Java Introduction

Dept of Computer Science
University of Maryland College Park

This material is based on material provided by Ben Bederson, Bonnie Dorr, Fawzi Emad, David Mount, Jan Plane
Java Programming Language

• **Java** → Why is it special?
  • An **object-oriented** programming language
  • Developed in early 1990's by James Gosling at Sun Microsystems for controlling programmable devices.
  • Unlike C++, Java programs are **portable** between machines – why?
    • C/C++ programs are compiled into **machine code** and is executed directly by CPU. Different machines may behave differently.
    • Java programs are compiled into **Java bytecode**. This is a machine code for a “virtual computer” called the **Java Virtual Machine (JVM)**.
      • A JVM **interpreter** reads bytecode and simulates its execution.
Java Virtual Machine

- Java compilers produce Java bytecode
- To run Java bytecode, must have bytecode interpreter ("Java Virtual Machine") on client machine
Java Programming Concepts

- **Object**: The principal entities that are manipulated by a Java program
- **Class**: A blueprint or template for the structure of an object
- **Method**: Java’s term for a *procedure* or *subroutine*. Every method belongs to some class, and a class may have many methods
- **Main Method**: There must be exactly one method called `main`. This is where execution begins
- **Statements**: Individual instructions. Examples:
  - **Declarations**: declare (and initialize) variables
  - **Assignment**: compute and assign a new value to a variable
  - **Method invocation**: execute a method (which may return a result)
  - **Control flow**: alter the order in which statements are executed
Sample Program

/*
 * My first sample Java program.
 */

public class MyFirstProgram {
    public static void main( String[] args ) {
        int secondsPerMinute = 60;            // let’s create some variables
        int minutesPerLecture = 50;
        int totalSeconds = secondsPerMinute * minutesPerLecture;
        System.out.println( "There are " + totalSeconds + " seconds in a lecture.” );
    }
}

Program Output

There are 3000 seconds in a lecture.

• Let’s look at each component of this program
• Let’s run this program in Eclipse
Class: The structure around which all Java programs are based. A typical Java program consists of many classes, and typically, each class resides in its own file, whose name is based on the class’s name. The class is delimited by curly braces { ... }.

File name: MyFirstProgram.java:

```java
public class MyFirstProgram {
    ... (contents of the class go here) ...
}
```

A class consist of a combination of data units, called variables, and computation units, called methods.
• **Methods:** This is where all the computation takes place. Each method has a name, a list of arguments enclosed in parentheses, and body, enclosed in curly braces.

```java
public static void main( String[] args ) {
    // (contents of the main method go here)
}
```

• **Variables:** These are the data items that the methods operate on. Variables can be of various types, integers, for example:

```java
int secondsPerMinute = 60;
int minutesPerLecture = 50;
```
Java Program Organization

- **Statements**: Each method consists of some number of statements. There are many different types of statements, which perform diverse tasks:
  - **Declarations** → specify variable types (and optionally initialize)
    ```java
    int x, y, z;        // three integer variables
    String s = "Howdy";    // a character string variable
    boolean isValid = true;    // a boolean (true or false) variable
    ```
  - **Assignments** → assign variables new values
    ```java
    x = 13;
    ```
  - **Method invocation** → call other methods
    ```java
    System.out.println("Print this message");
    ```
  - **Control flow** → determine the order of statement execution
  - **Expressions/Operators** → Java provides various operators, which allow you to manipulate the variables.
    ```java
    x = (2 * y - z) / 32;
    ```
Other Java Elements: Comments

- **Comments**: are used to indicate the programmer’s intent. They do not affect the program’s execution, (ignored by compiler) but are an important part of any program. Two ways:
  - **Line comments**: After `//` the rest of the line is a comment. These are often used to explain a single line of code
  - **Block comments**: The text between any pair: `/* ... */` this can run over many lines or on a single line
  - Comments are essential for good programming
Debugging Java Programs

- Types of errors
  - “Compile time” → caught by Eclipse / Java compiler
    - Syntax errors
    - Disobeys the rules of the language; violates language’s grammar
    - Type errors: misuse of variables
  - “Run time” → appear during program execution
    - Semantic errors
    - Obey the rules of the language but does not express them meaning you intended;
    - Division by 0
    - Crash or hang or wrong outputs (because of mistakes in programming)
- Eclipse helps catch compile time errors
  - Red → error
  - Yellow → warning
- Debugging
  - Process of finding and fixing problems
  - To minimize debugging frustration → use “unit” testing
  - Write a small part, thoroughly test it, cycle back