure. Methods are mainly used to add the business logic to a class or structure. Let's look at how we can add methods to a class or structure.

Methods

Methods are functions that are associated with an instance of a class or structure. A method, like a function, will encapsulate the code for a specific task or functionality that is associated with the class or structure. Let's look at how we can define methods for classes and structures. The following code will return the full name of the employee by using the `firstName` and `lastName` properties:

```
func getFullName() -> String {
    return firstName + " " + lastName
}
```

We define this method exactly as we would define any function. A method is simply a function that is associated with a specific class or structure, and everything that we learned about functions in the previous chapters applies to methods. The `getFullName()` function can be added directly to the `EmployeeClass` class or `EmployeeStruct` structure without any modification. To access a method, we use the same dot syntax we used to access properties. The following code shows how we access the `getFullName()` method of a class and a structure:

```
var e = EmployeeClass()
var f = EmployeeStruct(firstName: "Jon", lastName: "Hoffman",
    salaryYear: 50000)

e.firstName = "Jon"
e.lastName = "Hoffman"
e.salaryYear = 50000.00

print(e.getFullName()) //Jon Hoffman is printed to the console
print(f.getFullName()) //Jon Hoffman is printed to the console
```

In the preceding example, we initialize an instance of both the `EmployeeClass` class and `EmployeeStruct` structure. We populate the structure and class with the same information and then use the `getFullName()` method to print the full name of the employee to the console. In both cases, `Jon Hoffman` is printed to the console. There is a difference in how we define methods for classes and structures that need to update property values. Let's look at how we define a method that gives an employee a raise within the `EmployeeClass` class:

```
func giveRaise(amount: Double) {
    self.salaryYear += amount
}
```

If we add the preceding code to our `EmployeeClass`, it works as expected, and when we call the method with an amount, the employee gets a raise. However, if we try to add this method as it is written to the `EmployeeStruct` structure, we receive a `mark` method and a `mutating` to make `self` mutable error. By default, we are not allowed to update property values within a method of a structure. If we want to modify a property, we can mutate the behavior for that method by adding the `mutating` keyword before the `func` keyword of the method declaration. Therefore, the following code would be the correct way to define the `giveRaise(amount:)` method for the `EmployeeStruct` structure:

```
mutating func giveRase(amount: Double) {
    self.salaryYear += amount
}
```

In the preceding examples, we use the `self` property to refer to the current instance of the type within the instance itself, so when we write `self.salaryYear`, we ask for the value of the `salaryYear` property for the current instance of the type.



The `self` property should only be used when necessary. We are using it in these examples to illustrate what it is and how to use it.

The `self` property is mainly used to distinguish between local and instance variables that have the same name. Let's look at an example that illustrates this. We can add this function to either the `EmployeeClass` or `EmployeeStruct` type:

```
func isEqualFirstName(firstName: String) -> Bool {  
    return self.firstName == firstName}
```

In the preceding example, the method accepts an argument named `firstName`. There is also a property within the type that has the same name. We use the `self` property to specify that we want the instance property with the `firstName` name, and not the local variable with this name. Other than the `mutating` keyword being required for methods that change the value of the structure's properties, methods can be defined and used exactly as functions are defined and used. Therefore, everything we learned about functions in Chapter 6, *Functions*, can be applied to methods. There are times when we want to initialize properties or perform some business logic when a class or structure is first initialized. For this, we will use an initializer.

Custom initializers

Initializers are called when we initialize a new instance of a type (class or structure). Initialization is the process of preparing an instance for use. The initialization process can include setting initial values for stored properties, verifying that external resources are available, or setting up the UI properly. Initializers are generally used to ensure that the instance of the class or structure is properly initialized prior to first use. Initializers are special methods that are used to create a new instance of a type. We define an initializer similarly to defining other methods, but we must use the `init` keyword as the name of the initializer to tell the compiler that this method is an initializer. In its simplest form, the initializer does not accept any arguments. Let's look at the syntax that's used to write a simple initializer:

```
init() {  
    //Perform initialization here  
}
```

This format works for both classes and structures. By default, all classes and structures have an empty default initializer that can be overridden. We used these default initializers when we initialized the `EmployeeClass` class and `EmployeeStruct` structure in the previous section. Structures also have an additional default initializer, which we saw with the `EmployeeStruct` structure, that accepts a value for each stored property and initializes them with those values. Let's look at how we add custom initializers to the `EmployeeClass` class and `EmployeeStruct` structure. In the following code, we create three custom initializers that will work for both the `EmployeeClass` class and `EmployeeStruct` structure:

```
init() {
    firstName = ""
    lastName = ""
    salaryYear = 0.0
}
init(firstName: String, lastName: String) {
    self.firstName = firstName
    self.lastName = lastName
    salaryYear = 0.0
}
init(firstName: String, lastName: String, salaryYear: Double) {
    self.firstName = firstName
    self.lastName = lastName
    self.salaryYear = salaryYear
}
```

The first initializer, `init()`, will set all of the stored properties to their default values. The second initializer, `init(firstName: String, lastName: String)`, will populate the `firstName` and `lastName` properties with the values of the arguments. The third initializer, `init(firstName: String, lastName: String, salaryYear: Double)`, will populate all the properties with the values of the arguments. In the previous example, we can see that in Swift, an initializer does not have an explicit return value, but it does return an instance of the type. This means that we do not define a return type for the initializer or have a return statement within the initializer. Let's look at how we could use these initializers:

```
var g = EmployeeClass()
var h = EmployeeStruct(firstName: "Me", lastName: "Moe")
var i = EmployeeClass(firstName: "Me", lastName: "Moe", salaryYear: 45_000)
```

The `g` instances of the `EmployeeClass` use the `init()` initializer to create an instance of the `EmployeeClass` class; therefore, all the properties of this instance contain their default values. The `h` instance of the `EmployeeStruct` uses the `init(firstName: String, lastName: String)` initializer to create an instance of the `EmployeeStruct` structure; therefore, the `firstName` property is set to `Me` and the `lastName` property is set to `Moe`, which are the two arguments passed into the initializer. The `salaryYear` property is still set to the default value of `0.0`. The `i` instance of the `EmployeeClass` uses the `init(firstName: String, lastName: String, salaryYear: Double)` initializer to create an instance of the `EmployeeClass` class; therefore, the `firstName` property is set to `Me`, the `lastName` property is set to `Moe`, and the `salaryYear` property is set to `45_000`. Since all the initializers are identified with the `init` keyword, the parameters and parameter types are used to identify which initializer to use. A class, unlike a structure, can have a deinitializer. A deinitializer is called just before an instance of the class is destroyed and removed from memory. In *Chapter 16, Memory Management*, we will show examples of the deinitializer and see when it is called. Let's look at internal and external parameter names with initializers.

Internal and external parameter names

Just like functions, the parameters associated with an initializer can have separate internal and external names. If we do not supply external parameter names for our parameters, Swift will automatically generate them for us. In the previous examples, we did not include external parameter names in the definition of the initializers, so Swift created them for us using the internal parameter name as the external parameter name. If we wanted to supply our own parameter names, we would do so by putting the external parameter name before the internal parameter name, exactly as we do with any normal function. Let's look at how we can define our own external parameter names by redefining one of the initializers within our `EmployeeClass` class:

```
init(employeeWithFirstName firstName: String, lastName lastName: String,  
andSalary salaryYear: Double) {  
    self.firstName = firstName  
    self.lastName = lastName  
    self.salaryYear = salaryYear  
}
```

In the preceding example, we created the `init(employeeWithFirstName firstName: String, lastName lastName: String, andSalary salaryYear: Double)` initializer. This initializer will create an instance of the `EmployeeClass` class and populate the instance properties with the value of the arguments. In this example, each of the parameters has both external and internal property names. Let's look at how we would use this initializer, with the external property names:

```
var i = EmployeeClass(withFirstName: "Me", lastName: "Moe", andSalary: 45000)
```

Notice that we are now using the external parameter names as defined in the initializer. Using external parameter names can help make our code more readable and help differentiate between different initializers. So, what will happen if our initializer fails? For example, what if our class relies on a specific resource, such as a web service that is not currently available? This is where failable initializers come in.

Failable initializers

A failable initializer is an initializer that may fail to initialize the resources needed for a class or a structure, thereby rendering the instance unusable. When using a failable initializer, the result of the initializer is an optional type, containing either a valid instance of the type or `nil`. An initializer can be made failable by adding a question mark (?) after the `init` keyword. Let's look at how we can create a failable initializer that will not allow a new employee to be initialized with a salary of less than \$20,000 a year:

```
init?(firstName: String, lastName: String, salaryYear: Double) {
    self.firstName = firstName
    self.lastName = lastName
    self.salaryYear = salaryYear
    if self.salaryYear < 20_000 {
        return nil
    }
}
```

In the previous examples, we did not include a `return` statement within the initializer because Swift does not need to return the initialized instance; however, in a failable initializer, if the initialization fails, it must return `nil`. If the initializer successfully initializes the instance, we do not need to return anything. Therefore, in our example, if the yearly salary that is passed in is less than \$20,000 a year, we return `nil`, indicating that the initialization failed, otherwise nothing will be returned. Let's look at how we would use a failable initializer to create an instance of a class or structure:

```
if let f = EmployeeClass(firstName: "Jon", lastName: "Hoffman",
    salaryYear: 29_000) {
    print(f.getFullName())
} else {
    print("Failed to initialize")
}
```

In the previous example, we initialize the instance of the `EmployeeClass` class with a yearly salary of greater than \$20,000; therefore, the instance gets initialized correctly and the full name of `Jon Hoffman` is printed to the console. Now, let's try to initialize an instance of the `EmployeeClass` class with a yearly salary of less than \$20,000 to see how it fails:

```
if let f = EmployeeClass(firstName: "Jon", lastName: "Hoffman",
    salaryYear: 19_000) {
    print(f.getFullName())
} else {
    print("Failed to initialize")
}
```

In the preceding example, the yearly salary that we are attempting to initialize for our employee is less than \$20,000 therefore the initialization fails and a *Failed to initialize message* is printed to the console. There are times when we want to restrict access to certain parts of our code. For this, we use access controls.

Access controls

Access controls enable us to hide implementation details and only expose the interfaces we want to expose. This feature is handled with access controls. We can assign specific access levels to both classes and structures. We can also assign specific access levels to properties, methods, and initializers that belong to our classes and structures. In Swift, there are five access levels:

- **Open:** This is the most visible access control level. It allows us to use the property, method, class, and so on anywhere we want to import the module. Basically, anything can use an item that has an access-control level of open. Anything that is marked open can be subclassed or overridden by any item within the module they are defined in and any module that imports the module it is defined in. This level is primarily used by frameworks to expose the framework's public API. The open-access control is only available to classes and members of a class.
- **Public:** This access level allows us to use the property, method, class, and so on anywhere we want to import the module. Basically, anything can use an item that has an access-control level of public. Anything that is marked public can be subclassed or overridden only by any item within the module they are defined in. This level is primarily used by frameworks to expose the framework's public API.
- **Internal:** This is the default access level. This access level allows us to use the property, method, class, and so on in the module the item is defined in. If this level is used in a framework, it lets other parts of the framework use the item but code outside the framework will be unable to access it.
- **Fileprivate:** This access control allows access to the properties and methods from any code within the same source file that the item is defined in.
- **Private:** This is the least visible access-control level. It only allows us to use the property, method, class, and so on, within extensions of the declaration defined in the source file that defines it.

When we are developing frameworks, the access controls really become useful. We will need to mark the public-facing interfaces as public or open so that other modules, such as applications that import the framework, can use them. We will then use the internal and private access-control levels to mark the interfaces that we want to use internally to the framework and the source file, respectively. To define access levels, we place the name of the level before the definition of the entity. The following code shows examples of how we can add access levels to several entities:

```
private struct EmployeeStruct {}
public class EmployeeClass {} internal class EmployeeClass2 {}
public var firstName = "Jon" internal var lastName = "Hoffman"
private var salaryYear = 0.0
public func getFullName() -> String {}
private func giveRaise(amount: Double) {}
```

There are some limitations with access controls, but these limitations are there to ensure that access levels in Swift follow a simple guiding principle: no entity can be defined in terms of another entity that has a lower (more restrictive) access level. This means that we cannot assign a higher (less restrictive) access level to an entity when it relies on another entity that has a lower (more restrictive) access level. The following examples demonstrate this principle:

- We cannot mark a method as being public when one of the arguments or the return type has an access level of private, because external code would not have access to the private type
- We cannot set the access level of a method or property to public when the class or structure has an access level of private, because external code would not be able to access the constructor when the class is private

Inheritance

The concept of inheritance is a basic object-oriented development concept. Inheritance allows a class to be defined as having a certain set of characteristics, and then other classes can be derived from that class. The derived class inherits all of the features of the class it is inheriting from (unless the derived class overrides those characteristics) and then usually adds additional characteristics of its own.

With inheritance, we can create what is known as a class hierarchy. In a class hierarchy, the class at the top of the hierarchy is known as the base class, and the derived classes are known as subclasses. We are not limited to only creating subclasses from a base class, we can also create subclasses from other subclasses. The class that a subclass is derived from is known as the parent or superclass. In Swift, a class can have only one parent class. This is known as single inheritance.



Inheritance is one of the fundamental differences that separates classes from structures. Classes can be derived from a parent or superclass, but a structure cannot.

Subclasses can call and access the properties, methods, and subscripts of their superclass. They can also override the properties, methods, and subscripts of their superclass.

Subclasses can add property observers to properties that they inherit from a superclass so that they can be notified when the values of the properties change. Let's look at an example that illustrates how inheritance works in Swift. We will start off by defining a base class named `Plant`. The `Plant` class will have two properties: `height` and `age`. It will also have one method: `growHeight()`. The `height` property will represent the height of the plant, the `age` property will represent the age of the plant, and the `growHeight()` method will be used to increase the height of the plant. Here is how we would define the `Plant` class:

```
class Plant {  
    var height = 0.0  
    var age = 0  
    func growHeight(inches: Double) {  
        height += inches;  
    }  
}
```

Now that we have our `Plant` base class, let's see how we would define a subclass of it. We will name this subclass `Tree`. The `Tree` class will inherit the `age` and `height` properties of the `Plant` class and add one more property, named `limbs`. It will also inherit the `growHeight()` method of the `Plant` class and add two more methods: `limbGrow()`, where new limbs are grown, and `limbFall()`, where limbs fall off the tree. Let's have a look at the following code:

```
class Tree: Plant {  
    var limbs = 0  
    func limbGrow() {  
        self.limbs += 1  
    }  
    func limbFall() {
```

```
        self.limbs -= 1
    }
}
```

We indicate that a class has a superclass by adding a colon and the name of the superclass to the end of the class definition. In this example, we indicated that the `Tree` class has a superclass named `Plant`. Now, let's look at how we could use the `Tree` class that inherited the `age` and `height` properties from the `Plant` class:

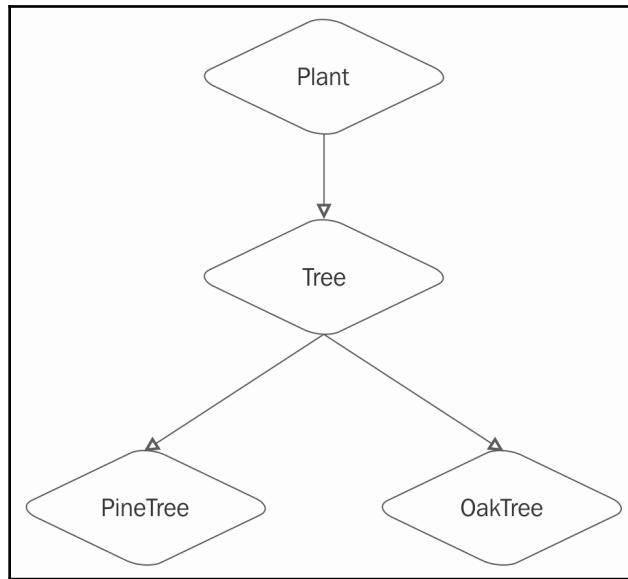
```
var tree = Tree()
tree.age = 5
tree.height = 4
tree.limbGrow()
tree.limbGrow()
```

The preceding example begins by creating an instance of the `Tree` class. We then set the `Age` and `height` properties to 5 and 4, respectively, and add two limbs to the tree by calling the `limbGrow()` method twice. We now have a base class named `Plant` that has a subclass named `Tree`. This means that the super (or parent) class of `Tree` is the `Plant` class. This also means that one of the subclasses (or child classes) of `Plant` is named `Tree`. There are, however, lots of different kinds of trees in the world. Let's create two subclasses from the `Tree` class. These subclasses will be the `PineTree` class and the `OakTree` class:

```
class PineTree: Tree {
    var needles = 0
}

class OakTree: Tree {
    var leaves = 0
}
```

The class hierarchy now looks like this:



It is important to keep in mind that, in Swift, a class can have multiple subclasses; however, a class can have only one superclass. There are times when a subclass needs to provide its own implementation of a method or property that it inherited from its superclass. This is known as **overriding**.

Overriding methods and properties

To override a method, property, or subscript, we need to prefix the definition with the `override` keyword. This tells the compiler that we intend to override something in the superclass, and that we did not make a duplicate definition by mistake. The `override` keyword prompts the Swift compiler to verify that the superclass (or one of its parents) has a matching declaration that can be overridden. If it cannot find a matching declaration in one of the superclasses, an error will be thrown.

Overriding methods

Let's look at how we can override a method. We will start by adding a `getDetails()` method to the `Plant` class that we will then override in the child classes. The following code shows the code for the new `Plant` class:

```
class Plant {  
    var height = 0.0  
    var age = 0  
    func growHeight(inches: Double) {  
        self.height += inches;  
    }  
    func getDetails() -& String {  
        return "Plant Details"  
    }  
}
```

Now, let's see how we can override the `getDetails()` method in the `Tree` class:

```
class Tree: Plant {  
    private var limbs = 0  
    func limbGrow() {  
        self.limbs += 1  
    }  
    func limbFall() {  
        self.limbs -= 1  
    }  
    override func getDetails() -> String {  
        return "Tree Details"  
    }  
}
```

The thing to note here is that we do not use the `override` keyword in the `Plant` class because it is the first class to implement this method; however, we do include it in the `Tree` class since we are overriding the `getDetails()` method from the `Plant` class. Now, let's see what happens if we call the `getDetails()` method from an instance of the `Plant` and `Tree` classes:

```
var plant = Plant()  
var tree = Tree()  
print("Plant: \(plant.getDetails())")  
print("Tree: \(tree.getDetails())")
```

The previous example will print the following two lines to the console:

```
Plant: Plant Details
Tree: Tree Details
```

As we can see, the `getDetails()` method in the `Tree` subclass overrides the `getDetails()` of its parent `Plant` class. Inside the `Tree` class, we can still call the `getDetails()` method (or any overridden method, property, or subscript) of its superclass by using the `super` prefix. We will begin by replacing the `getDetails()` method in the `Plant` class with the following method, which will generate a string that contains the values of the `height` and `age` properties:

```
func getDetails() -> String {
    return "Height:\(height) age:\(age)"
}
```

Now, we will replace the `getDetails()` method for the `Tree` class with the following method, which will call the `getDetails()` method of the superclass:

```
override func getDetails() -> String {
    let details = super.getDetails()
    return "\(details) limbs:\(limbs)"
}
```

In the preceding example, we begin by calling the `getDetails()` method of the superclass (the `Plant` class in this case) to get a string that contains the tree's height and age. We then build a new string object that combines the results of the `getDetails()` method and a new string that contains the number of limbs from the `Tree` class. This new string is then returned. Let's look at what happens if we call this new method:

```
var tree = Tree()
tree.age = 5
tree.height = 4
tree.limbGrow()
tree.limbGrow()
print(tree.getDetails())
```

If we run the preceding code, the following line will be printed to the console:

```
Height: 4.0 age: 5 limbs: 2
```

As we can see, the string that is returned contains the `height` and `age` information from the `Plant` class and the `limbs` information from the `Tree` class.

Overriding properties

We can provide custom getters and setters to override any inherited property. When we override a property, we must provide the name and the type of property we are overriding so that the compiler can verify that one of the classes in the class hierarchy has a matching property to override. Let's see how we can override a property by adding the following property to our `Plant` class:

```
var description: String {  
    return "Base class is Plant."  
}
```

The `description` property is a basic read-only property. This property returns the `Base class is Plant` string. Now, let's override this property by adding the following property to the `Tree` class:

```
override var description: String {  
    return "\\" + super.description + " I am a Tree class."  
}
```

The same `override` keyword is used when overriding both properties and methods. This keyword tells the compiler that we want to override a property so that the compiler can verify that another class in the class hierarchy contains a matching property to override. We then implement the property as we would any other property. Calling the `description` property for an instance of the `Tree` class will result in the `Base class is Plant. I am a Tree class` string being returned. There are times when we want to prevent a subclass from overriding the properties and methods. There are also times when we want to prevent an entire class from being subclassed. Let's see how we can do this.

Preventing overrides

To prevent overrides or subclassing, we can use the `final` keyword. To use the `final` keyword, we add it before the item's definition. Examples are `final func`, `final var`, and `final class`. Any attempt to override an item marked with this keyword will result in a compile-time error.

Protocols

There are times when we would like to describe the implementations (methods, properties, and other requirements) of a type without actually providing any implementation. For this, we can use protocols. Protocols define a blueprint of methods, properties, and other requirements for a class or a structure. A class or a structure can then provide an implementation that conforms to those requirements. The class or structure that provides the implementation is said to conform to the protocol. Protocols are very important to the Swift language. The entire Swift standard library is based on them, and we will be looking at protocols and how to use them in [Chapter 8, Using Protocols and Protocol Extensions](#), and [Chapter 9, Protocol Oriented Design](#).

Protocol syntax

The syntax to define a protocol is very similar to how we define a class or a structure. The following example shows the syntax that's used to define a protocol:

```
protocol MyProtocol {  
    // protocol definition here  
}
```

We state that a class or structure conforms to a protocol by placing the name of the protocol after the type's name, separated by a colon. Here is an example of how we would state that a structure conforms to the `MyProtocol` protocol:

```
struct MyStruct: MyProtocol {  
    // Structure implementation here  
}
```

A type can conform to multiple protocols. We list the protocols that the type conforms to by separating them with commas. The following example shows how we would state that our structure conforms to multiple protocols:

```
struct MyStruct: MyProtocol, AnotherProtocol, ThirdProtocol {  
    // Structure implementation here  
}
```

If we need a class to both inherit from a superclass and implement a protocol, we would list the superclass first, followed by the protocols. The following example illustrates this:

```
class MyClass: MySuperClass, MyProtocol, MyProtocol2 {  
    // Class implementation here  
}
```

Property requirements

A protocol can require that the conforming type provides certain properties with a specified name and type. The protocol does not say whether the property should be a stored or computed property because the implementation details are left up to the conforming type. When defining a property within a protocol, we must specify whether the property is a read-only or read-write property by using the `get` and `set` keywords. Let's look at how we would define properties within a protocol by creating a protocol named `FullName`:

```
protocol FullName {
    var firstName: String { get set }
    var lastName: String { get set }
}
```

The `FullName` protocol defines two properties, which any type that conforms to the protocol must implement. These are the `firstName` and `lastName` properties, and both are read-write properties. If we wanted to specify that the property is read-only, we would define it with only the `get` keyword, like this:

```
var readOnly: String { get }
```

Let's see how we can create a `Scientist` class that conforms to this protocol:

```
class Scientist: FullName {
    var firstName = ""
    var lastName = ""
}
```

If we had forgotten to include either of the required properties, we would have received an error message letting us know the property we forgot. We also need to make sure that the type of the property is the same. For example, if we change the definition of the `lastName` property in the `Scientist` class to `var lastName = 42`, we will also receive an error message because the protocol specifies that we must have a `lastName` property of the string type.

Method requirements

A protocol can require that the conforming class or structure provides certain methods. We define a method within a protocol exactly as we do within a class or structure, except without the method body. Let's add a `getFullName()` method to our `FullName` protocol and `Scientist` class:

```
protocol FullName {
    var firstName: String { get set }
    var lastName: String { get set }
    func getFullName() -> String
}
```

Now, we need to add a `getFullName()` method to our `Scientist` class so that it will conform to the protocol:

```
class Scientist: FullName {
    var firstName = ""
    var lastName = ""
    var field = ""

    func getFullName() -> String {
        return "\u{2028}(firstName) \u{2028}(lastName) studies \u{2028}(field)"
    }
}
```

Structures can conform to Swift protocols exactly as classes do. In fact, the majority of the Swift standard library are structures that implement the various protocols that make up the standard library. The following example shows how we can create a `FootballPlayer` structure that also conforms to the `FullName` protocol:

```
struct FootballPlayer: FullName {
    var firstName = ""
    var lastName = ""
    var number = 0

    func getFullName() -> String {
        return "\u{2028}(firstName) \u{2028}(lastName) has the number \u{2028}(number)"
    }
}
```

When a class or structure conforms to a Swift protocol, we can be sure that it has implemented the required properties and methods. This can be very useful when we want to ensure that certain properties or methods are implemented over various classes, as our preceding examples show. Protocols are also very useful when we want to decouple our code from requiring specific types. The following code shows how we would decouple our code using the `FullName` protocol, the `Scientist` class, and the `FootballPlayer` structure that we have already built:

```
var scientist = Scientist()
scientist.firstName = "Kara"
scientist.lastName = "Hoffman"
scientist.field = "Physics"

var player = FootballPlayer()

player.firstName = "Dan"
player.lastName = "Marino"
player.number = 13

var person: FullName
person = scientist
print(person.getFullName())
person = player
print(person.getFullName())
```

In the preceding code, we begin by creating an instance of the `Scientist` class and the `FootballPlayer` structure. We then create a `person` variable that is of the `FullName` (protocol) type and set it to the `scientist` instance that we just created. We then call the `getFullName()` method to retrieve our description. This will print out the `Kara Hoffman studies Physics` message to the console. We then set the `person` variable equal to the `player` instance and call the `getFullName()` method again. This will print out the `Dan Marino has the number 13` message to the console. As we can see, the `person` variable does not care what the actual implementation type is. Since we defined the `person` variable to be of the `FullName` type, we can set the variable to an instance of any type that conforms to the `FullName` protocol. This is called polymorphism. We will cover polymorphism and protocols more in [Chapter 8, Using Protocols and Protocol Extensions](#), and [Chapter 9, Protocol Oriented Design](#).

Extensions

With extensions, we can add new properties, methods, initializers, and subscripts, or make an existing type conform to a protocol without modifying the source code for the type. One thing to note is that extensions cannot override the existing functionality. To define an extension, we use the `extension` keyword, followed by the type that we are extending. The following example shows how we would create an extension that extends the string class:

```
extension String {  
    //add new functionality here  
}
```

Let's see how extensions work by adding a `reverse()` method and a `firstLetter` property to Swift's standard string class:

```
extension String {  
    var firstLetter: Character? {  
        get {  
            return self.first  
        }  
    }  
  
    func reverse() -> String {  
        var reverse = ""  
        for letter in self {  
            reverse = "\u{1d64}(letter)" + reverse  
        }  
        return reverse  
    }  
}
```

When we extend an existing type, we define properties, methods, initializers, subscripts, and protocols in exactly the same way as we would normally define them in a standard class or structure. In the string extension example, we can see that we define the `reverse()` method and the `firstLetter` property exactly as we would define them in a normal type. We can then use these methods exactly as we would use any other method, as the following example shows:

```
var myString = "Learning Swift is fun"  
print(myString.reverse())  
print(myString.firstLetter!)
```

Swift 4 did add the `reversed()` method to the `String` type, which should be preferred over the one we created here. This example just illustrates how to use extensions. Extensions are very useful for adding extra functionality to an existing type from external frameworks, even for Apple's frameworks, as demonstrated in this example. It is preferred to use extensions to add extra functionality to types from external frameworks rather than subclassing, because it allows us to continue to use the type throughout our code rather than changing the type to the subclass. Before we finish this chapter, let's take another look at optional chaining now that we have an understanding of classes and structures.

Optional chaining

Optional binding allows us to unwrap one optional at a time, but what would happen if we had optional types embedded within other optional types? This would force us to have optional binding statements embedded within other optional binding statements. There is a better way to handle this: by using optional chaining. Before we look at optional chaining, let's see how this would work with optional binding. We will start off by defining three types that we will be using for our examples in this section:

```
class Collar {  
    var color: String  
    init(color: String) {  
        self.color = color  
    }  
}  
  
class Pet {  
    var name: String  
    var collar: Collar?  
    init(name: String) {  
        self.name = name  
    }  
}  
  
class Person {  
    var name: String  
    var pet: Pet?  
    init(name: String) {  
        self.name = name  
    }  
}
```

In this example, we begin by defining a `Collar` class, which has one property defined. This property is named `color`, which is of the string type. We can see that the `color` property is not an optional; therefore, we can safely assume that it will always have a valid value. Next, we define a `Pet` class that has two properties defined. These properties are named `name` and `collar`. The `name` property is of the string type and the `collar` property is an optional that may contain an instance of the `Collar` type or may contain no value. Finally, we define a `Person` class, which also has two properties. These properties are named `name` and `pet`. The `name` property is of the string type and the `pet` property is an optional that may contain an instance of the `Pet` type or may contain no value. For the examples that follow, let's use the following code to initialize the classes:

```
var jon = Person(name: "Jon")
var buddy = Pet(name: "Buddy")
jon.pet = buddy

var collar = Collar(color: "red")
buddy.collar = collar
```

Now, let's say that we want to get the `color` of the `collar` for a person's pet; however, the person may not have a pet (the `pet` property may be `nil`) or the pet may not have a collar (the `collar` property may be `nil`). We could use optional binding to drill down through each layer, as shown in the following example:

```
if let tmpPet = jon.pet, let tmpCollar = tmpPet.collar {
    print("The color of the collar is \(tmpCollar.color)")
} else {
    print("Cannot retrieve color")
}
```

While this example is perfectly valid and would print out a `The color of the collar is red` message, the code is rather messy and hard to follow because we have multiple optional binding statements on the same line, where the second optional binding statement is dependent on the first one. Optional chaining allows us to drill down through multiple optional type layers of properties, methods, and subscripts in one line of code. These layers can be chained together and if any layer returns a `nil`, the entire chain gracefully fails and returns `nil`. If none of the values returns `nil`, the last value of the chain is returned. Since the results of optional chaining may be a `nil` value, the results are always returned as an optional type, even if the final value we are retrieving is a non-optional type. To specify optional chaining, we place a question mark (?) after each of the optional values within the chain. The following example shows how to use optional chaining to make the preceding example much cleaner and easier to read:

```
if let color = jon.pet?.collar?.color {  
    print("The color of the collar is \(color)")  
} else {  
    print("Cannot retrieve color")  
}
```

In this example, we put a question mark after the `pet` and `collar` properties to signify that they are of the optional type and that, if either value is `nil`, the whole chain will return `nil`. This code would also print out the `The color of the collar is red` message; however, it is much easier to read than the preceding example because it clearly shows us what optionals we are dependent on.

Summary

In this chapter, we took an in-depth look at classes and structures. We saw what makes them so similar and also what makes them so different. In the upcoming chapters, it will be important to remember that classes are reference types while structures are value types. We also looked at protocols and extensions. As this chapter ends, we end the introduction to the Swift programming language. At this point, we have enough knowledge of the Swift language to begin writing our own applications; however, there is still much to learn. In the following chapters, we will look in more depth at some of the concepts that we've already discussed, such as protocols and subscripts. We will also see how we can use protocol-oriented programming techniques to write easy-to-manage code. Finally, we will have chapters that will help us write better code, such as a sample Swift style guide, and a chapter on design patterns.

8

Using Protocols and Protocol Extensions

While watching the presentations from WWDC 2015 about protocol extensions and **protocol-oriented programming (POP)**, I will admit that I was very skeptical. I have worked with **object-oriented programming (OOP)** for so long that I was unsure whether this new programming paradigm would solve all of the problems that Apple was claiming it would. Since I am not one who lets my skepticism get in the way of trying something new, I set up a new project that mirrored the one I was currently working on, but wrote the code using Apple's recommendations for POP. I also used protocol extensions extensively in the code. I can honestly say that I was amazed by how much cleaner the new project was compared to the original one. I believe that protocol extensions are going to be one of those defining features that set one programming language apart from the rest. I also believe that many major languages will soon have similar features.

In this chapter, you will learn about the following topics:

- How are protocols used as a type?
- How do we implement polymorphism in Swift using protocols?
- How do we use protocol extensions?
- Why we would want to use protocol extensions?

While protocol extensions are basically syntactic sugar, they are, in my opinion, one of the most important additions to the Swift programming language. With protocol extensions, we are able to provide method and property implementations to any type that conforms to a protocol. To really understand how useful protocols and protocol extensions are, let's get a better understanding of protocols.

While classes, structures, and enumerations can all conform to protocols in Swift, for this chapter, we will be focusing on classes and structures. Enumerations are used when we need to represent a finite number of cases, and while there are valid use cases where we would have an enumeration conform to a protocol, they are very rare in my experience. Just remember that anywhere we refer to a class or structure, we can also use an enumeration.

Let's begin exploring protocols by seeing how they are full-fledged types in Swift.

Protocols as types

Even though no functionality is implemented in a protocol, they are still considered a full fledged type in the Swift programming language and can be used like any other type. This means that we can use protocols as a parameter type or as a return type in a function.

We can also use them as the type for variables, constants, and collections. Let's take a look at some examples. For these few examples, we will use the following `PersonProtocol` protocol:

```
protocol PersonProtocol {  
    var firstName: String { get set }  
    var lastName: String { get set }  
    var birthDate: Date { get set }  
    var profession: String { get }  
    init(firstName: String, lastName: String, birthDate: Date)  
}
```

In this first example, a protocol is used as a parameter type and a return type for a function:

```
func updatePerson(person: PersonProtocol) -> PersonProtocol {  
    // Code to update person goes here return person  
}
```

In this example, the `updatePerson()` function accepts one parameter of the `PersonProtocol` protocol type and returns a value of the `PersonProtocol` protocol type. This next example shows how to use a protocol as a type for constants, variables, or properties:

```
var myPerson: PersonProtocol
```

In this example, we create a variable of the `PersonProtocol` protocol type that is named `myPerson`. Protocols can also be used as the item type for storing a collection, such as arrays, dictionaries, or sets:

```
var people: [PersonProtocol] = []
```

In this final example, we created an array of the `PersonProtocol` protocol type. Even though the `PersonProtocol` protocol does not implement any functionality, we can still use protocols when we need to specify a type. However, a protocol cannot be instantiated in the same way as a class or a structure. This is because no functionality is implemented in a protocol. As an example, when trying to create an instance of the `PersonProtocol` protocol, as shown in the following example, we would receive a compile-time error:

```
var test = PersonProtocol(firstName: "Jon", lastName: "Hoffman",
    birthDate:bDateProgrammer)
```

We can use the instance of any type that conforms to our protocol wherever the protocol type is required. As an example, if we've defined a variable to be of the `PersonProtocol` protocol type, we can then populate that variable with any class or structure that conforms to this protocol. For this example, let's assume that we have two types, named `SwiftProgrammer` and `FootballPlayer`, that conform to the `PersonProtocol` protocol:

```
var myPerson: PersonProtocol

myPerson = SwiftProgrammer(firstName: "Jon", lastName: "Hoffman",
    birthDate: bDateProgrammer)
print("\(myPerson.firstName) \(myPerson.lastName)")

myPerson = FootballPlayer(firstName: "Dan", lastName: "Marino",
    birthDate:bDatePlayer)
print("\(myPerson.firstName) \(myPerson.lastName)")
```

In this example, we start off by creating the `myPerson` variable of the `PersonProtocol` protocol type. We then set the variable with an instance of the `SwiftProgrammer` type and print out the first and last names. Next, we set the `myPerson` variable to an instance of the `FootballPlayer` type and print out the first and last names again. One thing to note is that Swift does not care whether the instance is a class or structure. The only thing that matters is that the type conforms to the `PersonProtocol` protocol type.

We can use the `PersonProtocol` protocol as the type for an array, which means that we can populate the array with instances of any type that conforms to the protocol. Once again, it does not matter whether the type is a class or a structure, as long as it conforms to the `PersonProtocol` protocol.

Polymorphism with protocols

What we saw in the previous examples is a form of polymorphism. The word *polymorphism* comes from the Greek roots *poly*, meaning many, and *morphe*, meaning form. In programming languages, polymorphism is a single interface to multiple types (many forms). In the previous example, the single interface was the `PersonProtocol` protocol and the multiple types were any type that conforms to that protocol.

Polymorphism gives us the ability to interact with multiple types in a uniform manner. To illustrate this, we can extend the previous example where we created an array of the `PersonProtocol` types and looped through the array. We can then access each item in the array using the properties and methods defined in the `PersonProtocol` protocol, regardless of the actual type. Let's see an example of this:

```
for person in people {  
    print("\(person.firstName) \(person.lastName) : \(person.profession)")  
}
```

When we define the type of a variable, constant, collection type, and so on to be a protocol type, we can use the instance of any type that conforms to that protocol. This is a very important concept to understand, and is one of the many things that make protocols and protocol extensions so powerful.

When we use a protocol to access instances, as shown in the previous example, we are limited to using only properties and methods that are defined in the protocol itself. If we want to use properties or methods that are specific to the individual types, we need to cast the instance to that type.

Type casting with protocols

Typecasting is a way to check the type of the instance and/or to treat the instance as a specified type. In Swift, we use the `is` keyword to check whether an instance is a specific type, and the `as` keyword to treat the instance as a specific type.

To start, let's see how we would check the instance type using the `is` keyword. The following example shows how this is done:

```
for person in people {  
    if let p = person as? SwiftProgrammer {  
        print("\(person.firstName) is a Swift Programmer")  
    }  
}
```

In this example, we use the `if` conditional statement to check whether each element in the `people` array is an instance of the `SwiftProgrammer` type and, if so, we print that the person is a Swift programmer to the console. While this is a good method to check whether we have an instance of a specific class or structure, it is not very efficient if we want to check for multiple types. It would be more efficient to use a `switch` statement, as shown in the next example:

```
for person in people {  
    switch person {  
        case is SwiftProgrammer:  
            print("\(person.firstName) is a Swift Programmer")  
        case is FootballPlayer:  
            print("\(person.firstName) is a Football Player")  
        default:  
            print("\(person.firstName) is an unknown type")  
    }  
}
```

In the previous example, we showed how to use the `switch` statement to check the instance type for each element of the array. To do this check, we use the `is` keyword in each of the `case` statements in an attempt to match the instance type.

In Chapter 5, *Control Flow*, we saw how to filter conditional statements with the `where` statement. We can also use the `where` statement with the `is` keyword to filter the array, as shown in the following example:

```
for person in people where person is SwiftProgrammer {  
    print("\(person.firstName) is a Swift Programmer")  
}
```

Now let's look at how we can cast an instance of a class or structure to a specific type. To do this, we would use the `as` keyword. Since the cast can fail if the instance is not of the specified type, the `as` keyword comes in two forms: `as?` and `as!`. With the `as?` form, if the casting fails, it returns a `nil`, and with the `as!` form, if the casting fails, we get a runtime error. Therefore, it is recommended to use the `as?` form unless we are absolutely sure of the instance type or we perform a check of the instance type prior to doing the cast.



While we do show examples of typecasting with `as!` in this book, so you are aware that it is there, we highly recommend that you do not use it in your projects because it can cause a runtime error.

Let's look at how we would use the `as?` keyword to cast an instance of a class or structure to a specified type:

```
for person in people {
    if let p = person as? SwiftProgrammer {
        print("\(person.firstName) is a Swift Programmer")
    }
}
```

Since the `as?` keyword returns an optional, we use optional binding to perform the cast, as shown in this example.

Now that we have covered the basics of protocols, let's dive into one of the most exciting features of Swift: protocol extensions.

Protocol extensions

Protocol extensions allow us to extend a protocol to provide method and property implementations to conforming types. They also allow us to provide common implementations to all the conforming types, eliminating the need to provide an implementation in each individual type or the need to create a class hierarchy. While protocol extensions may not seem too exciting, once you see how powerful they really are, they will transform the way you think about and write code.

Let's begin by looking at how we would use protocol extensions within a very simplistic example. We will start by defining a protocol named `Dog`, as follows:

```
protocol Dog {
    var name: String { get set }
    var color: String { get set }
}
```

With this protocol, we state that any type that conforms to the `Dog` protocol must have the two properties of the `String` type, named `name` and `color`. Next, let's define the three types that conform to this `Dog` protocol. We will name these types `JackRussel`, `WhiteLab`, and `Mutt`. The following code shows how we would define these types:

```
struct JackRussel: Dog{
    var name: String
    var color: String
}

class WhiteLab: Dog{
    var name: String
```

```
var color: String
init(name: String, color: String) {
    self.name = name
    self.color = color
}
}

struct Mutt: Dog{
    var name: String
    var color: String
}
```

We purposely created the `JackRussel` and `Mutt` types as structures and the `WhiteLab` type as a class to show the differences between how the two types are set up, and to illustrate how they are treated the same when it comes to protocols and protocol extensions.

The biggest difference we can see in this example is that structure types provide a default initiator, but in the class we must provide the initiator to populate the properties.

Now let's say that we want to provide a method named `speak` to each type that conforms to the protocol. Prior to protocol extensions, we would have started off by adding the method definition to the protocol, as shown in the following code:

```
protocol Dog{
    var name: String { get set }
    var color: String { get set }
    func speak() -> String
}
```

Once the method is defined in the protocol, we would then need to provide an implementation of the method in every type that conforms to the protocol. Depending on the number of types that conformed to this protocol, this could take a bit of time to implement and it could affect a lot of code. The following code sample shows how we might implement this method:

```
struct JackRussel: Dog{
    var name: String
    var color: String
    func speak() -> String {
        return "Woof Woof"
    }
}

class WhiteLab: Dog{
    var name: String
    var color: String
```

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

func speak() -> String {
    return "Woof Woof"
}
}

struct Mutt: Dog{
    var name: String
    var color: String
    func speak() -> String {
        return "Woof Woof"
    }
}
```

While this method works, it is not very efficient because any time we update the protocol, we need to update all the types that conform to it, and therefore duplicate a lot of code, as shown in this example. If we need to change the default behavior of the `speak()` method, we would have to go into each implementation and change the method. This is where protocol extensions come in.

With protocol extensions, we could take the `speak()` method definition out of the protocol itself and define it with the default behavior in the protocol extension.



If we are implementing a method in a protocol extension, we are not required to define it in the protocol.

The following code shows how we would define the protocol and the protocol extension:

```
protocol Dog{
    var name: String { get set }
    var color: String { get set }
}

extension Dog{
    func speak() -> String {
        return "Woof Woof"
    }
}
```

We begin by defining the `Dog` protocol with the original two properties. We then create a protocol extension that extends it and contains the default implementation of the `speak()` method. With this code, there is no need to provide an implementation of the `speak()` method in all of the types that conform to the `Dog` protocol, because they automatically receive the implementation as part of the protocol.

Let's see how this works by setting the three types that conform to the `Dog` protocol back to their original implementations, then they should receive the `speak()` method from the protocol extension:

```
struct JackRussel: Dog{
    var name: String
    var color: String
}
class WhiteLab: Dog{
    var name: String
    var color: String
    init(name: String, color: String) {
        self.name = name
        self.color = color
    }
}

struct Mutt: Dog{
    var name: String
    var color: String
}
```

We can now use each of the types, as shown in the following code:

```
let dash = JackRussel(name: "Dash", color: "Brown and White")
let lily = WhiteLab(name: "Lily", color: "White")
let maple = Mutt(name: "Buddy", color: "Brown")

let dSpeak = dash.speak() // returns "woof woof"
let lSpeak = lily.speak() // returns "woof woof"
let bSpeak = maple.speak() // returns "woof woof"
```

As we can see in this example, by adding the `speak()` method to the `Dog` protocol extension, we are automatically adding that method to all the types that conform to the protocol. The `speak()` method in the protocol extension can be considered a default implementation of the method because we are able to override it in the type implementations. As an example, we could override the `speak()` method in the `Mutt` structure, as shown in the following code:

```
struct Mutt: Dog{
    var name: String
    var color: String
    func speak() -> String {
        return "I am hungry"
    }
}
```

When we call the `speak()` method for an instance of the `Mutt` type, it will return the `I am hungry` string.



In this chapter, we named our protocols with the protocol suffix. This was done to make it very clear that this was a protocol. This is not how we would normally name our types. The following example gives a better example of how we would properly name protocols. You can read additional information about Swift's naming conventions in the Swift API design guidelines: <https://swift.org/documentation/api-design-guidelines/#general-conventions>.

Now that we have seen how to use protocols and protocol extensions, let's look at a more real-world example. In numerous apps across multiple platforms (iOS, Android, and Windows), I have needed to validate user input as it is entered. This validation can be done very easily with regular expressions; however, we do not want various regular expressions littered throughout our code. It is very easy to solve this problem by creating different classes or structures that contain the validation code; however, we would have to organize these types to make them easy to use and maintain. Prior to protocol extensions in Swift, I would use a protocol to define the validation requirements and then create structures that would conform to the protocol for each validation that I needed. Let's look at this pre-protocol extension method.



A regular expression is a sequence of characters that defines a particular pattern. This pattern can then be used to search a string to see whether the string matches the pattern or contains a match of the pattern. Most major programming languages contain a regular expression parser, and if you are not familiar with regular expressions, it may be worthwhile to learn more about them.

The following code shows the `TextValidating` protocol that defines the requirements for any type that we want to use for text validation:

```
protocol TextValidating {  
    var regExMatchingString: String { get }  
    var regExFindMatchString: String { get }  
    var validationMessage: String { get }  
    func validateString(str: String) -> Bool  
    func getMatchingString(str: String) -> String?  
}
```

The Swift API design guidelines (<https://swift.org/documentation/api-design-guidelines/>) state that protocols that describe what something is should be named as a noun, while protocols that describe a capability should be named with a suffix of -able, -ible, or -ing. With this in mind, we named the text validation protocol `TextValidating`.

In this protocol, we define three properties and two methods that any type that conforms to a protocol must implement. The three properties are as follows:

- `regExMatchingString`: This is a regular expression string used to verify that the input string contains only valid characters.
- `regExFindMatchString`: This is a regular expression string used to retrieve a new string from the input string that contains only valid characters. This regular expression is generally used when we need to validate the input in real-time as the user enters information, because it will find the longest matching prefix of the input string.
- `validationMessage`: This is the error message to display if the input string contains non-valid characters.

The two methods for this protocol are as follows:

- `validateString`: This method will return `true` if the input string contains only valid characters. The `regExMatchingString` property will be used in this method to perform the match.
- `getMatchingString`: This method will return a new string that contains only valid characters. This method is generally used when we need to validate the input in real-time as the user enters information because it will find the longest matching prefix of the input string. We will use the `regExFindMatchString` property in this method to retrieve the new string.

Now let's see how we can create a structure that conforms to this protocol. The following structure would be used to verify that the input string contains only alpha characters:

```
struct AlphaValidation1: TextValidating {
    static let sharedInstance = AlphaValidation1()
    private init(){}
    let regExFindMatchString = "[a-zA-Z]{0,10}"
    let validationMessage = "Can only contain Alpha characters"
    var regExMatchingString: String {
        get {
            return regExFindMatchString + "$"
        }
    }
    func validateString(str: String) -> Bool {
        if let _ = str.range(of: regExMatchingString, options:
            .regularExpression) {
            return true
        } else {
            return false
        }
    }
    func getMatchingString(str: String) -> String? {
        if let newMatch = str.range(of: regExFindMatchString,
            options:.regularExpression) {
            return String(str[newMatch])
        } else {
            return nil
        }
    }
}
```

In this implementation, the `regExFindMatchString` and `validationMessage` properties are stored properties, and the `regExMatchingString` property is a computed property. We also implement the `validateString()` and `getMatchingString()` methods within the structure.

Normally, we would have several different types that conform to the protocol, where each one would validate a different type of input. As we can see from the `AlphaValidation1` structure, there is a bit of code involved with each validation type. A lot of the code would also be duplicated in each type. The code for both methods and the `regExMatchingString` property would probably be duplicated in every validation class. This is not ideal, but if we want to avoid creating a class hierarchy with a superclass that contains the duplicate code (it is recommended that we prefer value types over reference types), prior to protocol extensions, we have no other choice. Now let's see how we would implement this using protocol extensions.

With protocol extensions, we need to think about the code a little differently. The big difference is that we neither need nor want to define everything in the protocol. With standard protocols, all the methods and properties that you would want to access using a protocol interface would have to be defined within the protocol.

With protocol extensions, it is preferable for us to not define a property or method in the protocol if we are going to be defining it within the protocol extension. Therefore, when we rewrite our text validation types with protocol extensions, `TextValidating` would be greatly simplified to look like this:

```
protocol TextValidating {  
    var regExFindMatchString: String { get }  
    var validationMessage: String { get }  
}
```

In the original `TextValidating` protocol, we defined three properties and two methods. As we can see in this new protocol, we are only defining two properties. Now that we have our `TextValidating` protocol defined, let's create the protocol extension for it:

```
extension TextValidating {  
    var regExMatchingString: String {  
        get {  
            return regExFindMatchString + "$"  
        }  
    }  
    func validateString(str: String) -> Bool {  
        if let _ = str.range(of:regExMatchingString,  
                            options:.regularExpression) {  
            return true  
        } else {  
            return false  
        }  
    }  
    func getMatchingString(str: String) -> String? {  
        if let newMatch = str.range(of:regExFindMatchString,  
                                    options:.regularExpression) {  
            return str.substring(with: newMatch)  
        } else {  
            return nil  
        }  
    }  
}
```

In the `TextValidating` protocol extension, we define the two methods and the property that were defined in the original `TextValidating` protocol but were not defined in the new one. Now that we have created the protocol and protocol extension, we are able to define our new text validation types. In the following code, we define three structures that we will use to validate text as a user types it in:

```
struct AlphaValidation: TextValidating {
    static let sharedInstance = AlphaValidation()
    private init(){}
    let regExFindMatchString = "[a-zA-Z]{0,10}"
    let validationMessage = "Can only contain Alpha characters"
}

struct AlphaNumericValidation: TextValidating {
    static let sharedInstance = AlphaNumericValidation()
    private init(){}
    let regExFindMatchString = "[a-zA-Z0-9]{0,15}"
    let validationMessage = "Can only contain Alpha Numeric characters"
}

struct DisplayNameValidation: TextValidating {
    static let sharedInstance = DisplayNameValidation()
    private init(){}
    let regExFindMatchString = "[\\s?[a-zA-Z0-9\\-_\\s]]{0,15}"
    let validationMessage = "Can only contain Alphanumeric Characters"
}
```

In each of the text-validation structures, we create a static constant and a private initializer so that we can use the structure as a singleton. For more information on the singleton pattern, please see *The singleton design pattern* section of Chapter 18, *Adopting Design Patterns in Swift*.

After we define the singleton pattern, all we do in each type is set the values for the `regExFindMatchString` and `validationMessage` properties. Now we have virtually no duplicate code. The only code that is duplicated is the code for the singleton pattern and that is not something we would want to put in the protocol extension because we would not want to force the singleton pattern on all the conforming types.

We can now use the text validation types, as shown in the following code:

```
var testString = "abc123"

var alpha = AlphaValidation.sharedInstance
alpha.getMatchingString(str:testString)
alpha.validateString(str: testString)
```

In the previous code snippet, a new string is created to validate and get the shared instance of the `AlphaValidation` type. Then `getMatchingString()` is used to retrieve the longest matching prefix of the test string, which will be `acbc`. Then, the `validateString()` method is used to validate the test string, but since the test string contains numbers, the method will return `false`.

Do I need to use protocols?

Do you need to use protocols and protocol extensions when you already know OOP? The short answer is no; however, it is highly recommended. In *Chapter 9, Protocol Oriented Design*, we look at what makes protocol-oriented design so powerful to show you why you should prefer protocols with POP over OOP. By understanding protocols and protocol-oriented design, you will understand the Swift standard library better.

Swift's standard library

The Swift standard library defines a base layer of functionality for writing Swift applications. Everything we have used so far in this book is from the Swift standard library. The library defines the fundamental data types, such as the `String`, `Int`, and `Double` types. It also defines collections, optional, global functions, and all the protocols that these types conform to.

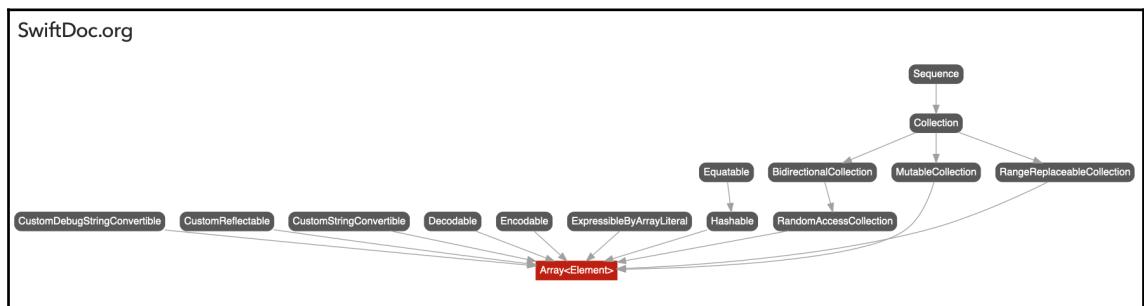
One of the best sites to see everything that makes up the standard library is <http://swiftdoc.org>. This site lists all the types, protocols, operators, and globals that make up the standard library and contains documentation for all of it.

Let's look at how protocols are used in the standard library by looking at the documentation. When you first visit the home page, you will be greeted with a searchable list of everything that makes up the standard library. There is also a complete list of all Swift types that you can select from. Let's look at the Swift `Array` type by clicking on the `Array` link. This will take you to the documentation page for the `Array` type.

These documentation pages are extremely useful and contain a lot of information about the various types that make up the standard library, including samples of how to use them. For our discussion, we are interested in the section labeled **Inheritance**:

Inheritance	BidirectionalCollection , Collection , CustomDebugStringConvertible , CustomReflectable , CustomStringConvertible , ExpressibleByArrayLiteral , MutableCollection , RandomAccessCollection , RangeReplaceableCollection , Sequence
VIEW PROTOCOL HIERARCHY →	

As we can see, the `Array` type conforms to 14 protocols, but this only shows us a small part of the picture. If we click on the view protocol hierarchy link, we can see the full protocol hierarchy that the array conforms to. This hierarchy looks like this:



From what you have learned in this and previous chapters, you should be able to understand this diagram; however, you may not understand why the hierarchy is laid out like it is. In the next chapter, *Protocol Oriented Design*, we will look at how to design our applications and frameworks using a protocol-oriented approach. At the end of that chapter, we will take a closer look at this protocol hierarchy.

Summary

In this chapter, we saw that protocols are treated as full-fledged types by Swift. We also saw how polymorphism can be implemented in Swift with protocols. We concluded this chapter with an in-depth look at protocol extensions and saw how we would use them in Swift. Protocols and protocol extensions are the backbone of Apple's new POP paradigm. This new model for programming has the potential to change the way we write and think about code. While we did not specifically cover POP in this chapter, getting to grips with the topics in this chapter gives us the solid understanding of protocols and protocol extensions needed to learn about this new programming model. In the next chapter, we will look at how to use protocols and protocol extensions when we are designing our application.

9

Protocol Oriented Design

When Apple announced Swift 2 at the **World Wide Developers Conference (WWDC)** in 2016, they also declared that Swift was the world's first **protocol-oriented programming (POP)** language. By its name, we might assume that protocol-oriented programming is all about protocol; however, that would be a wrong assumption. Protocol-oriented programming is about so much more than just protocol; it is actually a new way of not only writing applications, but also thinking about programming.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What is the difference between OOP and POP design?
- What is protocol-oriented design?
- What is protocol composition?
- What is protocol inheritance?

Days after *Dave Abrahams* did his presentation on POP at WWDC 2016, there were numerous tutorials on the internet about POP that took a very object-oriented approach to it. By this statement, I mean the approach taken by these tutorials focused on replacing the superclass with protocols and protocol extensions. While protocols and protocol extensions are arguably two of the more important concepts of POP, these tutorials seem to be missing some very important concepts.

In this chapter, we will be comparing a protocol-oriented design with an object-oriented design to highlight some of the conceptual differences between the two. We will look at how we can use protocols and protocol extensions to replace superclasses, and how we can use POP to create a cleaner and easier-to-maintain code base. To do this, we will look at how to define animal types for a video game in both an object-oriented and a protocol-oriented way. Let's start off by defining the requirements for our animals.

Requirements

When we develop applications, we usually have a set of requirements that we need to develop toward. With that in mind, let's define the requirements for the animal types that we will be creating in this chapter:

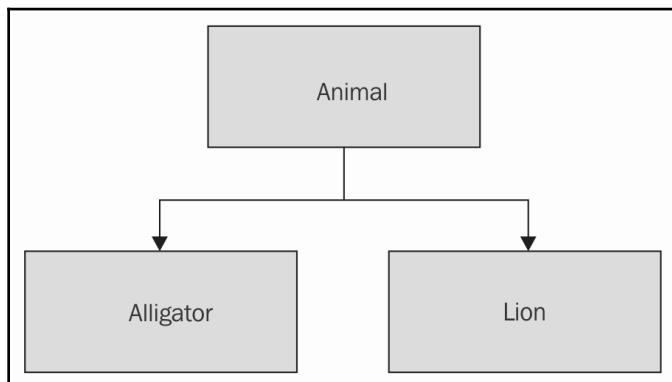
- We will have three categories of animals: sea, land, and air.
- Animals may be members of multiple categories. For example, an alligator can be a member of both the land and sea categories.
- Animals may attack and/or move when they are on a tile that matches the categories they are in.
- Animals will start off with a certain number of hit points, and if those hit points reach 0 or less, then they will be considered dead.

For our example here, we will define two animals, the Lion and Alligator, but we know that the number of animal types will grow as we develop the game.

We will start off by looking at how we would design our animal types using an object-oriented approach.

Object-oriented design

Before we start writing code, let's create a very basic diagram that shows how we would design the **Animal** class hierarchy. In this diagram, we will simply show the classes without much detail. This diagram will help us picture the class hierarchy in our mind. The following diagram shows the class hierarchy for the object-oriented design:



This diagram shows that we have one superclass named `Animal`, and two subclasses named `Alligator` and `Lion`. We may think with the three categories (land, air, and sea) that we would want to create a larger class hierarchy where the middle layer would contain the classes for the land, air, and sea animals. This would allow us to separate the code for each animal category; however, that is not possible with our requirements. The reason this is not possible is that any of the animal types can be members of multiple categories, and with a class hierarchy, each class can have one and only one superclass. This means that the `Animal` superclass will need to contain the code required for each of the three categories.

Let's begin by looking at the code for the `Animal` superclass.

We will start the `Animal` superclass by defining 10 properties. These properties will define what type of animal it is and what type of attacks/movements it can do. We also define a property that will keep track of the hit points for the animal.

We defined these properties as `fileprivate` variables. We will need to set these properties in the subclasses that we defined in the same source file; however, we do not want external entities to change them. The preference is for these to be constants, but with an object-oriented approach; a subclass cannot set/change the value of a constant defined in a superclass. For this to work, the subclass will need to be defined in the same physical file as the superclass. You can read about `fileprivate` access control within the proposal at <https://github.com/apple/swift-evolution/blob/master/proposals/25-scoped-access-level.md>:

```
class Animal {  
    fileprivate var landAnimal = false  
    fileprivate var landAttack = false  
    fileprivate var landMovement = false  
  
    fileprivate var seaAnimal = false  
    fileprivate var seaAttack = false  
    fileprivate var seaMovement = false  
  
    fileprivate var airAnimal = false  
    fileprivate var airAttack = false  
    fileprivate var airMovement = false  
  
    fileprivate var hitPoints = 0  
}
```

Next, we will define an initializer that will set the properties. We will set all the properties to false by default, and the hit points to zero. It will be up to the subclasses to set the appropriate properties that apply:

```
init() {
    landAnimal = false
    landAttack = false
    landMovement = false
    airAnimal = false
    airAttack = false
    airMovement = false
    seaAnimal = false
    seaAttack = false
    seaMovement = false
    hitPoints = 0
}
```

Since our properties are fileprivate, we need to create some getter methods so that we can retrieve their values. We will also create a couple of additional methods that will see if the animal is alive. We will need another method that will deduct hit points when the animal takes a hit:

```
func isLandAnimal() -> Bool {
    return landAnimal
}
func canLandAttack() -> Bool {
    return landAttack
}
func canLandMove() -> Bool {
    return landMovement
}
func isSeaAnimal() -> Bool {
    return seaAnimal
}
func canSeaAttack() -> Bool {
    return seaAttack
}
func canSeaMove() -> Bool {
    return seaMovement
}
func isAirAnimal() -> Bool {
    return airAnimal
}
func canAirAttack() -> Bool {
    return airAttack
}
func canAirMove() -> Bool {
```

```
        return airMovement
    }
    func doLandAttack() {}
    func doLandMovement() {}
    func doSeaAttack() {}
    func doSeaMovement() {}
    func doAirAttack() {}
    func doAirMovement() {}
    func takeHit(amount: Int) {
        hitPoints -= amount
    }
    func hitPointsRemaining() -> Int {
        return hitPoints
    }
    func isAlive() -> Bool {
        return hitPoints > 0 ? true : false
    }
}
```

One big disadvantage of this design, as noted previously, is that all the subclasses need to be in the same physical file as the `Animal` superclass. Considering how large the animal classes can be once we get in all of the game logic, we probably do not want all of these types in the same file. To avoid this, we could set the properties to internal or public, but that would not prevent the values from being changed by instances of other types. This is a major drawback of our object-oriented design.

Now that we have our `Animal` superclass, we can create the `Alligator` and `Lion` classes, which will be subclasses of the `Animal` class:

```
class Lion: Animal {
    override init() {
        super.init()
        landAnimal = true
        landAttack = true
        landMovement = true
        hitPoints = 20
    }
    override func doLandAttack() {
        print("Lion Attack")
    }
    override func doLandMovement() {
        print("Lion Move")
    }
}

class Alligator: Animal {
    override init() {
        super.init()
```

```
        landAnimal = true
        landAttack = true
        landMovement = true
        seaAnimal = true
        seaAttack = true
        seaMovement = true
        hitPoints = 35
    }
    override func doLandAttack() {
        print("Alligator Land Attack")
    }
    override func doLandMovement() {
        print("Alligator Land Move")
    }
    override func doSeaAttack() {
        print("Alligator Sea Attack")
    }
    override func doSeaMovement() {
        print("Alligator Sea Move")
    }
}
```

As we can see, these classes set the functionality needed for each animal. The `Lion` class contains the functionality for a land animal and the `Alligator` class contains the functionality for both land and sea animals.

Another disadvantage of this object-oriented design is that we do not have a single point that defines what type of animal (air, land, or sea) this is. It is very easy to set the wrong flag or add the wrong function when we cut and paste, or type in the code. This may lead us to have an animal like this:

```
class landAnimal: Animal {
    override init() {
        super.init()
        landAnimal = true
        airAttack = true
        landMovement = true
        hitPoints = 20
    }
    override func doLandAttack() {
        print("Lion Attack")
    }
    override func doLandMovement() {
        print("Lion Move")
    }
}
```

In the previous code, we set the `landAnimal` property to true; however, we accidentally set `airAttack` to true as well. This will give us an animal that can move on land, but cannot attack, since the `landAttack` property is not set. Hopefully, we would catch these types of errors in testing; however, as we will see later in this chapter, a protocol-oriented approach would help prevent coding errors like this.

Since both classes have the same `Animal` superclass, we can use polymorphism to access them through the interface provided by the `Animal` superclass:

```
var animals = [Animal]()
animals.append(Alligator())
animals.append(Alligator())
animals.append(Lion())

for (index, animal) in animals.enumerated() {
    if animal.isAirAnimal() {
        print("Animal at \(index) is Air")
    }
    if animal.isLandAnimal() {
        print("Animal at \(index) is Land")
    }
    if animal.isSeaAnimal() {
        print("Animal at \(index) is Sea")
    }
}
```

The way we designed the animal types here would work; however, there are several drawbacks in this design. The first drawback is the large monolithic `Animal` superclass. Those who are familiar with designing characters for video games probably realize how much functionality is missing from this superclass and its subclasses. This is on purpose, so that we can focus on the design and not the functionality. For those who are not familiar with designing characters for video games, trust me when I say that this class may get very large.

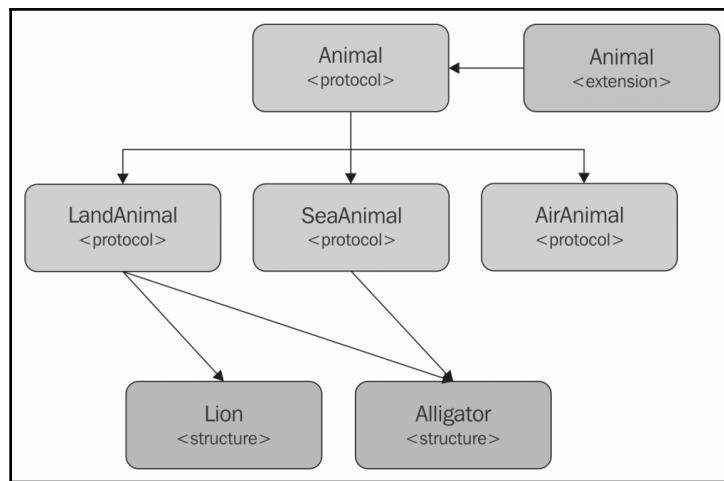
Another drawback is not being able to define constants in the superclass that the subclasses can set. We could define various initializers for the superclass that would correctly set the constants for the different animal categories; however, these initializers will become pretty complex and hard to maintain as we add more animals. The builder pattern could help us with the initialization, but as we are about to see, a protocol-oriented design would be even better.

One final drawback that I am going to point out is the use of flags (`landAnimal`, `seaAnimal`, and `airAnimal` properties) to define the type of animal, and the type of attack and movements an animal can perform. If we do not correctly set these flags, then the animal will not behave correctly. As an example, if we set the `seaAnimal` flag rather than the `landAnimal` flag in the `Lion` class, then the lion will not be able to move or attack on land. Trust me, it is very easy, even for the most experienced developers, to set flags wrongly.

Now let's look at how we would define this same functionality in a protocol-oriented way.

Protocol-oriented design

Just like our object-oriented design, we will start off with a diagram that shows the types needed and the relationships between them. The following diagram shows our protocol-oriented design:



As we can see, the POP design is quite different from the OOP design. In this design, we use three techniques that make POP significantly different from OOP. These techniques are protocol inheritance, protocol composition, and protocol extensions. We looked at protocol extensions in the previous chapter, but we have not covered protocol inheritance or composition yet. It is important to understand these concepts, so before we go into the design, let's look at what protocol inheritance and protocol composition are.

Protocol inheritance

Protocol inheritance is where one protocol can inherit the requirements from one or more protocols. This is similar to class inheritance in OOP, but instead of inheriting functionality, we are inheriting requirements. We can also inherit requirements from multiple protocols, whereas a class in Swift can have only one superclass. Let's start off by defining four protocols, named `Name`, `Age`, `Fur`, and `Hair`:

```
protocol Name {
    var firstName: String { get set }
    var lastName: String { get set }
}

protocol Age {
    var age: Double { get set }
}

protocol Fur {
    var furColor: String { get set }
}

protocol Hair {
    var hairColor: String { get set }
}
```

Each of the four protocols has different requirements.



There is one thing that I would like to point out. If you find yourself creating protocols with single requirements (as shown in this example), you probably want to reconsider your overall design. Protocols should not be this granular because we end up with too many protocols and they become hard to manage. We are using smaller protocols here as examples.

Now let's look at how we can use these protocols and protocol inheritance to create additional protocols. We will define two more protocols, named `Person` and `Dog`:

```
protocol Person: Name, Age, Hair {
    var height: Double { get set }
}

protocol Dog: Name, Age, Fur {
    var breed: String { get set }
}
```

In this example, any type that conforms to the Person protocol will need to fulfill the requirements of the Name, Age, and Hair protocols, as well as the requirements defined within the Person protocol itself. Any type that conforms to the Dog protocol will need to fulfill the requirements of the Name, Age, and Fur protocols as well as the requirements defined within the Dog protocol itself. This is the basis of protocol inheritance, where we can have one protocol inherit the requirements of one or more protocols.

Protocol inheritance is extremely powerful because we can define several smaller protocols and mix/match them to create larger protocols. You will want to be careful not to create protocols that are too granular because they will become hard to maintain and manage.

Protocol composition

Protocol composition allows types to conform to more than one protocol. This is one of the many advantages that protocol-oriented design has over object-oriented design. With object-oriented design, a class can have only one superclass. This can lead to very large, monolithic superclasses, as we saw in the *Object-oriented design* section of this chapter. With protocol-oriented design, we are encouraged to create multiple smaller protocols with very specific requirements. Let's look at how protocol composition works. Let's add another protocol, named Occupation, to our example from the *Protocol inheritance* section:

```
protocol Occupation {  
    var occupationName: String { get set }  
    var yearlySalary: Double { get set }  
    var experienceYears: Double { get set }  
}
```

Next let's create a new type named Programmer that will conform to both the Person and Occupation protocols:

```
struct Programmer: Person, Occupation {  
    var firstName: String  
    var lastName: String  
    var age: Double  
    var hairColor: String  
    var height: Double  
    var occupationName: String  
    var yearlySalary: Double  
    var experienceYears: Double  
}
```

In this example, the `Programmer` structure conforms to all the requirements from both the `Person` and `Occupation` protocols. Keep in mind that the `Person` protocol is a composite of the requirements from the `Name`, `Age`, `Hair`, and `Person` protocols; therefore, the `Programmer` type will need to conform to all those protocols plus the `Occupation` protocol.

Once again, I want to warn you not to make your protocols too granular. Protocol inheritance and composition are really powerful features but can also cause problems if used wrongly.

Protocol composition and inheritance may not seem that powerful on their own; however, when we combine them with protocol extensions, we have a very powerful programming paradigm. Let's look at how powerful this paradigm is.

Protocol-oriented design

We will begin by rewriting the `Animal` superclass as a protocol:

```
protocol Animal {  
    var hitPoints: Int { get set }  
}
```

In the `Animal` protocol, the only item that we are defining is the `hitPoints` property. If we were putting in all the requirements for an animal in a video game, this protocol would contain all the requirements that would be common to every animal. To be consistent with our object-oriented design, we only need to add the `hitPoints` property to this protocol.

Next, we need to add an `Animal` protocol extension, which will contain the functionality that is common for all types that conform to the protocol. Our `Animal` protocol extension would contain the following code:

```
extension Animal {  
    mutating func takeHit(amount: Int) {  
        hitPoints -= amount  
    }  
    func hitPointsRemaining() -> Int {  
        return hitPoints  
    }  
    func isAlive() -> Bool {  
        return hitPoints > 0 ? true : false  
    }  
}
```

The `Animal` protocol extension contains the same `takeHit()`, `hitPointsRemaining()`, and `isAlive()` methods that we saw in the `Animal` superclass from the object-oriented example. Any type that conforms to the `Animal` protocol will automatically inherit these three methods.

Now let's define our `LandAnimal`, `SeaAnimal`, and `AirAnimal` protocols. These protocols will define the requirements for the land, sea, and air animals respectively:

```
protocol LandAnimal: Animal {  
    var landAttack: Bool { get }  
    var landMovement: Bool { get }  
  
    func doLandAttack()  
    func doLandMovement()  
}  
  
protocol SeaAnimal: Animal {  
    var seaAttack: Bool { get }  
    var seaMovement: Bool { get }  
  
    func doSeaAttack()  
    func doSeaMovement()  
}  
  
protocol AirAnimal: Animal {  
    var airAttack: Bool { get }  
    var airMovement: Bool { get }  
  
    func doAirAttack()  
    func doAirMovement()  
}
```

Unlike the `Animal` superclass in the object-oriented design, these three protocols only contain the functionality needed for their particular type of animal. Each of these protocols only contains four lines of code, while the `Animal` superclass from the object-oriented example contains significantly more. This makes our protocol design much easier to read and manage. The protocol design is also much safer because the functionality for the various animal types is isolated in their own protocol rather than being embedded in a giant superclass. We are also able to avoid the use of flags to define the animal category and, instead, define the category of the animal by the protocols it conforms to.

In a full design, we would probably need to add some protocol extensions for each of the animal types, but once again, to be consistent with our object-oriented design, we do not need them for our example here.

Now, let's look at how we would create our `Lion` and `Alligator` types using protocol-oriented design:

```
struct Lion: LandAnimal {
    var hitPoints = 20
    let landAttack = true
    let landMovement = true

    func doLandAttack() {
        print("Lion Attack")
    }
    func doLandMovement() {
        print("Lion Move")
    }
}

struct Alligator: LandAnimal, SeaAnimal {
    var hitPoints = 35
    let landAttack = true
    let landMovement = true
    let seaAttack = true
    let seaMovement = true

    func doLandAttack() {
        print("Alligator Land Attack")
    }
    func doLandMovement() {
        print("Alligator Land Move")
    }
    func doSeaAttack() {
        print("Alligator Sea Attack")
    }
    func doSeaMovement() {
        print("Alligator Sea Move")
    }
}
```

Notice that we specify that the `Lion` type conforms to the `LandAnimal` protocol, while the `Alligator` type conforms to both the `LandAnimal` and `SeaAnimal` protocols. As we saw previously, having a single type that conforms to multiple protocols is called **protocol composition**, and is what allows us to use smaller protocols, rather than one giant monolithic superclass, as we did in the object-oriented example.

Both the `Lion` and `Alligator` types originate from the `Animal` protocol; therefore, they will inherit the functionality added with the `Animal` protocol extension. If our animal type protocols also had extensions, then they would also inherit the function added by those extensions as well. With protocol inheritance, composition, and extensions, our concrete types contain only the functionality needed by the particular animal types that they conform to, unlike in the object-oriented design, where each animal would contain all of the functionality from the huge, single superclass.

Since the `Lion` and `Alligator` types originate from the `Animal` protocol, we can still use polymorphism as we did in the object-oriented example. Let's look at how this works:

```
var animals = [Animal]()

animals.append(Alligator())
animals.append(Alligator())
animals.append(Lion())

for (index, animal) in animals.enumerated() {
    if let _ = animal as? AirAnimal {
        print("Animal at \\" + String(index) + "\" is Air")
    }
    if let _ = animal as? LandAnimal {
        print("Animal at \\" + String(index) + "\" is Land")
    }
    if let _ = animal as? SeaAnimal {
        print("Animal at \\" + String(index) + "\" is Sea")
    }
}
```

In this example, we create an array that will contain `Animal` types named `animals`. We then create two instances of the `Alligator` type and one instance of the `Lion` type that are added to the `animals` array. Finally, we use a for-in loop to loop through the array and print out the animal type based on the protocol that the instance conforms to.

Using the `where` statement with protocols

With protocols, we are able to use the `where` statement to filter the instances of our types. For example, if we only want to get the instances that conform to the `SeaAnimal` protocol, we can create a `for` loop as follows:

```
for (index, animal) in animals.enumerated() where animal is SeaAnimal {
    print("Only Sea Animal: " + String(index))
}
```

This will retrieve only the animals that conform to the `SeaAnimal` protocol. This is a lot safer than using flags as we did in the object-oriented design example.

Structures versus classes

You may have noticed that in the object-oriented design we used classes, while in the protocol-oriented design example we used structures. Classes, which are reference types, are one of the pillars of object-oriented programming and every major object-oriented programming language uses them. For Swift, Apple has said that we should prefer value types (structures) to reference types (classes). While this may seem odd for anyone who has extensive experience with object-oriented programming, there are several good reasons for this recommendation.

The biggest reason, in my opinion, for using structures (value types) over classes is the performance gain we get. Value types do not incur the additional overhead for reference counting that reference types incur. Value types are also stored on the stack, which provides better performance as compared to reference types, which are stored on the heap. It is also worth noting that copying values is relatively cheap in Swift.

Keep in mind that, as our value types get large, the performance cost of copying can negate the other performance gains of value types. In the Swift standard library, Apple has implemented copy-on-write behavior to reduce the overhead of copying large value types.

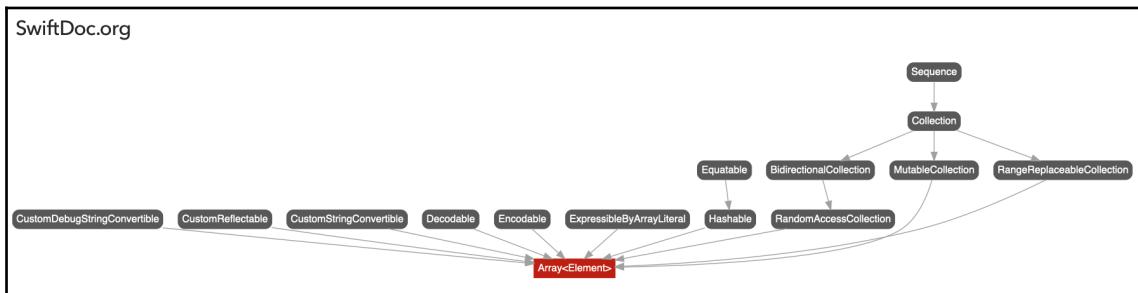
With copy-on-write behavior, we do not create a new copy of our value type when we assign it to a new variable. The copy is postponed until one of the instances changes the value. This means that, if we have an array of one million numbers, when we pass this array to another array we will not make a copy of the one million numbers until one of the arrays changes. This can greatly reduce the overhead incurred from copying instances of our value types.

Value types are also a lot safer than reference types, because we do not have multiple references pointing to the same instance, as we do with reference types. This really becomes apparent when we are dealing with a multithreaded environment. Value types are also safer because we do not have memory leaks caused by common programming errors, such as the strong reference cycles that we will discuss in Chapter 16, *Memory Management*.

Don't worry if you do not understand some of the items discussed in this section. The thing to understand is that value types, like structures, are safer, and for the most part provide better performance in Swift, as compared to reference types, such as classes. Now that we have a better understanding of protocol-oriented design, let's once again look at the array structure provided in the Swift standard library.

The array structure

At the end of chapter 6, *Using Protocols and Protocol Extensions*, we looked at the array structure provided in the Swift standard library. Now that we have a better understanding of protocol-oriented design, let's look at the protocol hierarchy for this structure again. The following diagram shows the protocol hierarchy:



As we can see, the protocol hierarchy for the array structure uses protocol-oriented design. Protocol inheritance is used in several places within the array protocol hierarchy. For example, the `Collection` protocol inherits from the `Sequence` protocol, and the `MutableCollection` protocol inherits from the `Collection` protocol.

Protocol composition is used because the array protocol inherits directly from eight different protocols. When you add in the protocol inheritance and composition, the array actually conforms to all 14 protocols shown in this diagram.

Summary

As we have read through this chapter and looked at some of the advantages that protocol-oriented design has over object-oriented design, we may think that protocol-oriented design is clearly superior to object-oriented design. However, this assumption would not be entirely correct.

Object-oriented design has been around since the 1970s and is a tried and true programming paradigm. Protocol-oriented design is the new kid on the block and was designed to correct some of the issues with object-oriented design.

Object-oriented and protocol-oriented design have similar philosophies, such as creating custom types that model real-world objects, and polymorphism to use a single interface to interact with multiple types. The difference is how these philosophies are implemented.

To me, the code base in a project that uses protocol-oriented design is much safer, easier to read, and easier to maintain as compared to a project that uses an object-oriented design. This does not mean that I am going to stop using object-oriented design altogether. I can still see a need for class hierarchy in certain instances.

Remember that when we are designing our application, we should always use the right tool for the job. We would not want to use a chainsaw to cut a piece of 2 x 4 lumber, but we also would not want to use a skill saw to cut down a tree. Therefore, the winner is the programmer who has the choice of using different programming paradigms rather than being limited to only one. In the next chapter, we will look at Generics.

10

Generics

My first experience with generics was back in 2004, when they were first introduced in the Java programming language. I can still remember picking up my copy of *The Java Programming Language, Fourth Edition*, which covered Java 5 and reading about Java's implementation of generics. Since then, I have used generics in several projects, not only in Java but also in other languages. If you are familiar with generics in other languages, such as Java, the syntax that Swift uses will be very familiar to you. Generics allow us to write very flexible and reusable code; however, just like with subscripts, we need to make sure that we use them properly and do not overuse them.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What are generics?
- How to create and use generic functions?
- How to create and use generic types?
- How to use associated types with protocols?

Introducing generics

The concept of generics has been around for a while, so it should not be a new concept to developers coming from languages such as Java or C#. The Swift implementation of generics is very similar to these languages. For those developers coming from languages that do not have generics, such as Objective-C, they might seem a bit foreign at first, but once you start using them you will realize how powerful they are.

Generics allow us to write very flexible and reusable code that avoids duplication. With a type-safe language, such as Swift, we often need to write functions, classes, and structures that are valid for multiple types. Without generics, we need to write separate functions for each type we wish to support; however, with generics, we can write one generic function to provide the functionality for multiple types. Generics allow us to tell a function or type *I know Swift is a type-safe language, but I do not know the type that will be needed yet. I will give you a placeholder for now and will let you know what type to enforce later.*

In Swift, we have the ability to define both generic functions and generic types. Let's look at generic functions first.

Generic functions

Let's begin by examining the problem that generics tries to solve, and then we will see how generics solve this problem. Let's say that we wanted to create functions that swapped the values of two variables (as described in the first part of this chapter); however, for our application, we need to swap two `integer` types, two `Double` types, and two `String` types. The following code shows what these functions could look like:

```
func swapInts(a: inout Int,b: inout Int) {  
    let tmp = a  
    a = b  
    b = tmp  
}  
  
func swapDoubles(a: inout Double,b: inout Double) {  
    let tmp = a  
    a = b  
    b = tmp  
}  
  
func swapStrings(a: inout String, b: inout String) {  
    let tmp = a  
    a = b  
    b = tmp  
}
```

With these three functions, we can swap the original values of two `Integer` types, two `Double` types, and two `String` types. Now, let's say, as we develop our application further, we find out that we also need to swap the values of two `unsigned Integer` types, two `Float` types, and even a couple of custom types. We might easily end up with eight or more swap functions. The worst part is that each of these functions contains duplicate code. The only difference between these functions is that the parameter types change. While this solution does work, generics offer a much simpler and more elegant solution that eliminates all the duplicate code. Let's see how we would condense all three of the preceding functions into a single generic function:

```
func swapGeneric<T>(a: inout T, b: inout T) {  
    let tmp = a  
    a = b  
    b = tmp  
}
```

Let's look at how we defined the `swapGeneric` function. The function itself looks pretty similar to a normal function, except for the capital `T`. The capital `T`, as used in the `swapGeneric` function, is a placeholder type, and tells Swift that we will be defining the type later. When a type is defined, it will be used in place of all the placeholders.

To define a generic function, we include the placeholder type between two angular brackets (`<T>`) after the function's name. We can then use that placeholder type in place of any type definition within the parameter definitions, the return type, or the function itself. The big thing to keep in mind is that, once the placeholder is defined as a type, all the other placeholders assume that type. Therefore, any variable or constant defined with that placeholder must conform to that type.

There is nothing special about the capital `T`; we could use any valid identifier in place of `T`. We can also use descriptive names, such as `key` and `value`, as the Swift language does with dictionaries. The following definitions are perfectly valid:

```
func swapGeneric<G>(a: inout G, b: inout G) {  
    //Statements  
}  
  
func swapGeneric<xyz>(a: inout xyz, b: inout xyz) {  
    //Statements  
}
```

In most documentation, generic placeholders are defined with either `T` (for type) or `E` (for element). We will, for the purposes of this chapter, use the capital `T` to define generic placeholders. It is also good practice to use the capital `T` to define a generic placeholder within our code so that the placeholder is easily recognized when we are looking at the code at a later time.



If you do not like using the capital `T` or capital `E` to define generics, try to be consistent. I would recommend that you avoid the use of different identifiers to define generics throughout your code.

If we need to use multiple generic types, we can create multiple placeholders by separating them with commas. The following example shows how to define multiple placeholders for a single function:

```
func testGeneric<T,E>(a: T, b: E) {  
    //Statements  
}
```

In this example, we are defining two generic placeholders, `T` and `E`. In this case, we can set the `T` placeholder to one type and the `E` placeholder to a different type.

Let's look at how to call a generic function. The following code will swap two integers using the `swapGeneric<T>(inout a: T, inout b: T)` function:

```
var a = 5  
var b = 10  
swapGeneric(a: &a, b: &b)  
print("a:\\"(a) " b:\\"(b) ")
```

If we run this code, the output will be `a: 10 b: 5`. We can see that we do not have to do anything special to call a generic function. The function infers the type from the first parameter and then sets all the remaining placeholders to that type. Now, if we need to swap the values of two strings, we will call the same function, as follows:

```
var c = "My String 1"  
var d = "My String 2"  
swapGeneric(a: &c, b: &d)  
print("c:\\"(c) " d:\\"(d) ")
```

We can see that the function is called in exactly the same way as we called it when we wanted to swap two integers. One thing that we cannot do is pass two different types into the swap function, because we defined only one generic placeholder. If we attempt to run the following code, we will receive an error:

```
var a = 5
var c = "My String 1"
swapGeneric(a: &a, b: &c)
```

The error that we will receive is that it cannot convert the value of type `String` to expected argument type `Int`, which tells us that we are attempting to use a `String` value when an `Int` value is expected. The reason the function is looking for an `Int` value is because the first parameter that we pass into the function is an `Int` value, and, therefore, all the generic types in the function became `Int` types.

Now, let's say we have the following function, which has multiple generic types defined:

```
func testGeneric<T, E>(a: T, b: E) {
    print("\(a) \(b)")
}
```

This function would accept parameters of different types; however, since they are of different types, we would be unable to swap the values because they are different. There are also other limitations to generics. For example, we may think that the following generic function would be valid; however, we would receive an error if we tried to implement it:

```
func genericEqual<T>(a: T, b: T) -> Bool{
    return a == b
}
```

The error that we receive is due to the fact that the binary operator, `==`, cannot be applied to two `T` operands. Since the type of the arguments is unknown at the time the code is compiled, Swift does not know whether it is able to use the equal operator on the types, and, therefore, the error is thrown. We might think that this is a limit that will make generics hard to use; however, we have a way to tell Swift that we expect the type, represented by the placeholder, will have a certain functionality. This is done with type constraints.

A type constraint specifies that a generic type must inherit from a specific class or conform to a particular protocol. This allows us to use the methods or properties defined by the parent class or protocol within the generic function. Let's look at how to use type constraints by rewriting the `genericEqual` function to use the `Comparable` protocol:

```
func testGenericComparable<T: Comparable>(a: T, b: T) -> Bool{
    return a == b
}
```

To specify the type constraint, we put the class or protocol constraint after the generic placeholder, where the generic placeholder and the constraint are separated by a colon. This new function works as we might expect, and it will compare the values of the two parameters and return `true` if they are equal or `false` if they are not.

We can declare multiple constraints just like we declare multiple generic types. The following example shows how to declare two generic types with different constraints:

```
func testFunction<T: MyClass, E: MyProtocol>(a: T, b: E) {
    //Statements
}
```

In this function, the type defined by the `T` placeholder must inherit from the `MyClass` class, and the type defined by the `E` placeholder must conform to the `MyProtocol` protocol. Now that we have looked at generic functions, let's look at generic types.

Generic types

We already had a general introduction to how generic types work when we looked at Swift arrays and dictionaries. A generic type is a class, structure, or enumeration, that can work with any type, just like the way Swift arrays and dictionaries work. As we recall, Swift arrays and dictionaries are written so that they can contain any type. The catch is that we cannot mix and match different types within an array or dictionary. When we create an instance of our generic type, we define the type that the instance will work with. After we define that type, we cannot change the type for that instance.

To demonstrate how to create a generic type, let's create a simple `List` class. This class will use a Swift array as the backend storage for the list, and will let us add items to the list or retrieve values from the list.

Let's begin by seeing how to define our generic list type:

```
class List<T> {  
}
```

The preceding code defines the generic list type. We can see that we use the `<T>` tag to define a generic placeholder, just like we did when we defined a generic function. This `T` placeholder can then be used anywhere within the type instead of a concrete type definition.

To create an instance of this type, we would need to define the type of items that our list will hold. The following example shows how to create instances of the generic list type for various types:

```
var stringList = List<String>()  
var intList = List<Int>()  
var customList = List<MyObject>()
```

The preceding example creates three instances of the `List` class. The `stringList` instance can be used with instances of the `String` type, the `intList` instance can be used with instances of the integer type, and the `customList` instance can be used with instances of the `MyObject` type.

We are not limited to using generics only with classes. We can also define structures and enumerations as generics. The following example shows how to define a generic structure and a generic enumeration:

```
struct GenericStruct<T> {  
}  
  
enum GenericEnum<T> {  
}
```

Now let's add the backend storage array to our `List` class. The items that are stored in this array need to be of the same type that we define when we initiate the class; therefore, we will use the `T` placeholder for the array's definition. The following code shows the `List` class with an array named `items`. The `items` array will be defined using the `T` placeholder, so it will hold the same types that we defined for the class:

```
class List<T> {  
    var items = [T]()  
}
```

This code defines our generic `List` type and uses `T` as the type placeholder. We can then use this `T` placeholder anywhere in the class to define the type of an item. That item will then be of the same type that we defined when we created the instance of the `List` class. Therefore, if we create an instance of the list type, such as `var stringList = List<String>()`, the items array will be an array of string instances. If we created an instance of the `List` type, such as `var intList = List<Int>()`, the item array will be an array of integer instances.

Now, we need to create the `add()` method, which will be used to add an item to the list. We will use the `T` placeholder within the method declaration to define that the `item` parameter will be of the same type that we declared when we initiated the class. Therefore, if we create an instance of the list type to use the `string` type, we will be required to use an instance of the `string` type as the parameter for the `add()` method. However, if we create an instance of the list type to use the `integer` type, we will be required to use an instance of the `integer` type as the parameter for the `add()` method.

Here is the code for the `add()` function:

```
func add(item: T) {
    items.append(item)
}
```

To create a standalone generic function, we add the `<T>` declaration after the function name to declare that it is a generic function; however, when we use a generic method within a generic type, we do not need the `<T>` declaration. Instead, we just need to use the type that we defined in the class declaration. If we wanted to introduce another generic type, we could define it with the method declaration.

Now, let's add the `getAtIndex()` method, which will return the item from the backend array, at the specified index:

```
func getItemAtIndex(index: Int) -> T? {
    if items.count > index {
        return items[index]
    } else {
        return nil
    }
}
```

The `getAtIndex()` method accepts one argument, which is the index of the item we want to retrieve. We then use the `T` placeholder to specify that our return type is an optional that might be of the `T` type or that might be `nil`. If the backend storage array contains an item at the specified index, we will return that item; otherwise, we return `nil`.

Now, let's look at our entire generic list class:

```
class List<T> {
    var items = [T]()
    func add(item: T) {
        items.append(item)
    }
    func getItemAtIndex(index: Int) -> T? {
        if items.count > index {
            return items[index]
        } else {
            return nil
        }
    }
}
```

As we can see, we initially defined the generic `T` placeholder type in the class declaration. We then used this placeholder type within our class. In our `List` class, we use this placeholder in three places. We use it as the type for our `items` array, as the parameter type for our `add()` method, and as the optional return type in the `getItemAtIndex()` method.

Now, let's look at how to use the `List` class. When we use a generic type, we define the type to be used within the class between angled brackets, such as `<type>`. The following code shows how to use the `List` class to store instances of the `String` types:

```
var list = List<String>()
list.add(item: "Hello")
list.add(item: "World")
print(list.getItemAtIndex(index: 1))
```

In this code, we start off by creating an instance of the `List` type, called `list`, and specify that it will store instances of the `String` type. We then use the `add()` method twice to store two items in the `list` instance. Finally, we use the `getItemAtIndex()` method to retrieve the item at index number 1, which will display `Optional(World)` to the console.

We can also define our generic types with multiple placeholder types, similarly to how we use multiple placeholders in our generic methods. To use multiple placeholder types, we separate them with commas. The following example shows how to define multiple placeholder types:

```
class MyClass<T, E>{
    //Code
}
```

We then create an instance of the `MyClass` type that uses instances of the `String` and `Integer` types, like this:

```
var mc = MyClass<String, Int>()
```

We can also use type constraints with generic types. Once again, using a type constraint for a generic type is exactly the same as using one with a generic function. The following code shows how to use a type constraint to ensure that the generic type conforms to the comparable protocol:

```
class MyClass<T: Comparable>{}
```

So far in this chapter, we have seen how to use placeholder types with functions and types. Now let's see how we can conditionally add extensions to a generic type.

Conditionally adding extensions with generics

We can add extensions to a generic type conditionally if the type conforms to a protocol. For example, if we wanted to add a `sum()` method to our generic `List` type only if the type for `T` conforms to the numeric protocol, we could do this as follows:

```
extension List where T: Numeric {
    func sum () -> T {
        return items.reduce (0, +)
    }
}
```

This extension will add the `sum()` method to any `List` instance where the `T` type conforms to the numeric protocol. This means that the list instance in the previous example, where the list was created to hold `String` types, would not receive this method.

In the following code, where we create an instance of the `List` type that contains integers, the instance will receive `sum()` and can be used as shown:

```
var list2 = List<Int>()
list2.add(item: 2)
list2.add(item: 4)
list2.add(item: 6)
print(list2.sum())
```

Now let's look at conditional conformance, which was added to Swift in version 4.1.

Conditional conformance

Conditional conformance allows a generic type to conform to a protocol only if the type meets certain conditions. For example, if we wanted our `List` type to conform to the equitable protocol only if the type stored in the list also conformed to the equitable protocol, we could use the following code:

```
extension List: Equatable where T: Equatable {
    static func ==(l1:List, l2:List) -> Bool {
        if l1.items.count != l2.items.count {
            return false
        }
        for (e1, e2) in zip(l1.items, l2.items) {
            if e1 != e2 {
                return false
            }
        }
        return true
    }
}
```

This code will add conformance to the Equitable protocol to any instance of the `List` type where the type that is stored in the list also conforms to the Equitable protocol.



There is a new function shown here that we have not talked about: the `zip()` function. This function will loop through two sequences, in our case arrays, simultaneously and create pairs (`e1` and `e2`) that we can compare.

The comparison function will first check to see that each array contains the same number of elements and if not, it will return false. It then loops through each array, simultaneously comparing the elements of the arrays; if any of the pairs do not match, it will return false. If the previous tests pass, true is returned, which indicates that the `List` instances are equal because the elements in the list are the same.

Now let's see how we can add generic subscripts to a non-generic type.

Generic subscripts

Prior to Swift 4, if we wanted to use generics with a subscript, we had to define the subscript at the class or structure level. This forced us to make generic methods when it felt like we should be using subscripts. Starting with Swift 4, we can create generic subscripts, where either the subscript's return type or its parameters may be generic. Let's look at how we can create a generic subscript. In this first example, we will create a subscript that will accept one generic parameter:

```
subscript<T: Hashable>(item: T) -> Int {  
    return item.hashValue  
}
```

When we create a generic subscript, we define the placeholder type after the subscript keyword. In the previous example, we define the `T` placeholder type and use a type constraint to ensure that the type conforms to the `Hashable` protocol. This will allow us to pass in an instance of any type that conforms to the `Hashable` protocol.

As we mentioned at the start of this section, we can also use generics for the return type of a subscript. We define the generic placeholder for the return type exactly as we did for the generic parameter. The following example illustrates this:

```
subscript<T>(key: String) -> T? {  
    return dictionary[key] as? T  
}
```

In this example, we define the `T` placeholder type after the subscript keyword, as we did in the previous example. We then use this type as our return type for the subscript.

Associated types

An associated type declares a placeholder name that can be used instead of a type within a protocol. The actual type to be used is not specified until the protocol is adopted. When creating generic functions and types, we used a very similar syntax, as we have seen throughout this chapter. Defining associated types for a protocol, however, is very different. We specify an associated type using the `associatedtype` keyword.

Let's see how to use associated types when we define a protocol. In this example, we will define the `QueueProtocol` protocol, which defines the capabilities that need to be implemented by the queue that implements it:

```
protocol QueueProtocol {  
    associatedtype QueueType
```

```
        mutating func add(item: QueueType)
        mutating func getItem() -> QueueType?
    func count() -> Int
}
```

In this protocol, we defined one associated type, named `QueueType`. We then used this associated type twice within the protocol: once as the parameter type for the `add()` method and once when we defined the return type of the `getItem()` method as an optional type that might return an associated type of `QueueType` or `nil`.

Any type that implements the `QueueProtocol` protocol must be able to specify the type to use for the `QueueType` placeholder, and must also ensure that only items of that type are used where the protocol uses the `QueueType` placeholder.

Let's look at how to implement `QueueProtocol` in a non-generic class called `IntQueue`. This class will implement the `QueueProtocol` protocol using the `Integer` type:

```
class IntQueue: QueueProtocol {
    var items = [Int]()
    func add(item: Int) {
        items.append(item)
    }
    func getItem() -> Int? {
        return items.count > 0 ? items.remove(at: 0) : nil
    }
    func count() -> Int {
        return items.count
    }
}
```

In the `IntQueue` class, we begin by defining our backend storage mechanism as an array of integer types. We then implement each of the methods defined in the `QueueProtocol` protocol, replacing the `QueueType` placeholder defined in the protocol with the `Integer` type. In the `add()` method, the parameter type is defined as an instance of the integer type, and in the `getItem()` method, the return type is defined as an optional that might return an instance of the integer type or `nil`.

We use the `IntQueue` class as we would use any other class. The following code shows this:

```
var intQ = IntQueue()
intQ.add(item: 2)
intQ.add(item: 4)
print(intQ.getItem()!)
intQ.add(item: 6)
```

We begin by creating an instance of the `IntQueue` class, named `intQ`. We then call the `add()` method twice to add two values of the integer type to the `intQ` instance. We then retrieve the first item in the `intQ` instance by calling the `getItem()` method. This line will print the number 2 to the console. The final line of code adds another instance of the integer type to the `intQ` instance.

In the preceding example, we implemented the `QueueProtocol` protocol in a non-generic way. This means that we replaced the placeholder types with an actual type. `QueueType` was replaced by the `Integer` type. We can also implement the `QueueProtocol` with a generic type. Let's see how we would do this:

```
class GenericQueue<T>: QueueProtocol {  
    var items = [T]()  
    func add(item: T) {  
        items.append(item)  
    }  
    func getItem() -> T? {  
        return items.count > 0 ? items.remove(at:0) : nil  
    }  
    func count() -> Int {  
        return items.count  
    }  
}
```

As we can see, the `GenericQueue` implementation is very similar to the `IntQueue` implementation, except that we define the type to use as the generic placeholder, `T`. We can then use the `GenericQueue` class as we would use any generic class. Let's look at how to use the `GenericQueue` class:

```
var intQ2 = GenericQueue<Int>()  
intQ2.add(item: 2)  
intQ2.add(item: 4)  
print(intQ2.getItem() !)  
intQ2.add(item: 6)
```

We begin by creating an instance of the `GenericQueue` class that will use the `integer` type and name it `intQ2`. Next, we call the `add()` method twice to add two instances of the integer type to the `intQ2` instance. We then retrieve the first item in the queue that was added using the `getItem()` method and print the value to the console. This line will print the number 2 to the console.

We can also use type constraints with associated types. When the protocol is adapted, the type defined for the associated type must inherit from the class or conform to the protocol defined by the type constraint. The following line defines an associated type with a type constraint:

```
associatedtype QueueType: Hashable
```

In this example, we specify that, when the protocol is implemented, the type defined for the associated type must conform to the `Hashable` protocol.

Summary

Generic types can be incredibly useful, and they are also the basis of the Swift standard collection types (arrays and dictionaries); however, as mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, we have to be careful to use them correctly.

We saw a couple of examples in this chapter that show how generics can make our lives easier. The `swapGeneric()` function that was shown at the beginning of the chapter is a good use of a generic function because it allows us to swap two values of any type we choose, while only implementing the swap code once.

The generic `List` type is also a good example of how to make custom collection types that can be used to hold any type. How we implemented the generic `List` type in this chapter is similar to how Swift implements an array and dictionary with generics.

In the next chapter, we will look at error handling with Swift and how we can make a feature only available if the device that the user is using has a certain version of the OS.

11

Availability and Error Handling

When I first started writing applications with objective-C, one of the most noticeable deficiencies was the lack of exception handling. Most modern programming languages, such as Java and C#, use try...catch blocks, or something similar, for exception handling. While objective-C did have the try...catch block, it wasn't used within the Cocoa framework itself, and it never really felt like a true part of the language. I have significant experience in C, so I was able to understand how Apple's frameworks received and responded to errors. To be honest, I sometimes preferred this method, even though I had grown accustomed to exception handling with Java and C#. When Swift was first introduced, I was hoping that Apple would put true error handling into the language so we would have the option of using it; however, it was not in the initial release of Swift. When Swift 2 was released, Apple added error handling to Swift. While this error handling may look similar to exception handling in Java and C#, there are some very significant differences.

We will cover the following topics in this chapter:

- How to use the do-catch block in Swift
- How to represent errors
- How to use the defer statement
- How to use the availability attribute

Native error handling

Languages such as Java and C# generally refer to the error-handling process as exception handling. Within the Swift documentation, Apple refers to this process as error handling. While on the outside, Java and C# exception handling may look somewhat similar to Swift's error handling, there are some significant differences that those familiar with exception handling in other languages will notice throughout this chapter.

Representing errors

Before we can really understand how error handling works in Swift, we must see how we can represent an error. In Swift, errors are represented by values of types that conform to the `Error` protocol. Swift's enumerations are very well-suited to modeling error conditions because we have a finite number of error conditions to represent.

Let's look at how we would use an enumeration to represent an error. For this, we will define a fictitious error named `MyError` with three error conditions, `Minor`, `Bad`, and `Terrible`:

```
enum MyError: Error {
    case Minor
    case Bad
    case Terrible
}
```

In this example, we define that the `MyError` enumeration conforms to the `Error` protocol. We then define the three error conditions: `Minor`, `Bad`, and `Terrible`. That is all there is to defining a basic error condition.

We can also use the associated values with our error conditions to allow us to add more details about the error condition. Let's say that we want to add a description to the `Terrible` error condition. We would do it like this:

```
enum MyError: Error {
    case Minor
    case Bad
    case Terrible(description:String)
}
```

Those who are familiar with exception handling in Java and C# can see that representing errors in Swift is a lot cleaner and easier, because we do not need to create a lot of boilerplate code or a full class. With Swift, it can be as simple as defining an enumeration with our error conditions. Another advantage is that it is very easy to define multiple error conditions and group them together so that all related error conditions are of one type.

Now let's see how we can model errors in Swift. For this example, let's look at how we would assign numbers to players on a baseball team. For a baseball team, every new player who is called up is assigned a unique number. This number must also be within a certain range, because only two numbers fit on a baseball jersey.

Therefore, we would have three error conditions: number is too large, number is too small, and number is not unique. The following example shows how we might represent these error conditions:

```
enum PlayerNumberError: Error {  
    case NumberTooHigh(description: String)  
    case NumberTooLow(description: String)  
    case NumberAlreadyAssigned  
}
```

With the `PlayerNumberError` type, we define three very specific error conditions that tell us exactly what went wrong. These error conditions are also grouped together in one type since they are all related to assigning the players' numbers.

This method of defining errors allows us to define very specific errors that let our code know exactly what went wrong if an error condition occurs. It also lets us group the errors so that all related errors can be defined in the same type.

Now that we know how to represent errors, let's look at how to throw errors.

Throwing errors

When an error occurs in a function, the code that called the function must be made aware of it; this is called throwing the error. When a function throws an error, it assumes that the code that called the function, or some code further up the chain, will catch and recover appropriately from the error.

To throw an error from a function, we use the `throws` keyword. This keyword lets the code that called it know that an error may be thrown from the function. Unlike exception handling in other languages, we do not list the specific error types that may be thrown.



Since we do not list the specific error types that may be thrown from a function within the function's definition, it would be good practice to list them in the documentation and comments for the function, so that other developers who use the function know what error types to catch.

Soon we will look at how we can throw errors. But first, let's add a fourth error to the `PlayerNumberError` type that we defined earlier. This error condition is thrown if we are trying to retrieve a player by their number, but no player has been assigned that number.

The new `PlayerNumberError` type will now look similar to this:

```
enum PlayerNumberError: Error {
    case NumberTooHigh(description: String)
    case NumberTooLow(description: String)
    case NumberAlreadyAssigned
    case NumberDoesNotExist
}
```

To demonstrate how to throw errors, let's create a `BaseballTeam` structure that will contain a list of players for a given team. These players will be stored in a dictionary object named `players`, and will use the player's number as the key, because we know that each player must have a unique number. The `BaseballPlayer` type, which will be used to represent a single player, will be a typealias for a tuple type, and is defined like this:

```
typealias BaseballPlayer = (firstName: String, lastName: String, number: Int)
```

In this `BaseballTeam` structure, we will have two methods. The first one will be named `addPlayer()`. This method will accept one parameter of the `BaseballPlayer` type and will attempt to add the player to the team. This method can also throw one of three error conditions: `NumberTooHigh`, `NumberTooLow`, or `NumberAlreadyExists`. Here is how we would write this method:

```
mutating func addPlayer(player: BaseballPlayer) throws {
    guard player.number < maxNumber else {
        throw PlayerNumberError.NumberTooHigh(description: "Max number
            is \((maxNumber))")
    }
    guard player.number > minNumber else {
        throw PlayerNumberError.NumberTooLow(description: "Min number
            is \((minNumber))")
    }
    guard players[player.number] == nil else {
        throw PlayerNumberError.NumberAlreadyAssigned
    }
    players[player.number] = player
}
```

We can see that the `throws` keyword is added to the method's definition. The `throws` keyword lets any code that calls this method know that it may throw an error and the error must be handled. We then use the three `guard` statements to verify that the number is not too large, not too small, and is unique in the `players` dictionary. If any of the conditions are not met, we throw the appropriate error using the `throws` keyword. If we make it through all three checks, the player is then added to the `players` dictionary.

The second method that we will be adding to the `BaseballTeam` structure is the `getPlayerByNumber()` method. This method will attempt to retrieve the baseball player that is assigned a given number. If no player is assigned that number, this method will throw a `NumberDoesNotExist` error. The `getPlayerByNumber()` method will look similar to this:

```
func getPlayerByNumber(number: Int) throws -> BaseballPlayer {  
    if let player = players[number] {  
        return player  
    } else {  
        throw PlayerNumberError.NumberDoesNotExist  
    }  
}
```

We have added the `throws` keyword to this method definition as well; however, this method also has a return type. When we use the `throws` keyword with a return type, it must be placed before the return type in the method's definition.

Within the method, we attempt to retrieve the baseball player with the number that is passed into the method. If we are able to retrieve the player, we return it; otherwise, we throw the `NumberDoesNotExist` error. Note that if we throw an error from a method that has a return type, a return value is not required.

Now let's see how to catch an error with Swift.

Catching errors

When an error is thrown from a function, we need to catch it in the code that called it; this is done using the do-catch block. We use the `try` keyword, within the do-catch block, to identify the places in the code that may throw an error. The do-catch block with a `try` statement takes the following syntax:

```
do {  
    try [Some function that throws]  
    [code if no error was thrown]  
} catch [pattern] {  
    [Code if function threw error]  
}
```

If an error is thrown, it is propagated out until it is handled by a catch clause. The catch clause consists of the `catch` keyword, followed by a pattern to match the error against. If the error matches the pattern, the code within the catch block is executed.

Let's look at how we can use the do-catch block by calling both the `getPlayerByNumber()` and `addPlayer()` methods of the `BaseballTeam` structure. Let's look at the `getPlayerByNumber()` method first, since it only throws one error condition:

```
do {  
    let player = try myTeam.getPlayerByNumber(number: 34)  
    print("Player is \(player.firstName) \(player.lastName)")  
} catch PlayerNumberError.NumberDoesNotExist {  
    print("No player has that number")  
}
```

Within this example, the do-catch block calls the `getPlayerByNumber()` method of the `BaseballTeam` structure. This method will throw the `NumberDoesNotExist` error condition if no player on the team has been assigned this number; therefore, we attempt to match this error in the catch statement.

Any time an error is thrown within a do-catch block, the remainder of the code within the block is skipped and the code within the catch block, which matches the error, is executed. Therefore, in our example, if the `NumberDoesNotExist` error is thrown by the `getPlayerByNumber()` method, the `print` statement is never reached.

We do not have to include a pattern after the catch statement. If a pattern is not included after the catch statement, or if we put in an underscore, the catch statement will match all error conditions. For example, either one of the following two catch statements will catch all errors:

```
do {  
    // our statements  
} catch {  
    // our error conditions  
}  
  
do {  
    // our statements  
} catch _ {  
    // our error conditions  
}
```

If we want to capture the error, we can use the `let` keyword, as shown in the following example:

```
do {  
    // our statements  
} catch let error {  
    print("Error:\(error)")  
}
```

Now, let's look at how we can use the catch statement, similar to a switch statement, to catch different error conditions. To do this, we will call the `addPlayer()` method of the `BaseballTeam` structure:

```
do {  
    try myTeam.addPlayer(player:("David", "Ortiz", 34))  
} catch PlayerNumberError.NumberTooHigh(let description) {  
    print("Error: \(description)")  
} catch PlayerNumberError.NumberTooLow(let description) {  
    print("Error: \(description)")  
} catch PlayerNumberError.NumberAlreadyAssigned {  
    print("Error: Number already assigned")  
}
```

In this example, we have three catch statements. Each catch statement has a different pattern to match; therefore, they will each match a different error condition. If you recall, the `NumberTooHigh` and `NumberToLow` error conditions have associated values. To retrieve the associated value, we use the `let` statement within the parentheses, as shown in the example.

It is always good practice to make your last catch statement an empty catch statement so that it will catch any error that did not match any of the patterns in the previous catch statements. Therefore, the previous example should be rewritten like this:

```
do {  
    try myTeam.addPlayer(player:("David", "Ortiz", 34))  
} catch PlayerNumberError.NumberTooHigh(let description) {  
    print("Error: \(description)")  
} catch PlayerNumberError.NumberTooLow(let description) {  
  
    print("Error: \(description)")  
} catch PlayerNumberError.NumberAlreadyAssigned {  
    print("Error: Number already assigned")  
} catch {  
    print("Error: Unknown Error")  
}
```

We can also let the errors propagate out rather than immediately catching them. To do this, we just need to add the `throws` keyword to the function definition. For instance, in the following example, rather than catching the error, we could let it propagate out to the code that called the function, like this:

```
func myFunc() throws {  
    try myTeam.addPlayer(player:("David", "Ortiz", 34))  
}
```

If we are certain that an error will not be thrown, we can call the function using a forced-try expression, which is written as `try!`. The forced-try expression disables error propagation and wraps the function call in a runtime assertion so no error will be thrown from this call. If an error is thrown, you will get a runtime error, so be very careful when using this expression.



It is highly recommended that you avoid using the forced-try expression in production code since it can cause a runtime error and cause your application to crash.

When I work with exceptions in languages such as Java and C#, I see a lot of empty catch blocks. This is where we need to catch the exception, because one might be thrown; however, we do not want to do anything with it. In Swift, the code would look something like this:

```
do {  
    let player = try myTeam.getPlayerByNumber(number: 34)  
    print("Player is \(player.firstName) \(player.lastName)")  
} catch {}
```

Code like this is one of the things that I dislike about exception handling. Well, the Swift developers have an answer for this: `try?`, which attempts to perform an operation that may throw an error and converts it into an optional value; therefore, the results of the operation will be `nil` if an error was thrown, or the result of the operation if there was no error thrown.

Since the results of `try?` are returned in the form of an optional, we would normally use this with optional binding. We could rewrite the previous example like this:

```
if let player = try? myTeam.getPlayerByNumber(number: 34) {  
    print("Player is \(player.firstName) \(player.lastName)")  
}
```

As we can see, this makes our code much cleaner and easier to read.

If we need to perform some cleanup action, regardless of whether we had any errors, we can use a `defer` statement. We use `defer` statements to execute a block of code just before the code execution leaves the current scope. The following example shows how we can use the `defer` statement:

```
func deferFunction() {  
    print("Function started")  
    var str: String?  
}
```

```
    defer {
        print("In defer block")
        if let s = str {
            print("str is \(s)")
        }
    }
    str = "Jon"
    print("Function finished")
}
```

If we called this function, the first line printed to the console would be function started. The execution of the code would skip over the defer block, and Function finished would then be printed to the console. Finally, the defer block of code would be executed just before we leave the function's scope, and we would see the In defer block message. The following is the output of this function:

```
Function started
Function finished
In defer block
str is Jon
```

The defer block will always be called before the execution leaves the current scope, even if an error is thrown. The defer statement is very useful when we want to make sure we perform all the necessary cleanup, even if an error is thrown. For example, if we successfully open a file to write to, we will always want to make sure we close that file, even if we encounter an error during the write operation.

In this case, we could put the file-closed functionality in a defer block to make sure that the file was always closed prior to leaving the current scope.

Next, let's look at how we would use the new availability attribute with Swift.

The availability attribute

Using the latest SDK gives us access to all the latest features for the platform that we are developing for; however, there are times when we want to also target older platforms. Swift allows us to use the availability attribute to safely wrap code to run only when the correct version of the operating system is available. This availability was first introduced in Swift 2.



The availability attribute is only available when we use Swift on Apple platforms.

The availability blocks essentially let us, if we are running the specified version of the operating system or higher, run this code or otherwise run some other code. There are two ways in which we can use the availability attribute. The first way allows us to execute a specific block of code that can be used with an if or a guard statement. The second way allows us to mark a method or type as available only on certain platforms.

The availability attribute accepts up to six comma-separated arguments, which allow us to define the minimum version of the operating system or application extension needed to execute our code. These arguments are as follows:

- `iOS`: This is the minimum iOS version that is compatible with our code
- `OSX`: This is the minimum OS X version that is compatible with our code
- `watchOS`: This is the minimum watchOS version that is compatible with our code
- `tvOS`: This is the minimum tvOS version that is compatible with our code
- `iOSApplicationExtension`: This is the minimum iOS application extension that is compatible with our code
- `OSXApplicationExtension`: This is the minimum OS X application extension that is compatible with our code

After the argument, we specify the minimum version that is required. We only need to include the arguments that are compatible with our code. As an example, if we are writing an iOS application, we only need to include the `iOS` argument in the availability attribute. We end the argument list with an `*` (asterisk) as it is a placeholder for future versions. Let's look at how we would execute a specific block of code only if we met the minimum requirements:

```
if #available(iOS 9.0, OSX 10.10, watchOS 2, *) {  
    //Available for iOS 9, OSX 10.10, watchOS 2 or above  
    print("Minimum requirements met")  
} else {  
    //Block on anything below the above minimum requirements  
    print("Minimum requirements not met")  
}
```

In this example, the `if #available(iOS 9.0, OSX 10.10, watchOS 2, *)` line of code prevents the block of code from executing when the application is run on a system that does not meet the specified minimum operating system version. In this example, we also use the `else` statement to execute a separate block of code if the operating system does not meet the minimum requirements.

We can also restrict access to a function or a type. In the previous code, the available attribute was prefixed with the # (pound, also known as octothorpe and hash) character. To restrict access to a function or type, we prefix the available attribute with an @ (at) character. The following example shows how we could restrict access to a type and function:

```
@available(iOS 9.0, *)
func testAvailability() {
    // Function only available for iOS 9 or above
}

@available(iOS 9.0, *)
struct TestStruct {
    // Type only available for iOS 9 or above
}
```

In the previous example, we specified that the `testAvailability()` function and the `testStruct()` type could only be accessed if the code was run on a device that has iOS version 9 or newer. In order to use the `@available` attribute to block access to a function or type, we must wrap the code that calls that function or type with the `#available` attribute.

The following example shows how we could call the `testAvailability()` function:

```
if #available(iOS 9.0, *) {
    testAvailability()
} else {
    // Fallback on earlier versions
}
```

In this example, the `testAvailability()` function is only called if the application is running on a device that has iOS version 9 or later.

Summary

In this chapter, we looked at Swift's error-handling features. While we are not required to use this feature in our custom types, it does give us a uniform way to handle and respond to errors. Apple has also started to use this error handling in their frameworks. It is recommended that we use error handling in our code.

We also looked at the availability attribute, which allows us to develop applications that take advantage of the latest features of our target operating systems, while still allowing our applications to run on older versions. In the next chapter, we'll take a look at how to write custom subscripts.

12

Custom Subscripting

Custom subscripts were added to Objective-C in 2012. At that time, Chris Lattner was already two years into developing Swift, and, like other good features, subscripts were added to the Swift language. I have not used custom subscripts in many other languages, however, I do find myself using subscripts extensively when I am developing in Swift. The syntax for using subscripts in Swift seems like a natural part of the language, possibly because they were part of the language when it was released and not added in later. Once you start using subscripts in Swift, you may find them indispensable.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What are custom subscripts?
- Adding custom subscripts to classes, structures, or enumerations
- Creating read/write and read-only subscripts
- Using external names without custom subscripts
- Using multidimensional subscripts

Introducing subscripts

Subscripts, in the Swift language, are used as shortcuts for accessing elements of a collection, list, or sequence. We can use them in our custom types to set or retrieve the values by index rather than using getter and setter methods. Subscripts, if used correctly, can significantly enhance the usability and readability of our custom types.

We can define multiple subscripts for a single type. When types have multiple subscripts, the appropriate subscript will be chosen based on the type of index passed in with the subscript. We can also set external parameter names for our subscripts that can help distinguish between subscripts that have the same types.

We use custom subscripts just like we use subscripts for arrays and dictionaries. For example, to access an element in an array, we use the `Array [index]` syntax. When we define a custom subscript for our custom types, we also access them with the same `ourType [key]` syntax.

When creating custom subscripts, we should try to make them feel like a natural part of the class, structure, or enumeration. As mentioned previously, subscripts can significantly enhance the usability and readability of our code, but if we try to overuse them, they will not feel natural and will be hard to use and understand.

In this chapter, we will look at several examples of how we can create and use custom subscripts; however, before we show how to use custom subscripts, let's review how subscripts are used with Swift arrays to understand how subscripts are used within the Swift language itself. We should use subscripts in a similar manner to how Apple uses them within the language to make our custom subscripts easy to understand and use.

Subscripts with Swift arrays

The following example shows how to use subscripts to access and change the values of an array:

```
var arrayOne = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]
print(arrayOne[3])    //Displays '4'
arrayOne[3] = 10
print(arrayOne[3])    //Displays '10'
```

In the preceding example, we create an array of integers and then use the subscript syntax to display and change the element at index three. Subscripts are mainly used to set or retrieve information from a collection. We generally do not use subscripts when specific logic needs to be applied to determine which item to select. As an example, we would not want to use subscripts to append an item to the end of the array or to retrieve the number of items in the array. To append an item to the end of an array, or to get the number of items in an array, we will use functions or properties, such as the following:

```
arrayOne.append(7)    //append 7 to the end of the array
arrayOne.count        //returns the number of items in an array
```

Subscripts in our custom types should follow the same standard set by the Swift language itself, so other developers that use our types are not confused by the implementation. The key to knowing when to use subscripts, and when not to, is to understand how they will be used.

Creating and using custom subscripts

Let's look at how to define a subscript that is used to read and write to a backend array. Reading and writing to a backend storage class is one of the most common uses of custom subscripts; however as we will see in this chapter, we do not need to have a backend storage class. The following code shows how to use a subscript to read and write to an array:

```
class MyNames {  
    private var names = ["Jon", "Kim", "Kailey", "Kara"]  
    subscript(index: Int) -> String {  
        get {  
            return names[index]  
        }  
        set {  
            names[index] = newValue  
        }  
    }  
}
```

As we can see, the syntax for subscripts is similar to how we define properties within a class using the `get` and `set` keywords. The difference is that we declare the subscript using the `subscript` keyword. We then specify one or more inputs and the return type.

We can now use the custom subscript just like we used subscripts with arrays and dictionaries. The following code shows how to use the subscript in the preceding example:

```
var nam = MyNames()  
print(nam[0]) //Displays 'Jon'  
nam[0] = "Buddy"  
print(nam[0]) //Displays 'Buddy'
```

In the preceding code, we create an instance of the `MyNames` class and display the original name at index 0. We then change the name at index 0 and redisplay it. In this example, we use the subscript that we defined in the `MyNames` class to retrieve and set elements of the `names` array within the class.

While we could make the `names` array available for external code to read and write directly, this would lock our code into using an array to store the data. In the future, if we wanted to change the backend storage mechanism to a dictionary object, or even an SQLite database, we would have a hard time doing so, because all of the external code would also have to be changed. Subscripts are very good at hiding how we store information within our custom types; therefore, external code that uses these custom types does not rely on specific storage implementations.

If we gave direct access to the names array, we would also be unable to verify that the external code was inserting valid information into the array. With subscripts, we can add validation to our setters to verify that the data being passed in is correct before adding it to the array. This can be very useful when we are creating a framework or a library.

Read-only custom subscripts

We can also make the subscript read-only by either not declaring a setter method within the subscript or by not implicitly declaring a getter or setter method. The following code shows how to declare a read-only property by not declaring a getter or setter method:

```
//No getter/setters implicitly declared
subscript(index: Int) -> String {
    return names[index]
}
```

The following example shows how to declare a read-only property by only declaring a getter method:

```
//Declaring only a getter
subscript(index: Int) -> String {
    get {
        return names[index]
    }
}
```

In the first example, we do not define either a getter or setter method; therefore, Swift sets the subscript as read-only, and the code acts as if it were in a getter definition. In the second example, we specifically set the code in a getter definition. Both examples are valid read-only subscripts. One thing to note is that write-only subscripts are not valid in Swift.

Calculated subscripts

While the preceding example is very similar to using stored properties in a class or structure, we can also use subscripts in a similar manner to the computed properties. Let's look at how to do this:

```
struct MathTable {
    var num: Int
    subscript(index: Int) -> Int {
        return num * index
    }
}
```

In the preceding example, we used an array as the backend storage mechanism for the subscript. In this example, we use the value of the subscript to calculate the return value. We would use this subscript as follows:

```
var table = MathTable(num: 5)
print(table[4])
```

This example will display the calculated value of 5 (the number defined in the initialization) multiplied by 4 (the subscript value), which is equal to 20.

Subscript values

In the preceding subscript examples, all of the subscripts accepted integers as the value for the subscript; however, we are not limited to integers. In the following example, we will use a `String` type as the value for the subscript. The `subscript` keyword will also return a `String` type:

```
struct Hello {
    subscript (name: String) -> String {
        return "Hello \\" + name + "\""
    }
}
```

In this example, the subscript takes a string as the value within the subscript and returns a message saying `Hello`. Let's look at how to use this subscript:

```
var hello = Hello()
print(hello["Jon"])
```

This example will display a `Hello Jon` message to the console.

External names for subscripts

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, we can have multiple subscript signatures for our custom types. The appropriate subscript will be chosen based on the type of index passed into the subscript. There are times when we may wish to define multiple subscripts that have the same type. For this, we could use external names in a similar way to how we define external names for the parameters of a function.

Let's rewrite the original `MathTable` structure to include two subscripts that each accept an integer as the subscript type; however, one will perform a multiplication operation, and the other will perform an addition operation:

```
struct MathTable {  
    var num: Int  
    subscript(multiply index: Int) -> Int {  
        return num * index  
    }  
    subscript(add index: Int) -> Int {  
        return num + index  
    }  
}
```

As we can see, in this example we define two subscripts, and each subscript accepts an integer type. The difference between the two subscripts is the external name within the definition. In the first subscript, we define an external name, `multiply`, because we multiply the value of the subscript by the `num` property within this subscript. In the second subscript, we define an external name, `add`, because we add the value of the subscript to the `num` property within the subscript.

Let's look at how to use these two subscripts:

```
var table = MathTable(num: 5)  
print(table[multiply: 4]) //Displays 20 because 5*4=20  
print(table[add: 4]) //Displays 9 because 5+4=9
```

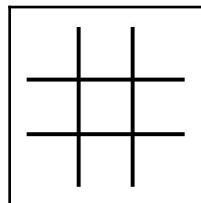
If we run this example, we will see that the correct subscript is used, based on the external name within the subscript.

Using external names within our subscript is very useful if we need multiple subscripts of the same type. I would not recommend using external names unless they are needed to distinguish between multiple subscripts.

Multidimensional subscripts

While the most common subscripts are those that take a single parameter, subscripts are not limited to single parameters. They can take any number of input parameters, and these parameters can be of any type.

Let's look at how we could use a multidimensional subscript to implement a Tic-Tac-Toe board. A Tic-Tac-Toe board looks similar to the following diagram:



The board can be represented by a two-dimensional array, where each dimension has three elements. Each player will then take a turn placing his/her pieces (typically x or o) onto the board until one player has three pieces in a row or the board is full.

Let's look at how we could implement a Tic-Tac-Toe board using a multidimensional array and multidimensional subscripts:

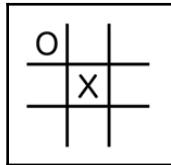
```
struct TicTacToe {  
    var board = [[ "", "", "" ], [ "", "", "" ], [ "", "", "" ]]  
    subscript(x: Int, y: Int) -> String {  
        get {  
            return board[x][y]  
        }  
        set {  
            board[x][y] = newValue  
        }  
    }  
}
```

We start the Tic-Tac-Toe structure by defining a 3×3 array, also known as a matrix, which will represent the game board. We then define a subscript that can be used to set and retrieve player pieces on the board. The subscript will accept two integer values. We define multiple parameters for our subscripts by putting the parameters between parentheses. In this example, we are defining the subscript with the parameters (`x: Int, y: Int`). We can then use the `x` and `y` variable names within our subscripts to access the values that are passed in.

Let's look at how to use this subscript to set the user's pieces on the board:

```
var board = TicTacToe()  
board[1,1] = "x"  
board[0,0] = "o"
```

If we run this code, we will see that we added the **x** piece to the center square and the **o** piece to the upper-left square, so our game board will look similar to the following:



We are not limited to using only one type for our multidimensional subscripts. For example, we could have a subscript of (**x**: Int, **y**: Double, **z**: String).

We can also add external names for our multidimensional subscript types to help identify what values are used for and to distinguish between subscripts that have the same types. Let's take a look at how to use multiple types and external names with subscripts, by creating a subscript that will return an array of string instances based on the values of the subscript:

```
struct SayHello {  
    subscript(messageText message: String, messageName name: String,  
            number number: Int) -> [String]{  
        var retArray: [String] = []  
        for _ in 0..            retArray.append("\(message) \ \(name)\")  
        }  
        return retArray  
    }  
}
```

In the **SayHello** structure, we define our subscript as follows:

```
subscript(messageText message: String, messageName name: String, number  
number: Int) -> [String]
```

This defines a subscript with three elements. Each element has an external name (`messageText`, `messageName`, and `number`) and an internal name (`message`, `name`, and `number`). The first two elements are of the string type and the last one is an integer type. We use the first two elements to create a message for the user that will repeat the number of times defined by the last (`number`) element. We will use this subscript as follows:

```
var message = SayHello()  
var ret = message[messageText:"Bonjour",messageName:"Jon",number:5]
```

If we run this code, we will see that the `ret` variable contains an array of five strings, where each string equals Bonjour Jon. Now let's look at one of the most controversial new additions to the Swift language; Dynamic Member Lookup.

Dynamic member lookup

Dynamic member lookup enables a call to a property that will be dynamically resolved at runtime. This may not make a lot of sense without seeing an example, so let's look at one. Let's say that we had a structure that represented a baseball team. This structure has a property that represents the city the team was from and another property that represented the nickname of the team. The following code shows this structure:

```
struct BaseballTeam {  
    let city: String  
    let nickName: String  
}
```

In this structure, if we wanted to retrieve the full name of the baseball team, including the city and nickname, we could easily create a method as shown in the following example:

```
func fullname() -> String {  
    return "\(city) \(\nickName)"  
}
```

This is how you would do it in most object-oriented programming languages; however, in our code, which uses the `BaseballTeam` structure, we would retrieve the city and nickname as properties with the dot notation and the full name as a method. The following code shows how we would use both the city property and the `fullname` method:

```
var redsox = BaseballTeam(city: "Boston", nickName: "Red Sox")  
let city = redsox.city  
let fullname = redsox.fullname()
```

We can create a much cleaner interface using dynamic member lookups. To use dynamic member lookups, the first thing we need to do is to add the `@dynamicMemberLookup` attribute when we define the `BaseballTeam` structure, as shown in the following code:

```
@dynamicMemberLookup
struct BaseballTeam {
    let city: String
    let nickName: String
    let wins: Double
    let losses: Double
    let year: Int
}
```

Now we will need to add the lookup to the `BaseballTeam` structure. This is done by implementing the `subscript(dynamicMember:)` subscript. The following code shows how we would create a lookup to retrieve both the full name and the winning percentage for the `BaseballTeam` structure:

```
subscript(dynamicMember key: String) -> String {
    switch key {
        case "fullname":
            return "\\(city) \\(nickName)"
        case "percent":
            let per = wins/(wins+losses)
            return String(per)
        default:
            return "Unknown request"
    }
}
```

This code will retrieve the key passed in and use a switch statement, using that key, to determine what information to return from the subscript. With this code added to the `BaseballTeam` structure we can use the lookup as shown in the following example:

```
var redsox = BaseballTeam(city: "Boston", nickName: "Red Sox", wins: 108,
                           losses: 54, year: 2018)

print("The \(redsox.fullname) won \(redsox.percent) of their games in
      \(redsox.year)")
```

Notice how we are able to access both `fullname` and `percent` from the instance of the `BaseballTeam` structure as if they were normal properties. This makes our code much cleaner and easier to read. However, there is one thing to keep in mind when using lookups like this: there is no way to control what keys are passed into the lookup.

In the previous example, we called `fullname` and `percent`, however, we could just as easily have called `flower` or `dog` with no warning from the compiler. This is why there is a lot of controversy attached to dynamic member lookup, because there is no compile time warning if you do something wrong.

If you use dynamic member lookup, make sure you verify the key and handle any instances when something unexpected is sent, as we did with the previous example using the default case of the switch statement.

Now that we have seen how to use subscripts, lets take a quick look at when not to use custom subscripts.

When not to use a custom subscript

As we have seen in this chapter, creating custom subscripts can really enhance our code; however, we should avoid overusing them or using them in a way that is not consistent with standard subscript usage. The way to avoid overusing subscripts is to examine how subscripts are used in Swift's standard libraries.

Let's look at the following example:

```
class MyNames {
    private var names:[String] = ["Jon", "Kim", "Kailey", "Kara"]
    var number: Int {
        get {
            return names.count
        }
    }
    subscript(add name: String) -> String {
        names.append(name)
        return name
    }
    subscript(index: Int) -> String { get {
            return names[index]
        }
        set {
            names[index] = newValue
        }
    }
}
```

In the preceding example, within the `MyNames` class, we define an array of names that are used within our application. As an example, let's say that within our application we display this list of names and allow users to add names to it. Within the `MyNames` class, we then define the following subscript, which allows us to append a new name to the array:

```
subscript (add name: String) -> String {  
    names.append(name)  
    return name  
}
```

This would be a poor use of subscripts, because its usage is not consistent with how subscripts are used within the Swift language itself. This might cause confusion when the class is used. It would be more appropriate to rewrite this subscript as a function, such as the following:

```
func append(name: String) {  
    names.append(name)  
}
```

Remember, when you are using custom subscripts, make sure that you are using them appropriately.

Summary

As we saw in this chapter, adding support for subscripts to our custom types can greatly enhance their readability and usability. We saw that subscripts can be used to add an abstraction layer between our backend storage class and external code. Subscripts can also be used in a similar manner to computed properties, where the subscript is used to calculate a value. As we noted, the key with subscripts is to use them appropriately and in a manner that is consistent with subscripts in the Swift language.

In the next chapter, we will look at what closures are and how to use them.

13

Working with Closures

Today, most major programming languages have functionalities similar to those of closures in Swift. Some of these implementations are really hard to use (objective-C blocks), while others are easy (Java lambdas and C# delegates). I have found that the functionality that closures provide is especially useful when developing frameworks. I have also used them extensively when communicating with remote services over a network connection. While blocks in Objective-C are incredibly useful, the syntax used to declare a block was absolutely horrible. Luckily, when Apple was developing the Swift language, they made the syntax of closures much easier to use and understand.

In this chapter, we will cover the following topics:

- What are closures?
- How to create a closure?
- How to use a closure?
- What are examples of useful closures?
- How to avoid strong reference cycles within closures?

An introduction to closures

Closures are self-contained blocks of code that can be passed around and used throughout our application. We can think of the `Int` type as a type that contains an integer, and a `String` type as a type that contains a string. In this context, a closure can be thought of as a type that contains a block of code. This means that we can assign closures to a variable, pass them as arguments to functions, and return them from a function.

Closures have the ability to capture and store references to any variable or constant from the context in which they were defined. This is known as closing over the variables or constants and, for the most part, Swift will handle the memory management for us. The only exception is in creating a strong reference cycle, and we will look at how to resolve this in the *Creating strong reference cycles with closures* section of Chapter 16, *Memory Management*.

Closures in Swift are similar to blocks in Objective-C; however, closures in Swift are a lot easier to use and understand. Let's look at the syntax used to define a closure in Swift:

```
{  
    (<#parameters#>) -> <#return-type#>  
    in <#statements#>  
}
```

The syntax used to create a closure looks very similar to the syntax we use to create functions, and in Swift, global and nested functions are closures. The biggest difference in the format between closures and functions is the `in` keyword. The `in` keyword is used in place of curly brackets to separate the definition of the closure's parameter and return types from the body of the closure.

There are many uses for closures, and we will go over a number of them later in this chapter, but first we need to understand the basics of closures. Let's start by looking at some very basic closures so that we can get a better understanding of what they are, how to define them, and how to use them.

Simple closures

We will begin by creating a very simple closure that does not accept any arguments and does not return any value. All it does is print `Hello World` to the console. Let's look at the following code:

```
let clos1 = { () -> Void in  
    print("Hello World")  
}
```

In this example, we create a closure and assign it to the `clos1` constant. Since there are no parameters defined between the parentheses, this closure will not accept any parameters. Also, the return type is defined as `Void`; therefore, this closure will not return any value. The body of the closure contains one line, which prints `Hello World` to the console.

There are many ways to use closures; in this example, all we want to do is execute it. We can execute the closure as follows:

```
clos1()
```

After executing the closure, we will see that `Hello World` is printed to the console. At this point, closures may not seem that useful, but as we get further along in this chapter, we will see how useful and powerful they can be.

Let's look at another simple example. This closure will accept one string parameter named `name` but will not return a value. Within the body of the closure, we will print out a greeting to the name passed into the closure through the `name` parameter. Here is the code for this second closure:

```
let clos2 = {  
    (name: String) -> Void in  
    print("Hello \\"(name)"")  
}
```

The big difference between the `clos2` closure and the `clos1` closure is that we define a single string parameter between the parentheses. As we can see, we define parameters for closures just like we define parameters for functions. We can execute this closure in the same way in which we executed the `clos1` closure. The following code shows how this is done:

```
clos2( "Jon")
```

This example, when executed, will print the `Hello Jon` message to the console. Let's look at another way we can use the `clos2` closure.

Our original definition of closures stated that Closures are self-contained blocks of code that can be passed around and used throughout our application code. This tells us that we can pass our closure from the context that they were created in to other parts of our code. Let's look at how to pass our `clos2` closure into a function. We will define a function that accepts our `clos2` closure, as follows:

```
func testClosure(handler: (String) -> Void) {  
    handler("Dasher")  
}
```

We define the function just like we would any other function; however, in the parameter list, we define a parameter named `handler`, and the type defined for the `handler` parameter is `(String) -> Void`. If we look closely, we can see that the `(String) -> Void` definition of the `handler` parameter matches the parameter and return types that we defined for the `clos2` closure. This means that we can pass the `clos2` closure into the function. Let's look at how to do this:

```
testClosure(handler: clos2)
```

We call the `testClosure()` function just like any other function, and the closure that is being passed in looks like any other variable. Since the `clos2` closure is executed in the `testClosure()` function, we will see the message, `HelloDasher`, printed to the console when this code is executed. As we will see a little later in this chapter, the ability to pass closures to functions is what makes closures so exciting and powerful. As the final piece to the closure puzzle, let's look at how to return a value from a closure. The following example shows this:

```
let clos3 = {  
    (name: String) -> String in  
    return "Hello \\" + name + "\""  
}
```

The definition of the `clos3` closure looks very similar to how we defined the `clos2` closure. The difference is that we changed the `Void` return type to a `String` type. Then, in the body of the closure, instead of printing the message to the console, we used the `return` statement to return the message. We can now execute the `clos3` closure just like the previous two closures or pass the closure to a function like we did with the `clos2` closure. The following example shows how to execute the `clos3` closure:

```
var message = clos3("Buddy")
```

After this line of code is executed, the `message` variable will contain the `Hello Buddy` string. The previous three examples of closures demonstrate the format and how to define a typical closure. Those who are familiar with Objective-C can see that the format of closures in Swift is a lot cleaner and easier to use. The syntax for creating closures that we have shown so far in this chapter is pretty short; however, we can shorten it even more. In this next section, we will look at how to do this.

Shorthand syntax for closures

In this section, we will look at a couple of ways to shorten the syntax.



Using the shorthand syntax for closures is really a matter of personal preference. A lot of developers like to make their code as small and compact as possible, and they take great pride in doing so. However, at times this can make the code hard to read and understand for other developers.

The first shorthand syntax for closures that we are going to look at is one of the most popular, which is the syntax we saw when we were using algorithms with arrays in Chapter 4, *Using Swift Collections*. This format is mainly used when we want to send a really small (usually one line) closure to a function, like we did with the algorithms for arrays. Before we look at this shorthand syntax, we need to write a function that will accept a closure as a parameter:

```
func testFunction(num: Int, handler:() -> Void) {  
    for _ in 0..        handler()  
    }  
}
```

This function accepts two parameters; the first parameter is an integer named `num`, and the second parameter is a closure named `handler` which does not have any parameters and does not return any value. Within the function, we create a `for` loop that will use the `num` integer to define how many times it loops. Within the `for` loop, we call the `handler` closure that was passed into the function. Now let's create a closure and pass it to `testFunction()` as follows:

```
let clos = {  
    () -> Void in  
    print("Hello from standard syntax")  
}  
testFunction(num: 5, handler: clos)
```

This code is very easy to read and understand; however, it does take five lines of code. Now let's look at how to shorten it by writing the closure inline within the function call:

```
testFunction(num: 5, handler: {print("Hello from Shorthand closure")})
```

In this example, we created the closure inline within the function call, using the same syntax that we used with the algorithms for arrays. The closure is placed in between two curly brackets ({}), which means the code to create the closure is `{print ("Hello from Shorthand closure")}`. When this code is executed, it will print out the `Hello from Shorthand closure` message five times on the screen. The ideal way to call the `testFunction()` with a closure, for both compactness and readability, would be as follows:

```
testFunction(num: 5) {  
    print("Hello from Shorthand closure")  
}
```

Having the closure as the final parameter allows us to leave off the label when calling the function. This example gives us both compact and readable code. Let's look at how to use parameters with this shorthand syntax. We will begin by creating a new function that will accept a closure with a single parameter. We will name this function `testFunction2`. The following example shows what the new `testFunction2` function does:

```
func testFunction2(num: Int, handler: (_ : String)->Void) {  
    for _ in 0..        handler("Me")  
    }  
}
```

In `testFunction2`, we define the closure like this: `(_ : String)->Void`. This definition means that the closure accepts one parameter and does not return any value. Now let's look at how to use the same shorthand syntax to call this function:

```
testFunction2(num: 5){  
    print("Hello from \$(0)")  
}
```

The difference between this closure definition and the previous one is `$0`. The `$0` parameter is shorthand for the first parameter passed into the function. If we execute this code, it prints out the `Hello from Me` message five times. Using the dollar sign (\$) followed by a number with inline closures allows us to define the closure without having to create a parameter list in the definition. The number after the dollar sign defines the position of the parameter in the parameter list. Let's examine this format a bit more, because we are not limited to only using the dollar sign (\$) and number shorthand format with inline closures. This shorthand syntax can also be used to shorten the closure definition by allowing us to leave the parameter names off. The following example demonstrates this:

```
let clos5: (String, String) -> Void = {  
    print("\$(0) \$(1)")  
}
```

In this example, the closure has two string parameters defined; however, we do not give them names. The parameters are defined like this: (String, String). We can then access the parameters within the body of the closure using \$0 and \$1. Also, note that the closure definition is after the colon (:), using the same syntax that we use to define a variable type rather than inside the curly brackets. When we use anonymous arguments, this is how we would define the closure. It will not be valid to define the closure as follows:

```
let clos5b = {  
    (String, String) in  
    print("\\"  
        ($0) \($1)")  
}
```

In this example, we will receive an error letting us know that this format is not valid. Next, let's look at how we would use the `clos5` closure:

```
clos5("Hello", "Kara")
```

Since `Hello` is the first string in the parameter list, it is accessed with `$0`, and as `Kara` is the second string in the parameter list, it is accessed with `$1`. When we execute this code, we will see the `HelloKara` message printed to the console. This next example is used when the closure doesn't return any value. Rather than defining the return type as `Void`, we can use parentheses, as the following example shows:

```
let clos6: () -> () = {  
    print("Howdy")  
}
```

In this example, we define the closure as `() -> ()`. This tells Swift that the closure does not accept any parameters and also does not return a value. We will execute this closure as follows:

```
clos6()
```

As a personal preference, I am not very fond of this shorthand syntax. I think the code is much easier to read when the `void` keyword is used rather than the parentheses.

We have one more shorthand closure example to demonstrate before we begin showing some really useful examples of closures. In this last example, we will demonstrate how we can return a value from the closure without the need to include the `return` keyword. If the entire closure body consists of only a single statement, we can omit the `return` keyword, and the results of the statement will be returned. Let's look at an example of this:

```
let clos7 = {(first: Int, second: Int) -> Int in first + second }
```

In this example, the closure accepts two parameters of the integer type and will return an instance of the integer type. The only statement within the body of the closure adds the first parameter to the second parameter. However, if you notice, we do not include the `return` keyword before the additional statement. Swift will see that this is a single statement closure and will automatically return the results, just as if we put the `return` keyword before the additional statement. We do need to make sure the result type of our statement matches the return type of the closure.

All of the examples shown in the previous two sections were designed to show how to define and use closures. On their own, these examples did not really show off the power of closures and they did not show how incredibly useful closures are. The remainder of this chapter is written to demonstrate the power and usefulness of closures in Swift.

Using closures with Swift's array algorithms

In Chapter 4, *Using Swift Collections*, we looked at several built-in algorithms that we can use with Swift's arrays. In that chapter, we briefly looked at how to add simple rules to each of these algorithms with very basic closures. Now that we have a better understanding of closures, let's look at how we can expand on these algorithms using more advanced closures.

In this section, we will primarily be using the `map` algorithm for consistency purposes; however, we can use the basic ideas demonstrated with any of the algorithms. We will start by defining an array to use:

```
let guests = ["Jon", "Kim", "Kailey", "Kara"]
```

This array contains a list of names and the array is named `guests`. This array will be used for the majority of examples in this section. Now that we have our `guests` array, let's add a closure that will print a greeting to each of the names in the array:

```
guests.map { name in
    print("Hello \(name)")}
```

Since the `map` algorithm applies the closure to each item of the array, this example will print out a greeting for each name within the array. After the first section in this chapter, we should have a pretty good understanding of how this closure works. Using the shorthand syntax that we saw in the previous section, we could reduce the preceding example down to the following single line of code:

```
guests.map {print("Hello \(\$0)")}
```

This is one of the few times, in my opinion, where the shorthand syntax may be easier to read than the standard syntax. Now, let's say that rather than printing the greeting to the console, we wanted to return a new array that contained the greetings. For this, we would return a `String` type from our closure, as shown in the following example:

```
var messages = guests.map {
    (name:String) -> String in
        return "Welcome \\"(name)""
}
```

When this code is executed, the `messages` array will contain a greeting to each of the names in the `guests` array, while the array will remain unchanged. We could access the greetings as follows:

```
for message in messages {
    print("\\"(message)")
}
```

The preceding examples in this section showed how to add a closure to the `map` algorithm inline. This is good if we only had one closure that we wanted to use with the `map` algorithm, but what if we had more than one closure that we wanted to use, or if we wanted to use the closure multiple times or reuse it with different arrays? For this, we could assign the closure to a constant or variable and then pass in the closure, using its constant or variable name, as needed. Let's look at how to do this. We will begin by defining two closures. One of the closures will print a greeting for each element in the array, and the other closure will print a goodbye message for each element in the array:

```
let greetGuest = { (name:String) -> Void in
    print("Hello guest named \\"(name)"")
}

let sayGoodbye = { (name:String) -> Void in
    print("Goodbye \\"(name)"")
}
```

Now that we have two closures, we can use them with the `map` algorithm as needed. The following code shows how to use these closures interchangeably with the `guests` array:

```
guests.map(greetGuest)
guests.map(sayGoodbye)
```

When we use the `greetGuest` closure with the `guests` array, the `greetings` message is printed to the console, and when we use the `sayGoodbye` closure with the `guests` array, the `goodbye` message is printed to the console. If we had another array named `guests2`, we could use the same closures for that array, as shown in the following example:

```
guests.map(greetGuest)
guests2.map(greetGuest)
guests.map(sayGoodbye)
guests2.map(sayGoodbye)
```

All of the examples in this section so far have either printed a message to the console or returned a new array from the closure. We are not limited to such basic functionality in our closures. For example, we can filter the array within the closure, as shown in the following example:

```
let greetGuest2 = {
  (name:String) -> Void in
    if (name.hasPrefix("K")) {
      print("\u0022(name) is on the guest list")
    } else {
      print("\u0022(name) was not invited")
    }
}
```

In this example, we print out a different message depending on whether the name starts with the letter K.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, closures have the ability to capture and store references to any variable or constant from the context in which they were defined. Let's look at an example of this. Let's say that we have a function that contains the highest temperature for the last seven days at a given location and this function accepts a closure as a parameter. This function will execute the closure on the array of temperatures. The function can be written as follows:

```
func temperatures(calculate:(Int)->Void) {
  var tempArray = [72,74,76,68,70,72,66]
  tempArray.map(calculate)
}
```

This function accepts a closure, defined as `(Int) -> Void`. We then use the map algorithm to execute this closure for each item of the `tempArray` array. The key to using a closure correctly in this situation is to understand that the `temperatures` function does not know, or care, about what goes on inside the `calculate` closure. Also, be aware that the closure is also unable to update or change the items within the function's context, which means that the closure cannot change any other variable within the temperature's function; however, it can update variables in the context that it was created in.

Let's look at the function that we will create the closure in. We will name this function `testFunction`:

```
func testFunction() {  
    var total = 0  
    var count = 0  
    let addTemps = {  
        (num: Int) -> Void in  
            total += num  
            count += 1  
    }  
    temperatures(calculate: addTemps)  
    print("Total: \(total)")  
    print("Count: \(count)")  
    print("Average: \(total/count)")  
}
```

In this function, we begin by defining two variables, named `total` and `count`, where both variables are of the integer type. We then create a closure named `addTemps` that will be used to add all the temperatures from the `temperatures` function together. The `addTemps` closure will also count how many temperatures there are in the array. To do this, the `addTemps` closure calculates the sum of each item in the array and keeps the total in the `total` variable that was defined at the beginning of the function. The `addTemps` closure also keeps track of the number of items in the array by incrementing the `count` variable for each item. Notice that neither the `total` nor `count` variables are defined within the closure; however, we are able to use them within the closure because they were defined in the same context as the closure.

We then call the `temperatures` function and pass it the `addTemps` closure. Finally, we print the `total`, `count`, and average temperature to the console. When `testFunction` is executed, we will see the following output to the console:

```
Total: 498  
Count: 7  
Average: 71
```

As we can see from the output, the `addTemps` closure is able to update and use items that are defined within the context that it was created in, even when the closure is used in a different context.

Now that we have looked at using closures with the array map algorithm, let's look at using closures by themselves. We will also look at the ways we can clean up our code to make it easier to read and use.

Changing functionality

Closures also give us the ability to change the functionality of types on the fly. In Chapter 10, *Generics*, we saw that generics give us the ability to write functions that are valid for multiple types. With closures, we are able to write functions and types whose functionality can change, based on the closure that is passed in. In this section, we will show you how to write a function whose functionality can be changed with a closure.

Let's begin by defining a type that will be used to demonstrate how to swap out a functionality. We will name this type `TestType`:

```
struct TestType {  
    typealias getNumClosure = ((Int, Int) -> Int)  
  
    var numOne = 5  
    var numTwo = 8  
  
    var results = 0;  
  
    mutating func getNum(handler: getNumClosure) -> Int {  
        results = handler(numOne, numTwo)  
        print("Results: \(results)")  
        return results  
    }  
}
```

We begin this type by defining a `typealias` for our closure, which is named `getNumClosure`. Any closure that is defined as a `getNumClosure` closure will take two integers and return a single integer. Within this closure, we assume that it does something with the integers that we pass in to get the value to return, but it really doesn't have to do anything with the integers. To be honest, this class doesn't really care what the closure does as long as it conforms to the `getNumClosure` type. Next, we define three integers, named `numOne`, `numTwo`, and `results`.

We also define a method named `getNum()`. This method accepts a closure that conforms to the `getNumClosure` type as its only parameter. Within the `getNum()` method, we execute the closure by passing in the `numOne` and `numTwo` variables, and the integer that is returned is put into the `results` class variable. Now let's look at several closures that conform to the `getNumClosure` type that we can use with the `getNum()` method:

```
var max: TestType.getNumClosure = {
    if $0 > $1 {
        return $0
    } else {
        return $1
    }
}

var min: TestType.getNumClosure = {
    if $0 < $1 {
        return $0
    } else {
        return $1
    }
}

var multiply: TestType.getNumClosure = {
    return $0 * $1
}

var second: TestType.getNumClosure = {
    return $1
}

var answer: TestType.getNumClosure = {
    var _ = $0 + $1
    return 42
}
```

In this code, we define five closures that conform to the `getNumClosure` type:

- `max`: This returns the maximum value of the two integers that are passed
- in `min`: This returns the minimum value of the two integers that are passed
- in `multiply`: This multiplies both the values that are passed in and returns the product
- `second`: This returns the second parameter that was passed in
- `answer`: This returns the answer to life, the universe, and everything

In the answer closure, we have an extra line that looks like it does not have a purpose:

```
var _ = $0 + $1.
```

We do this deliberately because the following code is not valid:

```
var answer: TestType.getNumClosure = {  
    return 42  
}
```

This type gives us the error: contextual type for closure argument list expects two arguments, which cannot be implicitly ignored. As we can see by the error, Swift will not let us ignore the expected parameters within the body of the closure. In the second closure, Swift assumes that there are two parameters because `$1` specifies the second parameter. We can now pass each one of these closures to the `getNum()` method to change the functionality of the function to suit our needs. The following code illustrates this:

```
var myType = TestType()  
  
myType.getNum(handler: max)  
myType.getNum(handler: min)  
myType.getNum(handler: multiply)  
myType.getNum(handler: second)  
myType.getNum(handler: answer)
```

When this code is run, we will receive the following results for each of the closures:

```
For Max: Results: 8  
For Min: Results: 5  
For Multiply: Results: 40  
For Second: Results: 8  
For Answer: Results: 42
```

The last example we are going to show you is one that is used a lot in frameworks, especially ones that have a functionality that is designed to be run asynchronously.

Selecting a closure based on results

In the final example, we will pass two closures to a method, and then, depending on some logic, one or possibly both of the closures will be executed. Generally, one of the closures is called if the method was successfully executed and the other closure is called if the method failed.

Let's start by creating a type that will contain a method that will accept two closures and then execute one of the closures based on the defined logic. We will name this type `TestType`. Here is the code for the `TestType` type:

```
class TestType {  
    typealias ResultsClosure = ((String) -> Void)  
  
    func isGreater(numOne: Int, numTwo: Int, successHandler:  
        ResultsClosure, failureHandler: ResultsClosure) {  
        if numOne > numTwo {  
            successHandler("\(numOne) is greater than \(numTwo)")  
        }  
        else {  
            failureHandler("\(numOne) is not greater than \(numTwo)")  
        }  
    }  
}
```

We begin this type by creating a `typealias` that defines the closure that we will use for both the successful and failure closures. We will name this `typealiasResultsClosure`. This example also illustrates why you should use a `typealias` rather than retying the closure definition. It saves us a lot of typing and prevents us from making mistakes. In this example, if we do not use a `typealias`, we would need to retype the closure definition four times, and if we need to change the closure definition, we would need to change it in four spots. With the type alias, we only need to type the closure definition once and then use the alias throughout the remaining code.

We then create a method named `isGreater`, which takes two integers as the first two parameters, and two closures as the next two parameters. The first closure is named `successHandler`, and the second closure is named `failureHandler`. Within this method, we check whether the first integer parameter is greater than the second. If the first integer is greater, the `successHandler` closure is executed; otherwise, the `failureHandler` closure is executed. Now, let's create two closures outside of the `TestType` structure. The code for these two closures is as follows:

```
var success: TestType.ResultsClosure = {  
    print("Success: \($0)")  
}  
  
var failure: TestType.ResultsClosure = {  
    print("Failure: \($0)")  
}
```

Note that both closures are defined as the `TestClass.ResultsClosure` type. In each closure, we simply print a message to the console to let us know which closure was executed. Normally, we would put some functionality in the closure. We will then call the method with both the closures, as follows:

```
var test = TestType()  
test.isGreater(numOne: 8, numTwo: 6, successHandler: success,  
failureHandler: failure)
```

Note that in the method call, we are sending both the success closure and the failure closure. In this example, we will see the `Success: 8 is greater than 6` message. If we reversed the numbers, we would see the `Failure: 6 is not greater than 8` message. This use case is really good when we call asynchronous methods, such as loading data from a web service. If the web service call was successful, the success closure is called; otherwise, the failure closure is called.

One big advantage of using closures like this is that the UI does not freeze while we wait for the asynchronous call to complete. This also involves a concurrency piece, which we will be covering in [Chapter 14, Concurrency and Parallelism in Swift](#). As an example, imagine we tried to retrieve data from a web service, as follows:

```
var data = myWebClass.myWebServiceCall(someParameter)
```

Our UI would freeze while we wait for the response, or we would have to make the call in a separate thread so that the UI would not hang. With closures, we pass the closures to the networking framework and rely on the framework to execute the appropriate closure when it is done. This relies on the framework to implement concurrency correctly, to make the calls asynchronously, but a decent framework should handle that for us.

Summary

In this chapter, we saw that we can define a closure just like we can define an `Integer` or `String` type. We can assign closures to a variable, pass them as an argument to functions, and return them from functions.

Closures capture strong references to any constants or variables from the context in which the closure was defined. We do have to be careful with this functionality, to make sure that we do not create a strong reference cycle, which would lead to memory leaks in our applications.

Swift closures are very similar to blocks in Objective-C, but they have a much cleaner and more eloquent syntax. This makes them a lot easier to use and understand.

Having a good understanding of closures is vital to mastering the Swift programming language and will make it easier to develop great applications that are easy to maintain. They are also essential for creating first-class frameworks that are easy both to use and to maintain.

The use cases that we looked at in this chapter are by no means the only useful use cases for closures. I can promise you that the more you use closures in Swift, the more uses you will find for them. Closures are definitely one of the most powerful and useful features of the Swift language, and Apple did a great job by implementing them.

In the next chapter, we will look at how we can use grand central dispatch and operation Queues to add concurrency and parallelism to our application's code.

14

Concurrency and Parallelism in Swift

When I first started learning Objective-C, I already had a good understanding of concurrency and multitasking with my background in other languages, such as C and Java. This background made it very easy for me to create multithreaded applications using threads. Then, Apple changed everything when they released Grand Central Dispatch (GCD) with OS X 10.6 and iOS 4. At first, I went into denial; there was no way GCD could manage my application's threads better than I could. Then, I entered the anger phase; GCD was hard to use and understand. Next was the bargaining phase; maybe I can use GCD with my threading code, so I could still control how the threading worked. Then, there was the depression phase; maybe GCD does handle threading better than I could. Finally, I entered the wow phase; this GCD thing is really easy to use and works amazingly well. After using GCD and operation queues with Objective-C, I do not see a reason for using manual threads with Swift.

In this chapter, we will learn about the following topics:

- What are basics of concurrency and parallelism
- How to use GCD to create and manage concurrent dispatch queues
- How to use GCD to create and manage serial dispatch queues
- How to use various GCD functions to add tasks to the dispatch queues
- How to use Operation and OperationQueues to add concurrency to our applications

Concurrency and parallelism

Concurrency is the concept of multiple tasks starting, running, and completing within the same time period. This does not necessarily mean that the tasks are executing simultaneously. In fact, in order for tasks to be run simultaneously, our application needs to be running on a multicore or multiprocessor system. Concurrency allows us to share the processor or cores for multiple tasks; however, a single core can only execute one task at a given time.

Parallelism is the concept of two or more tasks running simultaneously. Since each core of our processor can only execute one task at a time, the number of tasks executing simultaneously is limited to the number of cores within our processors and the number of processors that we have. As an example, if we have a four-core processor, then we are limited to running four tasks simultaneously. Today's processors can execute tasks so quickly that it may appear that larger tasks are executing simultaneously. However, within the system, the larger tasks are actually taking turns executing subtasks on the cores.

In order to understand the difference between concurrency and parallelism, let's look at how a juggler juggles balls. If you watch a juggler, it seems they are catching and throwing multiple balls at any given time, however, a closer look reveals that they are, in fact, only catching and throwing one ball at a time. The other balls are in the air waiting to be caught and thrown. If we want to be able to catch and throw multiple balls simultaneously, we need to have multiple jugglers.

This example is really good because we can think of jugglers as the cores of a processor. A system with a single core processor (one juggler), regardless of how it seems, can only execute one task (catch and throw one ball) at a time. If we want to execute more than one task at a time, we need to use a multicore processor (more than one juggler).

Back in the old days when all of the processors were single-core, the only way to have a system that executed tasks simultaneously was to have multiple processors in the system. This also required specialized software to take advantage of the multiple processors. In today's world, just about every device has a processor that has multiple cores, and both iOS and macOS are designed to take advantage of these multiple cores to run tasks simultaneously.

Traditionally, the way applications added concurrency was to create multiple threads; however, this model does not scale well to an arbitrary number of cores. The biggest problem with using threads was that our applications ran on a variety of systems (and processors), and in order to optimize our code, we needed to know how many cores/processors could be efficiently used at a given time, which is usually not known at the time of development.

To solve this problem, many operating systems, including iOS and macOS, started relying on asynchronous functions. These functions are often used to initiate tasks that could possibly take a long time to complete, such as making an HTTP request or writing data to disk. An asynchronous function typically starts the long running task and then returns prior to the task's completion. Usually, this task runs in the background and uses a callback function (such as closure in Swift) when the task completes.

These asynchronous functions work great for the tasks that the OS provides them for, but what if we need to create our own asynchronous functions and do not want to manage the threads ourselves? For this, Apple provides a couple of technologies. In this chapter, we will be covering two of these: GCD and operation queues.

GCD is a low-level, C-based API that allows specific tasks to be queued up for execution and schedules the execution on any of the available processor cores. Operation queues are similar to GCD; however, they are Foundation objects and are internally implemented using GCD.

Let's begin by looking at GCD.

Grand Central Dispatch

Prior to Swift 3, using GCD felt like writing low-level C code. The API was a little cumbersome and sometimes hard to understand because it did not use any of the Swift language design features. This all changed with Swift 3 because Apple took up the task of rewriting the API so it would meet the Swift 3 API guidelines.

GCD provides what is known as dispatch queues to manage submitted tasks. The queues manage these submitted tasks and execute them in a **First-In, First-Out (FIFO)** order. This ensures that the tasks are started in the order they were submitted.

A task is simply some work that our application needs to perform. For example, we can create tasks that perform simple calculations, read/write data to disk, make an HTTP request, or anything else that our application needs to do. We define these tasks by placing the code inside either a function or a closure and adding it to a dispatch queue.

GCD provides three types of queues:

- **Serial queues:** Tasks in a serial queue (also known as a **private queue**) are executed one at a time in the order they were submitted. Each task is started only after the preceding task is completed. Serial queues are often used to synchronize access to specific resources because we are guaranteed that no two tasks in a serial queue will ever run simultaneously. Therefore, if the only way to access the specific resource is through the tasks in the serial queue, then no two tasks will attempt to access the resource at the same time or out of order.
- **Concurrent queues:** Tasks in a concurrent queue (also known as a **global dispatch queue**) execute concurrently; however, the tasks are still started in the order that they were added to the queue. The exact number of tasks that can be executed at any given instance is variable and is dependent on the system's current conditions and resources. The decision on when to start a task is up to GCD and is not something that we can control within our application.
- **Main dispatch queue:** The main dispatch queue is a globally available serial queue that executes tasks on the application's main thread. Since tasks put into the main dispatch queue run on the main thread, it is usually called from a background queue when some background processing has finished and the user interface needs to be updated.

Dispatch queues offer several advantages over traditional threads. The first and foremost advantage is that, with dispatch queues, the system handles the creation and management of threads rather than the application itself. The system can scale the number of threads dynamically, based on the overall available resources of the system and the current system conditions. This means that dispatch queues can manage the threads with greater efficiency than we could.

Another advantage of dispatch queues is that we are able to control the order in which the tasks are started. With serial queues, not only do we control the order in which tasks are started, but we also ensure that one task does not start before the preceding one is complete. With traditional threads, this can be very cumbersome and brittle to implement, but with dispatch queues, as we will see later in this chapter, it is quite easy.

Calculation type

Before we look at how to use dispatch queues, let's create a class that will help us to demonstrate how the various types of queues work. This class will contain two basic functions and we will name the class `DoCalculations`. The first function will simply perform some basic calculations and then return a value. Here is the code for this function, which is named `doCalc()`:

```
func doCalc() {  
    let x = 100  
    let y = x*x  
    _ = y/x  
}
```

The other function, which we will name `performCalculation()`, accepts two parameters. One is an integer named `iterations` and the other is a string named `tag`. The `performCalculation()` function calls the `doCalc()` function repeatedly until it calls the function the same number of times as defined by the `iterations` parameter. We also use the `CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()` function to calculate the elapsed time it took to perform all of the iterations, and then print the elapsed time with the `tag` string to the console. This will let us know when the function completes and how long it took to complete it. Here is the code for this function:

```
func performCalculation(_ iterations: Int, tag: String) {  
    let start = CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()  
    for _ in 0 ..< iterations {  
        self.doCalc()  
    }  
    let end = CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()  
    print("time for \(tag):\ \(end-start)")  
}
```

These functions will be used together to keep our queues busy, so we can see how they work. Let's begin by looking at how we would create a dispatch queue.

Creating queues

We use the `DispatchQueue` initializer to create a new dispatch queue. The following code shows how we would create a new dispatch queue:

```
let concurrentQueue = DispatchQueue(label: "cqueue.hoffman.jon",  
                                    attributes: .concurrent)  
let serialQueue = DispatchQueue(label: "squeue.hoffman.jon")
```

The first line would create a concurrent queue with the label of `cqueue.hoffman.jon`, while the second line would create a serial queue with the label of `squeue.hoffman.jon`. `ispatchQueue` initializer takes the following parameters:

- **Label:** This is a string label that is attached to the queue to uniquely identify it in debugging tools, such as instruments and crash reports. It is recommended that we use a reverse DNS naming convention. This parameter is optional and can be `nil`.
- **Attributes:** This specifies the type of queue to make. This can be `DispatchQueue.Attributes.serial`, `DispatchQueue.Attributes.concurrent`, or `nil`. If the this parameter is `nil`, a serial queue is created. You can use `.serial` or `.concurrent` as we showed in the sample code.



Some programming languages use the reverse DNS naming convention to name certain components. This convention is based on a registered domain name that is reversed. As an example, if we worked for a company that had a domain name of `mycompany.com` with a product called `widget`, the reverse DNS name will be `com.mycompany.widget`.

Creating and using a concurrent queue

A concurrent queue will execute the tasks in a FIFO order; however, the tasks will execute concurrently and finish in any order. Let's see how we would create and use a concurrent queue. The following line will create the concurrent queue that we will be using for this section and will also create an instance of the `DoCalculations` type that will be used to test the queue:

```
let cqueue = DispatchQueue(label: "cqueue.hoffman.jon",
                           attributes:.concurrent)
let calculation = DoCalculations()
```

The first line will create a new dispatch queue that we will name `cqueue`, and the second line creates an instance of the `DoCalculations` type. Now, let's see how we would use our concurrent queue by using the `performCalculation()` method from the `DoCalculations` type to perform some calculations:

```
let c = {calculation.performCalculation(1000, tag: "async1")}
cqueue.async(execute: c)
```

In the preceding code, we created a closure, which represents our task and simply calls the `performCalculation()` function of the `DoCalculation` instance, requesting that it runs through 1,000 iterations of the `doCalc()` function. Finally, we use the `async(execute:)` method of our queue to execute it. This code will execute the task in a concurrent dispatch queue, which is separate from the main thread.

While the preceding example works perfectly, we can actually shorten the code a little bit. The next example shows that we do not need to create a separate closure as we did in the preceding example. We can also submit the task to execute, as follows:

```
cqueue.async {  
    calculation.performCalculation(1000, tag: "async1")  
}
```

This shorthand version is how we usually submit small code blocks to our queues. If we have larger tasks or tasks that we need to submit multiple times, we will generally want to create a closure and submit the closure to the queue as we showed in the first example.

Let's see how a concurrent queue works by adding several items to the queue and looking at the order and time that they return. The following code will add three tasks to the queue. Each task will call the `performCalculation()` function with various iteration counts. Remember that the `performCalculation()` function will execute the calculation routine continuously until it is executed the number of times defined by the iteration count passed in. Therefore, the larger the iteration count we pass into the function, the longer it should take to execute. Let's look at the following code:

```
cqueue.async {  
    calculation.performCalculation(10000000, tag: "async1")  
}  
  
cqueue.async {  
    calculation.performCalculation(1000, tag: "async2")  
}  
  
cqueue.async {  
    calculation.performCalculation(100000, tag: "async3")  
}
```

Note that each of the functions is called with a different value in the `tag` parameter. Since the `performCalculation()` function prints out the `tag` variable with the elapsed time, we can see the order in which the tasks complete and the time they took to execute. If we execute the preceding code, we should see results similar to this:

```
time for async2: 0.000200986862182617
time for async3: 0.00800204277038574
time for async1: 0.461670994758606
```



The elapsed time will vary from one run to the next and from system to system.

Since the `queues` function in a FIFO order, the task that had the tag of `async1` was executed first. However, as we can see from the results, it was the last task to finish. Since this is a concurrent queue, if it is possible (if the system has the available resources), the blocks of code will execute concurrently. This is why tasks with the tags of `async2` and `async3` completed prior to the task that had the `async1` tag, even though the execution of the `async1` task began before the other two.

Now, let's see how a serial queue executes tasks.

Creating and using a serial queue

A serial queue functions a little different than a concurrent queue. A serial queue will only execute one task at a time and will wait for one task to complete before starting the next one. This queue, like the concurrent dispatch queue, follows the FIFO order. The following line of code will create a serial queue that we will be using for this section and will create an instance of the `DoCalculations` type:

```
let squeue = DispatchQueue(label: "squeue.hoffman.jon")
let calculation = DoCalculations()
```

The first line will create a new serial dispatch queue that we name `squeue`, and the second line creates the instance of the `DoCalculations` type. Now, let's see how we would use our serial queue by using the `performCalculation()` method from the `DoCalculations` type to perform some calculations:

```
let s = {calculation.performCalculation(1000, tag: "sync1")}
squeue.async (execute: s)
```

In the preceding code, we created a closure, which represents our task, that simply calls the `performCalculation()` function of the `DoCalculation` instance, requesting that it runs through 1,000 iterations of the `doCalc()` function. Finally, we use the `async(execute:)` method of our queue to execute it. This code will execute the task in a serial dispatch queue, which is separate from the main thread. As we can see from this code, we use the serial queue exactly like we use the concurrent queue.

We can shorten this code a little bit, just like we did with the concurrent queue. The following example shows how we would do this with a serial queue:

```
squeue.async {  
    calculation.performCalculation(1000, tag: "sync2")  
}
```

Let's see how the serial queue works by adding several items to the queue and looking at the order in which they complete. The following code will add three tasks, which will call the `performCalculation()` function with various iteration counts, to the queue:

```
squeue.async {  
    calculation.performCalculation(100000, tag: "sync1")  
}  
  
squeue.async {  
    calculation.performCalculation(1000, tag: "sync2")  
}  
  
squeue.async {  
    calculation.performCalculation(100000, tag: "sync3")  
}
```

Just as we did in the concurrent queue example, we call the `performCalculation()` function with various iteration counts and different values in the `tag` parameter. Since the `performCalculation()` function prints out the tag string with the elapsed time, we can see the order that the tasks complete in and the time it takes to execute. If we execute this code, we should see the following results:

```
time for sync1: 0.00648999214172363  
time for sync2: 0.00009602308273315  
time for sync3: 0.00515800714492798
```

The elapsed time will vary from one run to the next and from system to system.



Unlike the concurrent queues, we can see that the tasks completed in the same order that they were submitted in, even though the `sync2` and `sync3` tasks took considerably less time to complete. This demonstrates that a serial queue only executes one task at a time and that the queue waits for each task to complete before starting the next one.

In the previous examples, we used the `async` method to execute the code blocks. We could also use the `sync` method.

Async versus sync

In the previous examples, we used the `async` method to execute the code blocks. When we use the `async` method, the call will not block the current thread. This means that the method returns and the code block is executed asynchronously.

Rather than using the `async` method, we could use the `sync` method to execute the code blocks. The `sync` method will block the current thread, which means it will not return until the execution of the code has completed. Generally, we use the `async` method, but there are use cases where the `sync` method is useful. This use case is usually when we have a separate thread and we want that thread to wait for some work to finish.

Executing code on the main queue function

The `DispatchQueue.main.async(execute:)` function will execute code on the application's main queue. We generally use this function when we want to update our code from another thread or queue.

The main queue is automatically created for the main thread when the application starts. This main queue is a serial queue; therefore, items in this queue are executed one at a time, in the order that they were submitted. We will generally want to avoid using this queue unless we have a need to update the user interface from a background thread.

The following code example shows how we would use this function:

```
let squeue = DispatchQueue(label: "squeue.hoffman.jon")
squeue.async{
    let resizedImage = image.resize(to: rect)
    DispatchQueue.main.async {
        picView.image = resizedImage
    }
}
```

In the previous code, we assume that we have added a method to the `UIImage` type that will resize the image. In this code, we create a new serial queue and, in that queue, we resize an image. This is a good example of how to use a dispatch queue because we would not want to resize an image on the main queue since it would freeze the UI while the image is being resized. Once the image is resized, we then need to update a `UIImageView` with the new image; however, all updates to the UI need to occur on the main thread. Therefore, we will use the `DispatchQueue.main.async` function to perform the update on the main queue.

There will be times when we need to execute tasks after a delay. If we were using a threading model, we would need to create a new thread, perform some sort of `delay` or `sleep` function, and execute our task. With GCD, we can use the `asyncAfter` function.

Using `asyncAfter`

The `asyncAfter` function will execute a block of code asynchronously after a given delay. This is very useful when we need to pause the execution of our code. The following code sample shows how we would use the `asyncAfter` function:

```
let queue2 = DispatchQueue(label: "squeue.hoffman.jon")
let delayInSeconds = 2.0
let pTime = DispatchTime.now() + Double(delayInSeconds) *
Double(NSEC_PER_SEC) / Double(NSEC_PER_SEC)
queue2.asyncAfter(deadline: pTime) {
    print("Times Up")
}
```

In this code, we begin by creating a serial dispatch queue. We then create an instance of the `DispatchTime` type and calculate the time to execute the block of code based on the current time. We then use the `asyncAfter` function to execute the code block after the delay.

Now, that we have looked at GCD, let's look at operation queues.

Using the Operation and OperationQueue types

The `Operation` and `OperationQueue` types, working together, provide us with an alternative to GCD for adding concurrency to our applications. Operation queues are part of the Foundation framework and function like dispatch queues as they are a higher-level of abstraction over GCD.

We define the tasks (`Operations`) that we wish to execute and then add the tasks to the operation queue. The operation queue will then handle the scheduling and execution of tasks. Operation queues are instances of the `OperationQueue` class and operations are instances of the `Operation` class.

An operation represents a single unit of work or task. The `Operation` type is an abstract class that provides a thread-safe structure for modeling the state, priority, and dependencies. This class must be subclassed to perform any useful work; we will look at how to subclass this class in the *Subclassing the Operation class* section of this chapter.

Apple provides a concrete implementation of the `Operation` type that we can use as-is for situations where it does not make sense to build a custom subclass. This subclass is `BlockOperation`.

More than one operation queue can exist at the same time, and, in fact, there is always at least one operation queue running. This operation queue is known as the **main queue**. The main queue is automatically created for the main thread when the application starts and is where all of the UI operations are performed.

There are several ways that we can use the `Operation` and `OperationQueue` classes to add concurrency to our application. In this chapter, we will look at three of these ways. The first one we will look at is the use of the `BlockOperation` implementation of the `Operation` abstract class.

Using BlockOperation

In this section, we will be using the same `DoCalculation` class that we used in the *Grand Central Dispatch* section to keep our queues busy with work so that we could see how the `OperationQueue` class works.

The `BlockOperation` class is a concrete implementation of the `Operation` type that can manage the execution of one or more blocks. This class can be used to execute several tasks at once without the need to create separate operations for each task.

Let's see how we can use the `BlockOperation` class to add concurrency to our application. The following code shows how to add three tasks to an operation queue using a single `BlockOperation` instance:

```
let calculation = DoCalculations()
let blockOperation1: BlockOperation = BlockOperation.init(
    block: {
        calculation.performCalculation(10000000, tag: "Operation 1")
    }
)
blockOperation1.addExecutionBlock({
    calculation.performCalculation(10000, tag: "Operation 2")
})
blockOperation1.addExecutionBlock({
    calculation.performCalculation(1000000, tag: "Operation 3")
})
let operationQueue = OperationQueue()
operationQueue.addOperation(blockOperation1)
```

In this code, we begin by creating an instance of the `DoCalculation` class and an instance of the `OperationQueue` class. Next, we created an instance of the `BlockOperation` class using the `init` constructor. This constructor takes a single parameter, which is a block of code that represents one of the tasks we want to execute in the queue. Next, we add two additional tasks using the `addExecutionBlock()` method.

One of the differences between dispatch queues and operations is that, with dispatch queues, if resources are available, the tasks are executed as they are added to the queue. With operations, the individual tasks are not executed until the operation itself is submitted to an operation queue. This allows us to initiate all of the operations into a single block operation prior to executing them.

Once we add all of the tasks to the `BlockOperation` instance, we then add the operation to the `OperationQueue` instance that we created at the beginning of the code. At this point, the individual tasks within the operation start to execute.

This example shows how to use `BlockOperation` to queue up multiple tasks and then pass the tasks to the operation queue. The tasks are executed in a FIFO order; therefore, the first task that is added will be the first task executed. However, the tasks can be executed concurrently if we have the available resources.

The output from this code should look similar to this:

```
time for Operation 2:      0.00546294450759888  
time for Operation 3:      0.0800899863243103  
time for Operation 1:      0.484337985515594
```

What if we do not want the tasks to run concurrently? What if we wanted them to run serially like the serial dispatch queue? We can set a property in the operation queue that defines the number of tasks that can be run concurrently in the queue. The property is named `maxConcurrentOperationCount`, and is used like this:

```
operationQueue.maxConcurrentOperationCount = 1
```

However, if we add this line to our previous example, it will not work as expected. To see why this is, we need to understand what the property actually defines. If we look at Apple's `OperationQueue` class reference, the definition of the property is, *the maximum number of queued operations that can execute at the same time*.

What this tells us is that this property defines the number of operations (this is the keyword) that can be executed at the same time. The `BlockOperation` instance, which we added all of the tasks to, represents a single operation, therefore, no other `BlockOperation` added to the queue will execute until the first one is complete, but the individual tasks within the operation will execute concurrently. To run the tasks serially, we would need to create a separate instance of `BlockOperation` for each task.

Using an instance of the `BlockOperation` class is good if we have several tasks that we want to execute concurrently, but they will not start executing until we add the operation to an operation queue. Let's look at a simpler way of adding tasks to an operation queue using the `addOperationWithBlock()` method.

Using the `addOperation()` method of the operation queue

The `OperationQueue` class has a method named `addOperation()`, which makes it easy to add a block of code to the queue. This method automatically wraps the block of code in an operation object and then passes that operation to the queue. Let's see how to use this method to add tasks to a queue:

```
let operationQueue = OperationQueue()  
let calculation = DoCalculations()  
operationQueue.addOperation() {  
    calculation.performCalculation(10000000, tag: "Operation1")
```

```
        }
        operationQueue.addOperation() {
            calculation.performCalculation(10000, tag: "Operation2")
        }
        operationQueue.addOperation() {
            calculation.performCalculation(1000000, tag: "Operation3")
        }
    }
```

In the `BlockOperation` example earlier in this chapter, we added the tasks that we wished to execute into a `BlockOperation` instance. In this example, we are adding the tasks directly to the operation queue, and each task represents one complete operation. Once we create the instance of the operation queue, we then use the `addOperation()` method to add the tasks to the queue.

Also, in the `BlockOperation` example, the individual tasks did not execute until all of the tasks were added, and then that operation was added to the queue. This example is similar to the GCD example where the tasks began executing as soon as they were added to the operation queue.

If we run the preceding code, the output should be similar to this:

```
time for Operation2: 0.0115870237350464
time for Operation3: 0.0790849924087524
time for Operation1: 0.520610988140106
```

You will notice that the operations are executed concurrently. With this example, we can execute the tasks serially by using the `maxConcurrentOperationCount` property that we mentioned earlier. Let's try this by initializing the `OperationQueue` instance as follows:

```
var operationQueue = OperationQueue()
operationQueue.maxConcurrentOperationCount = 1
```

Now, if we run the example, the output should be similar to this:

```
time for Operation1: 0.418763995170593
time for Operation2: 0.000427007675170898
time for Operation3: 0.0441589951515198
```

In this example, we can see that each task waited for the previous task to complete prior to starting.

Using the `addOperation()` method to add tasks to the operation queue is generally easier than using the `BlockOperation` method; however, the tasks will begin as soon as they are added to the queue. This is usually the desired behavior, although there are use cases where we do not want the tasks executing until all operations are added to the queue, as we saw in the `BlockOperation` example.

Now, let's look at how we can subclass the `Operation` class to create an operation that we can add directly to an operation queue.

Subclassing the Operation class

The previous two examples showed how to add small blocks of code to our operation queues. In these examples, we called the `performCalculations` method in the `DoCalculation` class to perform our tasks. These examples illustrate two really good ways to add concurrency for functionality that is already written, but what if, at design time, we want to design our `DoCalculation` class itself for concurrency? For this, we can subclass the `Operation` class.

The `Operation` abstract class provides a significant amount of infrastructure. This allows us to very easily create a subclass without a lot of work. We will need to provide at least an initialization method and a `main` method. The `main` method will be called when the queue begins executing the operation.

Let's see how to implement the `DoCalculation` class as a subclass of the `Operation` class; we will call this new class `MyOperation`:

```
class MyOperation: Operation {
    let iterations: Int
    let tag: String
    init(iterations: Int, tag: String) {
        self.iterations = iterations self.tag = tag
    }

    override func main() {
        performCalculation()
    }

    func performCalculation() {
        let start = CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()
        for _ in 0 ..< iterations {
            self.doCalc()
        }
    }
}
```

```
let end = CFAbsoluteTimeGetCurrent()
print("time for \(tag) : \(end-start)")
}

func doCalc() {
    let x=100
    let y = x*x
    _ = y/x
}
}
```

We begin by defining that the `MyOperation` class is a subclass of the `Operation` class. Within the implementation of the class, we define two class constants, which represent the iteration count and the tag that the `performCalculations()` method uses. Keep in mind that when the operation queue begins executing the operation, it will call the `main()` method with no parameters; therefore any parameters that we need to pass it must be passed through initializers.

In this example, our initializer takes two parameters that are used to set the `iterations` and `tag` class constants. Then, the `main()` method, which the operation queue is going to call to begin execution of the operation, simply calls the `performCalculation()` method.

We can now very easily add instances of our `MyOperation` class to an operation queue, as follows:

```
let operationQueue = NSOperationQueue() operationQueue.addOperation(
    MyOperation(iterations: 10000000, tag:"Operation 1")
)
operationQueue.addOperation( MyOperation(
    iterations: 10000, tag:"Operation 2")
)
operationQueue.addOperation(
    MyOperation(iterations: 1000000, tag:"Operation 3")
)
```

If we run this code, we will see the following results:

```
time for Operation 2:      0.00187397003173828
time for Operation 3:      0.104826986789703
time for Operation 1:      0.866684019565582
```

As we saw earlier, we can also execute the tasks serially by setting the `maxConcurrentOperationCount` property of the operation queue to 1.

If we know that we need to execute some functionality concurrently prior to writing the code, I would recommend subclassing the `Operation` class, as shown in this example, rather than using the previous examples. This gives us the cleanest implementation; however, there is nothing wrong with using the `BlockOperation` class or the `addOperation()` methods described earlier in this section.

Summary

Before we consider adding concurrency to our application, we should make sure that we understand why we are adding it and ask ourselves whether it is necessary. While concurrency can make our application more responsive by offloading work from our main application thread to a background thread, it also adds extra overhead and complexity to our code. I have even seen numerous applications, in various languages, which actually run better after we pulled out some of the concurrency code. This is because the concurrency was not well thought out or planned. With this in mind, it is always a good idea to think and talk about concurrency while we are discussing the application's expected behavior.

At the start of this chapter, we had a discussion about running tasks concurrently compared to running tasks in parallel. We also discussed the hardware limitations that restrict how many tasks can run in parallel on a given device. Having a good understand of those concepts is very important to understanding how and when to add concurrency to our projects.

While GCD is not limited to system-level applications, before we use it in our application, we should consider whether operation queues would be easier and more appropriate for our needs. In general, we should use the highest level of abstraction that meets our needs. This will usually point us to using operation queues; however, there really is nothing preventing us from using GCD, and it may be more appropriate for our needs.

One thing to keep in mind with operation queues is that they add additional overhead because they are Foundation objects. For the large majority of applications, this little extra overhead should not be an issue or even noticed; however, for some projects, such as games that need every last resource that they can get, this extra overhead might very well be an issue.

One last thing to keep in mind is there has been a lot of talk about overhauling the Swift concurrency model in Swift. While this is not going to happen with within Swift 5 it is something to keep an eye on as it will be changing in the future. You can read the Swift Concurrency Manifesto here: <https://gist.github.com/lattner/31ed37682ef1576b16bca1432ea9f782>.

15

Custom Types

In most traditional object-oriented programming languages, we create classes (which are reference types) as blueprints for our objects. In Swift, unlike other object-oriented languages, structures have much of the same functionality as classes, however, they are value types. Apple has said that we should prefer value types, such as structures, to reference types, but what are the differences between a reference type and a value type?

In this chapter, you will explore the following topics:

- The differences between value types and reference types
- Why recursive data types cannot be created as a value type
- How to implement copy-on-write in your custom type
- How to conform to the equitable protocol

As we saw in [Chapter 7, Classes, Structures, and Protocols](#), we have the ability to create our custom types as either a reference type (or class) or a value type (or structure). Let's review the differences between these two types because it is important to understand these differences when determining what type to use for our custom types.

Value types and reference types

Structures are value types; when we pass instances of a structure in our application, we pass a copy of the structure and not the original structure. Classes are reference types; therefore, when we pass an instance of a class within our application, a reference to the original instance is also passed. It is very important to understand this difference. We will discuss a very high-level view here and will provide additional details in [Chapter 16, Memory management](#).

When we pass structures in our application, we are passing copies of the structures and not the original structures. This means that the function gets its own copy of the structure, which it can change as needed without affecting the original instance of the structure.

When we pass an instance of a class in our application, we are passing a reference to the original instance of the class. Since we're passing the instance of the class to the function, the function is getting a reference to the original instance; therefore, any changes made within the function will remain once the function exits.

To illustrate the difference between value types and reference types, let's examine a real-world object: a book. If we have a friend who wants to read *Mastering Swift*, we could either buy them their own copy or share ours.

If we bought our friend their own copy of the book, then any notes they made in the book would remain in their copy of the book and would not be reflected in our copy. This is how passing by value works with structures and variables. Any changes that are made to the structure or variable within the function are not reflected in the original instance of the structure or variable.

If we share our copy of the book, then any notes that were made in the book will stay in the book when it is returned. This is how passing by reference works. Any changes that are made to the instance of the class remains when the function exits.

When we pass an instance of a value type, if we are actually passing a copy of the instance, you may be wondering about the performance of large value types when they are passed from one part of our code to another. For structures that have the possibility of becoming too large, we can use copy-on-write.

The explanation in the previous paragraphs is pretty straightforward; however, it is a very important concept that we must understand. In this section, we are going to examine the differences between value types and reference types so that we know when to use each type.

Let's begin by creating two types; one is going to be a structure (or value type) and the other is going to be a class (or reference type). We will be using these types in this section to demonstrate the differences between value types and reference types. The first type that we will examine is named `MyValueType`. We will implement `MyValueType` using a structure, which means that it is a value type, as its name suggests:

```
struct MyValueType {  
    var name: String  
    var assignment: String  
    var grade: Int  
}
```

In `MyValueType`, we define three properties. Two of the properties are of the `String` type (name and assignment) and one is of the `Integer` type (grade). Now, let's take a look at how we can implement this as a class:

```
class MyReferenceType {
    var name: String
    var assignment: String
    var grade: Int

    init(name: String, assignment: String, grade: Int) {
        self.name = name
        self.assignment = assignment
        self.grade = grade
    }
}
```

The `MyReferenceType` type defines the same three properties as in the `MyValueType` type, however, we need to define an initializer in the `MyReferenceType` type that we did not need to define in the `MyValueType` type. The reason for this is that structures provide us with a default initializer that will initialize all the properties that need to be initialized if we do not provide a default initializer.

Let's take a look at how we can use each of these types. The following code shows how we can create instances of each of these types:

```
var ref = MyReferenceType(name: "Jon", assignment: "Math Test 1", grade: 90)
var val = MyValueType(name: "Jon", assignment: "Math Test 1", grade: 90)
```

As you can see in this code, instances of structures are created in exactly the same way as the instances of classes. Being able to use the same format to create instances of structures and classes is good because it makes our lives easier; however, we do need to bear in mind that value types behave in a different manner to reference types. Let's explore this; the first thing we need to do is create two functions that will change the grades for the instances of the two types:

```
func extraCreditReferenceType(ref: MyReferenceType, extraCredit: Int) {
    ref.grade += extraCredit
}

func extraCreditValueType(val: MyValueType, extraCredit: Int) {
    val.grade += extraCredit
}
```

Each of these functions takes an instance of one of our types and an extra credit amount. Within the function, we will add the extra credit amount to the grade. If we try to use this code we will receive an error in the `extraCreditValueType()` function telling us that the left-side of the mutable operation is not mutable. The reason for this is that a value type parameter, by default, is immutable because the function is receiving an immutable copy of the parameter.

Using a value type like this protects us from making accidental changes to the instances; this is because the instances are scoped to the function or type in which they are created. Value types also protect us from having multiple references to the same instance. Therefore, they are, by default, thread (concurrency) safe because each thread will have its own version of the value type. If we absolutely need to change an instance of a value type outside of its scope, we could use an `inout` parameter.

We define an `inout` parameter by placing the `inout` keyword at the start of the parameter's definition. An `inout` parameter has a value that is passed into the function. This value is then modified by the function and is passed back out of the function to replace the original value.

Let's explore how we can use an `inout` parameter. We will begin by creating a function that is designed to retrieve the grade for an assignment from a data store. However, to simplify our example, we will simply generate a random score. The following code demonstrates how we can write this function.

Let's take a look at how we can use value types with the `inout` keyword to create a version of the previous example that will work correctly. The first thing we need to do is modify the `getGradeForAssignment()` function to use an instance of `MyValueType` that it can modify:

```
func getGradeForAssignment(assignment: inout MyValueType) {
    // Code to get grade from DB
    // Random code here to illustrate issue
    let num = Int(arc4random_uniform(20) + 80)
    assignment.grade = num
    print("Grade for \(assignment.name) is \(num)")
}
```

This function is designed to retrieve the grade for the assignment that is defined in the `MyValueType` instance and is then passed into the function. Once the grade is retrieved, we will use it to set the grade property of the `MyValueType` instance. We will also print the grade out to the console so that we can see what grade it is. Now explore how we can use this function:

```
var mathGrades = [MyValueType]()
var students = ["Jon", "Kim", "Kailey", "Kara"]
var mathAssignment = MyValueType(name: "", assignment: "Math Assignment", grade: 0)
for student in students {
    mathAssignment.name = student
    getGradeForAssignment(assignment: &mathAssignment)
    mathGrades.append(mathAssignment)
}

for assignment in mathGrades {
    print("\(assignment.name): grade \(assignment.grade)")
}
```

In the previous code, we created a `mathGrades` array that will store the grades for our assignment and a `students` array that will contain the names of the students that we wish to retrieve the grades for. We then created an instance of the `MyValueType` structure that contains the name for the assignment. We will use this instance to request the grades from the `getGradeForAssignment()` function. Notice that when we pass in the `mathAssignment` instance, we prefix the name of the instance with the `&` symbol. This lets us know that we are passing the reference to the original instance and not a copy. Now that everything is defined, we will loop through the list of students to retrieve the grades. The output of this code will look similar to the following snippet:

```
Grade for Jon is 87
Grade for Kim is 81
Grade for Kailey is 90
Grade for Kara is 83
Jon: grade 87
Kim: grade 81
Kailey: grade 90
Kara: grade 83
```

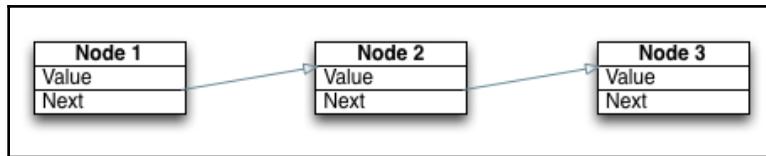
The output from this code is what we expected to see, where each instance in the `mathGrades` array represents the correct grade. The reason this code works correctly is because we are passing a reference from the `mathAssignment` instance to the `getGradeForAssignment()` function, and not a copy.

There are some things we cannot do with value types that we can do with reference (or class) types. The first thing that we will look at is the recursive data type.

Recursive data types for reference types

A recursive data type is a type that contains other values of the same type as a property for the type. Recursive data types are used when we want to define dynamic data structures, such as lists and trees. The size of these dynamic data structures can grow or shrink depending on our runtime requirements.

Linked lists are perfect examples of a dynamic data structure that we can implement using a recursive data type. A linked list is a group of nodes that are linked together and where, in its simplest form, each node maintains a link to the next node in the list. The following diagram shows how a very basic linked list works:



Each node in the list contains some value or data, and it also contains the link to the next node in the list. If one of the nodes in the list loses the reference to the next node, then the remainder of the list will be lost because each node is only aware of the next node. Some linked lists maintain a link to both the previous nodes and the following nodes to allow us to move both forward and backward through the list.

The following code shows how we can create a linked list using a reference type:

```
class LinkedListReferenceType {
    var value: String
    var next: LinkedListReferenceType?
    init(value: String) {
        self.value = value
    }
}
```

In the `LinkedListReferenceType` class, we have two properties. The first property is named `value` and it contains the data for this instance. The second property is named `next`, which points to the next item in the linked list. If the `next` property is `nil`, then this instance will be the last node in the list. If we try to implement this linked list as a value type, the code will be similar to the following code:

```
struct LinkedListValueType {  
    var value: String  
    var next: LinkedListValueType?  
}
```

When we add this code to a playground, we receive the following error: Recursive value type `LinkedListValueType` is not allowed. This tells us that Swift does not allow recursive value types. However, we are able to implement them as a reference type, which we discussed earlier.

If you think about it, recursive value types are a really bad idea because of how value types function. Let's examine this for a minute, because it will really stress the difference between value types and reference types. It will also help you to understand *why* we need reference types.

Let's say that we are able to create the `LinkedListValueType` structure without any errors. Now let's create three nodes for our list, as shown in the following code:

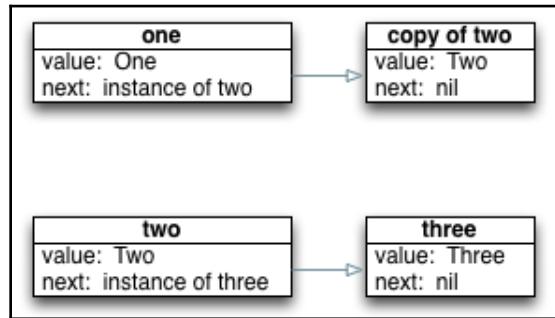
```
var one = LinkedListValueType(value: "One", next: nil)  
var two = LinkedListValueType (value: "Two", next: nil)  
var three = LinkedListValueType (value: "Three", next: nil)
```

Now we will link these nodes together using the following code:

```
one.next =  
two.two.next = three
```

Do you see the problem with this code? If not, think about how a value type is passed. In the first line, `one.next = two`, we are not actually setting the `next` property to the original `two` instance; in fact, we are actually setting it to a copy of the `two` instance. This means that in the next line, `two.next = three`, we are setting the `next` property of the original `two` instance to the `three` instance.

However, this change is not reflected back in the copy that was made for the next property of the one instance. Sounds a little confusing? Let's clear it up a little by looking at a diagram that shows the state of our three `LinkedListValueType` instances if we were able to run this code:



As you can see from the diagram, the next property of the one instance is pointing to a copy of the two instance whose next property is still nil. The next property of the original two instance, however, is pointing to the three instance. This means that, if we try to go through the list by starting at the one instance, we will not reach the three instance because the copy of the two instance will still have a `next` property that is nil.

Another thing that we can only do with reference (or class) types is class inheritance.

Inheritance for reference types

In object-oriented programming, inheritance refers to one class (known as a sub or child class) being derived from another class (known as a super or parent class). The subclass will inherit methods, properties, and other characteristics from the superclass. With inheritance, we can also create a class hierarchy where we can have multiple layers of inheritance.

Let's take a look at how we can create a class hierarchy with classes in Swift. We will start off by creating a base class named `Animal`:

```
class Animal {
    var numberOfLegs = 0
    func sleeps() {
        print("zzzzz")
    }
    func walking() {
        print("Walking on \numberOfLegs legs")
    }
    func speaking() {
```

```
        print("No sound")
    }
}
```

In the `Animal` class, we defined one property (`numberOfLegs`) and three methods (`sleeps()`, `walking()`, and `speaking()`). Now, any class that is a subclass of the `Animal` class will also have these properties and methods. Let's examine how this works by creating two classes that are subclasses of the `Animal` class. These two classes will be named `Biped` (an animal with two legs) and `Quadruped` (an animal with four legs):

```
class Biped: Animal {
    override init() {
        super.init()
        numberOfLegs = 2
    }
}

class Quadruped: Animal {
    override init() {
        super.init()
        numberOfLegs = 4
    }
}
```

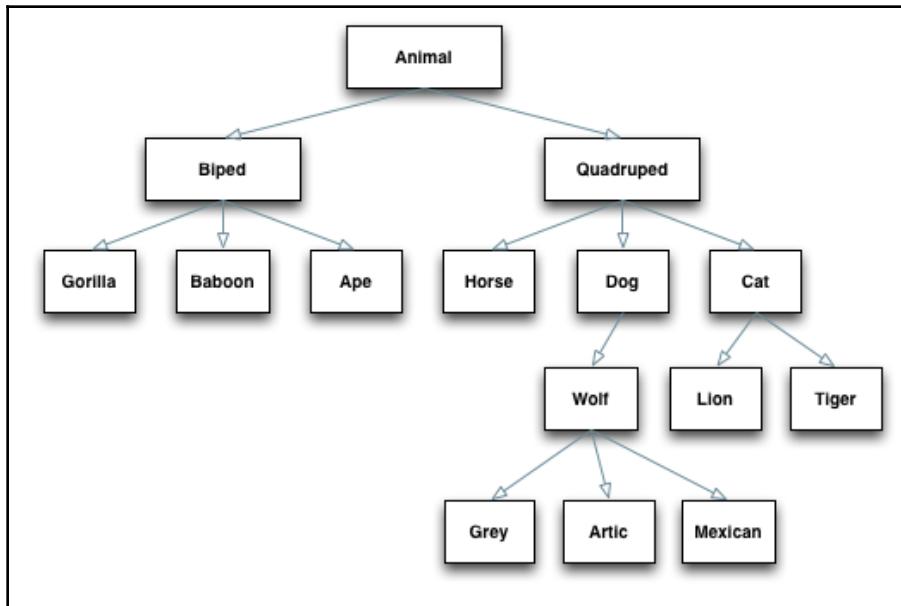
Since these two classes inherit all the properties and methods from the `Animal` class, all we need to do is create an initializer that sets the `numberOfLegs` property to the correct number of legs. Now, let's add another layer of inheritance by creating a `Dog` class that will be a subclass of the `Quadruped` class:

```
class Dog: Quadruped {
    override func speaking() {
        print("Barking")
    }
}
```

In the `Dog` class, we inherited from the `Quadruped` class, which, in turn, inherits from the `Animal` class. Therefore, the `Dog` class will have all the properties, methods, and characteristics of both the `Animal` and `Quadruped` classes. If the `Quadruped` class overrides anything from the

`Animal` class, then the `Dog` class will inherit the version from the `Quadruped` class.

We can create very complex class hierarchies in this manner; for example, the following diagram expands on the class hierarchy that we just created to add several other animal classes:



Class hierarchies can get very complex. However, as you just saw, they can eliminate a lot of duplicate code because our subclasses inherit methods, properties, and other characteristics from their superclasses. Therefore, we do not need to recreate them in all of the subclasses.

The biggest drawback of a class hierarchy is the complexity. When we have a complex hierarchy (as shown in the preceding diagram), it is easy to make a change and not realize how it is going to affect all of the subclasses. If you consider the dog and cat classes, for example, we may want to add a `furColor` property to our `Quadruped` class so that we can set the color of the animal's fur. However, horses do not have fur; they have hair. So, before we can make any changes to a class in our hierarchy, we need to understand how it will affect all the subclasses in the hierarchy.

In Swift, it is best to avoid using complex class hierarchies (as shown in this example), and instead use a protocol-oriented design, unless, of course, there are specific reasons to use them. Now that we have a good understanding of reference and value types let's explore dynamic dispatch.

Dynamic dispatch

In the previous section, we learned how to use inheritance with classes in order to inherit and override the functionality defined in a super class. You may be wondering how and when the appropriate implementation is chosen. The process of choosing which implementation to call is performed at runtime and is known as dynamic dispatch.

One of the key points to understand from the last paragraph is that the implementation is chosen at runtime. What this means is that a certain amount of runtime overhead is associated with using class inheritance, as shown in the *Inheritance for reference types* section. For most applications, this overhead is not a concern; however, for performance-sensitive applications such as games this overhead can be costly.

One of the ways that we can reduce the overhead associated with dynamic dispatch is to use the final keyword. The final keyword puts a restriction on the class, method, or function to indicate that it cannot be overridden, in the case of a method or function, or subclasses, in the case of a class.

To use the final keyword, you put it prior to the class, method, or function declaration, as shown in the following code:

```
final func myFunc() {}
final var myProperty = 0
final class MyClass {}
```

In the *Inheritance for reference types* section, we defined a class hierarchy that started with the Animal superclass. If we want to restrict subclasses from overriding the walking() method and the numberofLegs property, we can change the Animal implementation, as shown in the next example:

```
class Animal {
    final var numberofLegs = 0

    func sleeps() {
        print("zzzzz")
    }

    final func walking() {
        print("Walking on \$(numberofLegs) legs")
    }

    func speaking() {
        print("No sound")
    }
}
```

This change allows the application, at runtime, to make a direct call to the `walking()` method rather than an indirect call that gives the application a slight performance increase. If you must use a class hierarchy, it is good practice to use the `final` keyword wherever possible; however, it is better to use a protocol-oriented design, with value types to avoid this.

Now, let's take a look at something that can help with the performance of our custom value types: copy-on-write.

Copy-on-write

Normally, when we pass an instance of a value type, such as a structure, a new copy of the instance is created. This means that if we have a large data structure that contains 100,000 elements, then every time we pass that instance we will have to copy all 100,000 elements. This can have a detrimental impact on the performance of our applications, especially if we pass the instance to numerous functions.

To solve this issue, Apple has implemented the copy-on-write feature for all the data structures (such as `Array`, `Dictionary`, and `Set`) in the Swift standard library. With copy-on-write, Swift does not make a second copy of the data structure until a change is made to that data structure. Therefore, if we pass an array of 50,000 elements to another part of our code, and that code does not make any changes to the array, we will avoid the runtime overhead of copying all the elements.

This is a very useful feature and can greatly increase the performance of our applications. However, our custom value types do not automatically get this feature by default. In this section, we will explore how we can use reference types and value types together to implement the copy-on-write feature for our custom value types. To do this, we will create a very basic queue type.

We will start off by creating a backend storage type called `BackendQueue` and will implement it as a reference type. The following code gives our `BackendQueue` type the basic functionality of a queue type:

```
fileprivate class BackendQueue<T> {
    private var items = [T]()

    public func addItem(item: T) {
        items.append(item)
    }

    public func getItem() -> T? {
```

```
        if items.count > 0 {
            return items.remove(at: 0)
        } else {
            return nil
        }
    }
    public func count() -> Int {
        return items.count
    }
}
```

The `BackendQueue` type is a generic type that uses an array to store the data. This type contains three methods, which enables us to add items to the queue, retrieve an item from the queue, and to return the number of items in the queue. We use the `fileprivate` access level to prevent the use of this type outside of the defining source file, because it should only be used to implement the copy-on-write feature for our main queue type.

We now need to add a couple of extra items to the `BackendQueue` type so that we can use it to implement the copy-on-write feature for the main queue type. The first thing that we will add is a public default initializer and a private initializer that can be used to create a new instance of the `BackendQueue` type; the following code shows the two initializers:

```
public init() {}
private init(_ items: [T]) {
    self.items = items
}
```

The public initializer will be used to create an instance of the `BackendQueue` type without any items in the queue. The private initializer will be used internally to create a copy of itself that contains any items that are currently in the queue. Now we will need to create a method that will use the private initializer to create a copy of itself when required:

```
public func copy() -> BackendQueue<T> {
    return BackendQueue<T>(items)
}
```

It could be very easy to make the private initializer public and then let the main queue type call that initializer to create the copy; however, it is good practice to keep the logic needed to create the new copy within the type itself. The reason why you should do this is because if you need to make changes to the type, that may affect how the type is copied. Instead, the logic that you need to change the type is embedded within the type itself and is easy to find. Additionally, if you use the `BackendQueue` type as the backend storage for multiple types, you will only need to make the changes to the copy logic in one place if it changes.

Here is the final code for the `BackendQueue` type:

```
fileprivate class BackendQueue<T> {
    private var items = [T]()

    public init() {}
    private init(_ items: [T]) {
        self.items = items
    }

    public func addItem(item: T) {
        items.append(item)
    }

    public func getItem() -> T? {
        if items.count > 0 {
            return items.remove(at: 0)
        } else {
            return nil
        }
    }
    public func count() -> Int {
        return items.count
    }
    public func copy() -> BackendQueue<T> {
        return BackendQueue<T>(items)
    }
}
```

Now let's create our `Queue` type, which will use the `BackendQueue` type to implement the copy-on-write feature. The following code adds the basic queue functionality to our `Queue` type:

```
struct Queue {
    private var internalQueue = BackendQueue<Int>()

    public mutating func addItem(item: Int) {
        internalQueue.addItem(item)
    }
    public mutating func getItem() -> Int? {
        return internalQueue.getItem()
    }
    public func count() -> Int {
        return internalQueue.count()
    }
}
```

The `Queue` type is implemented as a value type. This type has one private property of the `BackendQueue` type, which will be used to store the data. This type contains three methods to add items to the queue, retrieve an item from the queue, and to return the number of items in the queue. Now let's explore how we can add the copy-on-write feature to the `Queue` type.

Swift has a global function named `isKnownUniquelyReferenced()`. This function will return true if there is only one reference to an instance of a reference type, or false if there is more than one reference.

We will begin by adding a function to check whether there is a unique reference to the `internalQueue` instance. This will be a private function named `checkUniquelyReferencedInternalQueue`. The following code shows how we can implement this method:

```
mutating private func checkUniquelyReferencedInternalQueue() {
    if !isKnownUniquelyReferenced(&internalQueue) {
        internalQueue = internalQueue.copy()
        print("Making a copy of internalQueue")
    } else {
        print("Not making a copy of internalQueue")
    }
}
```

In this method, we check to see whether there are multiple references to the `internalQueue` instances. If there are multiple references, then we know that we have multiple copies of the `Queue` instance and, therefore, we can create a new copy.

The `Queue` type itself is a value type; therefore, when we pass an instance of the `Queue` type within our code, the code that we pass the instance to receives a new copy of that instance. The `BackendQueue` type, which the `Queue` type is using, is a reference type. Therefore, when a copy is made of a `Queue` instance, then that new copy receives a reference to the original `Queue`'s `BackendQueue` instance and not a new copy. This means that each instance of the `Queue` type has a reference to the same `internalQueue` instance. Consider the following code as an example; both `queue1` and `queue2` have references to the same `internalQueue` instance:

```
var queue1 = Queue()
var queue2 = queue1
```

In the Queue type we know that both the `addItem()` and `getItem()` methods change the `internalQueue` instance. Therefore, before we make these changes we will want to call the `checkUniquelyReferencedInternalQueue()` method to create a new copy of the `internalQueue` instance. These two methods will now have the following code:

```
public mutating func addItem(item: Int) {
    checkUniquelyReferencedInternalQueue()
    internalQueue.addItem(item)
}

public mutating func getItem() -> Int? {
    checkUniquelyReferencedInternalQueue()
    return internalQueue.getItem()
}
```

With this code, when either the `addItem()` or `getItem()` methods are called - which will change the data in the `internalQueue` instance - we use the `checkUniquelyReferencedInternalQueue()` method to create a new instance of the data structure.

Let's add one additional method to the Queue type, which will allow us to see whether there is a unique reference to the `internalQueue` instance or not. Here is the code for this method:

```
mutating public func uniquelyReferenced() -> Bool {
    return isKnownUniquelyReferenced(&internalQueue)
}
```

Here is the full code listing for the Queue type:

```
struct Queue {
    private var internalQueue = BackendQueue<Int>()

    mutating private func checkUniquelyReferencedInternalQueue() {
        if !isKnownUniquelyReferenced(&internalQueue) {
            print("Making a copy of internalQueue")
            internalQueue = internalQueue.copy()
        } else {
            print("Not making a copy of internalQueue")
        }
    }

    public mutating func addItem(item: Int) {
        checkUniquelyReferencedInternalQueue()
        internalQueue.addItem(item)
    }

    public mutating func getItem() -> Int? {
```

```
        checkUniquelyReferencedInternalQueue();
        return internalQueue.getItem()
    }
    public func count() -> Int {
        return internalQueue.count()
    }
    mutating public func uniquelyReferenced() -> Bool{
        return isKnownUniquelyReferenced(&internalQueue)
    }
}
```

Now let's examine how the copy-on-write functionality works with the `Queue` type. We will start off by creating a new instance of the `Queue` type, add an item to the queue, and then check whether we have a unique reference to the `internalQueue` instance. The following code demonstrates how to do this:

```
var queue3 = Queue()
queue3.addItem(item: 1)

print(queue3.uniquelyReferenced())
```

When we add the item to the queue, the following messages will be printed to the console. This tells us that within the `checkUniquelyReferencedInternalQueue()` method, it was determined that there was only one reference to the `internalQueue` instance:

```
Not making a copy of internalQueue
```

We can verify this by printing the results of the `uniquelyReference()` method to the console. Now let's make a copy of the `queue3` instance by passing it to a new variable, as follows:

```
var queue4 = queue3
```

Now let's check whether we have a unique reference to the `internalQueue` instances of either the `queue3` or `queue4` instance. The following code will do this:

```
print(queue3.uniquelyReferenced())
print(queue4.uniquelyReferenced())
```

This code will print two `false` messages to the console, letting us know that neither instance has a unique reference to their `internalQueue` instances. Now let's add an item to either one of the queues. The following code will add another item to the `queue3` instance:

```
queue3.addItem(item: 2)
```

When we add the item to the queue, we will see the following message printed to the console:

```
Making a copy of internalQueue
```

This message tells us that when we add the new item to the queue, a new copy of the `internalQueue` instance is created. In order to verify this, we can print the results of the `uniquelyReferenced()` methods to the console again. If you do check this, you will see two `true` messages printed to the console this time rather than two `false` methods. We can now add additional items to the queues and we will see that we are not creating new instances of the `internalQueue` instance because each instance of the `Queue` type now has its own copy.



If you are planning on creating your own data structure that may contain a large number of items, it is recommended that you implement it with the copy-on-write feature as described here.

If you are comparing your custom types, it is also recommended that you implement the `Equatable` protocol within these custom types. This will enable you to compare two instances of the type using the equal to (`==`) and not equal to (`!=`) operators.

Implementing the `equatable` protocol

In this section, we will demonstrate how we can conform to the `Equatable` protocol using extensions. When a type conforms to the `Equatable` protocol, we can use the equal-to (`==`) operator to compare for equality and the not-equal-to (`!=`) operator to compare for inequality.



If you will be comparing instances of a custom type, then it is a good idea to have that type conform to the `Equatable` protocol because it makes comparing instances very easy.

Let's start off by creating the type that we will compare. We will name this type, `Place`:

```
struct Place {  
    let id: String  
    let latitude: Double  
    let longitude: Double  
}
```

In the `Place` type, we have three properties that represent the ID of the place and the latitude and longitude coordinates for its location. If there are two instances of the `Place` type that have the same ID and coordinates, then they will be considered the same place.

To implement the `Equatable` protocol, we can create a global function, however, that is not the recommended solution for protocol-oriented programming. We could also add a static function to the `Place` type itself, but sometimes it is better to pull the functionality needed to conform to a protocol out of the implementation itself. The following code will make the `Place` type conform to the `Equatable` protocol:

```
extension Place: Equatable {  
    static func ==(lhs: Place, rhs: Place) -> Bool {  
        return lhs.id == rhs.id &&  
            lhs.latitude == rhs.latitude &&  
            lhs.longitude == rhs.longitude  
    }  
}
```

We can now compare the instances of the `Place` type as follows:

```
var placeOne = Place(id: "Fenway Park", latitude: 42.3467,  
                     longitude: -71.0972)  
var placeTwo = Place(id: "Wrigley Field", latitude: 41.9484,  
                     longitude: -87.6553)  
  
print(placeOne == placeTwo)
```

This will print `false` because `Fenway Park` and `Wrigley Field` are two different baseball stadiums.

You may be wondering why we said that it may be better to pull the functionality needed to conform to a protocol out of the implementation itself. Well, think about some of the larger types that you have created in the past. Personally speaking, I have seen types that had several hundred lines of code and conformed to numerous protocols. By pulling the code that is needed to conform to a protocol out of the type's implementation and putting it in its own extension, we are making our code much easier to read and maintain in the future because the implementation code is isolated in its own extension.

Summary

In this chapter, we looked at the differences between value types and reference types. We also looked at how to implement copy-on-write and the equatable protocol with our custom types. We can implement the copy-on-write feature with value types that may become. We can implement the equatable protocol for any custom type, including reference types, when we need to compare two instances.

While Swift takes care of managing the memory for us, it is still a good idea to understand how this memory management works so that we can avoid the pitfalls that may cause it to fail. In the next chapter, we will look at how memory management in Swift works and demonstrate how it can fail.

16

Memory Management

For many years, the primary languages that I used was C and C based object-oriented languages. These languages required a good handle on managing memory and knowing when to release memory. Luckily modern languages like Swift take care of managing the memory for us however it is a good idea to understand how this memory management works so we can avoid the pitfalls that cause this memory management to fail.

In this chapter we will learn:

- How ARC works
- What is a Strong Reference Cycle
- How to use Weak and unowned to prevent strong reference cycles

As we saw in Chapter 15, *Custom Types*, structures are value types and classes are reference types. What this means is that when we pass an instance of a structure within our application, such as a parameter of a method, we create a new instance of the structure in the memory. This new instance of the structure is only valid while the application is in the scope where the structure was created. Once the structure goes out of scope, the new instance of the structure is automatically destroyed, and the memory is released. This makes memory management of structures very easy and mostly painless.

Classes, on the other hand, are reference types. This means that we allocate memory for the instance of the class only once which is when it is initially created. When we pass an instance of the class within our application, either as a function argument or by assigning it to a variable, we are really passing a reference to where the instance is stored in memory. Since the instance of a class may be referenced in multiple scopes (unlike a structure), it cannot be automatically destroyed, and memory is not released when it goes out of scope because it may be referenced in another scope. Therefore, Swift needs some form of memory management to track and release the memory used by instances of classes when the class is no longer needed. Swift uses **Automatic Reference Counting (ARC)** to track and manage memory usage.

With ARC, for the most part, memory management in Swift simply works. ARC will automatically track the references to instances of classes, and when an instance is no longer needed (no references pointing to it), ARC will automatically destroy the instance and release the memory. There are a few instances where ARC requires additional information about relationships to properly manage the memory. Before we look at the instances where ARC needs help, let's look at how ARC itself works.

How ARC works

Whenever we create a new instance of a class, ARC allocates the memory needed to store that class. This ensures that there is enough memory to store the information associated with that instance of the class, and also locks the memory so that nothing overwrites it. When the instance of the class is no longer needed, ARC will release the memory allocated for the class so that it can be used for other purposes. This ensures that we are not tying up memory that is no longer needed.

If ARC were to release the memory for an instance of a class that is still needed, it would not be possible to retrieve the class information from memory. If we did try to access the instance of the class after the memory was released, there is a possibility that the application would crash or the data would be corrupt. To ensure memory is not released for an instance of a class that is still needed, ARC counts how many times the instance is referenced, that is, how many active properties, variables, or constants are pointing to the instance of the class. Once the reference count for an instance of a class equals zero (nothing is referencing the instance), the memory is marked for release.

All the previous examples run properly in a playground, however, the following examples will not. When we run sample code in a playground, ARC does not release objects that we create; this is by design so that we can see how the application runs and also the state of the objects at each step. Therefore, we will need to run these samples as an iOS or macOS project. Let's look at an example of how ARC works. We begin by creating a `MyClass` class with the following code:

```
class MyClass {  
    var name = ""  
    init(name: String) {  
        self.name = name  
        print("Initializing class with name \(self.name)")  
    }  
    deinit {  
        print("Releasing class with name \(self.name)")  
    }  
}
```

In this class we have a `name` property with an initiator that will accept a string value which will be used to set the `name` property. This class also has a deinitializer that is called just before an instance of the class is destroyed and removed from memory. This deinitializer prints out a message to the console that lets us know that the instance of the class is about to be removed.

Now, let's look at the code that shows how ARC creates and destroys instances of a class:

```
var class1ref1: MyClass? = MyClass(name: "One")
var class2ref1: MyClass? = MyClass(name: "Two")
var class2ref2: MyClass? = class2ref1

print("Setting class1ref1 to nil")
class1ref1 = nil
print("Setting class2ref1 to nil")
class2ref1 = nil
print("Setting class2ref2 to nil")
class2ref2 = nil
```

In the example, we begin by creating two instances of the `MyClass` class named `class1ref1` (which stands for class 1 reference 1) and `class2ref1` (which stands for class 2 reference 1). We then create a second reference to `class2ref1` named `class2ref2`.

Now, in order to see how ARC works, we need to begin setting the references to `nil`. We start out by setting `class1ref1` to `nil`. Since there is only one reference to `class1ref1`, the deinitializer will be called. Once the deinitializer completes its task, in our case it prints a message to the console letting us know that the instance of the class has been destroyed and the memory has been released.

We then set `class2ref1` to `nil`, but there is a second reference to this class (`class2ref2`) that prevents ARC from destroying the instance so that the deinitializer is not called. Finally, we set `class2ref2` to `nil`, which allows ARC to destroy this instance of the `MyClass` class.

If we run this code, we will see the following output, which illustrates how ARC works:

```
Initializing class with name One
Initializing class with name Two
Setting class1ref1 to nil
Releasing class with name One
Setting class2ref1 to nil
Setting class2ref2 to nil
Releaseing class with name Two
```

From the example, it seems that ARC handles memory management very well. However, it is possible to write code that will prevent ARC from working properly.

Strong reference cycles

A strong reference cycle is where the instances of two classes holds a strong reference to each other, preventing ARC from releasing either instance. Once again, we are not able to use a playground for this example, so we need to create an Xcode project. In this project, we start off by creating two classes named `MyClass1_Strong` and `MyClass2_Strong` with the following code:

```
class MyClass1_Strong {
    var name = ""
    var class2: MyClass2_Strong?
    init(name: String) {
        self.name = name
        print("Initializing class1_Strong with name \(self.name)")
    }
    deinit {
        print("Releasing class1_Strong with name \(self.name)")
    }
}

class MyClass2_Strong {
    var name = ""
    var class1: MyClass1_Strong?
    init(name: String) {
        self.name = name
        print("Initializing class2_Strong with name \(self.name)")
    }
    deinit {
        print("Releasing class2_Strong with name \(self.name)")
    }
}
```

As we can see from the code, `MyClass1_Strong` contains an instance of `MyClass2_Strong`, therefore, the instance of `MyClass2_Strong` cannot be released until `MyClass1_Strong` is destroyed. We can also see from the code that `MyClass2_Strong` contains an instance of `MyClass1_Strong`, therefore, the instance of `MyClass1_Strong` cannot be released until `MyClass2_Strong` is destroyed. This creates a cycle of dependency in which neither instance can be destroyed until the other one is destroyed.

Let's see how this works by running the following code:

```
var class1: MyClass1_Strong? = MyClass1_Strong(name: "Class1_Strong")
var class2: MyClass2_Strong? = MyClass2_Strong(name: "Class2_Strong")

class1?.class2 = class2
class2?.class1 = class1

print("Setting classes to nil")
class2 = nil
class1 = nil
```

In this example we create instances of both the `MyClass1_Strong` and `MyClass2_Strong` classes. We then set the `class2` property of the `class1` instance to the `MyClass2_Strong` instance. We also set the `class1` property of the `class2` instance to the `MyClass1_Strong` instance. This means that the `MyClass1_Strong` instance cannot be destroyed until the `MyClass2_Strong` instance is destroyed. This means that the reference counters for each instance will never reach zero, therefore, ARC cannot destroy the instances, which creates a memory leak. A memory leak is where an application continues to use memory and does not properly release it. This can cause an application to eventually crash.

To resolve a strong reference cycle, we need to prevent one of the classes from keeping a strong hold on the instance of the other class, thereby allowing ARC to destroy them both. Swift provides two ways of doing this by letting us define the properties as either a weak or unowned reference.

The difference between a weak reference and an unowned reference is that the instance which a weak reference refers to can be `nil`, whereas the instance that an unowned reference is referring to cannot be `nil`. This means that when we use a weak reference, the property must be an optional property, since it can be `nil`. Let's see how we would use unowned and weak references to resolve a strong reference cycle. Let's start by looking at the unowned reference.

We begin by creating two more classes, `MyClass1_Unowned` and `MyClass2_Unowned`:

```
class MyClass1_Unowned {
    var name = ""
    unowned let class2: MyClass2_Unowned
    init(name: String, class2: MyClass2_Unowned) {
        self.name = name
        self.class2 = class2
        print("Initializing class1_Unowned with name \(self.name)")
    }
    deinit {
        print("Releasing class1_Unowned with name \(self.name)")
```

```
        }
    }

class MyClass2_Unowned {
    var name = ""
    var class1: MyClass1_Unowned?
    init(name: String) {
        self.name = name
        print("Initializing class2_Unowned with name \(self.name)")
    }
    deinit {
        print("Releasing class2_Unowned with name \(self.name)")
    }
}
```

The `MyClass1_Unowned` class looks pretty similar to classes in the preceding example. The difference here is the `MyClass1_Unowned` class--we set the `class2` property to `unowned`, which means it cannot be `nil` and it does not keep a strong reference to the instance that it is referring to. Since the `class2` property cannot be `nil`, we also need to set it when the class is initialized.

Let's see how we can initialize and deinitialize the instances of these classes with the following code:

```
let class2 = MyClass2_Unowned(name: "Class2_Unowned")
let class1: MyClass1_Unowned? = MyClass1_Unowned(name:
    "class1_Unowned", class2: class2)
    class2.class1 = class1
    print("Classes going out of scope")
```

In the preceding code, we create an instance of the `MyClass_Unowned` class and then use that instance to create an instance of the `MyClass1_Unowned` class. We then set the `class1` property of the `MyClass2` instance to the `MyClass1_Unowned` instance we just created. This creates a reference cycle of dependency between the two classes again, but this time, the `MyClass1_Unowned` instance is not keeping a strong hold on the `MyClass2_Unowned` instance, allowing ARC to release both instances when they are no longer needed.

If we run this code, we see the following output, showing that both the `MyClass3` and `MyClass4` instances are released, and the memory is freed:

```
Initializing class2_Unowned with name Class2_Unowned
Initializing class1_Unowned with name class1_Unowned
Classes going out of scope
Releasing class2_Unowned with name Class2_Unowned
Releasing class1_Unowned with name class1_Unowned
```

As we can see, both instances are properly released. Now let's look at how we would use a weak reference to prevent a strong reference cycle. Once again, we begin by creating two new classes:

```
class MyClass1_Weak {
    var name = ""
    var class2: MyClass2_Weak?
    init(name: String) {
        self.name = name
        print("Initializing class1_Weak with name \(self.name)")
    }
    deinit {
        print("Releasing class1_Weak with name \(self.name)")
    }
}

class MyClass2_Weak {
    var name = ""
    weak var class1: MyClass1_Weak?
    init(name: String) {
        self.name = name
        print("Initializing class2_Weak with name \(self.name)")
    }
    deinit {
        print("Releasing class2_Weak with name \(self.name)")
    }
}
```

The `MyClass1_Weak` and `MyClass2_Weak` classes look very similar to the previous classes we created that showed how a strong reference cycle works. The difference is that we define the `class1` property in the `MyClass2_Weak` class as a weak reference.

Now, let's see how we can initialize and deinitialize instances of these classes with the following code:

```
let class1: MyClass1_Weak? = MyClass1_Weak(name: "Class1_Weak")
let class2: MyClass2_Weak? = MyClass2_Weak(name: "Class2_Weak")

class1?.class2 = class2
class2?.class1 = class1

print("Classes going out of scope")
```

In the preceding code, we create instances of the `MyClass1_Weak` and `MyClass2_Weak` classes and then set the properties of those classes to point to the instance of the other class. Once again, this creates a cycle of dependency, but since we set the `class1` property of the `MyClass2_Weak` class to weak, it does not create a strong reference, allowing both instances to be released.

If we run the code, we will see the following output, showing that both the `MyClass5` and `MyClass6` instances are released and the memory is freed:

```
Initializing class1_Weak with name Class1_Weak
Initializing class2_Weak with name Class2_Weak
Classes going out of scope
Releasing class1_Weak with name Class1_Weak Releasing class2_Weak with name
Class2_Weak
```

It is recommended that you avoid creating circular dependencies, as shown in this section, but there are times when you may need them. For those times, remember that ARC needs some help to release them.

Summary

In this chapter we explained how ARC worked to give you an understanding of how memory is managed in your application. We showed what a strong reference cycle is and explained how it can cause ARC to fail. We concluded the chapter by showing how we can use weak and unowned references to prevent strong reference cycles.

In the next chapter we will look at how to properly format our Swift code for consistency and readability.

17

Swift Formatting and Style Guider

Throughout my development experience, every time I learned a new programming language, there was usually some mention of how the code for that language should be written and formatted. Early in my development career (which was a long time ago), these recommendations were very basic formatting recommendations, such as how to indent your code, or having one statement per line. It really wasn't until the last 10-12 years that I started to see complex and detailed formatting and style guides for different programming languages. Today, you will be hard-pressed to find a development shop with more than two or three developers that does not have a style/formatting guide for each language that they use. Even companies that do not create their own style guides generally refer back to some standard guide published by other companies, such as Google, Oracle, or Microsoft. These style guides help teams to write consistent and easy-to-maintain code.

In this chapter, you will learn in the following:

- What a style guide is
- What makes a good style guide
- Why it is important to use a style guide
- How to create a sample style guide

What is a programming style guide?

Coding styles are very personal, and every developer has his or her own preferred style. These styles can vary from language to language, from person to person, and also over time. The personal nature of coding styles can make it difficult to have a consistent and readable code base when numerous individuals are contributing to the code.

While most developers might have their own preferred styles, the recommended or preferred style between languages can vary. As an example, in C#, when we name a method or function, it is preferred that we use `PascalCase`, which is similar to `CamelCase` except the first letter is capitalized. In most other languages, such as C, Objective-C, and Java, it is also recommended that we use `CamelCase`, where the first letter is lowercase.

The best applications are coded so they are easy to maintain, and the code is easy to read. It is hard for large projects and companies with many developers to have code that is easy to maintain and read if every developer uses their own coding style. This is why companies and projects with multiple developers usually adopt programming style guides for each language that they use.

A programming style guide defines a set of rules and guidelines that a developer should follow while writing applications with a specific language within a project or company. These style guides can differ greatly between companies or projects and reflect how a company or project expects code to be written. These guides can also change over time. It is important to follow these style guides to maintain a consistent code base.

A lot of developers do not like the idea of being told how they should write code, and claim that as long as their code functions correctly, it shouldn't matter how they format their code. This type of philosophy doesn't work in a coding team or in a sports team, like a basketball team. What do you think would happen if all the players on a basketball team believed that they could all play the way they wanted to and the team was better when they did their own thing? That team would probably lose the majority of its games. It is impossible for a basketball team (or any sports team, for that matter) to win most of its games unless its members are working together. It is up to the coach to make sure that everyone is working together and executing the same game plan, just like it is up to the team leader of the development project to make sure all the developers are writing code according to the adopted style guide.

Your style guide

The style guide that we define in this book is just a guide. It reflects the author's opinion on how Swift code should be written and is meant to be a good starting point for creating your own style guide. If you really like this guide and adopt it as it is, great. If there are parts that you do not agree with and you change them within your guide, that is great as well. The appropriate style for you and your team is the one that you and your team feel comfortable with, and it may or may not be different from the guide in this book. Don't be afraid to adjust your style guide as needed.

One thing that is noticeable in the style guide within this chapter, and most good style guides, is that there is very little explanation about why each item is preferred or not preferred. Style guides should give enough details so that the reader understands the preferred and non-preferred methods for each item, but should also be small and compact to make them easy and quick to read. If a developer has questions about why a particular method is preferred, they should bring that concern up with the development group. With that in mind, let's get started with the guide.

Do not use semicolons at the end of statements

Unlike a lot of languages, Swift does not require semicolons at the end of statements. Therefore, we should not use them. Let's look at the following code:

```
//Preferred Method
var name = "Jon"
print(name)

//Non-preferred Method
var name = "Jon";
print(name);
```

Do not use parentheses for conditional statements

Unlike a lot of languages, parentheses are not required around conditional statements; therefore, we should avoid using them unless they are needed for clarification. Let's look at the following code:

```
//Preferred Method
if speed == 300_000_000 {
    print("Speed of light")
}

//Non-Preferred Method
if (speed == 300_000_000) {
    print("Speed of light")
}
```

Naming

We should always use descriptive names with `CamelCase` for customer types, methods, variables, constants, and so on. Let's look at some general naming rules.

Custom types

Custom types should have a descriptive name that describes what the type is for. The name should be in `PascalCase`. Here are examples of proper names and non-proper names based on our style guide:

```
// Proper Naming Convention  
BaseballTeam  
LaptopComputer  
  
//Non-Proper Naming Convention  
baseballTeam  
//Starts with a lowercase letter Laptop_Computer uses an underscore
```

Functions and methods

Function names should be descriptive, describing the function or method. They should be in `CamelCase`. Here are some examples of proper and non-proper names:

```
//Proper Naming Convention  
getCityName  
playSound  
  
//Non-Proper Naming Convention  
get_city_name //All lowercase and has an underscore  
PlaySound //Begins with an upper case letter
```

Constants and variables

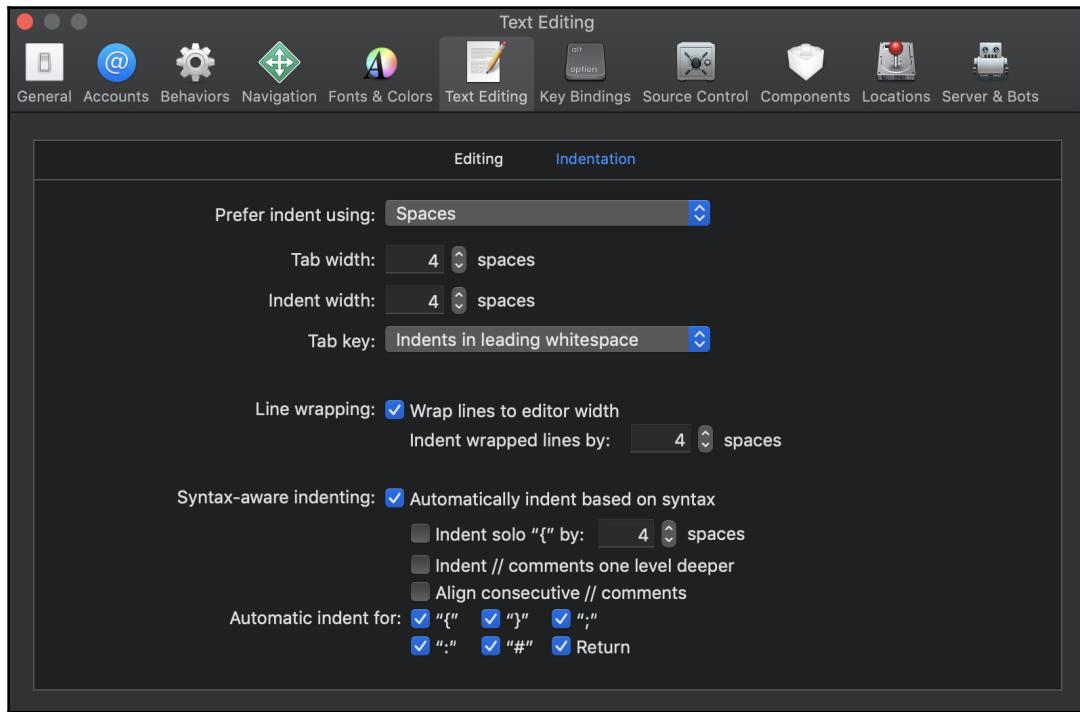
Constants and variables should have a descriptive name. They should begin with a lowercase letter and be in `CamelCase`. The only exception is when the constant is global; in that case, the name of the constant should contain all uppercase characters with the words separated by underscores. I have seen numerous guides that frown upon having all-uppercase names, but I personally like them for constants in the global scope, because it stands out that they are globally, not locally, scoped.

Here are some examples of proper and non-proper names:

```
//Proper Names
playerName
driveSize
//Non-Proper Names
PlayerName      //Starts with uppercase letter
drive_size      //Has underscore in name
```

Indenting

Indenting width in Xcode, by default, is defined as four spaces, and tab width is also defined as four spaces. We should leave this as the default. The following screenshot shows the indentation setting in Xcode:



We should add an extra blank line between functions/methods. We should also use a blank line to separate functionality within a function or method. That being said, using many blank lines within a function or method might signify that we should break the function into multiple functions.

Comments

We should use comments as needed to explain how and why our code is written. We should use block comments before custom types and functions. We should use double slashes to comment our code in one line. Here is an example of how comments should be written:

```
/*
    This is a block comment that should be used
    to explain a class or function
*/
public class EmployeeClass {
    // This is an inline comment with double slashes
    var firstName = ""
    var lastName = ""

    /**
        Use Block comments for functions
        - parameter paramName: use this tag for parameters
        - returns: explain what is returned
        - throws: Error thrown
    */
    func getFullName() -> String {
        return firstName + " " + lastName
    }
}
```

When we are commenting methods, we should also use the documentation tags, which will generate documentation in Xcode, as shown in the preceding example. At a minimum, we should use the following tags if they apply to our method:

- **Parameter:** This is used for parameters
- **Returns:** This is used for what is returned
- **Throws:** This is used to document errors that may be thrown

Using the self keyword

Since Swift does not require us to use the `self` keyword when accessing properties or invoking methods of an object, we should avoid using it unless we need to distinguish between an instance property and local variables. Here is an example of when you should use the `self` keyword:

```
public class EmployeeClass {
    var firstName = "
```

```
var lastName = ""  
func setName(firstName: String, lastName: String) {  
    self.firstName = firstName  
    self.lastName = lastName  
}  
}
```

Here is an example of when not to use the `self` keyword:

```
public class EmployeeClass {  
    var firstName = ""  
    var lastName = ""  
    func getFullName() -> String {  
        return self.firstName + " " + self.lastName  
    }  
}
```

Constants and variables

The difference between constants and variables is that the value of a constant never changes, whereas the value of a variable may change. Wherever possible, we should define constants rather than variables.

One of the easiest ways of doing this is by defining everything as a constant by default, and then changing the definition to a variable only after you reach a point in your code that requires you to change it. In Swift, you will get a warning if you define a variable and then never change the value within your code.

Optional types

Only use optional types when absolutely necessary. If there is no absolute need for a nil value to be assigned to a variable, we should not define it as an optional.

Using optional binding

We should avoid forced unwrapping of optionals, as there is rarely any need to do this. We should prefer optional binding or optional chaining over forced unwrapping.

The following examples show the preferred and non-preferred methods where the `myOptional` variable is defined as an optional:

```
//Preferred Method Optional Binding
if let value = myOptional {
    // code if myOptional is not nil
} else {
    // code if myOptional is nil
}

//Non-Preferred Method
if myOptional != nil {
    // code if myOptional is not nil
} else {
    // code if myOptional is nil
}
```

If there are several optionals that we need to unwrap, we should include them in the same `if-let` or `guard` statement, rather than unwrapping them on separate lines. There are times, however, when our business logic may require us to handle nil values differently and this may require us to unwrap the optionals on separate lines. The following examples show the preferred and non-preferred methods:

```
//Preferred Method Optional Binding
if let value1 = myOptional1, let value2 = myOptional2 {
    // code if myOptional1 and myOptional2 is not nil
} else {
    // code if myOptional1 and myOptional2 is nil
}

//Non-Preferred Method Optional Binding
if let value1 = myOptional1 {
    if let value2 = myOptional2 {
        // code if myOptional is not nil
    } else {
        // code if myOptional2 is nil
    }
} else {
    // code if myOptional1 is nil
}
```

Using optional chaining instead of optional binding for multiple unwrapping

When we need to unwrap multiple layers, we should use optional chaining over multiple optional binding statements. The following example shows the preferred and non-preferred methods:

```
//Preferred Method
if let color = jon.pet?.collar?.color {
    print("The color of the collar is \(color)")
} else {
    print("Cannot retrieve color")
}

//Non-Preferred Method
if let tmpPet = jon.pet, let tmpCollar = tmpPet.collar{
    print("The color of the collar is \(tmpCollar.color)")
} else {
    print("Cannot retrieve color")
}
```

Using type inference

Rather than defining variable types, we should let Swift infer the type. The only time we should define the variable or constant type is when we are not giving it a value while defining it. Let's look at the following code:

```
//Preferred method
var myVar = "String Type" //Infers a String type
var myNum = 2.25 //Infers a Double type

//Non-Preferred method
var myVar: String = "String Type"
var myNum: Double = 2.25
```

Using shorthand declaration for collections

When declaring native Swift collection types, we should use the shorthand syntax, and, unless absolutely necessary, we should initialize the collection. The following example shows the preferred and non-preferred methods:

```
//Preferred Method
var myDictionary: [String: String] = [:]
var strArray: [String] = []
var strOptional: String?

//Non-Preferred Method
var myDictionary: Dictionary<String, String>
var strArray: Array<String>
var strOptional: Optional<String>
```

Using switch rather than multiple if statements

Wherever possible, we should prefer to use a single `switch` statement over multiple `if` statements. The following example shows the preferred and non-preferred methods:

```
//Preferred Method
let speed = 300_000_000
switch speed {
    case 300_000_000: print("Speed of light")
    case 340:
        print("Speed of sound")
    default:
        print("Unknown speed")
}

//Non-preferred Method
let speed = 300_000_000
if speed == 300_000_000 {
    print("Speed of light")
} else if speed == 340 {
    print("Speed of sound")
} else {
    print("Unknown speed")
}
```

Don't leave commented-out code in your application

If we comment out a block of code while we attempt to replace it, once we are comfortable with the changes we should remove the code that we commented out. Having large blocks of code commented out can make the code base look messy and harder to follow.

Summary

When we are developing an application in a team environment, it is important to have a well-defined coding style that is adhered to by everyone on the team. This allows us to have a code base that is easy to read and maintain.

If a style guide remains static for too long, it means that it is probably not keeping up with the latest changes within the language. What is "too long" is different for each language. For example, with the C language, too long will be defined in years, since the language is very stable; however, with Swift, the language is new, and changes are coming pretty often, so too long can probably be defined as a couple of months.

It is recommended that we keep our style guides in a versioning control system so that we can refer to the older versions if need be. This allows us to pull the older versions of the style guide and refer back to them when we are looking at older code.

It is recommended, not only with Swift but other languages as well, that you use a Lint tool to check and enforce good coding practices. For Swift there is a great tool called SwiftLint (<https://github.com/realm/SwiftLint>) which has a command-line tool.

As you work on a style guide for your organization, you may want to keep an eye on Swift-Evolution Proposal SE-0250 (<https://github.com/apple/swift-evolution/blob/master/proposals/0250-swift-style-guide-and-formatter.md>). This proposal is to create an official Swift style guidelines and formatter. If this proposal is accepted and an official style guide is released then you should adopt those guidelines.

18

Adopting Design Patterns in Swift

While the first publication of the *Gang of Four's Design Patterns: Elements of Reusable Object-Oriented Software* was released in October of 1994, I have only been paying attention to design patterns for the last 12 years. Like most experienced developers, when I first started reading about design patterns, I recognized a lot of the patterns because I had already been using them without realizing what they were. I would have to say that in the past 12 years since I first read about design patterns, I have not written a serious application without using at least one of the Gang of Four's design patterns. I will tell you that I am definitely not a design pattern zealot, and if I get into a conversation about design patterns, there are usually only a couple of them that I can name without having to look them up. But one thing that I do remember is the concepts behind the major patterns and the problems they are designed to solve. This way, when I encounter one of these problems, I can look up the appropriate pattern and apply it. So, remember, as you go through this chapter, to take the time to understand the major concepts behind design patterns rather than trying to memorize the patterns themselves.

In this chapter, you will learn about the following topics:

- What are design patterns?
- What types of pattern make up the creational, structural, and behavioral categories of design patterns?
- How to implement the builder and singleton creational patterns in Swift?
- How to implement the bridge, facade, and proxy structural patterns in Swift?
- How to implement the strategy and command behavioral patterns in Swift?

What are design patterns?

Every experienced developer has a set of informal strategies that shape how they design and write applications. These strategies are shaped by their past experiences and the obstacles that they have had to overcome in previous projects. While these developers might swear by their own strategies, it does not mean that their strategies have been fully vetted. The use of these strategies can also introduce inconsistent implementations between different projects and developers.

While the concept of design patterns dates back to the mid 80s, they did not gain popularity until the Gang of Four released 'Elements of Reusable Object-Oriented Software', published in 1994. The book's authors, Erich Gamma, Richard Helm, Ralph Johnson, and John Vlissides (also known as the Gang of Four), discuss the pitfalls of object-oriented programming and describe 23 classic software design patterns. These 23 patterns are broken up into three categories: creational, structural, and behavioral.

A design pattern identifies common software development problems and provides a strategy to deal with them. These strategies have been proven, over the years, to be an effective solution for the problems they are intended to solve. Using these patterns can greatly speed up the development process because they provide us with solutions that have already been proven to solve several common software development problems.

Another advantage that we get when we use design patterns is consistent code that is easy to maintain because, months or years from now, when we look at the code we will recognize the patterns and understand what the code does. If we properly document the code and document the design pattern we are implementing, it will also help other developers to understand what the code is doing.

The two main philosophies behind design patterns are code reuse and flexibility. As a software architect, it is essential that we build reusability and flexibility into the code. This allows us to easily maintain the code in the future and also makes it easier for the applications to expand to meet future requirements, because we all know how quickly requirements change.

While there is a lot to like about design patterns, and they are extremely beneficial for developers and architects, they are not the solution for world hunger that some developers make them out to be. Sometime in your development career, you will probably meet a developer or an architect who thinks that design patterns are immutable laws. These developers usually try to force the use of design patterns even when they are not necessary. A good rule of thumb is to make sure that you have a problem that needs to be fixed before you try to fix it.

Design patterns are starting points for avoiding and solving common programming problems. We can think of each design pattern as a recipe for a food dish. Just like a good recipe, we can tinker and adjust it to meet the particular tastes. But we usually do not want to stray too far from the original recipe because we may mess it up.

There are also times when we do not have a recipe for a certain dish that we want to make, just like there are times when there isn't a design pattern to solve the problem we face. In cases like this, we can use the knowledge of design patterns and their underlying philosophy to come up with an effective solution for the problem.

Design patterns are generally split into three categories. These are as follows:

- **Creational patterns:** Creational patterns support the creation of objects
- **Structural patterns:** Structural patterns concern types and object compositions
- **Behavioral patterns:** Behavioral patterns communicate between types

While the Gang of Four defined over 20 design patterns, we are only going to look at examples of some of the more popular patterns in this chapter. Let's start off by looking at creational patterns.



Design patterns were originally defined for object-oriented programming. In this chapter, where possible, we will focus on implementing patterns in a more protocol-oriented way. Therefore, the examples in this chapter may look a little different from examples in other design pattern books, but the underlying philosophy of the solutions will be the same.

Creational patterns

Creational patterns are design patterns that deal with how an object is created. These patterns create objects in a manner suitable for a particular situation.

There are two basic ideas behind creational patterns. The first is encapsulating the knowledge of which concrete types should be created and the second is hiding how the instances of these types are created.

There are five well-known patterns that are a part of the creational pattern category. They are as follows:

- **Abstract factory pattern:** This provides an interface for creating related objects without specifying the concrete type
- **Builder pattern:** This separates the construction of a complex object from its representation, so the same process can be used to create similar types
- **Factory method pattern:** This creates objects without exposing the underlying logic of how the object (or which type of object) is created
- **Prototype pattern:** This creates an object by cloning an existing one
- **Singleton pattern:** This allows one (and only one) instance of a class for the lifetime of an application

In this chapter, we are going to show examples of how to implement the singleton and builder patterns in Swift. Let's start off by looking at one of the most controversial and possibly overused design patterns, the singleton pattern.

The singleton design pattern

The use of the singleton pattern is a fairly controversial subject among certain corners of the development community. One of the main reasons for this is that the singleton pattern is probably the most overused and misused pattern. Another reason this pattern is controversial is because the singleton pattern introduces a global state into an application, which provides the ability to change the object at any point within the application. The singleton pattern can also introduce hidden dependencies and tight compiling. My personal opinion is that, if the singleton pattern is used correctly, there is nothing wrong with using it. However, we do need to be careful not to misuse it.

The singleton pattern restricts the instantiation of a class to a single instance for the lifetime of an application. This pattern is very effective when we need exactly one object to coordinate actions within the application. An example of a good use of a singleton is if the application communicates with a remote device over Bluetooth and we also want to maintain that connection throughout the application. Some would say that we could pass the instance of the connection class from one page to the next, which is essentially what a singleton is. In my opinion, the singleton pattern, in this instance, is a much cleaner solution, because with the singleton pattern any page that needs the connection can get it without forcing every page to maintain the instance. This also allows us to maintain the connection without having to reconnect each time we go to another page.

Understanding the problem

The problem that the singleton pattern is designed to address is when we need one and only one instance of a type for the lifetime of the application. The singleton pattern is usually used when we need centralized management of an internal or external resource, and a single global point of access. Another popular use of the singleton pattern is when we want to consolidate a set of related activities needed throughout the application that do not maintain a state in one place.

In Chapter 7, *Classes, Structures, and Protocols*, we used the singleton pattern in the text validation example because we only needed one instance of the text validation types throughout the lifetime of the application. In this example, we used the singleton pattern for the text validation types because we wanted to create a single instance of the types that could then be used by all the components of the application without requiring us to create new instances of the types. These text validation types did not have a state that could be changed. They only had methods that performed the validation on the text and constants that defined how to validate the text. While some may disagree with me, I believe types like these are excellent candidates for the singleton pattern because there is no reason to create multiple instances of these types.

Understanding the solution

There are several ways to implement the singleton pattern in Swift. In the method that we use here, a single instance of the class is created the first time the class constant is accessed. We will then use the class constant to gain access to this instance throughout the lifetime of the application. We will also create a private initializer that will prevent external code from creating additional instances of the class.



Note that we use the word class in this description and not type. The reason for this is that the singleton pattern can only be implemented with reference types.

Implementing the singleton pattern

Let's look at how we implement the singleton pattern with Swift. The following code example shows how to create a singleton class:

```
class MySingleton {  
    static let sharedInstance = MySingleton()  
    var number = 0  
    private init() {}  
}
```

We can see that, within the `MySingleton` class, we created a static constant named `sharedInstance`, which contains an instance of the `MySingleton` class. A static constant can be called without having to instantiate the class. Since we declared the `sharedInstance` constant static, only one instance will exist throughout the lifecycle of the application, thereby creating the singleton pattern.

We also created the private initiator, which cannot be accessed outside of the class, which will restrict other code from creating additional instances of the `MySingleton` class.

Now, let's see how this pattern works. The `MySingleton` pattern has another property, named `number`, which is an integer. We will monitor how this property changes as we use the `sharedInstance` property to create multiple variables of the `MySingleton` type, as shown in the following code:

```
var singleA = MySingleton.sharedInstance  
var singleB = MySingleton.sharedInstance  
var singleC = MySingleton.sharedInstance  
  
singleB.number = 2  
print(singleA.number)  
print(singleB.number)  
print(singleC.number)  
  
singleC.number = 3  
print(singleA.number)  
print(singleB.number)  
print(singleC.number)
```

In this example, we used the `sharedInstance` property to create three variables of the `MySingleton` type. We initially set the `number` property of the second `MySingleton` variable (`singleB`) to the number 2. When we printed out the value of the `number` property for the `singleA`, `singleB`, and `singleC` instances we saw that the `number` property for all three equalled 2. We then changed the value of the `number` property of the third `MySingleton` instance (`singleC`) to the number 3.

When we printed out the value of the `number` property again, we saw that all three now have the value of 3. Therefore, when we change the value of the `number` property in any of the instances, the values of all three changes because each variable is pointed to the same instance.

In this example, we implemented the singleton pattern using a reference (class) type because we wanted to ensure that only one instance of the type existed throughout the application. If we implemented this pattern with a value type, such as a structure or an enumeration, we would run the risk of there being multiple instances of the type.

If you recall, each time we pass an instance of a value type, we are actually passing a copy of that instance, which means that, if we implemented the singleton pattern with a value type, each time we called the `sharedInstance` property we would receive a new copy, which would effectively break the singleton pattern.

The singleton pattern can be very useful when we need to maintain the state of an object throughout the application; however, be careful not to overuse it. The singleton pattern should not be used unless there is a specific requirement (requirement is the keyword here) for having one, and only one, instance of the class throughout the lifecycle of the application. If we are using the singleton pattern simply for convenience, then we are probably misusing it.

Keep in mind that, while Apple recommends that we prefer value types to reference types, there are still plenty of examples, such as the singleton pattern, where we need to use reference types. When we continuously tell ourselves to prefer value types to reference types, it can be very easy to forget that there are times where a reference type is needed. Don't forget to use reference types with this pattern.

Now, let's look at the builder design pattern.

The builder design pattern

The builder pattern helps us with the creation of complex objects and enforces the process of how these objects are created. With this pattern, we generally separate the creation logic from the complex type and put it in another type. This allows us to use the same construction process to create different representations of the type.

Understanding the problem

The problem that the builder pattern is designed to address is when an instance of a type requires a large number of configurable values. We could set the configuration options when we create instances of the class, but that can cause issues if the options are not set correctly or we do not know the proper values for all the options. Another issue is the amount of code that may be needed to set all the configurable options each time we create an instance of the types.

Understanding the solution

The builder pattern solves this problem by introducing an intermediary known as a builder type. This builder type contains most, if not all, of the information necessary to create an instance of the original complex type.

There are two methods that we can use to implement the builder pattern. The first method is to have multiple builder types where each of the types contains the information to configure the original complex object in a specific way. In the second method, we implement the builder pattern with a single builder type that sets all the configurable options to a default value and then we would change the values as needed.

In this section, we will look at both ways to use the builder pattern, because it is important to understand how each works.

Implementing the builder pattern

Before we show how we would use the builder pattern, let's look at how to create a complex structure without the builder pattern and the problems we run into.

The following code creates a structure named `BurgerOld`, and does not use the builder pattern:

```
struct BurgerOld {  
    var name: String  
    var patties: Int  
    var bacon: Bool  
    var cheese: Bool  
    var pickles: Bool  
    var ketchup: Bool  
    var mustard: Bool  
    var lettuce: Bool  
    var tomato: Bool  
    init(name: String, patties: Int, bacon: Bool, cheese: Bool,  
        pickles:Bool,ketchup: Bool,mustard: Bool,lettuce: Bool, tomato: Bool) {  
        self.name = name  
        self.patties = patties  
        self.bacon = bacon  
        self.cheese = cheese  
        self.pickles = pickles  
        self.ketchup = ketchup  
        self.mustard = mustard  
        self.lettuce = lettuce  
        self.tomato = tomato  
    }  
}
```

In the `BurgerOld` structure, we have several properties that define which condiments are on the burger and the name of the burger. Since we need to know which items are on the burgers and which items aren't, when we create an instance of the `BurgerOld` structure the initializer requires us to define each item. This can lead to some complex initializations throughout the application, not to mention that, if we had more than one standard burger (bacon cheeseburger, cheeseburger, hamburger, and so on), we would need to make sure that each is defined correctly. Let's see how to create instances of the `BurgerOld` class:

```
// Create Hamburger
var hamburger = BurgerOld(name: "Hamburger", patties: 1, bacon: false,
cheese: false, pickles: false, ketchup: false, mustard: false, lettuce:
false, tomato: false)

// Create Cheeseburger
var cheeseburger = BurgerOld(name: "Cheeseburger", patties: 1, bacon:
false, cheese: false, pickles: false, ketchup: false, mustard: false,
lettuce: false, tomato: false)
```

As we can see, creating instances of the `BurgerOld` type requires a lot of code. Now, let's look at a better way to do this. In this example, we will show how to use multiple builder types where each type will define the condiments that are on a particular burger. We will begin by creating a `BurgerBuilder` protocol that will have the following code in it:

```
protocol BurgerBuilder {
    var name: String { get }
    var patties: Int { get }
    var bacon: Bool { get }
    var cheese: Bool { get }
    var pickles: Bool { get }
    var ketchup: Bool { get }
    var mustard: Bool { get }

    var lettuce: Bool { get }
    var tomato: Bool { get }
}
```

This protocol simply defines the nine properties that will be required for any type that implements this protocol. Now, let's create two structures that implement this protocol: the `HamburgerBuilder` and the `CheeseBurgerBuilder` structures:

```
struct HamburgerBuilder: BurgerBuilder {
    let name = "Burger"
    let patties = 1
    let bacon = false
    let cheese = false
    let pickles = true
```

```
    let ketchup = true
    let mustard = true
    let lettuce = false
    let tomato = false
}

struct CheeseBurgerBuilder: BurgerBuilder {
    let name = "CheeseBurger"
    let patties = 1
    let bacon = false
    let cheese = true
    let pickles = true
    let ketchup = true
    let mustard = true
    let lettuce = false
    let tomato = false
}
```

In both the `HamburgerBuilder` and the `CheeseBurgerBuilder` structures, all we are doing is defining the values for each of the required properties. In more complex types, we might need to initialize additional resources.

Now, let's look at the `Burger` structure, which will use instances of the `BurgerBuilder` protocol to create instances of itself. The following code shows this new `Burger` type:

```
struct Burger {
    var name: String
    var patties: Int
    var bacon: Bool
    var cheese: Bool
    var pickles: Bool
    var ketchup: Bool
    var mustard: Bool
    var lettuce: Bool
    var tomato: Bool

    init(builder: BurgerBuilder) {
        self.name = builder.name
        self.patties = builder.patties
        self.bacon = builder.bacon
        self.cheese = builder.cheese
        self.pickles = builder.pickles
        self.ketchup = builder.ketchup
        self.mustard = builder.mustard
        self.lettuce = builder.lettuce
        self.tomato = builder.tomato
    }
}
```

```
func showBurger() {  
    print("Name: \(name)")  
    print("Patties: \(patties)")  
    print("Bacon: \(bacon)")  
    print("Cheese: \(cheese)")  
    print("Pickles: \(pickles)")  
    print("Ketchup: \(ketchup)")  
    print("Mustard: \(mustard)")  
    print("Lettuce: \(lettuce)")  
    print("Tomato: \(tomato)")  
}  
}
```

The difference between this Burger structure and the `BurgerOld` structure shown earlier is the initializer. In the previous `BurgerOld` structure, the initializer took nine arguments—one for each constant defined in the structure. In the new Burger structure, the initializer takes one argument, which is an instance of a type that conforms to the `BurgerBuilder` protocol. This new initializer allows us to create instances of the `Burger` class as follows:

```
// Create Hamburger  
var myBurger = Burger(builder: HamburgerBuilder())  
myBurger.showBurger()  
  
// Create Cheeseburger with tomatoes  
var myCheeseBurger = Burger(builder: CheeseBurgerBuilder())  
// Lets hold the tomatoes  
myCheeseBurger.tomato = false  
myCheeseBurger.showBurger()
```

If we compare how we create instances of the new `Burger` structure to the earlier `BurgerOld` structure, we can see that it is much easier to create instances of the `Burger` structure. We also know that we are correctly setting the property values for each type of burger because the values are set directly in the builder classes.

As we mentioned earlier, there is a second method that we can use to implement the builder pattern. Rather than having multiple builder types, we can have a single builder type that sets all the configurable options to a default value; then we change the values as needed. I use this implementation method a lot when I am updating older code because it is easy to integrate it with preexisting code.

For this implementation, we will create a single `BurgerBuilder` structure. This structure will be used to create instances of the `BurgerOld` structure and will, by default, set all the ingredients to their default values.

The `BurgerBuilder` structure also gives us the ability to change which ingredients will go on the burger prior to creating instances of the `BurgerOld` structure. We create the `BurgerBuilder` structure as follows:

```
struct BurgerBuilder {
    var name = "Burger"
    var patties = 1
    var bacon = false
    var cheese = false
    var pickles = true
    var ketchup = true
    var mustard = true
    var lettuce = false
    var tomato = false

    mutating func setPatties(choice: Int) {
        self.patties = choice
    }
    mutating func setBacon(choice: Bool) {
        self.bacon = choice
    }
    mutating func setCheese(choice: Bool) {
        self.cheese = choice
    }
    mutating func setPickles(choice: Bool) {
        self.pickles = choice
    }
    mutating func setKetchup(choice: Bool) {
        self.ketchup = choice
    }
    mutating func setMustard(choice: Bool) {
        self.mustard = choice
    }
    mutating func setLettuce(choice: Bool) {
        self.lettuce = choice
    }
    mutating func setTomato(choice: Bool) {
        self.tomato = choice
    }
}
func buildBurgerOld(name: String) -> BurgerOld {
    return BurgerOld(name: name, patties: self.patties, bacon:
        self.bacon, cheese: self.cheese, pickles: self.pickles,
        ketchup: self.ketchup, mustard: self.mustard, lettuce:
        self.lettuce, tomato: self.tomato)
}
```

In the `BurgerBuilder` structure, we define the nine properties (ingredients) for the burger and then create a setter method for each of the properties except for the name property. We also create one method named `buildBurgerOld()`, which will create an instance of the `BurgerOld` structure based on the values of the properties for the `BurgerBuilder` instance. We use the `BurgerBuilder` structure as follows:

```
var burgerBuilder = BurgerBuilder()  
burgerBuilder.setCheese(choice: true)  
burgerBuilder.setBacon(choice: true)  
var jonBurger = burgerBuilder.buildBurgerOld(name: "Jon's Burger")
```

In this example, we create an instance of the `BurgerBuilder` structure. We then use the `setCheese()` and `setBacon()` methods to add cheese and bacon to the burger. Finally, we call the `buildBurgerOld()` method to create the instance of the `burgerOld` structure.

As we can see, both methods that were used to implement the builder pattern greatly simplify the creation of the complex type. Both methods also ensured that the instances were properly configured with default values. If you find yourself creating instances of types with very long and complex initialization commands, I recommend that you look at the builder pattern to see if you can use it to simplify the initialization.

Now, let's look at structural design patterns.

Structural design patterns

Structural design patterns describe how types can be combined to form larger structures. These larger structures can generally be easier to work with and hide a lot of the complexity of the individual types. Most patterns in the structural pattern category involve connections between objects.

There are seven well-known patterns that are part of the structural design pattern type. These are as follows:

- **Adapter:** This allows types with incompatible interfaces to work together
- **Bridge:** This is used to separate the abstract elements of a type from the implementation so the two can vary
- **Composite:** This allows us to treat a group of objects as a single object
- **Decorator:** This lets us add or override behavior in an existing method of an object

- **Facade:** This provides a simplified interface for a larger and more complex body of code
- **Flyweight:** This allows us to reduce the resources needed to create and use a large number of similar objects
- **Proxy:** This is a type acting as an interface for another class or classes

In this chapter, we are going to give examples of how to use the bridge, facade, and proxy patterns in Swift. Let's start off by looking at the bridge pattern.

The bridge pattern

The bridge pattern decouples the abstraction from the implementation so that they can both vary independently. The bridge pattern can also be thought of as a two-layer abstraction.

Understanding the problem

The bridge pattern is designed to solve a couple of problems, but the one we are going to focus on here tends to arise over time as new requirements come in with new features. At some point as these come in, we will need to change how the features interact. Eventually this will require us to refactor the code.

In object-oriented programming, this is known as an exploding class hierarchy, but it can also happen in protocol-oriented programming.

Understanding the solution

The bridge pattern solves this problem by taking the interacting features and separating the functionality that is specific to each feature from the functionality that is shared between them. A bridge type can then be created, which will encapsulate the shared functionality, bringing them together.

Implementing the bridge pattern

To demonstrate how we would use the bridge pattern, we will create two features. The first feature is a message feature that will store and prepare a message that we wish to send out. The second feature is the sender feature that will send the message through a specific channel, such as email or SMS messaging.

Let's start off by creating two protocols named `Message` and `Sender`. The `Message` protocol will define the requirements for types that are used to create messages. The `Sender` protocol will be used to define the requirements for types that are used to send the messages through the specific channels. The following code shows how we define these two protocols:

```
protocol Message {  
    var messageString: String { get set }  
    init(messageString: String)  
    func prepareMessage()  
}  
  
protocol Sender {  
    func sendMessage(message: Message)  
}
```

The `Message` protocol defines a single property named `messageString` of the `String` type. This property will contain the text of the message and cannot be `nil`. We also define one initiator and a method named `prepareMessage()`. The initializer will be used to set the `messageString` property and anything else required by the message type. The `prepareMessage()` method will be used to prepare the message prior to sending it. This method can be used to encrypt the message, add formatting, or do anything else to the message prior to sending it.

The `Sender` protocol defines a method named `sendMessage()`. This method will send the message through the channel defined by conforming types. In this function, we will need to ensure that the `prepareMessage()` method from the message type is called prior to sending the message.

Now let's see how we define two types that conform to the `Message` protocol:

```
class PlainTextMessage: Message {  
    var messageString: String  
    required init(messageString: String) {  
        self.messageString = messageString  
    }  
    func prepareMessage() {  
        //Nothing to do  
    }  
}  
  
class DESEncryptedMessage: Message {  
    var messageString: String  
    required init(messageString: String) {  
        self.messageString = messageString  
    }  
}
```

```
func prepareMessage() {
    // Encrypt message here
    self.messageString = "DES: " + self.messageString
}
```

Each of these types contains the required functionality to conform to the `Message` protocol. The only real difference between these types is in the `prepareMessage()` methods. In the `PlainTextMessage` class, the `prepareMessage()` method is empty because we do not need to do anything to the message prior to sending it. The `prepareMessage()` method of the `DESEncryptionMessage` class would normally contain the logic to encrypt the message, but for the example we will just prepend a DES tag to the beginning of the message, letting us know that this method was called.

Now let's create two types that will conform to the `Sender` protocol. These types would typically handle sending the message through a specific channel; however, in the example, we will simply print a message to the console:

```
class EmailSender: Sender {
    func sendMessage(message: Message) {
        print("Sending through E-Mail:")
        print("\\"(message.messageString)")
    }
}

class SMSender: Sender {
    func sendMessage(message: Message) {
        print("Sending through SMS:")
        print("\\"(message.messageString)")
    }
}
```

Both the `EmailSender` and the `SMSender` types conform to the `Sender` protocol by implementing the `sendMessage()` function.

We can now use these two features, as shown in the following code:

```
var myMessage = PlainTextMessage(messageString: "Plain Text Message")
myMessage.prepareMessage()
var sender = SMSender() sender.sendMessage(message: myMessage)
```

This will work well, and we could add code similar to this anywhere we need to create and send a message. Now let's say that, one day in the near future, we get a requirement to add a new functionality to verify the message prior to sending it to make sure it meets the requirements of the channel we are sending the message through. To do this, we would start off by changing the `Sender` protocol to add the `verify` functionality.

The new sender protocol would look as follows:

```
protocol Sender {
    var message: Message? { get set }
    func sendMessage()
    func verifyMessage()
}
```

To the `Sender` protocol, we added a method named `verifyMessage()` and added a property named `message`. We also changed the definition of the `sendMessage()` method. The original `Sender` protocol was designed to simply send the message, but now we need to verify the message prior to calling the `sendMessage()` function; therefore, we couldn't simply pass the message to it, as we did in the previous definition.

Now we will need to change the types that conform to the `Sender` protocol to make them conform to this new protocol. The following code shows how we would make these changes:

```
class EmailSender: Sender {
    var message: Message?
    func sendMessage() {
        print("Sending through E-Mail:")
        print("\((message!.messageString))")
    }
    func verifyMessage() {
        print("Verifying E-Mail message")
    }
}

class SMSender: Sender {
    var message: Message?
    func sendMessage() {
        print("Sending through SMS:")
        print("\((message!.messageString))")
    }
    func verifyMessage() {
        print("Verifying SMS message")
    }
}
```

With the changes that we made to the types that conform to the `Sender` protocol, we will need to change how the code uses these types. The following example shows how we can now use them:

```
var myMessage = PlainTextMessage(messageString: "Plain Text Message")
myMessage.prepareMessage()
```

```
var sender = SMSSender()  
sender.message = myMessage  
  
sender.verifyMessage()  
sender.sendMessage()
```

These changes are not that hard to make; however, without the bridge pattern, we would need to refactor the entire code base and make the change everywhere that we are sending messages. The bridge pattern tells us that when we have two hierarchies that closely interact together like this, we should put this interaction logic into a bridge type that will encapsulate the logic in one spot. This way, when we receive new requirements or enhancements, we can make the change in one spot, thereby limiting the refactoring that we must do. We could make a bridge type for the message and sender hierarchies, as shown in the following example:

```
struct MessagingBridge {  
    static func sendMessage(message: Message, sender: Sender) {  
        var sender = sender  
        message.prepareMessage()  
        sender.message = message  
        sender.verifyMessage()  
        sender.sendMessage()  
    }  
}
```

The logic of how the messaging and sender hierarchies interact is now encapsulated into the `MessagingBridge` structure. Now, when the logic needs to change we only need to make the change to this one structure rather than having to refactor the entire code base.

The bridge pattern is a very good pattern to remember and use. There have been (and still are) times that I have regretted not using the bridge pattern in my code because, as we all know, requirements change frequently, and being able to make the changes in one spot rather than throughout the code base can save us a lot of time in the future.

Now, let's look at the next pattern in the structural category: the facade pattern.

The facade pattern

The facade pattern provides a simplified interface to a larger and more complex body of code. This allows us to make the libraries easier to use and understand by hiding some of the complexities. It also allows us to combine multiple APIs into a single, easier to use API, which is what we will see in the example.

Understanding the problem

The facade pattern is often used when we have a complex system that has a large number of independent APIs that are designed to work together. Sometimes it is hard to tell where we should use the facade pattern during the initial application design. The reason for this is that we normally try to simplify the initial API design; however, over time, and as requirements change and new features are added, the APIs become more and more complex, and then it becomes pretty evident where we should have used the facade pattern.

Understanding the solution

The main idea of the facade pattern is to hide the complexity of the APIs behind a simple interface. This offers us several advantages, with the most obvious being that it simplifies how we interact with the APIs. It also promotes loose coupling, which allows the APIs to change, as requirements change, without the need to refactor all the code that uses them.

Implementing the facade pattern

To demonstrate the facade pattern, we will create three APIs: `HotelBooking`, `FlightBooking`, and `RentalCarBookings`. These APIs will be used to search for and book hotels, flights, and rental cars for trips. While we could very easily call each of the APIs individually in the code, we are going to create a `TravelFacade` structure that will allow us to access the functionality of the APIs in single calls.

We will begin by defining the three APIs. Each of the APIs will need a data storage class that will store the information about the hotel, flight, or rental car. We will start off by implementing the hotel API:

```
struct Hotel {  
    //Information about hotel room  
}  
  
struct HotelBooking {  
    static func getHotelNameForDates(to: Date, from: Date) -> [Hotel]? {  
        let hotels = [Hotel]()  
        //logic to get hotels  
        return hotels  
    }  
  
    static func bookHotel(hotel: Hotel) {  
        // logic to reserve hotel room  
    }  
}
```

The hotel API consists of the Hotel and Hotel Booking structures. The Hotel structure will be used to store the information about a hotel room, and the HotelBooking structure will be used to search for a hotel room and to book the room for the trip. The flight and rental car APIs are very similar to the hotel API. The following code shows both of these APIs:

```
struct Flight {  
    //Information about flights  
}  
  
struct FlightBooking {  
    static func getFlightNameForDates(to: Date, from: Date) -> [Flight]?  
{  
    let flights = [Flight]()  
    //logic to get flights  
    return flights  
}  
    static func bookFlight(flight: Flight) {  
        // logic to reserve flight  
    }  
}  
  
struct RentalCar {  
    //Information about rental cars  
}  
  
struct RentalCarBooking {  
    static func getRentalCarNameForDates(to: Date, from: Date) ->  
    [RentalCar]?  
{  
    let cars = [RentalCar]()  
    //logic to get flights  
    return cars  
}  
    static func bookRentalCar(rentalCar: RentalCar) {  
        // logic to reserve rental car  
    }  
}
```

In each of these APIs, we have a structure that is used to store information and a structure that is used to provide the search/booking functionality. In the initial design, it would be very easy to call these individual APIs within the application; however, as we all know, requirements tend to change, which causes the APIs to change over time.

By using the facade pattern here, we are able to hide how we implement the APIs; therefore, if we need to change how the APIs work in the future, we will only need to update the facade type rather than refactoring all of the code. This makes the code easier to maintain and update in the future. Now let's look at how we will implement the facade pattern by creating a `TravelFacade` structure:

```
struct TravelFacade {
    var hotels: [Hotel]?
    var flights: [Flight]?
    var cars: [RentalCar]?

    init(to: Date, from: Date) {
        hotels = HotelBooking.getHotelNameForDates(to: to, from: from)
        flights = FlightBooking.getFlightNameForDates(to: to, from: from)
        cars = RentalCarBooking.getRentalCarNameForDates(to: to, from: from)
    }

    func bookTrip(hotel: Hotel, flight: Flight, rentalCar: RentalCar) {
        HotelBooking.bookHotel(hotel: hotel)
        FlightBooking.bookFlight(flight: flight)
        RentalCarBooking.bookRentalCar(rentalCar: rentalCar)
    }
}
```

The `TravelFacade` class contains the functionality to search the three APIs and book a hotel, flight, and rental car. We can now use the `TravelFacade` class to search for hotels, flights, and rental cars without having to directly access the individual APIs.

As we mentioned at the start of this chapter, it is not always obvious when we should use the facade pattern in the initial design.

A good rule to follow is: if we have several APIs that are working together to perform a task, we should think about using the facade pattern.

Now, let's look at the last structural pattern, which is the proxy design pattern.

The proxy design pattern

In the proxy design pattern, there is one type acting as an interface for another type or API. This wrapper class, which is the proxy, can then add functionality to the object, make the object available over a network, or restrict access to the object.

Understanding the problem

We can use the proxy pattern to solve several problems, but I find that I mainly use this pattern to solve one of two problems.

The first problem that I use the proxy pattern to solve is when I want to create a layer of abstraction between a single API and my code. The API could be a local or remote API, but I usually use this pattern to put an abstraction layer between my code and a remote service. This will allow changes to the remote API without the need to refactor large portions of the code.

The second problem that I use the proxy pattern to solve is when I need to make changes to an API, but I do not have the code or there is already a dependency on the API elsewhere in the application.

Understanding the solution

To solve these problems, the proxy pattern tells us that we should create a type that will act as an interface for interacting with the other type or API. In the example, we will show how to use the proxy pattern to add functionality to an existing type.

Implementing the proxy pattern

In this section, we will demonstrate the proxy pattern by creating a house class that we can add multiple floor plans to, where each floor plan represents a different story of the house. Let's begin by creating a `FloorPlan` protocol:

```
protocol FloorPlan {  
    var bedRooms: Int { get set }  
    var utilityRooms: Int { get set }  
    var bathRooms: Int { get set }  
    var kitchen: Int { get set }  
    var livingRooms: Int { get set }  
}
```

In the `FloorPlan` protocol, we define five properties that will represent the number of rooms contained in each floor plan. Now, let's create an implementation of the `FloorPlan` protocol named `HouseFloorPlan`, which is as follows:

```
struct HouseFloorPlan: FloorPlan {  
    var bedRooms = 0  
    var utilityRooms = 0  
    var bathRooms = 0  
    var kitchen = 0  
    var livingRooms = 0  
}
```

The `HouseFloorPlan` structure implements all five properties required from the `FloorPlan` protocol and assigns default values to them. Next, we will create the `House` type, which will represent a house:

```
struct House {  
    var stories = [FloorPlan]()  
    mutating func addStory(floorPlan: FloorPlan) {  
        stories.append(floorPlan)  
    }  
}
```

Within the `House` structure, we have an array of instances that conforms to the `FloorPlan` protocol where each floor plan will represent one story of the house. We also have a function named `addStory()`, which accepts an instance of a type that conforms to the `FloorPlan` protocol. This function will add the floor plan to the array of `FloorPlan` protocols.

If we think about the logic of this class, there is one problem that we might encounter; we are allowed to add as many floor plans as we want, which may lead to houses that are 60 or 70 stories high. This would be great if we were building skyscrapers, but we just want to build basic single-family houses. If we want to limit the number of floor plans without changing the `House` class (either we cannot change it, or we simply do not want to), we can implement the proxy pattern. The following example shows how to implement the `HouseProxy` class, where we limit the number of floor plans we can add to the house:

```
struct HouseProxy {  
    var house = House()  
  
    mutating func addStory(floorPlan: FloorPlan) -> Bool {  
        if house.stories.count > 3 {  
            house.addStory(floorPlan: floorPlan)  
            return true  
        } else {  
            return false  
        }  
    }  
}
```

```
        return false
    }
}
}
```

We begin the `HouseProxy` class by creating an instance of the `House` class. We then create a method named `addStory()`, which lets us add a new floor plan to the house. In the `addStory()` method, we check to see if the number of stories in the house is fewer than three; if so, we add the floor plan to the house and return true. If the number of stories is equal to or greater than three, then we do not add the floor plan to the house and return false. Let's see how we can use this proxy:

```
var ourHouse = HouseProxy()

var basement = HouseFloorPlan(bedRooms: 0, utilityRooms: 1,
                               bathRooms: 1, kitchen: 0, livingRooms: 1)
var firstStory = HouseFloorPlan(bedRooms: 1, utilityRooms:
                                 0, bathRooms: 2, kitchen: 1, livingRooms: 1)
var secondStory = HouseFloorPlan(bedRooms: 2, utilityRooms:
                                 0, bathRooms: 1, kitchen: 0, livingRooms: 1)
var additionalStory = HouseFloorPlan(bedRooms: 1, utilityRooms:
                                      0, bathRooms: 1, kitchen: 1, livingRooms: 1)

ourHouse.addStory(floorPlan: basement)
ourHouse.addStory(floorPlan: firstStory)
ourHouse.addStory(floorPlan: secondStory)
ourHouse.addStory(floorPlan: additionalStory)
```

In the example code, we start off by creating an instance of the `HouseProxy` class named `ourHouse`. We then create four instances of the `HouseFloorPlan` type, each with a different number of rooms. Finally, we attempt to add each of the floor plans to the `ourHouse` instance. If we run this code, we will see that the first three instances of the `floorplans` class were added to the house successfully, but the last one wasn't because we are only allowed to add three floors.

The proxy pattern is very useful when we want to add some additional functionality or error checking to a type, but we do not want to change the actual type itself. We can also use it to add a layer of abstraction between a remote or local API.

Now, let's look at behavioral design patterns.

Behavioral design patterns

Behavioral design patterns explain how types interact with each other. These patterns describe how different instances of types send messages to each other to make things happen.

There are nine well-known patterns that are part of the behavioral design pattern type. They are as follows:

- **Chain of responsibility:** This is used to process a variety of requests, each of which may be delegated to a different handler.
- **Command:** This creates objects that can encapsulate actions or parameters so that they can be invoked later or by a different component.
- **Iterator:** This allows us to access the elements of an object sequentially without exposing the underlying structure.
- **Mediator:** This is used to reduce coupling between types that communicate with each other.
- **Memento:** This is used to capture the current state of an object and store it in a manner that can be restored later.
- **Observer:** This allows an object to publish changes to an object's state. Other objects can then subscribe so they can be notified of any changes.
- **State:** This is used to alter the behavior of an object when its internal state changes.
- **Strategy:** This allows one out of a family of algorithms to be chosen at runtime.
- **Visitor:** This is a way of separating an algorithm from an object structure.

In this section, we are going to give examples of how to use strategy and command patterns in Swift. Let's start off by looking at the command pattern.

The command design pattern

The command design pattern lets us define actions that we can execute later. This pattern generally encapsulates all the information needed to call or trigger the actions at a later time.

Understanding the problem

There are times in the applications when we need to separate the execution of a command from its invoker. Typically, this is when we have a type that needs to perform one of several actions; however, the choice of which action to use needs to be made at runtime.

Understanding the solution

The command pattern tells us that we should encapsulate the logic for the actions into a type that conforms to a command protocol. We can then provide instances of the command types for use by the invoker. The invoker will use the interface provided by the protocol to invoke the necessary actions.

Implementing the command pattern

In this section, we will demonstrate how to use the command pattern by creating a `Light` type. In this type, we will define the `lightOnCommand` and `lightOffCommand` commands and will use the `turnOnLight()` and `turnOffLight()` methods to invoke these commands. We will begin by creating a protocol named `Command`, which all of the command types will conform to. Here is the command protocol:

```
protocol Command {  
    func execute()  
}
```

This protocol contains a method named `execute()`, which will be used to execute the command. Now, let's look at the command types that the `Light` type will use to turn the light on and off. They are as follows:

```
struct RockerSwitchLightOnCommand: Command {  
    func execute() {  
        print("Rocker Switch:Turning Light On")  
    }  
}  
  
struct RockerSwitchLightOffCommand: Command {  
    func execute() {  
        print("Rocker Switch:Turning Light Off")  
    }  
}  
struct PullSwitchLightOnCommand: Command {  
    func execute() {  
        print("Pull Switch:Turning Light On")  
    }  
}  
  
struct PullSwitchLightOffCommand: Command {  
    func execute() {  
        print("Pull Switch:Turning Light Off")  
    }  
}
```

The RockerSwitchLightOffCommand, RockerSwitchLightOnCommand, PullSwitchLightOnCommand, and PullSwitchLightOffCommand commands all conform to the Command protocol by implementing the execute() method; therefore, we will be able to use them in the Light type. Now, let's look at how to implement the Light type:

```
struct Light {
    var lightOnCommand: Command
    var lightOffCommand: Command

    func turnOnLight() {
        self.lightOnCommand.execute()
    }
    func turnOffLight() {
        self.lightOffCommand.execute()
    }
}
```

In the Light type, we start off by creating two variables, named lightOnCommand and lightOffCommand, which will contain instances of types that conform to the Command protocol. Then we create the turnOnLight() and turnOffLight() methods that we will use to turn the light on and off. In these methods, we call the appropriate command to turn the light on or off.

We would then use the Light type as follows:

```
var on = PullSwitchLightOnCommand()
var off = PullSwitchLightOffCommand()
var light = Light(lightOnCommand: on, lightOffCommand: off)
light.turnOnLight()
light.turnOffLight()

light.lightOnCommand = RockerSwitchLightOnCommand()
light.turnOnLight()
```

In this example, we begin by creating an instance of the PullSwitchLightOnCommand type named on and an instance of the PullSwitchLightOffCommand type named off. We then create an instance of the Light type using the two commands that we just created and call the turnOnLight() and turnOffLight() methods of the Light instance to turn the light on and off. In the last two lines, we change the lightOnCommand method, which was originally set to an instance of the PullSwitchLightOnCommand class, to an instance of the RockerSwitchLightOnCommand type. The Light instance will now use the RockerSwitchLightOnCommand type whenever we turn the light on. This allows us to change the functionality of the Light type during runtime.

There are several benefits from using the command pattern. One of the main benefits is that we are able to set which command to invoke at runtime, which also lets us swap the commands out with different implementations that conform to the Command protocol as needed throughout the life of the application. Another advantage of the command pattern is that we encapsulate the details of command implementations within the command types themselves rather than in the container type.

Now, let's look at the last design pattern, which is the strategy pattern

The strategy pattern

The strategy pattern is pretty similar to the command pattern in that they both allow us to decouple implementation details from the calling type, and also allow us to switch the implementation out at runtime. The big difference is that the strategy pattern is intended to encapsulate algorithms. By swapping out an algorithm, we are expecting the object to perform the same functionality, but in a different way. In the command pattern, when we swap out the commands, we are expecting the object to change the functionality.

Understanding the problem

There are times in the applications when we need to change the backend algorithm that is used to perform an operation. Typically, this is when we have a type that has several different algorithms that can be used to perform the same task; however, the choice of which algorithm to use needs to be made at runtime.

Understanding the solution

The strategy pattern tells us that we should encapsulate the algorithm in a type that conforms to a strategy protocol. We can then provide instances of the strategy types for use by the invoker. The invoker will use the interface provided by the protocol to invoke the algorithm.

Implementing the strategy pattern

In this section, we will demonstrate the strategy pattern by showing you how we could swap out compression algorithms at runtime. Let's begin this example by creating a `CompressionStrategy` protocol that each one of the compression types will conform to. Let's look at the following code:

```
protocol CompressionStrategy {  
    func compressFiles(filePaths: [String])  
}
```

This protocol defines a method named `compressFiles()` that accepts a single parameter, which is an array of strings that contain the paths to the files we want to compress. We will now create two structures that conform to this protocol. These are the `ZipCompressionStrategy` and the `RarCompressionStrategy` structures, which are as follows:

```
struct ZipCompressionStrategy: CompressionStrategy {  
    func compressFiles(filePaths: [String]) {  
        print("Using Zip Compression")  
    }  
}  
struct RarCompressionStrategy: CompressionStrategy {  
    func compressFiles(filePaths: [String]) {  
        print("Using RAR Compression")  
    }  
}
```

Both of these structures implement the `CompressionStrategy` protocol by using a method named `compressFiles()`, which accepts an array of strings. Within these methods, we simply print out the name of the compression that we are using. Normally, we would implement the compression logic in these methods.

Now, let's look at the `CompressContent` class, which will be used to compress the files:

```
struct CompressContent {  
    var strategy: CompressionStrategy  
  
    func compressFiles(filePaths: [String]) {  
        self.strategy.compressFiles(filePaths: filePaths)  
    }  
}
```

In this class, we start off by defining a variable, named `strategy`, which will contain an instance of a type that conforms to the `CompressionStrategy` protocol. Then we create a method named `compressFiles()`, which accepts an array of strings that contain the paths to the list of files that we wish to compress. In this method, we compress the files using the compression strategy that is set in the `strategy` variable.

We will use the `CompressContent` class as follows:

```
var filePaths = ["file1.txt", "file2.txt"]  
var zip = ZipCompressionStrategy()  
var rar = RarCompressionStrategy()  
  
var compress = CompressContent(strategy: zip)  
compress.compressFiles(filePaths: filePaths)
```

```
compress.strategy = rar  
compress.compressFiles(filePaths: filePaths)
```

We begin by creating an array of strings that contains the files we wish to compress. We also create an instance of both the `ZipCompressionStrategy` and the `RarCompressionStrategy` types. We then create an instance of the `CompressContent` class, setting the compression strategy to the `ZipCompressionStrategy` instance, and call the `compressFiles()` method, which will print the `Using zip` compression message to the console. We then set the compression strategy to the `RarCompressionStrategy` instance and call the `compressFiles()` method again, which will print the `Using rar` compression message to the console.

The strategy pattern is really good for setting the algorithms to use at runtime, which also lets us swap the algorithms out with different implementations as needed by the application. Another advantage of the strategy pattern is that we encapsulate the details of the algorithm within the strategy types themselves and not in the main implementation type.

This concludes the tour of design patterns in Swift.

Summary

Design patterns are solutions to software design problems that we tend to see over and over again in real-world application design. These patterns are designed to help us create reusable and flexible code. Design patterns can also make the code easier to read and understand for other developers and also for ourselves when we look back at the code months/years later.

If we look at the examples in this chapter carefully, we will notice that one of the backbones of design patterns is the protocol. Almost all design patterns (the singleton design pattern is an exception) use protocols to help us create very flexible and reusable code.

If this was the first time that you really looked at design patterns, you probably noticed some strategies that you have used in the past in your own code. This is expected when experienced developers are first introduced to design patterns. I would also encourage you to read more about design patterns because they will definitely help you to create more flexible and reusable code.

Swift is a language that is rapidly changing and it is important to keep up to date. Since Swift is an open source project there are plenty of resources that will help you. I would definitely recommend bookmarking <http://swiftdoc.org> in your favorite browser. It has auto-generated documentation for the Swift language and is a great resource.

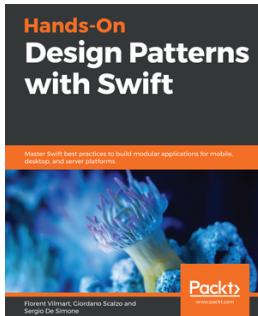
Another site to bookmark is <https://swift.org>. This is the main open source Swift site. On this site, you will find links to the Swift source code, blog posts, getting started pages, and information on how to install Swift.

I would also recommend signing up for some of the mailing lists on the swift.org site. The lists are located in the community section. The Swift-users mailing list is an excellent place to ask questions and is the list that Apple monitors. If you want to stay up-to-date with the changes to Swift then I would recommend the swift-evolution-announce list.

I hope you have enjoyed reading this book as much as I have enjoyed writing it.

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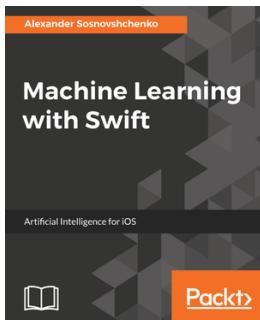


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