

JavaScript (programming language) Web Development

What are some cool JavaScript tricks?

22 Answers



Frank Taylor, Senior Front End Developer at Tahzoo Worldwide; JavaScript fanboy
11.6k Views • Upvoted by Neeraj Agrawal, Engineering Manager @ Quora

There's so many. Just keep in mind that, while these exist, and seem cool, they probably *don't* need to be seen in any production website.

Swap variables without a temp variable:^[1]

```
1 var a = 2
2 var b = 4
3 var b = [a,a=b ][0]
```

Unless you have a really giant project with tens or hundreds of thousands of lines of code, or a code interview, don't do this. A temporary variable isn't the worst thing in the world.

There's insanity to be done with type coercion:

```
1 var a = +[];           // a == 0
2 var b = false + true;  // b == 1
3 var c = true + true;   // c == 2
4 var d = !0;            // d == true
```

Just, please, don't *actually* use this anywhere. This kind of type coercion is useful for code contests and hackathons. It's absolutely unreadable anywhere else.

You can write actual, functional JavaScript that uses type coercion^[2]. It is a thing of evil. People who obfuscate their JavaScript are either evil, or assholes. Don't be either.

You don't *have* to declare **var** at the top of a function:

Instead of

```
1 function(a){
2   var b=1;
3 }
```

you could write

```
1 function(a,b) {
2   b=1;
3 }
```

This is because the variable name is declared as an argument. It saves you having to write var a whole lot, but it could confuse anyone else looking at your code. They might think you're actually passing these arguments into your function somewhere.

My favorite: `.call()`

Say you want to iterate over the properties in an object.

```
1 var listitems = document.querySelectorAll('li');
```

You could try:

```
1 for (i = 0; i < listitems.length; i++) {
2   var listitem = listitems[i];
3   // do things
4 }
```

Or, you can use `.call()` to simply `forEach` this bad boy:

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```
1 [].forEach.call(listitems, function(listitem) {  
2 //do things  
3 })
```

`call()` simply lets you apply your own **this**. So in the above example, instead of an empty array being the **this**, you're using `listitems`, instead.

[edit]

I can't help myself. one more example with `.call()`

Say you wanted to you reverse a string. Well, reversing stuff is the thing of arrays. So, why not take the magic power of an array, and call it on a string:

```
1 var hey = 'hello world';  
2 var yeh = [].reverse.call(hey.split('')).join(''); // "dlrow olleh"
```

`call()` is useful when you want to use methods that don't usually exist on properties^[3].

Footnotes

[1] [jed/140bytes](#)

[2] [Page on korelogic.com](#)

[3] [Function.prototype.call\(\)](#)

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Marcus Geduld, 30 years of coding.

1.1k Views • Upvoted by Neeraj Agrawal, Engineering Manager @ Quora
Marcus has 90+ answers in JavaScript (programming language).

```
1 // generate an array of 25 random numbers  
2 const xs = Array.from({length: 25}).map(Math.random);
```

`Array.from` converts an array-like object to an array. An object is array-like if it has a `length` property with an integer value. `Array.from({length: 2})` returns an array that looks like this: `[undefined, undefined]`.

You can then map that array to a different array. `map(Math.random)` calls `Math.random` for each item in the original array, always passing in the current original array item:

```
Math.random(undefined); // Math.random([undefined, undefined ...][0]);
```

```
Math.random(undefined); // Math.random([undefined, undefined ...][1]);
```

...

Of course, `Math.random()` doesn't use the value passed into it. It just spits out a random (or, rather, pseudo-random) number, and the `Array.prototype.map` function collects all those numbers in a new array and returns that new array.

What if you wanted to generate an array like this `[0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, ... 24]`?

```
1 const xs = Array.from({length: 25}).map((_, index) => index);
```

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Jonathan Fenocchi, Sr. DevOps Engineer

5k Views

You can execute arbitrary JavaScript on any web page by typing `javascript:`

`(function(){ /* your code */ })()` in your address bar. Sometimes, when a page is misbehaving, such as telling me I can't submit a form without filling out some field, I just correct it by forcibly initiating the submission via a script, something like `javascript:(function(){document.forms[1].submit();})();` and hitting return.

Written Sep 6, 2013 • View Upvotes

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Dong Nguyen, Web Developer
8.7k Views

I like this trick the best:

```
1 setTimeout(function handle(){
2   // do something
3 }, 0);
```

It moves the function "handle" into message queue instead of executing it immediately.
For more info:

[Concurrency model and Event Loop](#)

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Vladislav Zorov, Has written a simple game engine in JS.
66.5k Views • Vladislav is a Most Viewed Writer in JavaScript (programming language) with 210+ answers.

If you have an array of something (numbers, strings, objects - doesn't matter) that contains duplicates, and want only the unique values and don't care about preserving their order, you can do this:

```
1 let arr = [1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4]
2 arr = [...new Set(arr)]
3 // [1, 2, 3, 4]
```

Wait, what? The triple-dot is a new operator in ES6, called the [Spread operator](#) .
Essentially it unpacks stuff in-place, or denotes that multiple things should be packed under some name:

```
1 const fn = (arg1, ...rest) => {
2   console.log(arg1)
3   console.log(rest)
4 }
5
6 fn(1, 2, 3, 4)
7 // 1
8 // [2,3,4]
9
10 fn(...arr)
11 // 1
12 // [2,3,4]
```

This already exists in many languages (known as "splat operator"), but it's still a pretty cool trick :)

P.S. It also works for pattern matching, i.e. destructuring:

```
1 const [head, ...tail] = [1, 2, 3, 4]
2 console.log(head) // 1
3 console.log(tail) // [2, 3, 4]
```

Written Feb 7 • View Upvotes



Khandar William, If JavaScript is magic then I'm a wizard
2.6k Views

Do you know that any JS code can be rewritten using only six characters?
[Write any JavaScript with 6 Characters: \[\]\(\)!+](#)

Written Sep 28, 2013 • View Upvotes

Not sure if these qualify as "cool", but some nifty ones nonetheless.
(And not claiming originality for any one of them).

1. Converting a numeric string to a number:

```
1 var str = "1000.997",
2   num = +str; //unary plus, num is 1000.997
```

- floats supported
- signs supported
- malformed numeric strings are evaluated to NaN
- Pitfalls: +true is 1, +false is 0, +"" is 0, +[] is 0

2. Truncating (Floor-ish, but not quite) a number / numeric string to an integer.

```
1 // test cases
2 console.log(~12); //12
3 console.log(~12.00001); //12
4 console.log(~"12.0001"); //12
5 console.log(~"12"); //12
6
7 //interesting cases
8 console.log(~undefined); //0
9 console.log(~[]); //0
10 console.log(~false); //0
11 console.log(~"Quora"); //0
12 console.log(~true); //1
13 console.log(~-12.20); //11, so not really a Math.floor :)
14
15 //achtung: integer overflow
16 ~3000000000.5 === -1294967296 //true
17 ~(2419354838.709677) === -1875612458 //true
```

- Note the interesting cases.
- Thanks [Marek Pepke](#) for the negative number case and the integer overflow case. :)
Some more details here: <http://stackoverflow.com/question/11111111>

3. Multi-line string literals

```
1 var longLine = "All your base \
2 are belong \
3 to us";
```

- newline must be right after the \
- This is NOT the equivalent of using the escape sequence \n
- i.e., in the example above, it's all still one line of text, not three.
- Detecting a trailing white-space in your favorite editor should be trivial, however, as noted by [Marek Pepke](#), one should exercise caution while using this technique and should have a very good justification for it, since a single trailing white-space will result in a `SyntaxError` being thrown.

4. Map and Reduce

```
1 var arr = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6];
2
3 var squares = arr.map(function (el, i) {
4   return el * el;
5 });
6 // squares is [1, 4, 9, 16, 25, 36], arr is NOT mutated
7
8 var sum = arr.reduce(function (p, n, i, array) {
9   return p + n;
10 }, 0);
11 // sum is 21
12
```

```

13 var sumOfSquares = arr.map(function (el, i) {
14     return el * el;
15 }).reduce(function (p, n, i, array) {
16     return p + n;
17 }, 0);
18 // sumOfSquares is 91

```

- Immensely powerful, incredibly convenient.
- Can be slow, so profile and consider performance carefully, although for reasonably sized iterations, the performance penalty of function invocation is trivial, and even more so on engines like the V8. Still, always profile.

5. Omit parenthesis when constructing without arguments

```

1 function Dog(breed) {
2     this.breed = breed;
3 }
4 var lab = new Dog('Labrador');
5 var stray = new Dog; // Legal! same as new Dog();

```

- JavaScript allows you to omit parentheses for constructor calls without parameters.
- DON'T DO IT. This is merely a mention for the sake of knowing the syntactical oddity, but it reflects extremely poor style, that's all.

Updated Feb 16 • View Upvotes



Andrei Cristof, Software developer living in Berlin, Germany

2.2k Views

The module pattern. Read this:

[JavaScript Module Pattern: In-Depth](#)

Written Jun 12, 2013 • View Upvotes



Yanzi Chrissie Xiao, PhD in Env Eng, MS in Env Sci, Translator, Illustrator

1.1k Views

[codecademy.com](#)

I am a very beginner level on JS... but on Valentine's Day, I decided to do a little trick using JS I learnt from [Learn to code](#) to show my nerdy love to my same nerdy husband -- <http://craigpedia.com> He thinks it is quite cool so maybe it qualifies as a cool trick then. By the way, the message may not be there later on when I decide to do some work with it.

Updated Feb 17 • View Upvotes



Brett Williams, I speak geek

2.1k Views

Chain bookmarklets together with ;

It saves me a massive amount of time.

See <http://www.quora.com/What-are-so...> for a much more elegant solution.

Written Mar 15, 2012 • View Upvotes



Priya Ananthasankar, Designing and programming for more than a decade

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There are quite some many cool stuff:

1. Functions as first class objects. You could do `obj.somefunc = function(){ console.log}` and it dynamically adds this function to your obj. It's simple enough.
2. Ability to create objects via prototype. Prototypical pattern of object creation.
3. Ability for easy mixin. You could mix in one object into another with just a simple 1 line of code. It's quite powerful

Written Sep 5, 2013 • View Upvotes



Yann Bertrand, having fun with JS

2.4k Views

Here is a cool trick with the `.indexOf()` method:

```
1 var list = ['my', 'str', 'list'];
2 if (~list.indexOf('my')) {
3   console.log('the `list` array contains `my`');
4 }
5 if (!~list.indexOf('number')) {
6   console.log('the `list` array does not contain `number`');
7 }
8
9 var hello = 'world';
10 if (~hello.indexOf('orl')) {
11   console.log('`hello` contains `orl`');
12 }
13 if (!~hello.indexOf('qsd')) {
14   console.log('`hello` does not contain `qsd`');
15 }
```

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György Fekete, I'm the CTO of Primal Skill. Mainly work with back-end tech Go, PHP, Node

1.5k Views

The most impressive JS code I've seen lately: [Page on Aemik](#)

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Pomy, JavaScript Web dev

405 Views

For this question, I read two articles about JavaScript tricks:

[10 Small Things You May Not Know About Javascript](#)

[45 Useful JavaScript Tips, Tricks and Best Practices - Modern Web](#)

In the second link, the article had some good related sources in the end.

Written Feb 17



Will Seitz

928 Views

The ability to create asynchronous decorative combinators using closures.

```
1 function callOnlyOnceBeforeCompletion(func) {
2   var promise;
3   return function() {
4     if (!promise) {
5       promise = func().finally(function(){
6         promise = null;
7       });
8       return promise;
9     } else {
10      return promise;
11    }
12  }
13 }
14
15 serverCall = callOnlyOnceBeforeCompletion(serverCall);
```

This demonstrates asynchronous code using promises. A simple and flexible way to handle asynchronous code. It shows decorative combinators, functions that take in a modify the behavior of other functions. It also shows how closures can be used by decorative combinators.

Another simple example is writing a function that gets data and then a decorative combinator that caches arbitrary functions and can be used like so:

```
1 getCall = cacheThisFunction(getCall);
```

Wrote this one up at [Simple Little Cacher](#) .

These are the tools that make the language powerfully expressive and I am not sure if that falls under "neat tricks".

Written Feb 16



Richard Herbert

1.4k Views

How about this awesome trick with closures?

```
1 var persistentX = (function(){
2     var x = 0;
3     return function(){
4         x += 1;
5         console.log(x);
6     };
7 })();
8
9 persistentX(); //displays one
10 persistentX(); //displays two
11
```

"...an inner function always has access to the vars and parameters of its outer function, even after the outer function has returned. This is an extremely powerful property of the language." -Douglas Crockford

Written Feb 13 • View Upvotes



Tran Dac Anh, programming the frontend

1.1k Views

//shortest decimal-to-binary conversion

```
var a = 8..toString(2); // "1000"
```

Written Oct 17, 2013 • View Upvotes



Russell Heimlich, Web developer at the Pew Research Center in Washington, DC.
Created dummyimag...

297 Views

Here are a whole bunch of JavaScript tips and tricks [loverajoel/jstips](#)

Written Feb 16



Peter Chon

804 Views

You can shorthand conditionals inside shorthand conditionals:

```
1 var x = foo == true ? bar == 1 ? "foobar" : "foobaz" : "barbaz";
```

above is same as:

```
1 if (foo == true){
2     if (bar == 1) {
3         x = "foobar";
4     } else {
5         x = "foobaz";
6     }
7 } else {
8     x = "barbaz";
9 }
```

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Manuel Bieh, bought my first JavaScript book in 1998

1.3k Views

You can use double exclamation marks to cast to boolean:

```
1 var x;
2 console.log(!x);
```

is 'false'

while:

```
1 var x;
2 console.log(x);
```

is 'undefined'

Written Sep 20, 2013 • View Upvotes

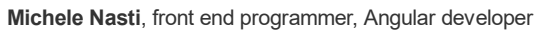


Ivan Torres, geek

331 Views

Paste this into the console

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what will this return ? Enjoy :)

What are some really cool features of JavaScript?

What are some cool PHP tricks?

What are some cool things to build with Javascript, that look good in a portfolio?

What cool things can I make with JavaScript?

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What are some html, css and javascript tricks that every web designer/developer should know?

What are cool things you can do with javascript?

What is Isomorphic JavaScript?

I'm building a website for my portfolio. What are some "cool" things I could add to show I have some knowledge of JavaScript?

What is the best way to learn JavaScript?

What's cool about Meteor?

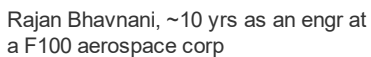
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What are some cool CSS tricks?

What and How to build cool things with Javascript?

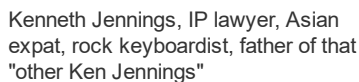
Is there any website like CSS-Tricks to learn JavaScript?

What is the strangest thing you've seen at airport security?



They ruined my Christmas present... My wife and I were flying to LA to spend Christmas with my sister. Naturally, we had several wrapped presents in our carry-on bags (I've had expensive checked in stuff stolen and destroyed by TSA; appeals/reports go nowhere). Going through security they stopped my wife's carry on, and asked if it

What was your scariest travel experience?



Sometimes the scare comes after the fact. Two scary incidents that I was aware of at the time were the fan coming apart in the outboard engine of a 747 while I was on my way from Singapore to Seoul. We made an emergency landing in Taiwan. The second was a bird strike on an A320 flying from Busan to Cheju Island in Korea. The plane

Was Mao Zedong a psychopath?



He was a sociopath, that much is certain.

He exhibits all the symptoms:

- Doesn't care for the welfare of others, at all. He can throw people who have been his friends and allies under the bus as soon as they stand in his way.
- Is supremely confident and narcissistic.
- Completely unswayed by the opinions of others

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