Convert ArrayList to String

To convert any collection to string [AbstractCollection<E>](http://data-structure-learning.blogspot.com/2015/05/java-collection-part-10.html) class has a method called toString(). Suppose we have List of numbers from 1 to 5 then output of toString() is

[1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

Now in this post we will convert this Collection to String using our own method. Also we will make sure to insert a delimiter of our choice. In addition to that we will insert some prefix and suffix if needed to each element in the Collection.

First we will design our method for conversion of List<E> to String. Let’s say we have delimiter as “::”. So output would look like this

1::2::3::4::5

So for this we would iterate through the list and then append object of list and the delimiter. We will also make sure that delimiter is not appended at the end. Delimiter is always appended between two objects.

Let us write code for it.

StringBuilder sb = **new** StringBuilder();

Iterator<?> iter = c.iterator();

sb.append(iter.next());

**while** (iter.hasNext()) {

sb.append(delimiter).append(iter.next());

}

Now the above code will work.

Now we will write code for appending prefix and suffix string to each element in list.

[1, 2, 3, 4, 5]

Prefix = “p”

Suffix=”s”

Delimiter=”$”

p1s$p2s$p3s$p4s$p5s

StringBuilder sb = **new** StringBuilder();

Iterator<?> iter = c.iterator();

sb.append(prefix)

.append(iter.next())

.append(suffix);

**while** (iter.hasNext()) {

sb.append(delimiter)

.append(prefix)

.append(iter.next())

.append(suffix);

}

Entire program is below:

**package** org.collections;

**import** java.util.ArrayList;

**import** java.util.Arrays;

**import** java.util.Collection;

**import** java.util.Iterator;

**import** java.util.List;

**public** **class** ConvertListToString {

**public** **static** **void** main(String[] args) {

List<Integer> list = **new** ArrayList<Integer>(Arrays.*asList*(1, 2, 3, 4, 5));

System.***out***.println(list);

String str = *convert*(list, "$", "p", "s");

System.***out***.println(str);

}

**public** **static** String convert(Collection<?> c, String delimiter) {

**return** *convert*(c, delimiter, "", "");

}

**public** **static** String convert(Collection<?> c, String delimiter, String prefix, String suffix) {

**if** (c == **null**) {

**throw** **new** NullPointerException("Input Collection can't be null");

}

**if** (delimiter == **null**) {

delimiter = "";

}

**if** (prefix == **null**) {

prefix = "";

}

**if** (suffix == **null**) {

suffix = "";

}

StringBuilder sb = **new** StringBuilder();

Iterator<?> iter = c.iterator();

sb.append(prefix)

.append(iter.next())

.append(suffix);

**while** (iter.hasNext()) {

sb.append(delimiter)

.append(prefix)

.append(iter.next())

.append(suffix);

}

**return** sb.toString();

}

}

That’s all on List to String.