

Chapter 14. Tools and Debugging

No matter how careful you are, mistakes will be made. We won't cover how to debug JavaScript, but we will talk about some tools to make debugging React applications easier.

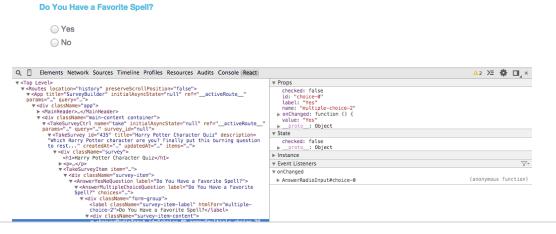
Starting out

For this chapter, please open Chrome and install the <u>React Developer Tools</u> addon. One requirement is to set window.React.

```
window.React = require('react');
```

Right click on an element, and choose "Inspect Element". You get the familiar view of the DOM structure, the elements tab. Click the

You're not here to look at the DOM, though. You want to see the components, their props, and their state. If completed the previous steps you should see a tab on the far right named "React".



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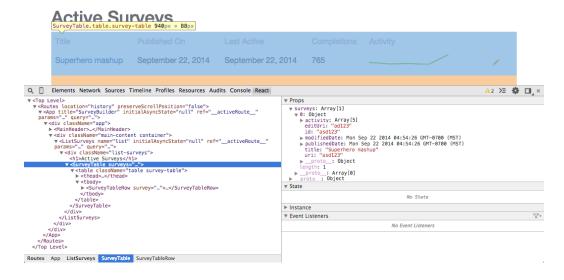
DISPLAYNAME

The JSX to JS converter tries to guess the displayName and insert it. If you're not using JSX you should provide a displayName for your components.

```
React.createClass({displayName: "MyComponent", ...});
```

The hierarchy of components is on the left, and the information about the selected instance is on the right.

Viewing just this information can tell you a lot about the state, props, and event listeners attached to our components. You can see that the onDragStart listener is ModuleButton::handleDragStart, the classes our button has, and any other information you might be interested in. The developer tools allow you to do more than this.



You can see our SurveyTable component gets passed an array of surveys which contain timestamps. In the actual view they're presented in a human readable format. Double click one of the timestamps and type in a new value. This causes the component to update with the new value.

The developer tools help you narrow down problems, and helps new people to your team find the components they need to edit to complete tasks.

JSBin and JSFiddle

While debugging, or just brainstorming, online demo sites like JSFiddle and JSBin are great assets. Use them to create test cases when asking for help, or to share prototypes with others.





NEXT 15. Testing