

CMSC 132: Object-Oriented Programming II



Graphical User Interface (GUI)

Department of Computer Science
University of Maryland, College Park

Graphical User Interface (GUI)

■ User interface

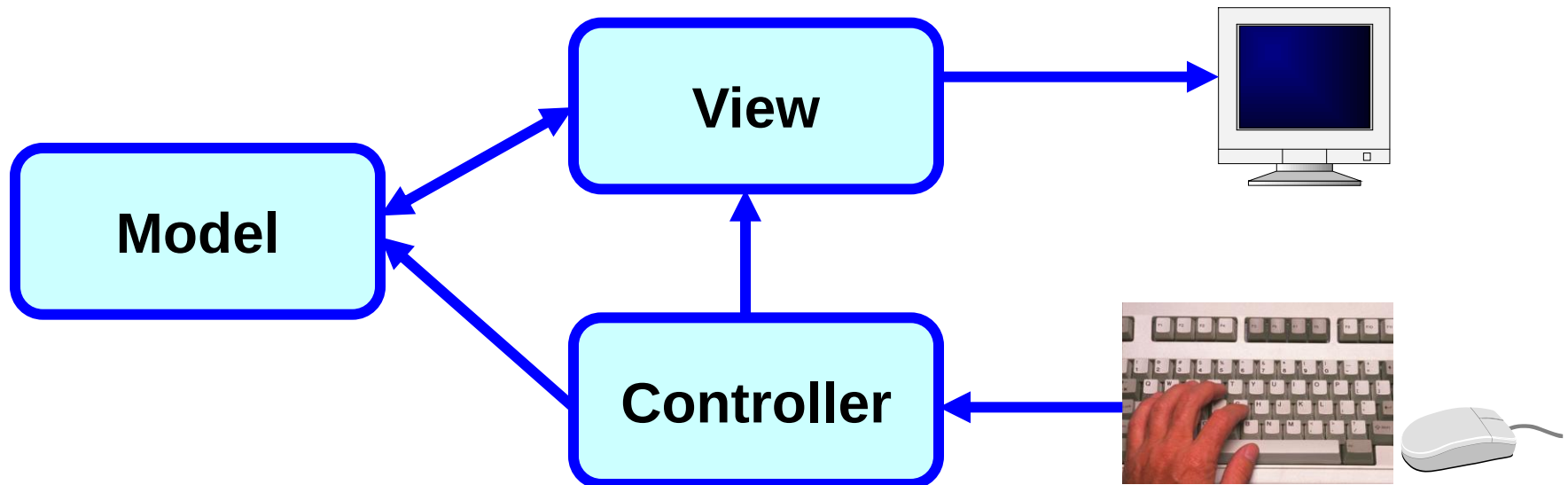
- Interface between user and computer
- Both input and output
- Affects **usability** of computer

■ Interface improving with better hardware

- Switches & light bulbs
- Punch cards & teletype (typewriter)
- Keyboard & black/white monitor (text)
- Mouse & color monitor (graphics)

Model-View-Controller (MVC)

- **Model for GUI programming (Xerox PARC '78)**
- **Separates GUI into 3 components**
 1. **Model** ⇒ application data
 2. **View** ⇒ visual interface
 3. **Controller** ⇒ user interaction



MVC Model of GUI Design

■ Model

- Should perform actual work
- Should be independent of the GUI
 - But can provide access methods

■ Controller

- Lets user **control** what work the program is doing
- Design of controller depends on model

■ View

- Lets user see what the program is doing
- Should not display what controller **thinks** is happening (base display on model, not controller)

Programming Models

■ Normal (control flow-based) Programming

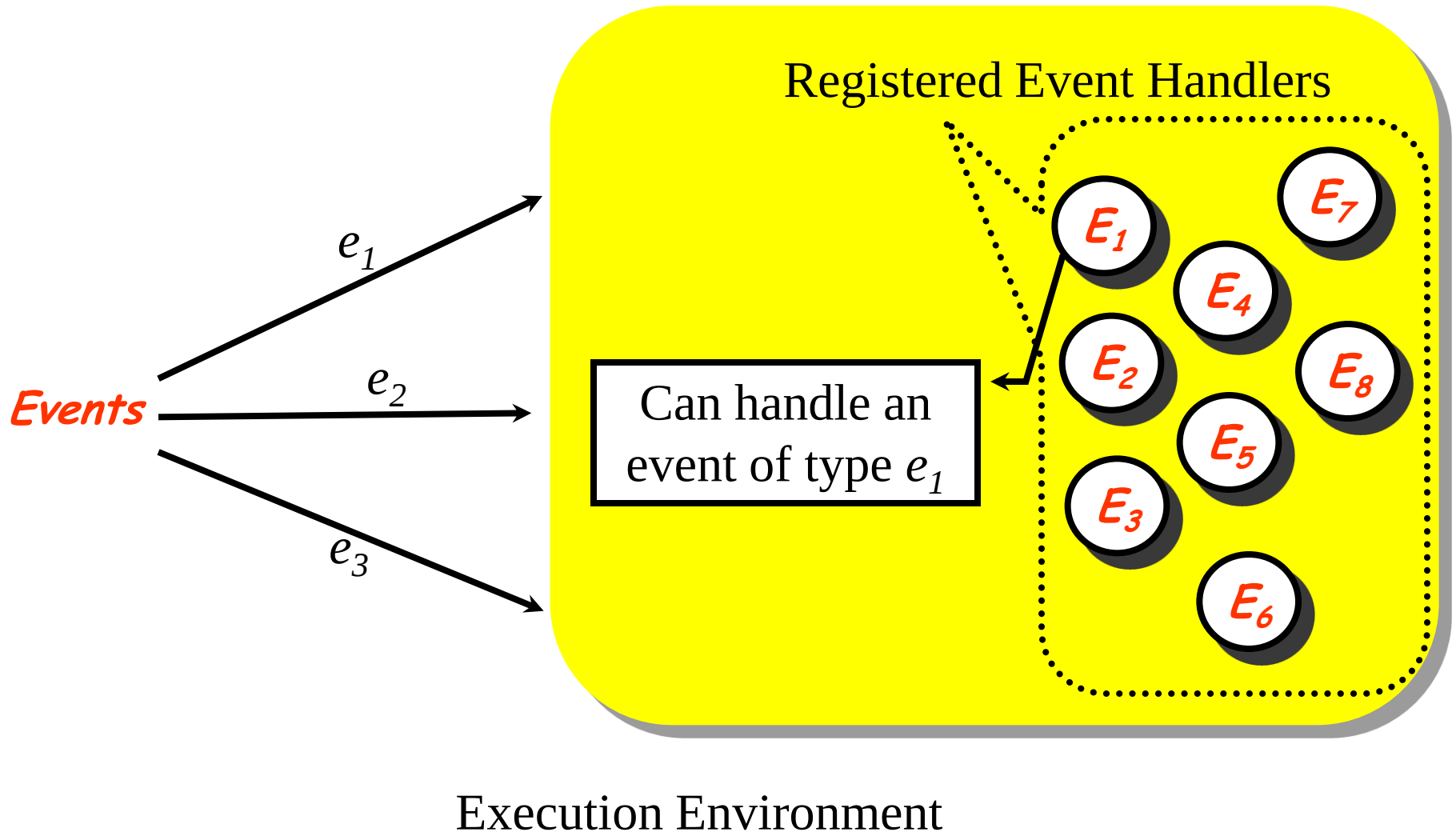
■ Approach

- Start at main()
- Continue until end of program or exit()

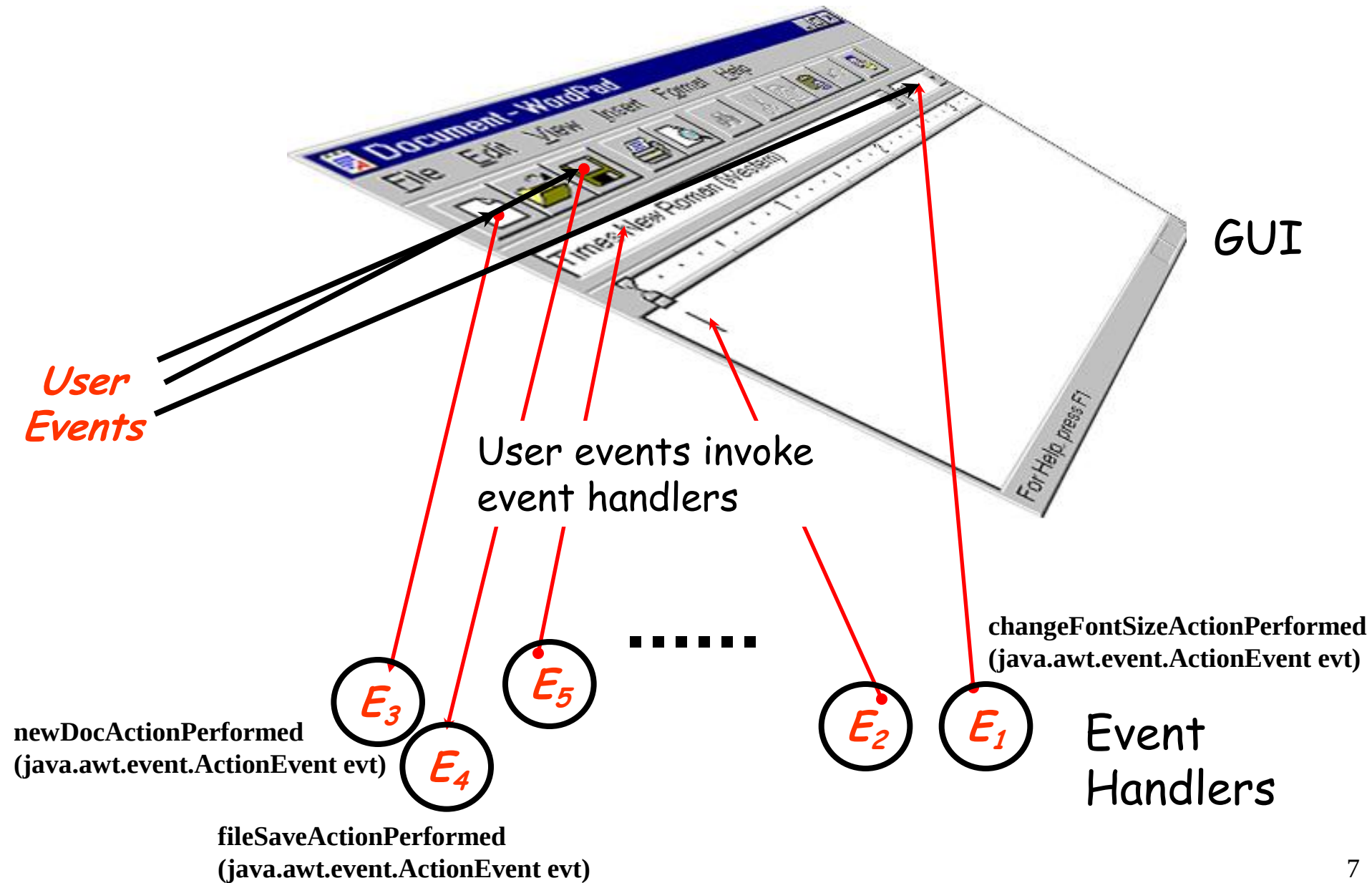
■ Event-driven Programming

- Event - Action or condition occurring outside normal flow of control of program (e.g., mouse clicks, keyboard input, etc.)
- Unable to predict time & occurrence of event
- Approach
 - Start with main()
 - Define system elements and register event listeners
 - Await events (& perform associated computation)

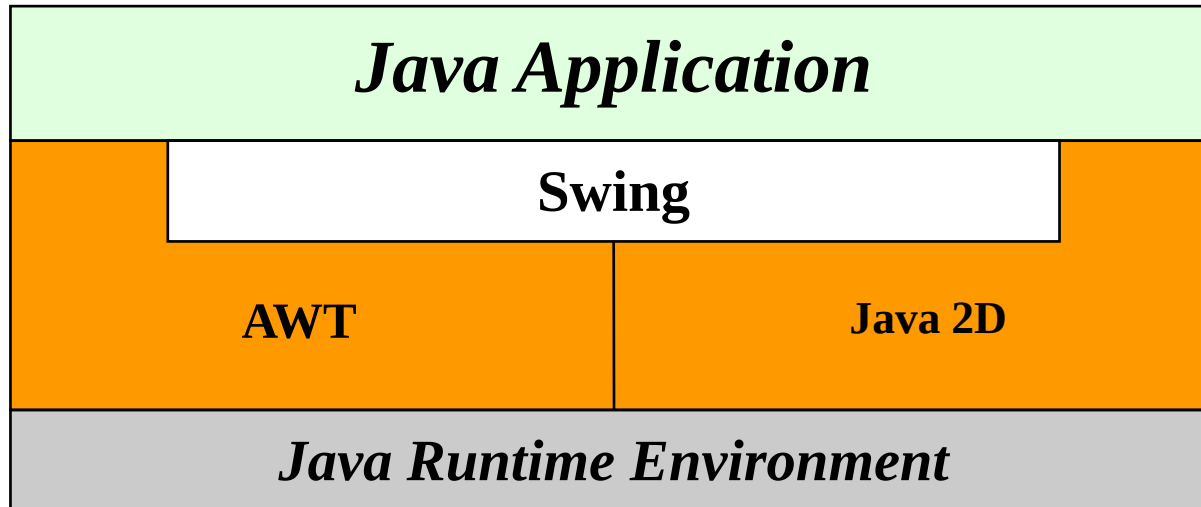
Event Handling in Action



GUIs are Event-Driven Software



GUIs in Java



Desktop Java Graphics APIs: From “Filthy Rich Clients”
by Chet Haase and Romain Guy, Chap1, Page 12
ISBN-978-0-13-241393-0
Book Web Site: <http://www.filthyrichclients.org/>

GUIs in Java

- **AWT (Abstract Window Toolkit) (java.awt.*)**
 - First graphical user interface toolkit for Java
 - Old GUI framework for Java (Java 1.1)
 - Reliance on native system libraries
 - Platform independence problems
 - Responsible for input event mechanisms
- **Java 2D**
 - Graphics Library of Java
 - Introduced in JDK 1.2
 - Basics and advance drawing operation, image manipulation, and drawing
 - Handles Swing's Rendering operations
- **Swing (javax.swing.*)**
 - GUI framework first introduced in JDK 1.2
 - Includes AWT features plus many enhancements
 - Pure Java components (no reliance on native code)
 - Pluggable look and feel architecture

Some of this material is from “Filthy Rich Clients” (see reference in previous slide).

Steps for Creating a GUI in Java

1. Define a **container** to hold components
 - Examples: JFrame, JApplet...
2. Add GUI **components** to the container
 - Examples: JButton, JTextField, JScrollBar...
 - Use layout manager to determine positions
3. Add actions to GUI
 - Add event listeners to GUI components
4. Schedule the GUI processing in the EDT (Event-Dispatching Thread)

Step 1 (Define Container)

■ Container Definition

- Abstractions occupying space in GUI

■ Properties

- Usually contain one or more widgets
 - widget - actual item user can see
- Can be nested in other containers

■ Container Examples

- JFrame, JDialog, JPanel, JScrollPane

Step 2 (Define Components)

■ Component Definition

- Actual items (**widgets**) user sees in GUI

■ Examples

- Labels (fixed text)
- Text areas (for entering text)
- Buttons
- Checkboxes
- Tables
- Menus
- Toolbars
- Etc...

Step 3 (Set Event Listeners)

■ Implementation

- Implement **event listeners** for each event
- Usually one event listener class per widget
- Inner class usually utilized to implement listener
- Register (add) listener object with widget object

■ At run time

- Java generates **event object** when events occur
- Java then passes event object to event listener

■ Example of Java listeners & Actions Causing Event

- ActionListener → clicking button in GUI
- CaretListener → selecting portion of text in GUI
- FocusListener → component gains / loses focus
- KeyListener → pressing key
- MouseListener → mouse clicked
- WindowListener → closing a window

Step 4 (Schedule GUI Processing in EDT)

- What is a thread?
- Event Dispatching Thread (EDT)
 - EDT is a background thread to process events
- These events are mainly **updates** that
 - Cause components to redraw themselves
 - Represent input events
- Swing uses a single-threaded painting model
 - Event Dispatching thread is the only valid thread for updating GUI components
 - Avoid updating GUI components from other threads
 - A source of common bugs

Event Dispatching Thread

- **Code that allows current thread to execute GUI code in dispatching thread**

```
public static void main(String[] args) {  
    javax.swing.SwingUtilities.invokeLater(new Runnable() {  
        public void run() {  
            createAndDisplayGUI(); // actually creates GUI  
        }  
    });  
}
```

Additional Resources

- **Javadoc from the JDK**

- **Swing tutorial -**

- <http://java.sun.com/docs/books/tutorial/uiswing/components/>

- **Filthy Rich Clients**

- <http://filthyrichclients.org/>