CMSC 132: OBJECT-ORIENTED PROGRAMMING II

Effective Java

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Effective Java Textbook

- Title
  - Effective Java, Second Edition
- Author
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- Contents
  - Learn to use Java language and its libraries more effectively
Java Puzzlers (By J. Bloch)

• Java
  • Simple and elegant
  • Need to avoid some sharp corners!
• Puzzlers
  • Java code fragments
  • Expose some tricky aspects of Java
• Effective Java
  • Patterns and idioms to emulate
  • Pitfalls to avoid
What's In A Name?

public class Name {
    private String myName;
    public Name(String n) { myName = n; }
    public boolean equals(Object o) {
        if (!(o instanceof Name)) return false;
        Name n = (Name)o;
        return myName.equals(n.myName);
    }
    public static void main(String[ ] args) {
        Set s = new HashSet();
        s.add(new Name("Donald"));
        System.out.println(s.contains(new Name("Donald")));}
}
public class Trivial {
    public static void main(String args[ ]) {
        System.out.print("H" + "a");
        System.out.print('H' + 'a');
    }
}

Output
1. Ha
2. HaHa
3. Neither

Prints Ha169

'H' + 'a' evaluated as *int*,
then converted to String!

Use string concatenation
(+) with care. At least one
operand must be a String
The Confusing Constructor

public class Confusing {
    public Confusing(Object o) {
        System.out.println("Object");
    }
    public Confusing(double[] dArray) {
        System.out.println("double array");
    }
    public static void main(String args[]) {
        new Confusing(null);
    }
}

Output
1. Object
2. double array
3. Neither

When multiple overloading apply, the most specific wins

Avoid overloading. If you overload, avoid ambiguity
Time For A Change

• Problem
  • If you pay $2.00 for a gasket that costs $1.10, how much change do you get?

```
public class Change {
    public static void main(String args[ ]) {
        System.out.println(2.00 - 1.10);
    }
}
```

Output
1.  0.9
2.  0.90
3.  Neither

Prints 0.89999999999999999. Decimal values can’t be represented exactly by float or double

Avoid float or double where exact answers are required. Use BigDecimal, int, or long instead
A Private Matter

class Base {
    public String name = "Base";
}

class Derived extends Base {
    private String name = "Derived";
}

public class PrivateMatter {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        System.out.println(new Derived().name);
    }
}

Output
1. Derived
2. Base
3. Neither

Compiler error in class PrivateMatter:
Can't access name

Private field can hide public.
Avoid hiding & public fields
Regarding Objects

- Creating and destroying objects
  - Avoid creating duplicate/unnecessary objects
  - Eliminate obsolete object references
  - Avoid finalizers
- Methods common to all objects
  - Obey the general hash contract when overriding equals
  - Always override hashCode when you override equals
  - Always override toString
Classes and Interfaces

• Minimize the accessibility of classes and members
• Favor immutability
• Favor composition over inheritance
• Design and document for inheritance or else prohibit it
• Prefer interfaces to abstract classes
• User interfaces only to define types
Methods

• Check parameters for validity
• Make defensive copies when needed
• Design method signatures carefully
• Use overloading judiciously
• Return zero-length arrays, not nulls
• Write doc comments for all exposed API elements
General Programming

- Minimize the scope of local variables
- Prefer for-each loops to traditional for loops
- Know and use the libraries
- Prefer primitive types to boxed primitives
- Avoid float and double if exact answers are required
- Avoid strings where other types are more appropriate
- Beware the performance of string concatenation
- Adhere to generally accepted naming conventions
- Refer to objects by their interfaces
Exceptions

• Use exceptions only for exceptional conditions
• Use checked exceptions for recoverable conditions and run-time exceptions for programming errors
• Avoid unnecessary use of checked exceptions
• Favor the use of standard exceptions
• Throw exceptions appropriate to the abstraction
• Document all exceptions thrown by each method
• Don't ignore exceptions
Generics

- Don’t use raw types
  - E.g., raw type for List<E> is List
- Prefer lists to arrays
- Favor generic types and methods
  - Define classes and methods using generics when possible
- Use bounded wildcards to increase API flexibility
Avoid Duplicate Object Creation

• Reuse existing object instead
  • Reuse improves clarity and performance
• Simplest example

  String s = new String("DON’T DO THIS!");
  String s = "Do this instead";

  • Since Strings constants are reused
• In loops, savings can be substantial
• But don't be afraid to create objects
  • Object creation is cheap on modern JVMs
  • Can enhance simplicity, power, robustness
Object Duplication Example

```java
public class Person {
    private final Date birthDate;
    public Person(Date birthDate) {
        this.birthDate = birthDate;
    }
    // UNNECESSARY OBJECT CREATION
    public boolean bornBefore2000() {
        Calendar gmtCal = Calendar.getInstance(
            TimeZone.getTimeZone("GMT"));
        gmtCal.set(2000, Calendar.JANUARY, 1, 0, 0, 0);
        Date MILLENIUM = gmtCal.getTime();
        return birthDate.before(MILLENIUM);
    }
}
```
Object Duplication Example

```java
global public class Person {
   ...
    // STATIC INITIALIZATION CREATES OBJECT ONCE
    private static final Date MILLENIUM;
    static {
        Calendar gmtCal = Calendar.getInstance(
            TimeZone.getTimeZone("GMT"));
        gmtCal.set(2000, Calendar.JANUARY, 1, 0, 0, 0);
        Date MILLENIUM = gmtCal.getTime();
    }
    public boolean bornBefore2000() { //FASTER!
        return birthDate.before(MILLENIUM);
    }
}
```
Immutable Classes

- Class whose instances cannot be modified
- Examples
  - String
  - Integer
  - BigInteger
- How, why, and when to use them
How to Write an Immutable Class

• Don’t provide any mutators
• Ensure that no methods may be overridden
• Make all fields final
• Make all fields private
• Ensure exclusive access to any mutable components
public final class Fval {
    private final float f;
    public Fval(float f) {
        this.f = f;
    }
    // ACCESSORS WITHOUT CORRESPONDING MUTATORS
    public float value() { return f; }

    // ALL OPERATIONS RETURN NEW Fval
    public Fval add(Fval x) {
        return new Fval(f + x.f);
    }
    // SUBTRACT, MULTIPLY, ETC. SIMILAR TO ADD
public boolean equals(Object o) {
    if (o == this) return true;
    if (!(o instanceof Fval))
        return false;
    Fval c = (Fval) o;
    return (Float.floatToIntBits(f) ==
            Float.floatToIntBits(c.f));
}
Distinguishing Characteristic

• Return new instance instead of modifying
• Functional programming
• May seem unnatural at first
• Many advantages
Advantage 1 – Simplicity

• Instances have exactly one state
• Easy to design, implement
• Constructors establish invariants
• Invariants can never be corrupted
• Requires no effort on the part of clients
Advantage 2 – Inherently Thread-Safe

• No need for synchronization
  • Internal or external
  • Since no writes to shared data
• Can’t be corrupted by concurrent access
• By far the easiest approach to thread safety
Advantage 3 – Can Be Shared Freely

// EXPORTED CONSTANTS
public static final Fval ZERO = new Fval(0);
public static final Fval ONE  = new Fval(1);

// STATIC FACTORY CAN CACHE COMMON VALUES
public static Fval valueOf(float f) { ...
}

// PRIVATE CONSTRUCTOR MAKES FACTORY MANDATORY
private Fval (float f) {
    this.f = f;
}
Advantage 4 – No Copies

• No need for defensive copies
• No need for any copies at all!
• No need for clone or copy constructor
• Not well understood in the early days
  • public String(String s);  // Should not exist
Advantage 5 – Composability

- Excellent building blocks
- Easier to maintain invariants
  - If component objects won't change
- Special cases
  - Map keys
  - Set elements
The Major Disadvantage

- Separate instance for each distinct value
- Creating these instances can be costly
  
  ```java
  BigInteger moby = ...; // A million bits
  moby = moby.flipBit(0); // Ouch!
  ```

- Problem magnified for multistep operations
  - Provide common multistep operations as primitives
  - Alternatively provide mutable companion class
When to Make Classes Immutable

• Always, unless there's a good reason not to
• Always make small “value classes” immutable
  • Examples
    • Color
    • PhoneNumber
    • Price
  • Date and Point (both mutable) were mistakes!
  • Experts often use long instead of Date
When to Make Classes Mutable

• Class represents entity whose state changes
  • Real-world
    • BankAccount, TrafficLight
  • Abstract
    • Iterator, Matcher, Collection
  • Process classes
    • Thread, Timer
• If class must be mutable, minimize mutability
  • Constructors should fully initialize instance
  • Avoid reinitialize methods
Common Errors

• See