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 GNOME 3 Application Development

Step-by-step practical guide to get to grips with GNOME application development

Beginner's Guide

Mohammad Anwari
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He worked for his own startup company during the dotcom era before moving to Finland to work for Nokia/MeeGo. Now he's back in Indonesia, regaining his entrepreneurship by establishing a new startup company that focuses on Node.js and Linux-based projects. In his free time, he serves as an executive director for BlankOn, one of the biggest open source projects in Indonesia.

In the past, he has published a couple of books on Linux in the Indonesian language.

This book would have been impossible to write without the great and continuous support from my family: Rini, Alif, and Abil.
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Table of Contents

Preface 1

Chapter 1: Installing GNOME 3 and SDK 7

System requirements 8
  The GNOME Shell 8
  GNOME Panel/Fallback 8
  Development requirements 9

GNOME 3 desktop architecture 9

GNOME and the SDK 12

Time for action – installing GNOME and SDK in Fedora 17 12
  Marking packages to be installed 14
  Ready to install the packages 15

Time for action – installing GNOME and SDK in openSUSE 12 15
  Marking SDK packages 17
  Starting the installation 18

Time for action – installing GNOME and SDK in Debian Testing 18
  Marking SDK packages 19
  Applying the installation 20

Time for action – installing GNOME and SDK in Ubuntu 12.04 20
  Continue installing the SDK 21

Summary 21

Chapter 2: Preparing Our Weapons 23

Firing up Anjuta 24

Time for action – creating a new Vala project 24
  The IDE layout 25
    Bookmarks 26
    Files 26
    Project 26
    Symbols 26
    Watches 26
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakpoints</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messages</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terminal</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Navigation between tabs</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – navigating between tabs</strong></td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comment block</strong></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – commenting/uncommenting a block</strong></td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – running the program for the first time</strong></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make an error and see how it works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Editing UI</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – editing UI</strong></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palette</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widgets</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – adding a label and a button</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – changing widget properties</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A responsive button</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – making the button responsive</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tracking symbols</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – finding a symbol</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Getting help</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter 3: Programming Languages</strong></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Programming GNOME with JavaScript</strong></td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – saying hello to Seed</strong></td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – running our program with Seed</strong></td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loosely typed language</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – playing with data types</strong></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling iteration</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – controlling Iteration</strong></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – manipulating an array</strong></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object-oriented programming (OOP) with JavaScript</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – using the JavaScript object</strong></td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With great power comes great responsibility</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructing objects</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – playing with constructors</strong></td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class and object</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using prototypes</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – adding prototypes</strong></td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – modifying the prototype of an object</strong></td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modularization</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – modularizing our program</strong></td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1: Getting to know Vala</th>
<th>63</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – entry point to our program</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member access specifier</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – defining member access</strong></td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The access specifiers</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic data types</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – experiment with data types</strong></td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gee, what is it?</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – adding the Gee library</strong></td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – Gee in action</strong></td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initializing members when declaring</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – watching for signals</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 4: Using GNOME Core Libraries</th>
<th>79</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before we start</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The GLib main loop</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – playing with the GLib main loop</strong></td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GObject signals</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – handling GObject signals</strong></td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLib properties</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – accessing properties</strong></td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Configuration files</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – reading configuration files</strong></td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIO, the input/output library</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – accessing files</strong></td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network access with GIO</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – accessing a network</strong></td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding GSets</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – learning GSets</strong></td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GSets API</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – accessing GSets programmatically</strong></td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 5: Building Graphical User Interface Applications</th>
<th>107</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before we start</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating a basic GTK+ application</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time for action – implementing the mockup</strong></td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – adding icons to the buttons</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porting the code without GtkBuilder</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – programming with raw GTK+</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUI programming with Clutter</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 6: Creating Widgets</th>
<th>131</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before we take off</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overriding the widget's standard functions</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – overriding the set_title function</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adding new functionalities</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – making a composite widget</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining compatibility</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing a GTK+ custom widget</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – implementing the custom widget</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining widgets in a library</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – creating a library</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 7: Having Fun with Multimedia</th>
<th>159</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Packages required</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the basic concept of GStreamer</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing the GStreamer pipeline with the command line</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – testing the pipeline</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – programmatically playing the audio</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – handling the events</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing a video media</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – playing video</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – programmatically playing the video</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 8: Playing with Data</th>
<th>179</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presenting data with TreeView</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – using TreeView</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Evolution Data Server (EDS) architecture</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – setting up the address book and the calendar data source</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – accessing the address book</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a go hero – saving data to the address book</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 9: Deploying HTML5 Applications with GNOME</th>
<th>201</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before we start</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embedding WebKit</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – embedding WebKit</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runtime with JavaScriptCore</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – calling the Vala object from the frontend</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 10: Desktop Integration</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – connecting GNOME with client-side JavaScript</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking to each other with D-Bus</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – listening to D-Bus</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The GNOME session manager</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – talking to the session manager</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launcher</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – putting our application in the launcher</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNOME keyring</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – storing passwords securely</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification system</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – sending notifications</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 11: Making Our Applications Go International</th>
<th>253</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding locale</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – getting the available locales</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – adding a locale</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – getting different outputs with different locales</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i18n in a Vala project</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – bootstrapping the infrastructure</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – creating a UI</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – translating UI texts</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The localization process</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 12: Quality Made Easy</th>
<th>273</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reasons for performing unit testing</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – creating our first unit test</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stubbing our tests</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – creating stubs</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing GUI modules</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – testing a GTK+ module</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 13: Exciting Projects</th>
<th>301</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part I – web browser</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – designing our UI</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browser interaction</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – preparing the build infrastructure</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – finishing up</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part II – A Twitter client</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time for action – implementing the Twitter client</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix: Pop Quiz Answers</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preface

This book is about developing GNOME 3 applications with the Vala and JavaScript programming languages. It guides you to build GTK+, Clutter, and HTML5 applications on the GNOME 3 platform. It covers GNOME 3 specific subsystems such as data access, multimedia, networking, and filesystem. It also covers good software engineering practices such as localization and testing.

What this book covers

Chapter 1, Installing GNOME 3 and SDK, discusses installing GNOME 3 and the Software Development Kit in some popular Linux distributions.


Chapter 3, Programming Languages, covers the basics of Vala and programming JavaScript with Seed. This chapter will be the foundation to understand the following chapters if you are yet not familiar with Vala and JavaScript.

Chapter 4, Using GNOME Core Libraries, guides you to exploit the commonly used features of the GNOME core libraries.

Chapter 5, Building Graphical User Interface Applications explains the steps of building GUI applications with GTK+ and Clutter.

Chapter 6, Creating Widgets, explains how to create GTK+ widgets from scratch. This chapter also talks about extending and customizing widgets.

Chapter 7, Having Fun with Multimedia, contains lots of information on GStreamer. It covers both playing multimedia stream and applying filters to the stream.
Preface

Chapter 8, Playing with Data, explains presenting data with the TreeView API family. While showing the data presentation, it also talks about getting data from Evolution Data Server.

Chapter 9, Deploying HTML5 Applications with GNOME, explains how to embed WebKit into a GTK+ application. It also talks about the JavaScriptCore library, which makes it possible to get the JavaScript running in WebKit to talk with the backend system written in Vala.

Chapter 10, Desktop Integration, discusses about creating applications that integrate nicely with the GNOME 3 desktop. It talks about D-Bus, session management, keyring, launcher, and notification services.

Chapter 11, Making Our Applications Go International, discusses about internationalization and localization in GNOME 3 applications. It also provides a proposal of the localization process as a bonus.

Chapter 12, Quality Made Easy, talks about performing unit testing and stubbing. This covers both testing GTK+ and non-GUI applications.

Chapter 13, Exciting Projects, offers two exciting projects to build a web browser and a Twitter client. It covers many aspects learned in the preceding chapters and uses them in these two projects.

What you need for this book

This book requires a basic level of object-oriented programming. Prior experience with Vala or JavaScript will make your experience more enjoyable. In order to follow the book, you must install the latest version of Fedora, openSUSE, Ubuntu, or (preferably) any Debian-based Linux distribution.

Who this book is for

This book is suitable for software developers who target GNOME 3 as one of the deployment platforms. This book is also beneficial for developers who want to create multiplatform applications, as many of the GNOME 3 libraries are also available in Linux, OSX, and Windows.

Conventions

In this book, you will find several headings appearing frequently.

To give clear instructions of how to complete a procedure or task, we use:
Time for action – heading

1. Action 1
2. Action 2
3. Action 3

Instructions often need some extra explanation so that they make sense, so they are followed with:

What just happened?
This heading explains the working of tasks or instructions that you have just completed.

You will also find some other learning aids in the book, including:

Pop quiz – heading
These are short multiple-choice questions intended to help you test your own understanding.

Have a go hero – heading
These are practical challenges and give you ideas for experimenting with what you have learned.

You will also find a number of styles of text that distinguish between different kinds of information. Here are some examples of these styles, and an explanation of their meaning.

Code words in text are shown as follows: "Modify configure.ac to include WebKitGTK+ into the project."

A block of code is set as follows:

```java
using GLib;
using Gtk;
using WebKit;

public class Main : WebView
{
    public Main ()
    {
        load_html_string("<h1>Hello</h1>";"/");
    }
```
static int main (string[] args)
{
    Gtk.init (ref args);
    var webView = new Main ();
    var window = new Gtk.Window();
    window.add(webView);
    window.show_all ();

    Gtk.main ();

    return 0;
}

Any command-line input or output is written as follows:

```
LANGUAGE=id LC_ALL=id_ID.utf8 src/hello-i18n
```

**New terms and important words** are shown in bold. Words that you see on the screen, in menus or dialog boxes for example, appear in the text like this: "Click **Continue**, finish the setup of **GTranslator** and go ahead and open the **id.po** file using its menu."

![Warnings or important notes appear in a box like this.](image)

![Tips and tricks appear like this.](image)

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1

Installing GNOME 3 and SDK

GNOME 3 is the latest and greatest version of GNOME since it was released for the first time in 1999. GNOME 3 delivers a breakthrough desktop user experience compared to its previous versions. While providing smooth user interface with fluid animations, it uses a different metaphor of how a modern desktop would work by introducing GNOME Shell as its new user experience (UX). However, the traditional user experience still persists as a fallback whenever the hardware configuration is not supported.

GNOME is known for its simplicity and has been chosen as the default desktop environment in many popular Linux distributions. It is also one of the first free types of software that has user interface guidelines, hence securing itself as usable and user friendly.

During its evolution, the architecture also changed and was extended, making it one of the most advanced freely available desktops in the world. With that, it requires more and more advanced technology to be available in the system to be able to maximize the usage of the hardware and at the same time give users an enjoyable time when using computers.

Before we go any further, a proper installation of GNOME as well as the development environment should be available in our computer. And as a starter, we will talk about the installation in a few popular Linux distributions. Specifically, we will cover these topics in this chapter:

- Understanding the system requirements
- The basic GNOME 3 architecture that we will cover in this book
- Installing GNOME 3 and the SDK on various Linux distributions

So let's get started.
System requirements

GNOME 3 provides two sets of User Experience (UX) that target different types of installed hardware—**GNOME Shell** and **GNOME Panel/Fallback**. These two UX have different requirements, but they share the basic ones:

- 800 MHz CPU power (at least 1 GHz for optimal performance)
- 512 MB of RAM (at least 1 GB for optimal performance)
- More than 2 GB of available hard drive storage (more, if you want to install more applications)

**The GNOME Shell**

This is the latest addition in GNOME 3, and provides slick user experience. This UX requires 3D acceleration through an OpenGL-capable video card properly installed in your system. On a safer note, most of the video cards from Intel, ATI, and nvidia brands would work nicely.

However, even though you know that you have a video card that is capable of doing OpenGL, make sure that your video card is really activated with the proper drivers, otherwise the system will not let you use this UX.

You can check whether your video card would work with this UX by checking the [h-node page](http://www.h-node.org/videocards/catalogue/en) and check whether it has the **works with 3D acceleration** verdict stated there.

**GNOME Panel/Fallback**

This is the good old GNOME desktop, which provides a basic and less attractive user experience. The system will fall back into this UX whenever it cannot activate the OpenGL. This UX is similar to the older versions of GNOME, but the user interface is modified a bit so that it will look similar to a state of GNOME Shell user interface. For example, the main UI is totally different but the lock screen is pretty similar in both.

Fortunately, only a few parts of this book will make use of the GNOME Shell UX in great depth, so we can safely work with GNOME Panel/Fallback UX in order to follow this book.
Development requirements

As we are doing software development on top of these requirements, obviously we will need more computing power, RAM, and storage. Fulfilling at least the following requirements would make our development time enjoyable:

- Multicore 2 GHz CPU
- 4 GB of RAM
- 500 GB of hard drive storage, preferably SSD

The good news is that we can easily develop GNOME 3 applications using virtualization. By installing the Linux distributions in virtual machines, we can switch between them and tackle the issues found there so that we can make sure that our applications will be built smoothly in GNOME 3 regardless of the distributions. In case of GNOME Shell, you need to make sure that you have enabled the 3D acceleration option in your favorite virtual machine program.

For example, in VirtualBox, we can go to the Settings dialog of a virtual machine, click on the Display option, and then tick on the Enable 3D Acceleration option. Remember, though, that you will not be able to activate this option if your host machine is not capable of doing 3D acceleration by itself.

**GNOME 3 desktop architecture**

When talking about GNOME 3, usually many people refer only to the GNOME Shell. This is incorrect. GNOME Shell is just a part of the whole GNOME desktop architecture. It can be replaced (as in the case of GNOME Panel/Fallback UX) or even removed.
In fact, GNOME is more than GNOME Shell. It provides the infrastructure of the applications so they can talk to the system, render text nicely, flow the animation, read data, and so on. We need to understand the architecture better before starting any development. This would help us to know which parts need to be installed, too. Let's start with looking at the following simplified GNOME architecture diagram:

As we can see from the diagram, the GNOME Shell, along with the applications, sits on top of the GNOME platform architecture stack. This book covers the platform architecture and will touch on some parts of the upper layer.

The GNOME platform reference can be studied in more depth in the GNOME developer website, http://developer.gnome.org.

The following are the specific components of the GNOME platform that we will cover in this book:

- **Core libraries**: These are the lowest interface in the architecture. It includes the following:
  - **GObject**: This is the object system in GNOME. It is the GNOME's object-oriented programming approach with the C language.
  - **GLib**: This is a general purpose library that contains the infrastructure used by all the parts in the architecture.
  - **GIO**: This is a virtual filesystem library that provides access to files, volumes, and drives in an abstracted manner.
Chapter 1

◆ **User interface libraries:** This is the toolkit for building graphical applications, and includes:
  - **GTK+**: Historically named as the GIMP toolkit, this is the default toolkit to build graphical applications in GNOME. It provides a set of widgets and tools.
  - **Cairo**: This is a library that helps us draw on the canvas. It is mainly used for creating new widgets or extending the existing ones.
  - **Pango**: This is a library that helps us to do text rendering.
  - **ATK**: This is the accessibility toolkit. It provides ways to offer a good experience for special users of GNOME that have different needs.
  - **Clutter**: This is a toolkit that is used for creating applications with rich and fluid animations. This requires OpenGL.
  - **WebKit**: This is the web toolkit. It provides full-featured engines capable of displaying HTML5 documents.

◆ **Multimedia libraries:** Provides playing and authoring multimedia files, and includes:
  - **GStreamer**: This is a powerful multimedia library

◆ **Data storage:** Provides libraries of accessing data:
  - **Evolution Data Storage (EDS)**: This contains libebook and libecal, and provides access to the address book and the calendar managed in your Evolution.

We will also use several tools in this book; they are as follows:

◆ **seed**: This is a JavaScript interpreter in the GNOME world. We will use this when we develop our GNOME application scripts. We will have seed automatically installed when installing the GNOME Shell, so we will not see this explicitly later when we do the installation.

◆ **vala**: This is an emerging object-oriented programming language, mainly used for developing GNOME applications.

◆ **Anjuta**: This is an integrated development environment software for GNOME.

◆ **Glade**: This is a graphical application layout designer for GTK+.

◆ **Gtranslator**: This is a tool for translating our application user interface to local languages.

◆ **Devhelp**: This is a reference lookup tool; really handy when developing applications.
Note that the actual package names of these parts are not standardized, so you will find that the package names are slightly different from the preceding list. These will be specifically covered in each section.

**GNOME and the SDK**

We will go through installing GNOME and the Software Development Kit (SDK) in our favorite Linux distribution. A few popular distributions are covered. However, we are not going to talk about installing any of these distributions, so it is expected that we already have it up and running. We just need to install several additional packages to get the GNOME and the SDK.

You can directly go ahead to the section discussing your distribution without bothering to read the other distribution's installation descriptions. And if your distribution is not listed here, no need to be worried, just pick the closest distribution variant and adjust the package names as we will use the search function in the distributions when we are installing. Now let's pull our sleeves up and jump right into the action.

**Time for action – installing GNOME and SDK in Fedora 17**

Fedora 17 uses GNOME 3 by default, so our focus here is to install the SDK. To install packages in Fedora 17, we are going to use the Add/Remove Software tool. This is how we do it:

1. Click on the Activities button on upper-left corner of the screen.
2. Click on the Applications button.
3. Click on the Add/Remove Software button.
4. The following tool shows up:

![Add/Remove Software](image)

**What just happened?**

The *Add/Remove Software* tool shows the database of Fedora 17 packages that we can browse and select. The left-hand side of the screen displays a search textbox, and below it we can see the collection packages. The collection package is a group of packages that serve similar functionalities. On the upper-left corner we can see the place where the search results or the contents of a collection will be displayed, and below it we can see the description box of a selected package we choose in the above area.

The SDK comes in the form of so-called development packages. In Fedora, the development packages use `-devel` as its postfix on their names. The actual libraries are inside the package without the `-devel` postfix and they are by default installed when the `devel` packages are installed. For example, Glib is available inside the `glib2` package and the supporting development package is available in the `glib2-devel` package. Whenever the `glib2-devel` package is installed, the `glib2` package is automatically installed.

- The development package means that it contains header files and other files needed only when you do development, but not needed when you are only running it.

So let's start finding them.
Marking packages to be installed

Before a package can be installed with this tool, it must be marked for installation. Head on to the search box and type glib2-devel. Click on the Find button and we will see the search results. It should be a couple of lines with one of them showing the glib2-devel string followed by a long version number (glib2-devel-2.32.1-1.fc17, in my case). Tick on the checkbox to its left. We should see that the tool stamps the icon with a big plus sign, meaning that it is marked for installation. If you don’t see a checkbox, it is already installed.

The following table provides a mapping between the package names in Fedora 17 and the GNOME components described in the architecture section earlier. We also want to install the documentation packages (the names are inconsistently postfixed with -doc or -docs). We also will install the tools and basic development packages that we are going to use throughout this book. So let’s go ahead with marking these packages in the tool by searching and ticking the checkbox.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsystem</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>glib2-devel (GIO and GObject are already inside this package)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User interface libraries</td>
<td>gtk3-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gtk3-devel-docs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cairo-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pango-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>atk-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clutter-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clutter-doc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>webkitgtk3-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>webkitgtk3-doc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimedia libraries</td>
<td>gstreamer-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gstreamer-devel-docs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data storage</td>
<td>evolution-data-server-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evolution-data-server-doc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools and basic development packages</td>
<td>vala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vala-doc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vala-tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>anjuta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>glade (don't mix up with glade3!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>glade-libs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gtranslator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>devhelp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[14]
Ready to install the packages

After we mark the packages, we are ready to install them. Just click on the Apply button at the bottom of the screen. We will get a dialog popping up and asking whether we want to install additional packages required by the packages we selected previously. Make a nod gesture to agree by clicking on the Continue button. Then enter the root password and relax for a while as the tool will download and install all the packages into the system. After everything is installed, we will get a new window, as shown in the next screenshot, that displays that there are newly installed applications that we can run; let’s keep this dialog for the next chapter.

Time for action – installing GNOME and SDK in openSUSE 12

openSUSE 12 ships GNOME by default, so we don't need to worry about it and can just concentrate on getting the SDK installed. To manage applications, openSUSE provides the Yet another Setup Tool (YaST) tool. Follow these steps to install the SDK in openSUSE 12:

1. Click on the Activities button on the upper-left corner of the screen.
2. Click on the Applications button.
3. Click on YaST (or type YaST in the text field).
4. YaST is now opened; to continue, click on the Software Management icon.
5. After a while taken for contacting the servers and refreshing the package database, it is ready to use. This is how it will appear:

What just happened?
YaST is a collection of system management tools in openSUSE, and Software Manager is one of the tools. As the name suggests, we will use this tool to install the GNOME SDK. As you can see, the tool has two main columns, with each column having two sections each. The left-hand side column shows package categories whereas the right-hand side column shows the content of the selected categories (or the search results) and the description of the package. We will use this tool only by using the search functionality and not touching the categories to the left.
Similar to the Add/Remove Software tool in Fedora, YaST uses a mark-and-install paradigm, meaning we need to mark a software before installing it. With this concept, we can first select the software we want and then make the final move by just pressing a button to get the selections installed. Let's do it.

**Marking SDK packages**

SDK are scattered in many different development packages. Similar to Fedora, which uses the RPM package management system, the development package names are postfixed with `-devel`, and the corresponding library will get automatically installed when the development package is installed.

The following table provides a mapping between the openSUSE package names and the GNOME components described in the architecture section earlier. We can go ahead and type these names (one at a time) in the search box and tick a checkbox situated to the left of the search results entry. By ticking this checkbox, it means that the package is put into an installing queue. If you see that the checkbox is already ticked, it means the package is already installed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsystem</th>
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</tr>
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<td>User interface libraries</td>
<td>gtk3-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gtk3-devel-docs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>libseed-gtk3-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cairo-devel</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pango-devel</td>
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<td></td>
<td>atk-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clutter-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>libwebkitgtk3-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimedia libraries</td>
<td>gstreamer-0_10-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gstreamer-0_10-doc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gstreamer-0_10-fluendo-mp3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data storage</td>
<td>evolution-data-server-devel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>evolution-data-server-doc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools and basic development</td>
<td>vala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>packages</td>
<td>anjuta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gtranslator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gtranslator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>devhelp</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Installing GNOME 3 and SDK

**Starting the installation**

After marking the packages, let’s now hit the **Apply** button to start the installation. Let’s wait a while until all the packages are installed; after this, we are good to go to the next chapter.

**Time for action – installing GNOME and SDK in Debian Testing**

Debian Testing (also called Wheezy) uses GNOME 3 as its default desktop, so our focus now is to get the SDK installed. Same as Fedora, Debian Testing uses the **Add/Remove Software** tool to do the package management. So let’s get started by running the tool:

1. Click on the **Activities** button on the upper-left corner of the screen.
2. Click on the **Applications** button.
3. Click on the **Add/Remove Software** button.
4. The following tool shows up:

![Add/Remove Software](image)

**What just happened?**

The **Add/Remove Software** tool is a mark-and-install package management tool. It means that before doing any real installation, we are given a chance to select the packages we want to install. The installation is postponed until the time we provide confirmation by pressing the **Apply** button. With this installation style, we can keep browsing the packages without getting bothered by the installation process.

As you can see in the previous screenshot, the tool has two main columns. The left-hand side column shows the search box and the package categories. The right-hand side column shows the search results (or the category contents), and below it there is a box showing the package description.
Marking SDK packages

The SDK packages come in many development packages. The development packages contain the header and all the supporting files required during compilation and linking. It is not necessary for them to be installed when we just need to run the applications linked to a library.

These packages are named with the `lib` prefix and the `-dev` postfix. They have internal dependencies to the actual library needed by the applications; so whenever we install a development package, the package containing the actual library goes with it automatically.

Here is a map of the Debian packages and GNOME components described in the architecture section. Let's type the names of the packages into the search box and mark them for installation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsystem</th>
<th>Package names</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core libraries</td>
<td><code>libglib2.0-dev</code> 9 (GIO and GObject are already inside this package)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libglib2.0-doc</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User interface libraries</td>
<td><code>libgtk-3-dev</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libgtk-3-doc</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libcairo2-dev</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libcairo2-doc</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libpango1.0-dev</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libpango1.0-doc</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libatk1.0-dev</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libatk1.0-doc</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libclutter-1.0-dev</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libclutter-1.0-doc</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libwebkitgtk-3.0-dev</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>libwebkitgtk-3.0-doc</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimedia libraries</td>
<td><code>libgstreamer0.10-dev</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data storage</td>
<td><code>libecal1.2-dev</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools and basic development packages</td>
<td><code>valac-0.16</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>anjuta</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>glade</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>gtranslator</code></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><code>devhelp</code></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Installing GNOME 3 and SDK

Applying the installation

After marking the packages, let’s now hit the Apply button to start the installation. Let’s sit back and relax. Wait a while until all the packages are installed. After that, we are clear to go to the next chapter.

Time for action – Installing GNOME and SDK in Ubuntu 12.04

Ubuntu ships with its own desktop, called Unity. Our focus here is to install the GNOME 3 desktop as well as the SDK with the Ubuntu Software Center tool; let’s see how this is done:

1. Click on the Ubuntu Software Center icon on the left-hand side of the screen. The next screenshot shows this tool.
2. Click within the search box and type gnome-shell.
3. Click on the Install button of the first search result.
4. GNOME Shell is installed.
What just happened?

What we have done is install the GNOME Shell desktop. Because the GNOME Panel is also coupled with the GNOME Shell in form of package dependencies specified internally, we will get both the UXs installed.

The Ubuntu Software Center tool doesn't use the mark-and-install paradigm, so we need to do installation on every search result. The installation process is done in the background, but unfortunately we can't search while installing. However, if some other package that we want to install appears on the same result page, we can click on the Install button to queue it in the installation process.

Continue installing the SDK

Ubuntu gets its root from Debian, hence the package naming system is the same. Let's see the mapping of the Ubuntu package names and GNOME components in the Debian section explained earlier. Get all the packages mentioned in the map installed one by one.

After all of the packages are installed, we are ready to go to the next chapter!

Summary

We learned a lot in this chapter about system requirements, basic architecture, and installing GNOME and the SDK. Specifically, we learned that GNOME 3 provides two UXs. We understood their system requirements for running as well as for developing on top of them. Also, we learned a small tip for getting it to work in a virtualization environment. We discussed the basic GNOME desktop architecture and the description of each of the components inside it, along with the tools that we are going to use in this book.

We also now know where certain GNOME components sit in the architecture diagram. We also know the tools we are going to use and how they are packaged in popular Linux distributions. We also learned how to install them. The advantage of this is that it will give us insight into how Linux distributions ship the system.

This is a good start for us to learn how to develop applications on top of GNOME 3. The next step is to prepare our development tools. We are going to learn how to use them and touch on a little bit of Vala, one of the programming languages we will use in this book.
Preparing Our Weapons

One of the great factors that contributes to a successful software project is familiarity with the tools used in the project. The tools we are using in this book can be considered as our weapons. If we use them correctly, not only could they take down our targets (which is the software we are creating) nicely, but we could also save time by using them efficiently. Otherwise, they could backfire and hurt us.

In this chapter, we want to master the main tools that we are going to use throughout the book. They are the Integrated Development Environment (IDE) called Anjuta, the user interface layout designer called Glade, and the development reference browser called Devhelp. These tools are a great help for beginners, and even if we become experts after finishing this book, we would still benefit from using them.

As a quick outline for this chapter, we will take a look at these topics:

- Creating a project in Anjuta
- The IDE layout
- Source code navigation and manipulation
- Managing project building
- Using mockup to design application layout using Glade
- Reading reference books with Devhelp

So let's start!
Preparing Our Weapons

Firing up Anjuta

We are going to use Anjuta in this chapter. Let’s do that by invoking Anjuta by navigating to Activities | Anjuta in GNOME Shell or Applications | Programming | Anjuta in GNOME Panel.

Time for action – creating a new Vala project

We are going to create a simple Vala project to warm up. We will use this project to go through the features of Anjuta. So here we go:

1. In Anjuta’s main screen click on Create a new project.
2. In the dialog box that appears, click on the Vala tab.
3. Click on the GTK+ (Simple) option and then click on Continue.
4. Fill in the project information dialog, type hello-world in the Project Name field, and fill the rest with your own preference and click on Continue.
5. Leave the next few questions as they are (except if you really want to make changes, for example, to the path of the project). Make sure that the Use GtkBuilder for user interface checkbox is ticked. Click on Continue.
6. If you are happy with the information shown in the confirmation dialog, hit Apply.
7. A new project has now been created, as shown in the following screenshot:
What just happened?

In Anjuta, we will create a project that is a container of all the files and resources that collectively make a software. We will add source codes, files, images, and so on, which are required for project building and deployment. What we have just done is that we have created a simple GTK+ project using the Vala programming language. Don’t worry if you don’t know what Vala is at this point and the code presented here does not make sense to you, because you are going to learn about it after this chapter.

The wizard that we just ran created a set of files, including generated source code and a user interface. These files can be considered as templates, and we will make changes to these files when we do the development.

As an IDE, Anjuta is quite full featured. It has a source code and general files’ editor, a debugger, and Glade, a user interface layout designer. If you are familiar with other IDEs, you may find the view a bit different; so let’s dissect this further.

The IDE layout

The layout of the IDE is quite simple and is composed of a toolbar, an editor, and arrangeable docks. The toolbar is quite straightforward and is a familiar element. It is a shortcut of certain functions, such as file and editing operation, project running and building, and debugging operations.

There are two kinds of editors in Anjuta. The source code editor and Glade, the user interface editor. Let’s talk about the first one.

Like other advanced source code editors, Anjuta provides quite a powerful editor. The notable features are:

- **Line numbering**: You see the line number on the left side of the editor. The line number on the current line is emboldened so it is easy for us to know where we are.
- **Syntax highlighting**: The tokens in source code are colored so we can easily distinguish variables, classes, comments, and so on.
- **Code completion**: Anjuta provides decent code completion. A candidate list of class members or methods are displayed when we type an object instance.

Docks are a set of tools that contain specific functions. We can decide whether we want to show or hide the docks by toggling them individually in the View menu. Let’s see a quick introduction of each dock.
Preparing Our Weapons

Bookmarks
This tool enables us to bookmark places inside the files that we are editing. When our source code becomes larger and more complex, this tool would come in handy. Whenever we edit more than one file and they are cross referenced with each other, we can go back and forth between the files quickly by just clicking on the bookmark entry.

Files
This tool lists all the files in the project. It is a quick view of the files inside the project folder. If we want to edit the file, we just need to double-click on the file we are interested in, and the editor will pop up.

Project
This tool acts as our view to the project. It categorically lists the contents of the project. We can easily see which files are user interface files, which files are source code, and so on. A double-click on the project item would either bring up the editor (for the user interface layout files or the source code) or a dialog (for other project items). Here we can control Anjuta and many aspects of the project items, such as the installation path, compiler switches, and so on.

Symbols
This tool shows all the symbols inside our project. The File, Project, and Search tabs represent the scope of the symbol that we are interested in. When we double-click on the symbol, the editor will immediately go to the line where the symbol resides.

Watches
This is a debugger tool that shows the values of all the variables that we are interested in. If you are a "debugging-by-doing-printf" person, you may find that this tool is better. Unfortunately, this tool only works when we develop with the C language. However, we can still use this with C code that is generated from Vala.

Breakpoints
This is also a debugger tool that manages the breakpoints. Breakpoints are places in the source code that we want to pause at when we run the program. Breakpoints and Watches are really useful and powerful tools that will make our life easier. It's the same with the Watches dock; this tool only works when we develop with the C language.

Messages
This dock displays the compiler's, linker's, and other build tools' messages. This dock is activated when we start building a project.
Terminal
This dock embeds a terminal shell. We can invoke commands to the shell directly. This dock is activated when we have built a project successfully.

Navigation between tabs
The editor is capable of editing multiple files at the same time. The files we are editing are displayed in tabs, and we can easily switch between them.

Time for action – navigating between tabs
Let’s try to open a couple of files from our project and see how we can navigate between the files. One scenario we can imagine is that we are editing a complex project and one file depends on the other, so editing one file would require us to change the other file.

1. Click on the View menu and make sure that the Files dock is active.
2. Click on the Files dock and navigate through the list until you find src/.
3. Expand the list by clicking on the plus button.
4. Double-click on hello_world.vala.
5. Double-click on config.vapi.
6. Now we have two files open, and we can switch between these tabs by pressing the Alt + 1 and Alt + 2 combination keys on the keyboard. If you open more files, go ahead with using Alt + 3, Alt + 4, and so on to navigate.
Preparing Our Weapons

What just happened?
Whenever we open a file, Anjuta will put it inside a tab. Tabs are quite useful during development involving many files. Usually, we will open more than one file at the same time. The feature discussed here makes it easier for us to switch between these files.

Comment block
Anjuta provides a quick way to enclose a block of text in the source code into a comment block. It can also do the opposite and remove the comment markers from a block of text. Imagine that we have a block of code that we are doubtful of or of which we want to see the effect when they are commented out. This functionality helps us comment and uncomment them, especially when the block is large.

Time for action – commenting/uncommenting a block
We can follow these steps to learn how to comment/uncomment blocks of text:

1. Open the hello_world.vala file or activate it from our previous activity.
2. In the source code text, search for the following two lines:
   using Glib;
   using Gtk:
3. Highlight these two lines with your mouse cursor.
4. Activate the Edit menu and choose Comment/Uncomment.
5. The text will be commented out. See the /* */ pairs enclosing the selected text? They have automatically been created by this command.
What just happened?
Anjuta wraps the text selection block with a C-style comment. It puts the /* characters in front of the text and */ at the end. This means that this trick will also be applicable to our Vala and JavaScript projects later on.

Have a go hero – uncommenting the block
Now try to uncomment the block by repeating the previous steps. We have to do this now, otherwise our next activity will not work!

Time for action – running the program for the first time
As we have not yet changed anything in the project (You have uncommented the text in the previous section, right?), let's try to run it.

1. Click on the Run menu and choose Execute.
2. A pop-up dialog will open; let's go ahead and click on the Execute button without making any changes.
3. Wait for a moment while Anjuta builds the program.
4. An empty window pops up on the screen like in the following screenshot:

Congratulations! This is one small milestone for us!
Preparing Our Weapons

What just happened?

What we see now is a small grayish window without anything in it. That is because we have not yet added anything to it. Actually, the window itself was added by the Create a new project wizard that we started earlier. The wizard created a class called Main inside the hello_world.vala file. Inside it we see the following snippet:

```vala
var builder = new Builder ();
builder.add_from_file (UI_FILE);
builder.connect_signals (this);
```

This code opens the hello-world.ui file and loads it into memory. But before we load the file, we have these lines that we defined earlier in the source code:

```vala
/*
 * Uncomment this line when you are done testing and building a tarball
 * or installing
 */
const string UI_FILE = Config.PACKAGE_DATA_DIR + "" + "hello_world.ui";
const string UI_FILE = "src/hello_world.ui";
```

This means that the UI_FILE file mentioned previously comes from src/hello_world.ui, which is inside our project directory. The comment placed there seems suspicious, but that is actually required to remove the comment on the first line of code and comment out the last line, because the hello_world.ui file's location during deployment is not inside the src/subdirectory anymore.

```vala
var window = builder.get_object ("window" as Window;
window.show_all ();
```

And, this code finds the window instance from the hello-world.ui definition and then displays it on the screen.

The point here is that the program uses a separate file, which is hello-world.ui, as the UI layout definition and displays the content on the screen. This means that we do not create the widgets manually in the code.

When we start the execution of the program, Anjuta first saves the project, builds the executable binary by compiling the source code, and then runs it. The whole build process is visible in the Messages dock. For compiled languages, such as Vala that we are using now, the build is made up of two steps, namely the configure step and the make step. These two steps are shown in the Messages dock in tabs.
The build status in each step is shown as an icon in the respective build step tab. We can see whether the build is failing by looking at this icon. When everything is OK, we can see the green tick icon.

By default, Anjuta shows the output of the build process inside the tab. However, you can suppress the output by pressing the message suppression toggle buttons. These buttons are used to show or hide normal information, warnings, and error messages. Sometimes it is quite useful just to hide all the messages except the error and warning messages so we can focus on what is wrong and not get confused because of other messages being received from the build tools.
Preparing Our Weapons

Make an error and see how it works

Go ahead and modify the source code, for example, by typing I’m an error on top of most of the code in the hello_world.vala file. Save it and try running it again. You will find that the build is broken as shown by the build indicator icon. Let’s try to suppress the messages presented by Anjuta by pressing the suppression buttons one at a time. You will find these buttons useful for filtering out unnecessary messages.

Now let’s try to disable all messages except the error messages. When you see the error, try double-clicking it.

Do you see what happens? Yes, the editor immediately shows you the place where the error occurred.

Before continuing, remember to undo your changes.
Editing UI

In Anjuta, we can edit not only the source code but also the UI. Earlier, we saw only a plain window with nothing in it. It is now time to make some progress.

Time for action – editing UI

Let’s now try to edit the user interface:

1. Activate the Project dock and click on the hello_world folder.
2. After it has been expanded, further expand the src folder.
3. Expand the ui object further.
4. There is a hello_world.ui item listed there; double-click it.
5. The user interface editor is opened.
If your Linux distribution pops up a dialog mentioning that the `hello_world.ui` file requires GTK+ Version 2, no need to worry. This is harmless so just go ahead; these messages will go away once you save it. This happens because the initial code generator invoked by New application wizard wrongly put the Version 2 definition inside the `hello_world.ui` file. When we save it later, this definition is replaced with Version 3.

**What just happened?**

The user interface editor is Glade and it is embedded inside Anjuta. This is a desirable feature as it ensures that Anjuta is fully integrated. We will find the exact same editor if we run it individually from the GNOME system menu.

Glade provides two additional docks to Anjuta. Let’s look at them now.

**Palette**

This dock contains selectable GTK+ stock widgets as well as third-party widgets. We can choose these available widgets and put it inside our project. The widgets are represented with icons and laid out categorically. We can show or hide the widgets inside a category just by clicking on the category name. The widget name is visible by hovering our mouse over the widget icon.

If you haven’t changed the layout, this dock usually resides on the left side of the Anjuta window.

**Widgets**

This dock has two parts, namely the widget tree and the widget properties. The widget tree shows the hierarchy of the widgets, and by clicking on a widget in the tree, the properties of the selected widget are shown in the widget properties. If you haven’t changed the layout, this dock usually resides on the right side of the Anjuta window.

Let’s now try using these tools.

**Downloading the example code**

You can download the example code files for all Packt books you have purchased from your account at http://www.packtpub.com. If you purchased this book elsewhere, you can visit http://www.packtpub.com/support and register to have the files e-mailed directly to you.
Chapter 2

Time for action – adding a label and a button

We are going to follow a UI mockup as our guideline when editing the UI layout. A mockup is a rough design of the UI and is usually created by the application designers. This mockup is then proposed to the development team to be implemented. Now let’s consider this mockup:

![Mockup Image]

Based on the mockup, we see that two widgets, a label and a button, are required. The label is laid out on top of the button. Now we are going to put these widgets inside our window. Follow these steps to do it:

1. In the Palette dock, find the Container category.
2. Choose Box by clicking on the box icon (remember that we can find the Box object by hovering over the icon list).
3. Click on the window object, which was created by Anjuta, in the center.
4. A dialog will pop up and ask how many items are preserved inside the box. Type 2 for the label and button.
5. The box would be inserted on the window object, even though it is hardly noticeable, but we can see that the window is now split into two parts.
6. Inspect Box Properties on the right-hand side. In the Orientation option, make sure we have the Vertical value; if the value is Horizontal, change it.
7. From the mockup, we can see that the label is at the top and the button is at the bottom.
8. Find the label widget in the Control and Display category in Palette, and click on it.
9. Click on the top part of the box in the center. We will see that the top part shrinks according to the size of the label. Let it be like that.
10. Find the button widget in the Control and Display category in Palette, and click on it.
11. Click on the bottom part of the box, which is now the only place that is vacant.
Preparing Our Weapons

12. We now have all widgets in place!

![Image of the GUI interface showing the window with widgets]

What just happened?

We have successfully added widgets into our window. Unfortunately, we can't just add a button and label into our window directly because of how GTK+ works. A window can only contain one widget. Therefore, we need a container that is capable of hosting more than one widget. That is why we need to add it before adding the button and label.

Understanding the hierarchy is very important when developing GTK+ applications. Let's look at the top part of the Widgets dock on the right-hand side; we can see how the widgets appear in the hierarchy. The topmost is the window object. The window object has a child that is box1. And box1 has two children, namely label1 and button1. The widgets are not placed in any specific place in the coordinate system, but rather packed one after another following the hierarchy.

Now go ahead and run this program to see what it looks like. Make sure you can click on the button.

Time for action – changing widget properties

As we can see, the result from our last activity is not satisfying. It does not look like what we expected in our mockup design. Now let's do something to fix this.

1. Click on the label widget on the top part of the box. Note that the label has been highlighted.
2. In the Label Properties section in the Widgets dock, click on the Packing tab.
3. Find the Expand option and choose Yes.
4. Finally, it now looks like our mockup!

![Image of Code Editor](image-url)

### A responsive button

At this point we have the program that does nothing except show itself. Let's change it so the button responds to the click event. For example, suppose we want to print something when the button is clicked.

### Time for action – making the button responsive

Now let's add some code to make this happen:

1. Click on the button object, which we created earlier, to get it highlighted.
2. Check Button Properties and find the Signals tab in it. If you can't see it, click on the > button on the right side of the tabs. Keep clicking on it until you find Signals. Click on Signals.
3. Our button is essentially a Gtk button, so expand the GtkButton entry on the list. There are few columns and rows. Find the clicked signal on the list.
4. On the handler column, click on the clicked signal so that a text entry is activated. Type main_on_button1_clicked in it.

5. Go back to the source code of hello_world.vala, and look within the body of the Main class. Add this code anywhere inside the class scope, or, to make it easier for you, find the public void on_destroy method inside the Main class and put this code above it:

```c
public void on_button1_clicked(Button button) {
    stdout.printf("OK\n");
}
```

6. Now go ahead and run the program and click on the button.

7. We should be able to see OK being printed on the Terminal dock when we click the button.
What just happened?

We have just connected a signal handler written in the source code with the named signal in the button1 widget created in Glade. The signal name we connected is clicked, so whenever the button is clicked, the signal handler specified in the Handler column is called. We specify main_on_button1_clicked, which correlates with the function we wrote in hello_world.vala earlier, in the Handler column.

We named our handler function as on_button1_clicked and put it inside a class called Main. This is why we use main_on_button1_clicked in the signal handler name. One convention shown here is the use of the class name, which is written in lowercase, concatenated with the function name, separated by an underscore. The function name itself should give the impression that an event has occurred.

Ok, let's back up to our previous inspection of the hello_world.vala file. We have this piece of code:

```vala
var builder = new Builder ();
builder.add_from_file (UI_FILE);
builder.connect_signals (this);
```

The last line now makes sense here. The connect_signals method in the builder object is responsible for the signal's connection. Without this line, even with the previous instructions and writing of the handler function, the whole program will not work. This line basically ties all signals emitted by the user interface widgets into the this object, which is the Main object. So that is why we put our handler function inside Main.

Pop quiz – naming a signal

Good programming practices can make our life easier. One of them is to stick to a convention. One of the advantages is that when debugging, our mind can immediately trace the code. The convention can vary between organizations and even between projects. The developer must stick to one convention, especially in a project, and they can switch to another convention in another project, if necessary.

Imagine that we have a Server class and a function that handle the event when a connection is started.

Q1. Based on the convention we discussed earlier, what do you think is the best name we can give to the function?

1. server_on_connection_started.
2. server_connection.
3. start_connecting.
Preparing Our Weapons

**Tracking symbols**

Symbols, be it a variable, a method, a constant, or something similar, can easily be tracked in Anjuta. Remember the \texttt{UI\_FILE} constant we discussed before? Imagine that we are deep inside a source code file and stumble upon the following piece of code:

\begin{verbatim}
builder.add_from_file (UI\_FILE);
\end{verbatim}

We may be wondering what the value of \texttt{UI\_FILE} is, who defined it, and so on.

**Time for action – finding a symbol**

Let’s practice finding it out:

1. Activate the **Symbols** dock by clicking on it; if it is not available on the screen, go to the **View** menu and activate it from there.
2. We should immediately see \texttt{UI\_FILE} listed there. However, imagine that our project is so big that the constant is buried inside. Let’s go to the **Search** tab in the dock.
3. Type \texttt{UI\_FILE} there. Note that it has a nice code completion to avoid mistyping.
4. \texttt{UI\_FILE} is shown on the list along with the place where it is defined.
5. Double-click on the search result. The editor will show us the exact place where it is defined. Neat, eh?
Getting help

When developing a software, we need a good reference tool to get some help. Devhelp is the tool that we are going to talk about. It is an offline Application Programming Interface (API) reference tool, which is used here because it is simple and fast. It opens a collection of manuals (called "books") that we can read and search from.

The usage is quite straightforward. The books are displayed on the left-hand side. To read a book, we can either follow the internal links shown on the body of the page on the right-hand side or we can expand it and see the chapters for quick navigation.

Summary

We have introduced ourselves to Vala programming by easily creating a Vala project in Anjuta with a wizard. We found that the IDE layout is quite simple to use; we can hide and show elements that we do not want to see. We also know the steps for building an application and how to find more information when the building has failed. When something is wrong with the build, we can filter out messages in order to avoid confusion.

Source code navigation is easy to do in Anjuta. Manipulating code is also easy as Anjuta provides some shortcuts for it (for example, when commenting and uncommenting blocks of code).
Preparing Our Weapons

We managed to implement a UI based on a mockup design with Glade. We also know that Glade is deeply integrated into Anjuta, and we know that we can run Glade as a separate application. We saw how the UI is crafted in Glade and then read and used by our program, including how it works by connecting the signals of the UI objects into handler code.

When we need help during development, we know that Devhelp will be there for us by providing access to API reference documentation.

At this point, we should be ready to start learning GNOME application development. The basic skill needed is now in our hands. After our first exposure with Vala, let’s take another step in GNOME application development by learning it in depth along with JavaScript in the next chapter.
Long before GNOME 3, C was the first programming language for creating GNOME applications, and after it came C++, C#, Python, and the others. When GNOME was evolving close to Version 3, Vala and JavaScript became more and more popular and even became an important part of it. JavaScript has been around for a long time and people are familiar with it. Vala is quite new, but because the program written with it is fast and has a familiar syntax adopted from Java and C#, it is gaining popularity among GNOME application developers.

This chapter talks about these two programming languages. We will quickly look at the essentials of JavaScript and Vala, making sure that we have enough knowledge to make our applications with these languages.

In this chapter we shall learn about:

- Playing with data types in JavaScript
- Controlling iteration in JavaScript
- Basic object-oriented programming in JavaScript
- Constructing JavaScript objects
- Using JavaScript prototypes
- Modularizing a JavaScript program
- A Vala member access specifier
- Basic data types in Vala
- Gee collection library

Let’s start first with implementing JavaScript with Seed.
Programming GNOME with JavaScript

There are actually two competing JavaScript implementations in GNOME, with differences in
the engines used. The first one is Gjs, which is based on Spidermonkey, a JavaScript engine
created by Mozilla. The second one, which we will use, is Seed. It is based on WebKit's
JavaScript core engine. We chose Seed because it is used officially in GNOME 3.

Time for action – saying hello to Seed

Now it is time to see how Seed works.

1. Run the terminal from the Terminal menu in Activities in GNOME Shell or from
   Applications | Accessories | Terminal.
2. Run Seed by typing seed within the terminal console.
   $ seed
3. We are entering the Seed prompt:
   >
4. Type the following code, followed by the return key:
   print("Hello, world")
5. The text is printed out.
   Hello, world

What just happened?

Seed is an interpreter. When running Seed like this, we are entering the Seed interactive
mode, which means that it interactively gives the result of the code that we typed. In this
mode, we can type any valid JavaScript code in this shell. However, for those of you who
are used to JavaScript programming, you can't type code like we do when coding for web
applications. For example, you can't type the following code:

   console.log("Hello, world")

This is because Seed does not provide objects such as document or console. So, only basic
JavaScript is acceptable unless we can import the required objects.
Have a go hero – trying more JavaScript code here

While we are at it, let's try entering some JavaScript code, such as additions, subtractions, and variable assignment, in the shell. For example:

```javascript
var a=1
var b=2
b+a
a-b
```

The list goes on. This is just to grasp the basic idea of the shell. If you have experience with using JavaScript but your skills are a bit rusty, you can use this as a warmup. We can also think of using this as a calculator, a smart one.

Say we give an unfinished line, for example:

```javascript
var c=
```

We will see the prompt change into this:

```
..
```

This means that we need to finish it or else Seed will spew a syntax error message.

If done with this, feel free to quit by pressing the Ctrl + C key combination, and it will bring us back to the system's terminal console.

Time for action – running our program with Seed

Interactive mode is not the approach that we would use in our real applications. What we are going to do now is to put our code in a file and then run it. Are you ready?

1. Fire up Anjuta.
2. Create a new file by via File | New.
3. Fill the editor with this piece of code:
   
   ```
   #!/usr/bin/env seed
   print("Hello, world")
   ```

4. Save this file as `hello-world.js`. It is better to create a new directory for this (say, `hello-worldjs`) and put this file inside it.

   ```
   You can click on the Create folder button, type hello-worldjs, and click on the newly created folder.
   ```
5. Click on the Run menu and choose Execute. A small dialog will appear; fill the Program field with /usr/bin/seed and the Arguments field with hello-world.js. Make sure that the Run in terminal option is checked.

What just happened?

We call this method of program invocation as scripting. With this approach, the file itself is loaded and run by Seed directly. It uses a similar method with other scripts such as Bash, Perl, and Python. We can see from the first line that we use the hash bang (#!) sign to indicate the program that is used as the interpreter of the script. We used /usr/bin/env followed by seed instead of directly putting /usr/bin/seed there. We do it this way because we don't want to strictly tighten the location of seed. With env, the system will honor the system path setting to find the exact location of Seed. For example, if we have seed in /usr/local/bin instead of in /usr/bin, the program will still work.

You might wonder why we still need to put /usr/bin/seed in the Run dialog rather than entering hello-world.js directly. This is because we have not yet set the executable property of the script. Let's bring out our Linux administration skill and go to the directory where we placed hello-world.js and invoke this command in the terminal:

```
chmod +x hello-world.js
```
After this, we can put `hello-world.js` immediately in the **Program** field of the **Run** dialog. You may notice that we can no longer see this dialog when accessing the **Run** menu and **Execute** menu. This is because Anjuta now thinks that we already set the program arguments and are ready to execute. If we want to change this again, we can go to the **Run** menu and choose the **Program Parameters...** menu. Alternatively, we can run the script directly from the system console like this:

`./hello-world.js`

### Loosely typed language

JavaScript is known as a loosely (weakly) typed programming language. It means that we can use a variable without declaring its type whether it is a number, string, or array. We simply use the `var` directive (or not) to declare a variable. We will soon find out how this works.

### Time for action – playing with data types

Now, let’s discuss the basic data types in JavaScript and see how we can interact with them. After this, we should be able to choose which type we should use depending on our needs.

1. Create a new file called `hello-world-data-types.js` and fill it with this:

   ```javascript
   #!/usr/bin/env seed
   print("Hello world")

   var number = 1;
   print(number);
   number = number + 0.5;
   print(number);
   print(number.length);
   number = number + " is a number? no, it is now a string";
   print(number.length);
   print(number);
   number = (number.length == 0)
   print(number);
   number = undefined
   print(number);
   ```

2. Run it.
3. The number variable is printed, thus:

```
Hello world
1
1.5
[undefined]
1.5 is a number? no, it is now a string
39
0
[undefined]
```

**What just happened?**

We can now see two interesting things. First, that JavaScript can juggle between data types. We can change the type of one variable into another by just assigning a new value. The second, which we have talked about is that we do not need to declare the type of the variable. In this code, we have the `number` variable that we initially set with the value of 1.

```
var number = 1;
print(number);
```

Now the `number` variable is just a plain integer.

```
number = number + 0.5;
print(number);
```

Then we add 0.5 into it, making it a floating point data type. JavaScript accepts this without any problem and we have 1.5 as the value now.

```
print(number.length);
```

Then we try to access the `.length` property of the number. Because the type of the `number` variable at this moment is a number, and because it does not have any length, the value of `number.length` is `[undefined]`.

We see now that JavaScript has the unknown value concept, which is described as `[undefined]`. If a variable is undefined, we can't access anything inside it and it will cause JavaScript to think that this is an error.

```
number = number + " is a number? no, it is now a string";
print(number);
```

Now we concatenated `number` with a string, effectively making it a string as a whole. Now `number.length` is defined by the interpreter and has a value of 39, showing that it has 39 characters in it.

```
number = (number.length == 0)
print(number);
```
Here we assign number with a Boolean value coming from the (number.length == 0) expression. Because number.length is not 0, the expression returns false, and it is printed as 0. If it was true, it would be printed as 1.

```javascript
number = undefined
print(number);
```

Now we set number to undefined; it is a reserved word, so we can just set it as shown previously.

It is fun, isn’t it?

**Pop quiz – what is the value now?**

Q1. After the assignment of all data types that was performed earlier, at the very end of our code, what is the value of number.length now? Choose from the following (remember that just after we assigned it as a string, it had a value of 39):

1. 0, because we set number to undefined.
2. undefined, because we set number to undefined.
3. JavaScript will think this is an error because we try to access .length from an undefined value.

**Controlling iteration**

In programming, we almost always need to repeat certain parts of the code to be run. We do this by having an iteration control (also known as loop or repetition control) inside our code. In JavaScript it is quite easy.

**Time for action – controlling iteration**

We can follow these steps to control iteration:

1. Create a new file called hello-world-iteration.js and put this code in it:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

print("Hello, world")
for (i = 0; i < 10; i ++) {
    print("Iteration number "+ i);
}
```

2. Run it.
3. We can see that the text is printed 10 times.

```
# hello-world.js

print("Hello world")
for (i = 0; i < 10; i++) {
    print("Iteration number "+i);
}
```

**What just happened?**

In the code, we tell JavaScript to do 10 iterations using the `for` loop. We can see that JavaScript starts the index from 0, and not from 1, as we initially set the value of `i` (`i = 0` in the code). In each iteration we add 1 to `i` (see the `i++` expression in the `for` loop, which means "increase the value of `i` by 1"). The loop stops immediately when the `i` value breaks the constraint, which is 10. At the end of the loop, the value of `i` is 10. But because 10 is not lesser than 10 (in the code we put `i < 10`), it breaks the loop. Hence the text displays 0 to 9 instead of up to 10.

**Have a go hero – counting down**

We have done the counting up. Now how about counting down?
Time for action – manipulating an array

We can imagine an array as a collection of boxes that can hold a number of items with the same type. Let's try to fill those boxes.

1. Create a new script called hello-world-array.js and fill it to look like this:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

print("Hello world")
var boxes = []
for (i = 0; i < 10; i ++) {
    boxes[i] = i * 2;
}
for (i = 0; i < boxes.length; i ++) {
    print("Box content #" + i + " is " + boxes[i])
}
```

2. Run it.

3. We will see the text specifying the box number and its content.
Programming Languages

What just happened?

The first thing we do is to declare `boxes` as an array:

```javascript
var boxes = []
```

Note that we did not set the size of the array; we just say that it is an array and let JavaScript do the magic. This is because the array can shrink or grow at any time whenever we modify its content. Then we fill in the boxes:

```javascript
for (i = 0; i < 10; i ++) {
    boxes[i] = i * 2;
}
```

Then, on each box, we set the value to be the index of the array times two. We just set the content on the index `i` directly, without allocating anything, like in the C programming language. It's super easy. Then we print out the content of the array:

```javascript
for (i = 0; i < boxes.length; i ++) {
    print("Box content #" + i + " is " + boxes[i])
}
```

The length of the array can be obtained from the `length` variable within an object. In this case, we can get the length from `boxes.length`. So whenever we fill an array, the length is adjusted automatically.

Have a go hero – fill with anything you want

We have filled the boxes with numbers in the previous section; how about other data types? Try to fill boxes with string or even mixed string and integer. Are you surprised?

Object-oriented programming (OOP) with JavaScript

If you are already familiar with object-oriented programming, be prepared that OOP in JavaScript is somewhat limited and does not follow the usual OOP practice. This is because the language itself is not a full OOP language. What we are trying to do here is to adapt the OOP concept within the limitations that JavaScript has.

Time for action – using the JavaScript object

Now it is time to eat the meat, the JavaScript object. We will use objects extensively in this book. Let’s do that by first introducing to ourselves a simple one.

1. Create a new script called `hello-world-object.js` and fill with this code:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed
print("Hello world")
```
```javascript
var book = { }
print(book);
print(book.isbn);

book.isbn = "xxxx-1234-1234";
book.title = "A somewhat interesting book"
print(book);
print(book.isbn);
print(book.title);

2. Run it.
3. See the values printed:

   Hello world
   [object Object]
   [undefined]
   [object Object]
   xxxxx-1234-1234
   A somewhat interesting book

**What just happened?**

Like any other data type, we can assign a variable with an object easily.

```
Here, we print the `book` variable again; it still says that it is an object of type `Object`.

```javascript
print(book.isbn);
print(book.title);
```

But here the situation changes as the values are assigned and can be printed.

**With great power comes great responsibility**

As you may have noticed, in JavaScript, we are practically free to do anything with the data types. However, with this power, we have to thoroughly check our code for correctness. Sloppy programming with JavaScript will end up in disaster, because as the code grows, it becomes harder to track where the error is.

Because JavaScript is case sensitive, it will become even harder to track errors. Imagine if we have set this line somewhere in our code:

```javascript
book.authorFirstName = "Random Joe"
```

Then, in other parts of the code, we try to modify the variable with this line:

```javascript
book.authorFirstName = "Another Joe"
```

JavaScript will not complain about this because we are free to set anything inside our object. We must take responsibility for this error by double, no, triple checking our code so that we do not make typos like the previous one. Wait a second; have you spotted the bug that we are talking about?

**Have a go hero – another way to fill the object**

Try to modify a part of the previous code to look like this and see what happens:

```javascript
var book = {
    isbn:"xxxx-1234-1234",
    title:"A somewhat interesting book"
}
```

We are now defining the ISBN and the title inside the object in a different way. Here we use a colon instead of the equals sign, and we put a comma in between the definitions. This notation is called **JSON (JavaScript Object Notation)**.

**Constructing objects**

After using the simplest form of a JavaScript object, let's now have a more sophisticated object. This marks our adventure with object-oriented programming with JavaScript.
Time for action – playing with constructors

When we talk about constructing an object, it means that we call a special function called a constructor. Let’s see how to do it.

1. Create a new file called hello-world-constructor.js and fill it with this code:

   ```javascript
   print("Hello world")

   var Book = function(isbn, title) {
     this.isbn = isbn;
     this.title = title;
   }

   book = new Book("1234", "A good title");
   print(book.isbn);
   print(book.title);
   ```

2. Run it.

3. See the values printed:

   Hello world
   1234
   A good title

What just happened?

This is actually similar to our previous code, with the difference that now we define it as a class, and then later instantiate it as an object.

   ```javascript
   var Book = function(isbn, title) {
     this.isbn = isbn;
     this.title = title;
   }
   ```

This is our constructor of the Book class. Within it, we assign the .isbn property with the isbn variable passed as an argument in the constructor function. The same thing happens with the .title property.

   ```javascript
   book = new Book("1234", "A good title");
   ```
Here we create a new variable called `book` (note the lowercase!) by instantiating a `Book` class with the supplied arguments.

```javascript
    print(book.isbn);
    print(book.title);
```

Now we can see the value of `.isbn` and `.title` as printed.

**Class and object**

The **class** is only a definition such as `var Book = function(..) {...}` in the previous code; it is not an object until we really instantiate it later with the `new` operator. When it becomes an object, we also call it an **instance of a class**. Previously, we did the instantiation differently by just using the curly brackets without any class definition.

By convention, we usually name our classes with CamelCase, which has a mix of uppercase and lowercase characters, where the first character in the first word is started with uppercase (for example, `Book`). In contrast, for object instances or variables, we used lowercase for the first character in the first word (for example, `book`).

**Pop quiz – can you see the difference now?**

Let’s take a look at this code:

```javascript
    var Circle = function(radiusInPixel) {
        this.radius = radiusInPixel
    }

    var circle = new Circle(100);
```

Q1. What is `circle` and what is `Circle`? Which one of the following statements is correct?

1. `Circle` is a class because it has the definition, and `circle` is an object, instantiated from the `Circle` class.
2. `circle` is an object because it has the definition, and `Circle` is an instance of the `circle` object.

**Using prototypes**

In OOP, we can have methods or functions attached to an object. This means that the function is specific to a particular object in memory. If we call a function in one object, it does not interfere with another object of the same type that also has the same function. In JavaScript we use prototypes to achieve this feature.
Time for action – adding prototypes

Let’s now add some methods to our class. Here we will use the prototype object to define them.

1. Create a new script called `hello-world-prototype.js` and fill it with this:
   ```javascript
   #!/usr/bin/env seed
   print("Hello world")
   var Book = function(isbn, title) {
     this.isbn = isbn;
     this.title = title;
   }
   Book.prototype = {
     printTitle: function(){
       print("Title is " + this.title);
     },
     printISBN: function() {
       print("ISBN is " + this.isbn);
     }
   }
   var book = new Book("1234", "A good title");
   book.printTitle();
   book.printISBN();
   
2. Run it.
   
3. See the values printed:

   Hello world
   Title is A good title
   ISBN is 1234

What just happened?

In a JavaScript object, prototype is a special object that holds all the properties and methods inside a class or an object. So what we do here is to fill in the prototype with our own methods.

   var Book = function(isbn, title) {
     this.isbn = isbn;
     this.title = title;
   }
In this code, we have our constructor like before:

```javascript
Book.prototype = {

};
```

Then, we start the declaration of the prototype, ready to fill it in with our own method definitions:

```javascript
printTitle: function(){
    print("Title is " + this.title);
},
```

Here, we put our first method as described with a function body:

```javascript
printISBN: function() {
    print("ISBN is " + this.isbn);
}
```

We use a colon instead of an equals sign to define the method, and we put a comma at the end of our method, meaning that there will come another method or member declaration after this line. Remember our experience from the previous code when defining the book object in a different way?

Then, our next method comes along. Here we end the definition without putting a comma.

```javascript
var book = new Book("1234", "A good title");
```

After that, we declare a book variable by constructing the Book object with specified arguments.

```javascript
book.printTitle();
book.printISBN();
```

Finally, we use our method by just calling it (note the brackets after the name of the method).

**Have a go hero – adding more methods**

Why don't we add more methods? Let's say we need these methods:

- `getISBN()`, which returns the isbn
- `getTitle()`, which returns the title of the book

Don't forget about the colon and the comma!
Time for action – modifying the prototype of an object

As mentioned previously, we can also put something inside the prototype of an object directly and not in the class. This is not something that we will do on an everyday basis, but we will learn it here just for our knowledge; it may come in handy later. Imagine that we want to replace a function defined in our prototype with another function at runtime!

1. Create a new script called `hello-world-proto.js` and fill with this:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed
print("Hello world")
var Book = function(isbn, title) {
  this.isbn = isbn;
  this.title = title;
}
Book.prototype = {
  printTitle: function(){
    print("Title is " + this.title);
  },
  printISBN: function() {
    print("ISBN is " + this.isbn);
  }
}
var book = new Book("1234", "A good title");
book.printTitle();
book.printISBN();
book.__proto__ = {
  author: "Joe Random",
  printAuthor: function() {
    print("Author is " + this.author);
  }
}
book.printAuthor();
var anotherBook = new Book("4567", "A more better title");
anotherBook.printTitle();
anotherBook.printISBN();
anotherBook.printAuthor(); // this is invalid
```
Run it.

Note that it prints the author of the first book, but it fails to do so for the second one.

```
Hello world
Title is A good title
ISBN is 1234
Author is Joe Random
Title is A more better title
ISBN is 4567
** (seed:4911): CRITICAL **: Line 39 in hello-world.js:
TypeError 'undefined' is not a function (evaluating 'anotherBook.
printAuthor()')
```

**What just happened?**

To modify the prototype at runtime, we need to know a little secret. It's no longer accessible with the `prototype` property but rather with `__proto__`. In this line, we instantiate the `book` object:

```
var book = new Book("1234", "A good title");
```

And here, we add two properties inside the prototype which we access with `__proto__`:

```
book.__proto__ = {
    author: "Joe Random",
    printAuthor: function() {
        print("Author is " + this.author);
    }
}
```

Then, we try to use it immediately:

```
book.printAuthor();
```

However, we were not able to do this in another instance. Do you know why? Yes, because we only modify the `book` object, and this does not affect the `anotherBook` object.

```
var anotherBook = new Book("4567", "A more better title");

anotherBook.printAuthor(); // this is invalid
```
Pop quiz – how to make it global then?

Q1. What is the best way to add the `printAuthor` method in all objects created from the `Book` class?

1. Add `printAuthor` to `__proto__` in every object created, and then we will have the function available in all objects.
2. Just add `printAuthor` in the `Book` class prototype, and then all objects created from `Book` will have the function.

Have a go hero – changing the implementation details

Imagine that we want the `anotherBook` object to be used only for declaring special books. Because it is so special, we want to print `<book-title> is a really good title` in the `printTitle` function, with `<book-title>` being the actual title of the book.

```
[💡]
Just redefine the function within `__proto__` in the `anotherBook` object.
```

Modularization

Imagine that we implemented a big project and we put it inside a single script. That would be a nightmare as it would be very difficult to debug. Hence, we should discuss this now, before our code gets bigger.

Time for action – modularizing our program

Now we are going to modularize our software.

1. Let’s create a new file called `hello-world-module.js` and fill it with this:

   ```javascript
   #!/usr/bin/env seed
   print("Hello world")
   
   var BookModule = imports.book
   
   book.printTitle();
   book.printISBN();
   ```
2. Create another new script called `book.js` and fill it with this:

```javascript
var Book = function(isbn, title) {
    this.isbn = isbn;
    this.title = title;
}

Book.prototype = {
    printTitle: function() {
        print("Title is " + this.title);
    },

    printISBN: function() {
        print("ISBN is " + this.isbn);
    }
}
```

3. Then run `hello-world-module.js` (not `book.js`).

4. See the printouts.

**What just happened?**

From the output, we can see that it is exactly the same as the previous code. But here we split the code into two files.

```javascript
var BookModule = imports.book

```

Here, we ask Seed to attach the `BookModule` variable with the evaluation of `book` with the `imports` command. Here it is expected that we have `book.js` inside our current directory. With this, all objects in `book.js` are accessible from the `BookModule` variable. Hence, we construct the `book` object with the previous line.

Also note that, in `book.js`, we no longer have the hashbang line. This is not required because we don't use `book.js` as our entry point, but rather we use `hello-world-module.js`.

With this approach, we can lay out our objects in files and import them whenever necessary. This not only makes the memory usage efficient but also keeps the code structure clean.

This concludes our quick introduction to JavaScript as a GNOME application development programming language. Now let's move on to Vala.
Getting to know Vala

When compared to JavaScript, Vala is fairly new and is the only language being used in GNOME development since its conception. It has quite an interesting concept: the programmers are exposed to C# and Java-like syntax, but underneath, the code will be translated into pure C and then compiled to binary.

This approach will make GNOME programming more accessible, because developing a GNOME application with C is quite hard to understand for beginners. It involves many boilerplate code snippets that you must copy and paste into your source code tree and then modify according to the guidelines. This step is totally hidden by Vala.

Similar to our adventure with JavaScript, we will now learn the basics of the Vala language without implementing any graphical elements. As Vala is a full-blown object-oriented programming language, we will immediately use the OOP concept in our journey with Vala.

Let’s now prepare a project that will be used as our experiment. Remember the steps from Chapter 2, Preparing Our Weapons? Good! Let’s do it again with some changes. We will use hello-vala as the project name.

In the preceding screenshot, we can see in Project options that we choose No license to minimize modifications that we are going to do next. We also uncheck the Use GtkBuilder for user interface option because we want to do a simple text-based application to grasp the essentials of Vala.
Time for action – entry point to our program

We are now going to replace all the generated code with our own so that we understand what makes an application from the ground up.

1. Edit the generated hello_vala.vala file and fill it with this:
   ```vala
   using GLib;
   public class Main : Object
   {
   public Main ()
   {
   }
   static int main (string[] args)
   {
   stdout.printf ("Hello, world\n");
   return 0;
   }
   }
   ```

2. Click on the Run menu and choose Execute.

3. See the text that is printed:
   ```
   Hello, world
   ```

What just happened?

Here we start by looking at the Book class.

```vala
using GLib;
```

This line says that we are using the GLib namespace.

```vala
public class Main : Object
```

This is the definition of the Main class. It is stated here that it is derived from the GLib.Object class. We don't put the full name GLib.Object but only Object because we already stated in the first line that we are using the GLib namespace.

```vala
public Main ()
{
}
```
The preceding structure is the constructor of the class. Here we have an empty one.

```c
static int main (string[] args)
{
    stdout.printf ("Hello, world
");
    return 0;
}
```

This is our entry point to the program. If declared as static, the `main` function will be considered as the first function that will be run in the application. Without this function, we can't run the application.

And one more thing; there must be one and only one static `main` function, otherwise your program will not compile.

### Have a go hero – look at the generated C code

Now we should have the generated C code available in the `src/` directory. Navigate the filesystem using the Files dock and find `hello_vala.c`. Let's open it and see how Vala transforms the Vala code into C code.

We can modify the C code, but your changes will be overwritten whenever you change the Vala code, and the C code will get regenerated.

### Member access specifier

Vala defines a set of member access specifiers, which we can use to define which member of the class can be accessed by another class or by its inheriting classes. This idiom provides us a way to make a clean set of application programming interfaces (API), which is easy to use.

### Time for action – defining member access

Let's take a look at how to specify the access to our class member.

1. Create a new file and save it as `book.vala` inside the `src/` directory. Fill it with this:

```vala
using GLib;

public class Book : Object {
    private string title;
    private string isbn;

    public Book(string isbn, string title) {
        this.isbn = isbn;
    }
}
```
this.title = title;
}

public void printISBN() {
    stdout.printf("%s\n", isbn);
}

public void printTitle() {
    stdout.printf("%s\n", title);
}

2. We need to add this to the project. Click on the Project menu and choose Add Source File....

3. In the next dialog, click on the Target option, find hello_vala inside src/, and then, in the file selection box below it, choose book.vala.

4. Modify the main function of hello_vala.vala to look like this:

```
using GLib;
public class Main : Object
{
    public Main ()
    {
        book.printISBN ();
    }

    static int main (string[] args)
    {
        stdout.printf ("Hello, world\n");
        var main = new Main();
        return 0;
    }
}
```

5. Run it.
6. Note that the program cannot be built.

What just happened?

From the error message, we see that it rejects our access to call `Book.printISBN` (we read this dot notation as the `printISBN` member from the `Book` class).

```java
book.printISBN();
```

This is what we have in the `Main` class constructor. There we instantiate `Book` into the `book` variable, and call `printISBN` there.

```java
void printISBN() {
    stdout.printf(isbn);
}
```

However, this is what we have in the `Book` class. It looks innocent, but it turns out that we missed something crucial that makes this function inaccessible from outside the class.
The access specifiers

Here is a list of access specifiers that are recognized by Vala:

- **private**: The access is limited within the class or struct.
- **public**: The access is unlimited
- **protected**: The access is limited within the class and any class that inherits from the class
- **internal**: The access is limited within the classes inside the package

When we don’t specify anything, the access is set to `private` by default. That is why our program cannot be built.

**Pop quiz – how to fix this?**

As mentioned previously, we don't put any specifiers in front of the `printISBN` function, so it is considered `private`. We can fix this by putting the correct access specifier in the `printISBN` function.

Q1. Which specifier from the following options do you think is correct?

1. **public**, because we want to access it from `Main` class which is outside the `Book` class.
2. **None**; we just need to fix how we call `printISBN` in the `Main` constructor.

Basic data types

Let’s now move on, learning the basic data types available in Vala, meaning that we will take a look at how to interact with strings, numbers, and Boolean.

**Time for action – experiment with data types**

We will now create an imaginary BookStore program to explore the data types in Vala.

1. Create a new file called `bookstore.vala` and put it in `src/`. Fill it with these lines:

   ```vala
   using GLib;
   
   public class BookStore {
     private Book book;
     private double price = 0.0;
     private int stock = 0;
   }
   ```
public BookStore (Book book, double price, int stock) {
    this.book = book;
    this.price = price;
    this.stock = stock;
}

public int getStock() {
    return stock;
}

public void removeStock(int amount) {
    stock = stock - amount;
}

public void addStock(int amount) {
    stock = stock + amount;
}

public double getPrice() {
    return price;
}

public void setPrice(double price) {
    this.price = price;
}

public bool isAvailable() {
    return (stock > 0);
}

2. Add this file to our project.
3. Modify our Main class to look like this:

```java
using GLib;

public class Main : Object
{
    public Main ()
    {
        book.printISBN ();
        var store = new BookStore(book, 4.2, 10);
        stdout.printf ("Initial stock is %d\n", store.getStock());
        stdout.printf ("Initial price is $ %f\n", store.getPrice());
        store.removeStock(4);
        store.setPrice(5.0);
    }
}
```
Programming Languages

```java
stdout.printf("Stock is %d\n", store.getStock());
stdout.printf("and price is now $ %f\n", store.getPrice());
var status = "still available";
if (store.isAvailable() == false) {
    status = "not available";
}
stdout.printf("And the book is %s\n", status);
}
static int main (string[] args)
{
    stdout.printf("Hello, world\n");
    var main = new Main();
    return 0;
}
```

4. Run it.

5. See how the data is manipulated and printed:

```
Hello, world
1234
Initial stock is 10
Initial price is $ 4.200000
Stock is 6
and price is now $ 5.000000
And the book is still available
```

What just happened?
Let’s start analyzing from the calling code, the Main constructor.

```java
var store = new BookStore(book, 4.2, 10);
```

Here, we instantiate a new store object from the BookStore class. We initialize it with a book object, a floating point number, and an integer.

```java
public BookStore (Book book, double price, int stock) {
```

In the BookStore constructor, we have to specify the data types in the argument list as previously done. Then we say that we want to accept a Book object, a number in double precision, and an integer.

```java
this.book = book;
this.price = price;
this.stock = stock;
```
And then, we assign our private members of `book`, `price`, and `stock` with the arguments. Here we use `this` to denote that we want to assign the `book` member from the private member with the `book` member from the argument. If we name our argument variable with a different name, for example, `bookObject`, we can omit `this` because it is no longer ambiguous; we know that `bookObject` must be coming from the argument list and not from our member. The same happens with `price` and `stock`.

```java
stdout.printf("Initial stock is %d\n", store.getStock());
```

This is how we print an integer with `printf`. We use `%d` as a placeholder for an integer.

```java
stdout.printf("Initial price is $ %f\n", store.getPrice());
```

And this is how we print a real number with `printf`. We use `%f` as a placeholder for it.

```java
store.removeStock(4);
```

Then, we remove 4 books from the stock. Internally, this is defined in `BookStore`. `removeStock`, as follows:

```java
stock = stock - amount;
```

There we just subtract using a mathematical expression because it is simply an integer.

```java
var status = "still available";
if (store.isAvailable() == false) {
    status = "not available";
}
```

Next, we have a Boolean expression evaluation. If the value is `false`, we change the value of `status`. The type for `status` is `string`, and we can just assign the value.

```java
stdout.printf("And the book is %s\n", status);
```

Finally, we use `%s` as a placeholder in `printf` to put our string value there.

**Gee, what is it?**

Gee is a collection library written in Vala. The basic types of the collection are list, set, and maps. These are similar to array but with more powerful features.

**Time for action – adding the Gee library**

Let’s take a look at Gee more closely. But first, let’s try adding it to our project:

1. Click on the `Project` menu and choose `Add Library`.
2. In `Select the target for the library`, find `hello_vala` under `src/`.
3. Then click on the **New library...** button.

4. Find **gee** from the list and check it in the **Module** option at the bottom of the dialog, and then find **HELLO_VALA**. This means that we add Gee into the C compilation step. Under the hood, this step modifies the `configure.ac` file to add Gee into the build system.

5. Then, from the **Files** dock, find `Makefile.am` in the `src/` directory and open it. Find the `hello_vala_VALAFLAGS` stanza and modify it to look like this:

   ```
   hello_vala_VALAFLAGS = \
   --pkg gtk+-3.0 \
   --pkg gee-1.0
   ```

6. Then, save and close the `Makefile.am` file. This step means that we add Gee into the Vala compilation step.

7. Then click on **Build** and choose **Clean Project**. This would clean the project from all the generated code and scripts prepared by the build system to make sure we pick up changes that we made in `Makefile.am` and `configure.ac`.

8. Try running our previous code again. There should be no error anymore.

**What just happened?**

We just added Gee into the project. Anjuta support for Vala is not yet perfect as we need to perform two actions (as we just did) to add a library into a project, one for C compilation and another for Vala compilation. Without these two steps, our program cannot be built because either Vala would not recognize the Gee namespace or the C compiler would not find the Gee header files and library.

**Time for action – Gee in action**

After installing Gee in our project, let's quickly check what capabilities Gee has to offer. Let's start from the simple ones, the array list.

1. Modify our `book.vala` file to look like this:

   ```
   using GLib;
   using Gee;

   public class Book : Object {
     private string title;
     private string isbn;
     private ArrayList<string> authors;

     public Book(string isbn, string title) {
       this.isbn = isbn;
       this.title = title;
   ```
authors = new ArrayList<string>();
}
public void addAuthor(string author) {
    authors.add(author);
}
public void printISBN() {
    stdout.printf("%s\n", isbn);
}
public void printTitle() {
    stdout.printf("%s\n", title);
}
public void printAuthors() {
    foreach (var author in authors) {
        stdout.printf("Author name: %s\n", author);
    }
}

2. Modify the Main class constructor to include these lines:
   book.printISBN();
   book.addAuthor("Joe Random");
   book.addAuthor("Joe Random Jr.");
   book.printAuthors();

3. Run it.
4. See that it prints all of the authors of the book.

Hello, world
1234
Author name: Joe Random
Author name: Joe Random Jr.
Initial stock is 10
Initial price is $ 4.200000
Stock is 6
and price is now $ 5.000000
And the book is still available
What just happened?
Here we try to utilize the array list, which is one of many collection data structures provided by Gee.

using Gee;

In order to use Gee, first we declare that we are using the Gee namespace.

```
We can actually omit this, but we need to always put the Gee. prefix in front of all Gee classes.
```

Now look at the member declaration in the Book class:

```
public class Book : Object {
  private string title;
  private string isbn;
  private ArrayList<string> authors;
}
```

The construct with angle brackets is called generics programming. This means that the data contained in the data structure (which is ArrayList in this context) is generic. If we have an array of type integer, we will put it as ArrayList<int>, and so on. Hence, in this particular line, we have ArrayList, which has content with type string, and we call the list with the name authors. In the constructor, we have to initialize the array list with this syntax:

```
public Book(string isbn, string title) {
  this.isbn = isbn;
  this.title = title;
  authors = new ArrayList<string>();
}
```

It means that we need to allocate an ArrayList object, which has content of type string. Note that only a declaration is not enough. If we forget this part, the program will crash.

```
public void addAuthor(string author) {
  authors.add(author);
}
```

Here, we use an add function, which is provided by the ArrayList class. As the name suggests, it will add the data into the array list; note that it can only accept string because we declare and initialize it with string content.

```
public void printAuthors() {
  foreach (var author in authors) {
    stdout.printf("Author name: %s\n", author);
  }
}
```
Here we iterate the content of the array list. We use the `foreach` command to iterate while assigning the value obtained on each iteration to the `author` variable. Note that we use the `var author in authors` expression. We don’t specify the `author` variable to be `string`, but instead we use an automatic variable construction with the `var` keyword. In this line, `var` will get assigned a type depending on the content of the `authors` variable. Because the `authors` content type is `string`, the `author` variable bound to the `var` keyword will be also `string`. This kind of construction is really useful if we generalize a class to be able to handle any kind of data types depending on the data type stored in the collection or data structure.

### Initializing members when declaring

In our previous code, we initialize the array list in the constructor. Another alternative is to initialize it while declaring in the declaration area, without initializing it in the constructor. We can do it like this:

```vala
private ArrayList<string> authors = new ArrayList<string>();
```

When your code grows and you have more than one constructor, this alternative is better than initializing in the constructor because you must copy all of the initialization code to all constructors.

### Time for action – watching for signals

Vala has a construct for emitting and watching signals, which is a mechanism of subscribing to information when something happens in the code. We can subscribe to a signal by connecting the function that will perform some action into the signal. Let’s see how it works.

1. Modify our `bookstore.vala` file and add two new declarations:

   ```vala
   public class BookStore {
   ...
   public signal void stockAlert();
   public signal void priceAlert();
   ```

2. Modify our `removeStock` and `setPrice` functions in `bookstore.vala` to be like this:

   ```vala
   public void removeStock(int amount) {
   stock = stock - amount;
   if (stock < 5) {
   stockAlert();
   }
   }
   public void setPrice(double price) {
   this.price = price;
   ```
if (price < 1) {
    priceAlert();
}

3. Modify our `Main` constructor to be like this:

```java
public Main ()
{
    book.printISBN();
    book.addAuthor("Joe Random");
    book.addAuthor("Joe Random Jr.");
    book.printAuthors();

    var store = new BookStore(book, 4.2, 10);
    store.stockAlert.connect(() => {
        stdout.printf("Uh oh, we are going to run out stock soon!\n");
    });
    store.priceAlert.connect(() => {
        stdout.printf("Uh oh, price is too low\n");
    });
    stdout.printf("Initial stock is %d\n", store.getStock());
    stdout.printf("Initial price is $ %f\n", store.getPrice());
    store.removeStock(4);
    store.setPrice(5.0);
    stdout.printf("Stock is %d\n", store.getStock());
    stdout.printf("and price is now $ %f\n", store.getPrice());
    store.removeStock(4);
    var status = "still available";
    if (store.isAvailable() == false) {
        status = "not available";
    }
    stdout.printf("And the book is %s\n", status);
    store.setPrice(0.2);
}
```

4. Run it.

5. See the printed message:

    Hello, world
    1234
    Author name: Joe Random
Author name: Joe Random Jr.
Initial stock is 10
Initial price is $ 4.200000
Stock is 6
and price is now $ 5.000000
Uh oh, we are going to run out stock soon!
And the book is still available
Uh oh, price is too low

What just happened?
The warning message printed that the stock is running out and the price is too low is not printed by BookStore class but rather by the Main class. This assumes a scenario where the Main class subscribes to the signals and will do something about it when Main receives the information from the signals.

```java
public signal void stockAlert();
public signal void priceAlert();
```

First, we have to define the signal in the class that we want to publish the signal from. In BookStore, we declare these two signals. Note that we only declare the method signature with the `signal` keyword. We don't declare the body of the function. It is essential of the signal that the object that subscribes to these signals provides functions to handle the emitted signals.

```java
if (stock < 5) {
    stockAlert();
}
...
if (price < 1) {
    priceAlert();
}
```

These two snippets show how we emit the signal. When stock is less than 5, we emit the `stockAlert` signal, and if price is less than 1, we emit the `priceAlert` signal. The BookStore class doesn't care about what happens next; it only announces the signals, and that's it.

```java
store.stockAlert.connect(() => {
    stdout.printf("Uh oh, we are going to run out stock soon!\n");
});
store.priceAlert.connect(() => {
    stdout.printf("Uh oh, price is too low\n");
});
```
While here, the Main class constructor connects itself with these two signals. We can see the construct for providing a function body by using the \( \Rightarrow \) operator. This construct is called **closure** or **anonymous function**. The parameter of this function is defined before \( \Rightarrow \), which in this context is indicating that no parameters were supplied. This is shown by empty parentheses.

Inside the function body, we declare what should happen when the signal is emitted by the store object. Here, we just print some alert text. In reality, we could do anything from disconnecting network and displaying images to any other actions we want.

```javascript
store.removeStock(4);
...
store.setPrice(0.2);
```

Here the actual signals are emitted and the text is printed.

### Have a go hero – putting parameters in signals

We can put parameters in our signal, too. We can just put the parameters we want in the signal declaration. Then, when connecting to a signal, put the parameters before the \( \Rightarrow \) operator. Now how about modifying the priceAlert signal to have one parameter, which is the price of the book?

### Summary

It is fairly easy and quick to create an application and get it up and running with both Seed and Vala. So why do we want to learn both and use them in this book?

JavaScript is an interpreted language; we can see the guts of the program and modify it directly without recompilation. Vala, on the other hand, is a compiled language. We need to have access to the source code to modify it. If we want to make a commercial software on top of the GNOME platform, Vala makes a pretty good choice.

Making a program with JavaScript in Seed is pretty straightforward and does not require project management in Anjuta, while in Vala, we need to take care of the dependencies manually. Let’s hope this can be fixed in the future version of Anjuta.

Now we know the basic construct of the JavaScript and Vala code, from manipulating basic data types to using the object-oriented programming concept.

We see that JavaScript programming is pretty relaxed, while Vala is strict. A better code structure using modularization would help simplify development and make debugging easier.

After knowing all of this, now we are ready to go to the next chapter, which uses the GNOME platform libraries, which is the foundation of creating a GNOME application.
Using GNOME Core Libraries

GNOME core libraries are a collection of foundation utility classes and functions. It covers many things from simple date-conversion functions to virtual filesystem access management. GNOME would not be as powerful as it is now without its core libraries. There are a lot of UI libraries out there that are not successful because of the lack of this kind of power. No wonder there are many libraries outside GNOME that also use GNOME core libraries to support their functionalities.

GNOME core libraries are composed from GLib and GIO, which are non-UI libraries for supporting our UI applications. These libraries connect our programs with files, networks, timers, and other important aspects in the operating system. Without this knowledge, we can probably make a beautiful program, but we would be incapable of interacting with the rest of the system.

In this chapter we shall learn about:

- The GLib main loop and basic functions
- The GObject signaling system and properties
- The GIO files, stream and networking
- The GSettings configuration system

Ok, let's get started.
**Before we start**

There are a few exercises in this chapter that need access to the Internet or the local network. Make sure you have a good connection before running the program. Another exercise requires access to removable hardware and mountable filesystems.

In this chapter, we will do something different regarding the Vala exercises. Because the nature of the discussions are independent of each other, each Vala exercise is done in its own project instead of continuously modifying a file in a single project. So, in each Vala exercise we will create a new project and work inside that project. The name of the project will be noted so you can easily compare your project with the source code that accompanies this book. Similar to the previous chapter, the project we create here is a Vala GTK+ (simple) project. In the project properties, we should not tick on the **GtkBuilder support for user interface** option and should pick **No license** in the **License** option.

In each exercise, the JavaScript code follows the Vala code and it is kept inside one file per exercise. The functionalities of the JavaScript code would be exactly the same. So you can opt to choose whether you want to use either the Vala or the JavaScript code, or both.

**The GLib main loop**

GLib provides a main event loop, which takes care of the events coming from various sources. With this event loop, we can catch these events and do the necessary processing.

**Time for action – playing with the GLib main loop**

Here, we will introduce ourselves to the GLib main loop.

1. Create a new Vala project called `core-mainloop` and use this code in the `Main` class:

```vala
using GLib;

public class Main : Object
{
    int counter = 0;

    bool printCounter() {
        stdout.printf("%d\n", counter++);
        return true;
    }

    public Main ()
    {
```

```
2. And this is the JavaScript code’s counterpart; you can name the script as core-mainloop.js:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

GLib = imports.gi.GLib;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Main = new GType({
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Main",
    init: function() {
        var counter = 0;
        this.printCounter = function() {
            Seed.printf("%d", counter++);
            return true;
        };
        GLib.timeout_add(0, 1000, this.printCounter);
    }
});

var main = new Main();
var context = GLib.main_context_default();
var loop = new GLib.MainLoop.c_new(context);
loop.run();
```

3. Run it. Do you notice that the program prints the counter and stays running?
   You can do nothing except press the Ctrl + C key combination to kill it.

**What just happened?**

We have set up a GLib main loop with a single source of events, a timeout.

Initially, we set the `counter` variable to 0.

```c
int counter = 0;
```
We prepare a function called `printCounter` to print the `counter` variable's value, and increase its value by one immediately after printing. Then we return `true` to indicate that we want the counter to continue.

```c
bool printCounter() {
    std::printf("%d\n", counter++);
    return true;
}
```

In the constructor, we create a `Timeout` object with a 1000 ms interval pointing to our `printCounter` function. This means that `printCounter` will be called at every 1-second interval, and it will be repeatedly called as long as `printCounter` returns `true`.

```c
public Main ()
{
    Timeout.add(1000, printCounter);
}
```

In the `main` function, we instantiate the `Main` class, create a `MainLoop` object, and call `run`. This will cause the program to stay running until we manually terminate it. When the loop is running, it can accept events submitted to it. The `Timeout` object that we created earlier produces such an event. Whenever the timer interval expires, it notifies the main loop, which in turn calls the `printCounter` function.

```c
static int main (string[] args)
{
    Main main = new Main();
    var loop = new MainLoop();
    loop.run ();
    return 0;
}
```

Now, let's take a look at the JavaScript code. If you notice, the class structure is a bit different from what we learned in the previous chapter. Here we use Seed Runtime's construction of class.

```javascript
GLib = imports.gi.GLib;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;
```

Here, we import `GLib` and `GObject`. Then we construct a class called `Main`, which is based on `GObject`.

Here is how we do it. The following code says that we subclass `GType` into a new class called `Main` and pass the object structure into the argument.

```javascript
Main = new GType(
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Main",
```
The first member of the object is `parent`, which is the parent of our class. We assign it with `GObject.Object.type` to denote that our class is derived from `Object` in the `GObject` module that we imported previously. Then we name our class as `Main`. After that, we put the functions inside the `init` function, which is also the constructor of the class.

The content of the class member is similar to what we've seen in the Vala code and it is quite straightforward.

```
init: function() {
  var counter = 0;
  this.printCounter = function() {
    Seed.printf("%d", counter++);
    return true;
  };
  GLib.timeout_add(0, 1000, this.printCounter);
}
```

Then we have the code that is analogous to what we have in Vala's static `main` function. Here we create our `Main` object and create the GLib's main loop.

```
var main = new Main();
var context = GLib.main_context_default();
var loop = new GLib.MainLoop.c_new(context);
loop.run();
```

**Have a go hero – stopping the timeout**

Our program counts forever. Can you make it stop after the counter reaches 10?

You can just play with the `printCounter` return value.

Or even better, can you make it stop totally, meaning that the program would exit after the counter reaches 10?

You can ignore the return value and rearrange the code, and somehow pass the `loop` object into the `Main` class. In the `printCounter` function, you can call `loop.quit()` whenever it reaches 10 to make the program break the main loop programmatically.
GObject signals

GObject provides a signaling mechanism that we can hook into. In the previous chapter, we have discussed the Vala signaling system. Internally, it is actually using the GObject signaling system, but it is so transparent that it is seamlessly integrated into the language itself.

Time for action – handling GObject signals

Let us see how to do it in JavaScript:

1. Create a new script called core-signals.js and fill it with the following code:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

GLib = imports.gi.GLib;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Main = new GType({
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Main",
    signals: [
        {
            name: "alert",
            parameters: [GObject.TYPE_INT]
        }
    ],
    init: function(self) {
        var counter = 0;

        this.printCounter = function() {
            Seed.printf("%d", counter++);
            if (counter > 9) {
                self.signal.alert.emit(counter);
            }
            return true;
        };
        GLib.timeout_add(0, 1000, this.printCounter);
    }
});

var main = new Main();

var context = GLib.main_context_default();
var loop = new GLib.MainLoop.c_new(context);
```

main.signal.connect('alert', function(object, counter) {
    Seed.printf("Counter is %d, let's stop here", counter);
    loop.quit();
});
loop.run();

2. Run it and notice the messages printed:

0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
Counter is 10, let's stop here

What just happened?

With the GObject signaling system, we can subscribe for notifications that are emitted by an object. We just need to provide a handler that will perform some action upon receiving the signal.

Here, we declare our signal in an array by putting an object with names and parameters as the content of the object. The parameter type is the type that is known by the GLib system. If our signal does not have any parameters, we can omit it.

    signals: [
    {
        name: "alert",
        parameters: [GObject.TYPE_INT]
    }
    ],

    main.signal.connect('alert', function(object, counter) {
        Seed.printf("Counter is %d, let's stop here", counter);
        loop.quit();
    });
Then we subscribe to the signal and provide a closure that just prints the `counter` value and breaks the main loop. Note that the parameter is defined in the second parameter of the closure. The first parameter is reserved for the object itself.

Finally, we emit the signal by calling the signal by its name. `self` is the `Main` class we pass in the `init` function.

```javascript
if (counter > 9) {
    self.signal.alert.emit(counter);
}
```

As soon as we call this, the signal will be processed in the main loop and will be delivered to the objects that subscribe to it.

**Have a go hero – writing it in Vala**

Compared with the previous code, signal declaration, emission, and subscription are easier in Vala, as we've seen it the last time. How about trying to write the previous code in Vala?

**GLib properties**

Properties are key-value pairs in a storage system that are available in all instances of `GObject`, which is the base class for all objects in the GNOME system. One useful feature of properties is that we can subscribe for changes when the value is changed.

**Time for action – accessing properties**

We are going to learn how to set and get a value to and from a property as well as monitor the changes.

1. Create a new script called `core-properties.js` and fill it with this code:

   ```javascript
   #!/usr/bin/env seed
   GLib = imports.gi.GLib;
   GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

   Main = new GType({
       parent: GObject.Object.type,
       name: "Main",
       properties: [
           {
               name: 'counter',
               type: GObject.TYPE_INT,
           }
       ]
   });
   ```
default_value: 0,  
minimum_value: 0,  
maximum_value: 1024,  
flags: (GObject.ParamFlags.CONSTRUCT
    | GObject.ParamFlags.READABLE
    | GObject.ParamFlags.WRITABLE),  
}

init: function(self) {
    this.print_counter = function() {
        Seed.printf("%d", self.counter++);
        return true;
    }
    this.monitor_counter = function(obj, gobject, data) {
        Seed.print("Counter value has changed to " + obj.counter);
    }
    GLib.timeout_add(0, 1000, this.print_counter);
    self.signal.connect("notify::counter", this.monitor_counter);
}
});

var main = new Main();
var context = GLib.main_context_default();
var loop = new GLib.MainLoop.c_new(context);
loop.run();

2. And this is the Vala counterpart (you can create a new project called
   core-properties and fill core_properties.vala with this code):

   using GLib;

   public class Main : Object
   {
      public int counter {
        set construct;
        get;
        default = 0;
      }

      public bool print_counter() {
        stdout.printf("%d\n", counter++);
        return true;
      }
   }
Using GNOME Core Libraries

```java
public void monitor_counter() {
    stdout.printf("Counter value has changed to %d\n", counter);
}

public Main () {
}

construct {
    Timeout.add(1000, print_counter);
    notify["counter"].connect ((obj)=> {
        monitor_counter ()
    });
}

static int main (string[] args) {
    Gtk.init (ref args);
    var app = new Main ();
    Gtk.main ();
    return 0;
}
```

3. Run it and notice the messages printed. Note that you can press the Ctrl + C combination keys to stop the program.

Counter value has changed to 0
Counter value has changed to 1
Counter value has changed to 2
Counter value has changed to 3
Counter value has changed to 4
Counter value has changed to 5
Counter value has changed to 6
..
**What just happened?**

In the JavaScript code, we need to declare the properties inside the `properties` array, and fill it with the property's object.

Here we describe that our property has the name `counter` and is of type integer. It needs to declare the default, minimum, and maximum values. It also needs the flags. From the flags, we can see `GObject.ParamFlags.CONSTRUCT`, which means that the property is initialized in the construction phase. It means that the default value is set when the object is created. We also see that it is readable and writable.

```javascript
properties: [
    {
        name: 'counter',
        type: GObject.TYPE_INT,
        default_value: 0,
        minimum_value: 0,
        maximum_value: 1024,
        flags: (GObject.ParamFlags.CONSTRUCT |
                GObject.ParamFlags.READABLE |
                GObject.ParamFlags.WRITABLE),
    }
]
```

In the following code, we subscribe for changes. We use the signaling system and the name of the signal is constructed with the `notify::` keyword followed by the property's name. After this, every change that happens to the property will trigger the signal handler.

```javascript
self.signal.connect("notify::counter", this.monitor_counter);
```

Here we set the value of the property by increasing its value. Note that here we modify the value; hence the value monitor will be triggered first, and then the actual value is printed by `printf`.

```javascript
this.print_counter = function() {
    Seed.printf("%d", self.counter++);
    return true;
}
```

And the following code shows how to read the value:

```javascript
this.monitor_counter = function(obj, gobject, data) {
    Seed.print("Counter value has changed to " + obj.counter);
}
```
In contrast with the JavaScript code, the properties declaration in Vala is very simple. The declaration is similar to the normal variable declaration with some additions.

In the following code, the `set construct` expression means that it is writable and the default value is initialized in the construction phase. `get` means that it is readable, and `default` defines the default value.

```vala
public int counter {
  set construct;
  get;
  default = 0;
}
```

However, there is no mechanism to set the minimum and maximum value.

Then we see how reading and writing the property are done like reading and writing a normal variable. From outside the class, we can use the normal way to refer a member variable, which is by using an object name followed by a dot and the property name.

```vala
public bool print_counter() {
  stdout.printf("%d\n", counter ++);
  return true;
}

public void monitor_counter() {
  stdout.printf("Counter value has changed to %d\n", counter);
}
```

Subscribing for changes also uses the usual signaling mechanism, with the exception that we insert the property name in square brackets following the signal name, `notify`.

```vala
notify["counter"].connect ((obj)=> {
  monitor_counter ();
}
```

There is something new in the code; something we have not seen before. It is the `construct` keyword. It is basically an alternative way to construct an object similar to the normal constructors. This style of construction is close to how GObject construction is being carried out in the actual generated C code.

Despite the differences between these JavaScript and Vala codes, both allow the use of a property just like a plain member of the class. So, in both languages, you can access the `counter` property as `main.counter` (assuming that the object's name is `main`).
Chapter 4

Pop quiz – why the value of zero is printed out

From the output, we saw this:

Counter value has changed to 0

Q1. We did not set the counter to 0 explicitly, did we? So, why did it happen?

1. Because the property has the set construct keyword defined.
2. Because 0 is the default value.

Have a go hero – making a property read-only

When a property is read-only, we can no longer set its value. Now, let’s try to make the counter property read-only. Hint: Play with the property flag.

Configuration files

In many cases we need to somehow read from a configuration file in order to customize how our program should behave. Here, we will learn how to use the simplest configuration mechanism in GLib using a configuration file. Imagine that we have a configuration file and it contains the name and version of our application so that we can print it somewhere inside our program.

Time for action – reading configuration files

Here’s how to do it:

1. Create a configuration file; let’s call it core-keyfile.ini. Its content is as follows:

[General]
name = "This is name"
version = 1

2. Create a new Vala project and name it core-keyfile. Put the core-keyfile.ini file inside the project directory (but not in src).

3. Edit core_keyfile.vala to look like this:

```vala
using GLib;

public class Main : Object
{
    KeyFile keyFile = null;
    public Main ()
```
Using GNOME Core Libraries

```java
{  
keyFile = new KeyFile();  
keyFile.load_from_file("core-keyfile.ini", 0);  
}

public int get_version()  
{  
  return keyFile.get_integer("General", "version");  
}

public string get_name()  
{  
  return keyFile.get_string("General", "name");  
}

static int main (string[] args)  
{  
  var app = new Main ();  
  stdout.printf("%s %d\n", app.get_name(), app.get_version());  
  
  return 0;  
}
```

4. The JavaScript code (let's call it core-keyfile.js) looks like this (remember to put the .ini file in the same directory as the script):

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

GLib = imports.gi.GLib;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Main = new GType{
  parent: GObject.Object.type,  
  name: "Main",  
  init: function(self) {  
    this.get_name = function() {  
      return this.keyFile.get_string("General", "name");  
    }  
    
    this.get_version = function() {  
      return this.keyFile.get_integer("General", "version");  
    }  
  }
} 
```
this.keyFile = new GLib.KeyFile.c_new();
this.keyFile.load_from_file("core-keyfile.ini");
}
});

var main = new Main();
Seed.printf("%s %d", main.get_name(), main.get_version());

5. Run the program and look at the output:

"This is name" 1

What just happened?
The configuration file we are using has a key-value pairs structure conforming to the Desktop Entry Specification document of freedesktop.org. In the GNOME platform, this structure is commonly used, mainly in the .desktop files, which are used by the launcher. People using Windows might find this similar to the .ini format, which is also used for configuration.

GLib provides the KeyFile class to access this type of configuration file. In our constructor, we have this snippet:

```java
keyFile = new KeyFile();
keyFile.load_from_file("core-keyfile.ini", 0);
```

It initializes an object of KeyFile, and loads the core-keyfile.ini file into the object.

If we jump a bit in our core-keyfile.ini file, we have a section, as shown, written inside a pair of square brackets.

```ini
[General]
```

And then all the entries following it can be accessed by specifying the section name. Here we provide two methods, get_version() and get_name(), as shortcuts to get the value of the name and version entries in the configuration file.

```java
public int get_version()
{
    return keyFile.get_integer("General", "version");
}

public string get_name()
{
    return keyFile.get_string("General", "name");
}
```
Inside the methods, we just get the integer value from the `version` entry and get the string value from the `name` entry. We also see that we obtain the entries under the `General` section. And in these methods we just return the value immediately.

As shown in the following code, we consume the values from the methods and print them:

```plaintext
stdout.printf("%s %d\n", app.get_name(), app.get_version());
```

Quite easy, isn't it? The JavaScript code is also easy and straightforward; so it does not need to be explained further.

### Have a go hero – multi-section configuration

Let's try adding more sections inside the configuration file and accessing the values. Imagine that we have a specific section called `License` that has `license_file` and `customer_id` as the entries. Imagine that we will use this information later to check whether the customer has the right to use the software.

### GIO, the input/output library

In real life, our program must be able to access files wherever they are stored, locally or remotely. Imagine that we have a set of files that we need to read. The files are spread both locally and remotely. GIO will make it easy for us to manipulate these files as it provides an API to interact with our files in an abstract way.

### Time for action – accessing files

Let's see how it works:

1. Let's create a new script called `core-files.js`, and fill it with these lines:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

GLib = imports.gi.GLib;
Gio = imports.gi.Gio;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Main = new GType({
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Main",
    init: function(self) {
        this.start = function() {
            var file = null;
                         "core-files.js"];
```
for (var i = 0; i < files.length; i++) {
    if (files[i].match(/http:/)) {
        file = Gio.file_new_for_uri(files[i]);
    } else {
        file = Gio.file_new_for_path(files[i]);
    }

    var stream = file.read();
    var data_stream = new Gio.DataInputStream.c_new(stream);
    var data = data_stream.read_until("", 0);
    Seed.print(data)
}

var main = new Main();
main.start();

2. Alternatively, you can create a Vala project called core-files. Fill src/core_files.vala with this code:

```
using GLib;

public class Main : Object
{
    public Main ()
    {
    }

    public void start ()
    {
        File file = null;
        string[] files = {"http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Text_file",
                          "src/core_files.vala"};

        for (var i = 0; i < files.length; i++) {
            if (files[i].has_prefix("http:")) {
                file = File.new_for_uri(files[i]);
            } else {
                file = File.new_for_path(files[i]);
            }

            var stream = file.read();
            var data_stream = new DataInputStream(stream);
```
Using GNOME Core Libraries

```c
size_t data_read;
lon data = data_stream.read_until("", out data_read);
std.out.printf(data);
}
}
static int main (string[] args)
{
    var app = new Main();
    app.start();
    return 0;
}

3. Run the program, and notice that it fetches the Wikipedia page from the Internet as well as the source code of the program from the local directory.
```

What just happened?

GIO aims to provide a set of powerful virtual filesystem APIs. It provides a set of interfaces that serve as a foundation to be extended by the specific implementation. For example, here we use the GFile interface that defines the functions for a file. The GFile API does not tell us where the file is located, how the file is read, or other such details. It just provides the functions and that's it. The specific implementation that is transparent to the application developers will do all the hard work. Let's see what this means.

---

96
In the following code, we get the file location from the array `files`. Then we check if the location has an HTTP protocol identifier or not; if yes, we create the `GFile` object using `file_new_for_uri`, otherwise we use `file_new_for_path`. We can, of course, use `file_new_for_uri` even for the local file, but we need to prepend the `file://` protocol identifier to the filename.

```javascript
if (files[i].match(/\^http:/)) {
    file = Gio.file_new_for_uri(files[i]);
} else {
    file = Gio.file_new_for_path(files[i]);
}
```

This is the only difference between handling the remote file and the local file. And after that we can access files either from the local drive or from a web server by using the same function with GIO.

```javascript
var stream = file.read();
var data_stream = new Gio.DataInputStream.c_new(stream);
var data = data_stream.read_until("", 0);
```

Here we use the `read` function to get the `GFileInputStream` object. Notice here that the API provides the same function wherever the file is.

The resulting object is a stream. A stream is a sequence of data that flows from one end to the other. The stream can be passed to an object and can transform it to become another stream or just consume it.

In our case, we get the stream initially from the `file.read` function. We transfer this stream into `GDataInputStream` in order to easily read the data. With the new stream, we ask GIO to read the data until we find nothing, which means it has reached the end of the file. And then we spit the data out onto the screen.

## Network access with GIO

GIO provides adequate functions to access the network. Here we will learn how to create socket client and server programs. Imagine that we are building a simple chat program that can send data from one end to another.
Time for action – accessing a network

For brevity, we will do it only in JavaScript now; you can look at the Vala program in core-server and core-client projects code that accompany this book. Ok, so let’s see what are the steps needed to access the network.

1. Create a new script called core-server.js and fill it with these lines:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

GLib = imports.gi.GLib;
Gio = imports.gi.Gio;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Main = new GObject.Type({
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Main",
    init: function(self) {
        this.process = function(connection) {
            var input = new Gio.DataInputStream.c_new (connection.get_input_stream());
            var data = input.read_upto("\n", 1);
            Seed.print("data from client: " + data);
            var output = new Gio.DataOutputStream.c_new (connection.get_output_stream());
            output.put_string(data.toUpperCase());
            output.put_string("\n");
            connection.get_output_stream().flush();
        }
    }
    this.start = function() {
        var service = new Gio.SocketService();
        service.add_inet_port(9000, null);
        service.start();
        while (1) {
            var connection = service.accept(null);
            this.process(connection);
        }
    }
});

var main = new Main();
main.start();
```
2. Run this script. The program will stay running until we press Ctrl + C.

3. Then create another script called `core-client.js`; here is the code:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

GLib = imports.gi.GLib;
Gio = imports.gi.Gio;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Main = new GType({
  parent: GObject.Object.type,
  name: "Main",
  init: function(self) {
    this.start = function() {
      var address = new Gio.InetAddress.from_string("127.0.0.1");
      var socket = new Gio.InetSocketAddress({address: address, port: 9000});
      var client = new Gio.SocketClient();
      var conn = client.connect(socket);
      Seed.printf("Connected to server");
      var output = conn.get_output_stream();
      var output_stream = new Gio.DataOutputStream.c_new(output);
      var message = "Hello\n";
      output_stream.put_string(message);
      output.flush();
      var input = conn.get_input_stream();
      var input_stream = new Gio.DataInputStream.c_new(input);
      var data = input_stream.read_upto("\n", 1);
      Seed.printf("Data from server: " + data);
    }
  }
});

var main = new Main();
main.start();
```
4. Run this program and notice the output of both the server and the client programs. They can talk to each other!

What just happened?

GIO provides high-level as well as low-level networking APIs that are really easy to use. Let’s take a look at the server first.

Here we open a service in port number 9000. It is an arbitrary number; you can use your own number if you want, with some restrictions:

```javascript
var service = new Gio.SocketService();
service.add_inet_port(9000, null);
service.start();
```

You can’t run the service if there is already another service running with a port number that is the same as yours. Also, you have to run your program as root if you want to use a port number below 1024.

And then we enter an infinite loop that is called when the service is accepting an incoming connection. Here, we just call our process function to handle the connection. That’s it.

```javascript
while (1) {
    var connection = service.accept(null);
    this.process(connection);
}
```

The server’s basic activity is defined as easily as that. The details of the processing is another story.
Then, we create a `GDataInputStream` object based on the input stream coming from the connection. And then we read the data in until we find the end of line character which is `\n`. It is one character, so we put `1` there as well. And then we print the incoming data.

```javascript
var input = new Gio.DataInputStream.c_new (connection.get_input_stream());
var data = input.read_upto("\n", 1);
Seed.print("data from client: " + data);
```

To make things interesting, we want to return something to the client. Here we create an object of the `GDataOutputStream` class that is coming from the connection object. We change the data coming from the client to uppercase, and we send it back through the stream. In the end, we make sure everything is sent by flushing down the pipe. That's all on the server side.

```javascript
var output = new Gio.DataOutputStream.c_new (connection.get_output_stream());
output.put_string(data.toUpperCase());
output.put_string("\n");
connection.get_output_stream().flush();
```

On the client side, initially, we make an object of `GInetAddress`. The object is then fed into `GInetSocketAddress` so we can define the port of the address that we want to connect to.

```javascript
var address = new Gio.InetAddress.from_string("127.0.0.1");
var socket = new Gio.InetSocketAddress({address: address, port: 9000});
```

Then we connect the `socket` object with `SocketClient` into `GSocketClient`. After this, if everything is OK, the connection to the server is established.

```javascript
var client = new Gio.SocketClient ();
var conn = client.connect (socket);
```

On the client side, in principle, the process occurs in the opposite way as it would occur on the server side. Here we create `GDataOutputStream` first, based on the stream coming from the connection object. Then we just send the message into it. We also want to flush it so all the remaining data in the pipeline is flushed out.

```javascript
var output = conn.get_output_stream();
var output_stream = new Gio.DataOutputStream.c_new(output);

var message = "Hello\n";
output_stream.put_string(message);
output.flush();
```
Then, we expect to get something from the server; so we create an input stream object. We read from it until we find a newline, and we print the data.

```javascript
var input = conn.get_input_stream();
var input_stream = new Gio.DataInputStream.c_new(input);
var data = input_stream.read_upto("\n", 1);
Seed.printf("Data from server: " + data);
```

**Have a go hero – making an echo server**

**Echo server** is a service that returns everything that is sent to it as it is, without any modifications. For example, if we send "Hello", the server will also send back "Hello". Sometimes it is used for checking whether the connection between two hosts is working. How about modifying the server program to be an echo server?

We can put it in an infinite loop, but if we type "quit", the server disconnects.

**Understanding GSettings**

Previously, we have used the GLib configuration parser to read our application configuration. Now we will try to use a more advanced settings system with GSettings. With this, we can access configurations throughout the GNOME platform, including all the applications that use the system.

**Time for action – learning GSettings**

Let’s see what the GSettings configuration system looks like as visualized by the `dconf-editor` tool:

1. Launch a terminal.
2. Run `dconf-editor` from the terminal.
3. Navigate through the `org` tree on the left-hand side of the application, and go through `gnome`, `desktop`, and then `background`.

**What just happened?**

GSettings is a new introduction in GNOME 3. Before, the configuration was handled with GConf. In GNOME 3, every shipped GNOME application has been migrated to use GSettings. The concept of storing the settings in GConf and GSettings remains the same, that is, by using key-value pairs. However, GSettings contains improvements in many aspects, including more restrictive usage by enforcing schema as metadata. With GConf, we can freely store and read any values from the system.

GSettings is actually only a top-level layer. Underneath, there is a low-level system called dconf, which handles the actual storing and reading of the values. The tool we discuss here shows the keys and values in a hierarchy so we can browse, read, and even write a new value (if the schema says it’s writable, of course).

In the screenshot we can see that `org.gnome.desktop.background` has many entries; one of them is `picture-uri`, which contains the URI of the desktop’s background image.

**GSettings API**

In this book, the API is more interesting than the administrative tools. After we see GSettings visually, it is time to access GSettings through API.
Time for action – accessing GSettings programmatically

Imagine that we create a tool to set the background image of our GNOME desktop. Here is how to do it:

1. Create a new Vala project called `core-settings`, and modify `core_settings.vala` with the following:

```vala
using GLib;

public class Main : Object
{
    Settings settings = null;
    public Main ()
    {
        settings = new Settings("org.gnome.desktop.background");
    }

    public string get_bg()
    {
        if (settings == null) {
            return null;
        }

        return settings.get_string("picture-uri");
    }

    public void set_bg(string new_file)
    {
        if (settings == null) {
            return;
        }

        if (settings.set_string("picture-uri", new_file)) {
            Settings.sync();
        }
    }

    static int main (string[] args)
    {
        var app = new Main();
        stdout.printf("%s\n", app.get_bg());
        app.set_bg("file:///usr/share/backgrounds/gnome/Wood.jpg");
        return 0;
    }
}
```
2. The JavaScript code is quite straightforward; here we have a snippet of it just to see the adaptation needed from the Vala code:

```javascript
init: function(self) {
  this.settings = null;

  this.get_bg = function() {
    if (this.settings == null)
      return null;

    return this.settings.get_string("picture-uri");
  }

  this.set_bg = function(new_file) {
    if (this.settings == null)
      return;

    if (this.settings.set_string("picture-uri", new_file)) {
      Gio.Settings.sync();
    }
  }

  this.settings = new Gio.Settings({schema: 'org.gnome.desktop.background'});
}
```

3. Run it and see the change in your current desktop background image. Your current desktop background will change to the file specified in the code.

**What just happened?**

In this exercise, we use the already installed schema owned by the desktop, which is org.gnome.desktop.background, so we can just use the API to access the settings. Let's take a look at the details.

First, we initiate the connection to GSettings by specifying the schema name, which is org.gnome.desktop.background, and it returns a GSettings object.

```javascript
settings = new Settings("org.gnome.desktop.background");
```

Then we put a simple safety net just in case the initialization fails. In the real world, we can perform reinitialization rather than just a simple return.

```javascript
if (settings == null) {
  return null;
}
```
After that, we obtain a value of type \texttt{string} under the key \texttt{picture-uri}, and we can consume it in any way we want.

\begin{verbatim}
    return settings.get_string("picture-uri");
\end{verbatim}

Finally, we set the value using the same key. If it is successful, we ask GSettings to save it to the disk by calling the \texttt{sync} function. Easy, right?

\begin{verbatim}
    if (settings.set_string ("picture-uri", new_file)) {
        Settings.sync ();
    }
\end{verbatim}

\section*{Summary}

In this chapter, we learned a lot about the GNOME core libraries. Even though we did not touch everything in the libraries, we managed to tackle all the basics and essentials needed to build our GNOME application.

We know now that GLib provides a main loop that handles all the events from various sources. We discussed the GObject property and the signaling system. We also tried to look into the events processed by the main loop by posting with the timeouts, and signals when a value of a property has changed. Regarding the programming languages, we found out that Vala is more integrated with GNOME, and JavaScript requires more code to use GObject properties or signals.

We had an exercise of accessing files both locally and remotely, and we found out that the API provided by GIO is very easy to use because it abstracts the way we access those files wherever they are.

With GIO, we also did an experiment of building a simple client and server chat program and we found out that to create such an interesting program requires quite a minimal amount of code, both in JavaScript and Vala.

Finally, we had a discussion about GSettings and tried to read and write the GNOME desktop's background image with it.

After we master the foundation of the GNOME application, the next step is to learn the basics of a graphical program in the next chapter.
Building Graphical User Interface Applications

GTK+ has been the de facto graphical user interface (GUI) toolkit for GNOME since the project’s inception. Lately, Clutter joined as the alternative, providing a fluid animating user interface powered by OpenGL. These two make a good set of base toolkits to choose from when developing a GUI application for GNOME.

In this chapter, we will learn how to create applications with GTK+ and Clutter. Specifically, we will take a look at:

- Creating a basic GTK+ application
- Programming with plain GTK+
- GUI programming with Clutter

Before we start

Developing an application with Clutter requires that you have a working OpenGL-enabled environment as mentioned in Chapter 1, Installing GNOME 3 and SDK. If your environment is not supported, the program will not start at all. However, GTK+ application development does not require any hardware support.
Creating a basic GTK+ application

Let’s start by using the basic widgets of GTK+: label and button. We saw a mockup once in Chapter 2, Preparing Our Weapons, and here again, we will use a mockup as our blueprint to create an application. But now, we will add a feature to the mockup to make our plan more concrete. Imagine that we want to create an application, which is shown by the following mockup:
Each image on the mockup shows a particular state of the application. By following the state from one image to the next, it makes the whole sequence flow, which is called the interaction flow. Concretely, this shows us the interaction by the user immediately followed by the response of the application. The user interaction is represented by a graphical icon, which is drawn on top of the item on the application screen that the user is interacting with. In this mockup we only have click interaction, which is represented by a dotted circle to indicate that a mouse click is performed on the item.

Let’s see the mockup closely. The first application state is shown by image number 1. It shows a label that is aligned to the center, and three buttons with the middle one in the pressed state. The image number 2 shows that the user clicks on the first button. The image number 3 shows the application's response. We see that the image is moved to the left and the button state is changed to the pressed state. Also shown there is the middle button’s state, which is set to the normal state. If we follow the next image until the end, we have the complete possible interaction in our application.

From here we can try to plan what widgets need to be used. For the window, we could use a simple GtkWindow. We can use a GtkLabel for the label in the center of the application. If we use a normal GtkButton for the buttons, we need to reset all the buttons when one of the buttons is pressed. So here we can use a special button called GtkRadioButton to get the feature of setting all the buttons to the inactive state except the button that we press. When we know what widgets to use, then we can start doing the implementation.

### Time for action – implementing the mockup

We briefly did a GUI application with Vala in Chapter 2, Preparing Our Weapons, so now we will create an application in JavaScript to experiment with labels and buttons according to the mockup.

1. Run Glade as a standalone program and create a new file called gtk-basic-widgets.ui and put it into a dedicated directory called gtk-basic-widgets.

2. On the Palette dock, find a Box object inside the Containers section. Click on it and click on the blank window on the right. When asked, the Number of items value is 2. You can use the – and + buttons or just enter the number 2 inside it.
3. Now we can see that the box on the window is divided into two boxes; let's call them top and bottom box.

4. Again, click on the Box object inside the Containers section and click on the bottom box. Our bottom box will be divided into three boxes.

5. Our second group of boxes here is named automatically as box2. Check the Orientation value in the General tab of box2. Change this to Horizontal.

6. In the General tab, set the Homogeneous value to Yes.

7. Now we have our bottom box divided horizontally into three boxes. Let's remember these new boxes as left, center, and right boxes.

8. Find the label on the Control and Display section in the Palette dock. Click on it, and then click on the top box. Now we have the label put into the top box.

9. Find label1 on the Widgets dock, and click on the Packing tab. Change the value of Expand to Yes, by just clicking on its value.

10. Now our label expands the area on the top box.

11. Find Toggle Button on the Control and Display section in the Palette dock. Click on it and click on the left box. Continue to click on Toggle Button and then click on the middle box, and then the right box.

12. For the middle and right buttons, we need to specify the button group so that they can be selected. In the General tab of these buttons, find the Group option. Click on the ellipsis button (shown with three dots) and select radiobutton1.

13. Now we have all buttons filling the bottom boxes.

14. Click on the middle button, set the Active value (it can be found in the General tab) as Yes.

15. Click on the label, open the General tab, and set the value of Label to in the center.

16. Click on the left button, click on the Label on optional image option, and fill Label with Go Left. Repeat the same actions with the middle and right button, and set the labels to Go Center and Go Right respectively.

17. For all the buttons, we go to the General tab on each button and set the value of Draw indicator to No, and Horizontal alignment for child to 0.5.

18. Create a new script called gtk-basic-widgets.js with code that looks like this:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

Gtk = imports.gi.Gtk;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;
Main = new GType({
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Main",
    init: function(self) {
```
```javascript
this.go_left = function(object) {
    if (object.active) {
        self.label.set_label("going left");
        self.label.set_alignment(0, 0.5);
    }
}

this.go_center = function(object) {
    if (object.active) {
        self.label.set_label("in the center");
        self.label.set_alignment(0.5, 0.5);
    }
}

this.go_right = function(object) {
    if (object.active) {
        self.label.set_label("going right");
        self.label.set_alignment(1, 0.5);
    }
}

var ui = new Gtk.Builder()
this.ui = ui;
ui.add_from_file("gtk-basic-widgets.ui");
var window = ui.get_object("window1");
window.resize(300, 400);
window.show_all();
window.signal.destroy.connect(Gtk.main_quit);

this.label = ui.get_object("label1");
ui.get_object("radiobutton1").signal.toggled.
    connect(this.go_left);
ui.get_object("radiobutton2").signal.toggled.
    connect(this.go_center);
    ui.get_object("radiobutton2").set_active(true);
ui.get_object("radiobutton3").signal.toggled.
    connect(this.go_right);
}
});

Gtk.init(Seed.argv);
var main = new Main();
Gtk.main();```
19. Run the application. Try to press the buttons and see whether we fulfill the mockup.

What just happened?
As we saw in Chapter 2, Preparing Our Weapons, we can’t just add the widgets (buttons and a label) directly into a window because the window can only take one widget. Hence, we need a container widget that can hold more than one widget. Because of the desired appearance, we first divide the window into two parts: top and bottom. Then we put another container inside the bottom part. With these containers set, we can then put our widgets inside.

In this example, we use GtkBox (shown as Box in Glade) as the container and set the orientation to indicate how we want to divide the parts. GtkBox does not have a visible part. It lets the widgets that are placed inside to cover the whole area that is allocated to it. When we pack a widget inside Box, the widget gives a hint to Box about its preferred height, then Box will calculate and allocate an area according to the height and let the widget draw itself into the area. Box automatically arranges the widgets that are added into it according to the orientation that we have specified. So, we don’t put the widgets with certain coordinates but rely on how Box arranges them.

Our first box is a vertical box and we want the bottom part to be of a rather constant size and the top part to adjust its size according to the size of the window. To do that, we specifically make the label1 widget, which is placed inside the top box, expand by setting the Expand packing option to Yes when it is packed, so the label will give extra space that it can get when the parent’s size grows. Together with the Fill option, which is already set to Yes by default, Box will give maximal height instead of giving the actual height of the label.
What happened here is that `Box` will calculate the preferred size for all widgets inside the top and bottom parts and find out the remaining size available according to the size of the window. After that, it maximizes the size of the `label1` widget, which is inside the top part, by adding the remaining size to the original size of the label.

We can’t split the bottom part directly because a `Box` object can only have one orientation. In order to do that, we add a new horizontal `Box` widget inside the bottom part. Now, the situation is a bit different. Here, our `Box` orientation is horizontal and what we want is to split it into three parts equally, so we need to enable the `Homogeneous` option.

In our toggle buttons, we use `radiobutton1` as our group leader. With this, when one of the buttons is pressed then all other buttons are made inactive. We also make the appearance to look like normal buttons by disabling the `Draw indicator` option and making the labels inside the buttons be aligned to the center.

In this example, we have put many widgets in the hierarchy, meaning that some widgets have parents and children. For example, the window contains the children of all widgets attached to it and its children. The vertical `Box` widget has children of label and the horizontal `Box` widget and its children. The horizontal `Box` widget has all buttons as its children, and so on. Understanding the hierarchy is very important so we can know the structure of the application. The hierarchy is visible in Glade in the `Inspector` dock.

```javascript
Gtk.init(Seed.argv);
var main = new Main();
Gtk.main();
```

Here we have the initialization code of GTK+. `Gtk.init` prepares the graphical environment so that our application is run as a GUI application. `Seed.argv` provides a list of arguments that are passed into our application. In this example it is an empty list. Then we initialize our `Main` class. After that, we enter the GTK+ main loop by calling `Gtk.main`.

In this part of the code, we load the `gtk-basic-widgets.ui` file with a `Gtk.Builder` object:

```javascript
this.ui = new Gtk.Builder();
this.ui.add_from_file("gtk-basic-widgets.ui");
```

Make sure that the path is correct.

Then we get the reference of our window by just finding its name, which is `window1`.

```javascript
var window = this.ui.get_object("window1");
```

If you change the name to something else, then you need to change it in this code too.

We can use the `get_object` function to find any widgets that we use in Glade as long as the name is correct.
Building Graphical User Interface Applications

Then we resize the window and show everything in it on the screen.

```javascript
window.resize(300, 400);
window.show_all();
```

This part will terminate the application whenever the window is closed.

```javascript
window.signal.destroy.connect(Gtk.main_quit);
```

If we don’t have this code, the application will still be running even if the window is closed. One way to check whether your application is still running is to run the `ps` command in a terminal.

In the following code, we connect the toggled signal of all the buttons to their respective handler. A toggled signal is emitted by a button whenever the state is changed, either from the active to inactive state or vice versa.

```javascript
this.label = ui.get_object("label1");
ui.get_object("radiobutton1").signal.toggled.
    connect(this.go_left);
ui.get_object("radiobutton2").signal.toggled.
    connect(this.go_center);
ui.get_object("radiobutton3").set_active(true);
ui.get_object("radiobutton2").signal.toggled.connect(this.go_right);
```

When the `radiobutton1` button is toggled, the signal handler `go_left` function is called. For `radiobutton2`, it is `go_center`, and for `radiobutton3`, it is `go_right`. For `radiobutton2`, we initialize it to be active so that it matches with the mockup’s initial state.

In the `go_left` function, we set the label to going left, and we make the label to be left aligned by setting the first variable of the `set_alignment` function to 0. The second variable is for the vertical alignment.

```javascript
this.go_left = function(object) {
    if (object.active) {
        self.label.set_label("going left");
        self.label.set_alignment(0, 0.5);
    }
}
```

It is always set to 0.5. The alignment value range is from 0 (left) to 1 (right). The vertical alignment value is also from 0 (top) to 1 (bottom). Remember also that when we set Horizontal alignment for child for all buttons to 0.5 in Glade, it means that the label inside the button is set to be center aligned.
What we really want is to set these settings only when the button is active, and not otherwise. Hence, we guard the function with `if (object.active)` in order to avoid the label and alignment setting to be called twice. In this example, the guard does not make any difference if we don’t have it. But in a real live application, the guard is sometimes necessary in order to avoid duplicate calls, which can lead to confusion and even make the performance slower if there are some heavy calculations inside the handler.

A similar thing happens to the `go_center` and `go_right` functions. But there, we set the alignment to be centered with an argument of `0.5` and right alignment with an argument of `1`.

**Pop quiz**

Q1. If we have the value of horizontal alignment as `0.3`, where is the place of a widget visually?

1. Center
2. Slightly to the right
3. Slightly to the left

Q2. If we have the value of vertical alignment as `0.3`, where is the place of a widget visually?

1. Center
2. Slightly to the right
3. Slightly to the left

**Have a go hero – creating a Vala version**

Now you can try to port this simple code to a Vala version by using the example we’ve used in Chapter 2, Preparing Our Weapons. The port should be straightforward and pretty easy.

**Time for action – adding icons to the buttons**

Now imagine that we want to add icons to our buttons. Icons are usually added into buttons to explain more about the intended functionality represented by the button. This will become more important if the label on the button is short or ambiguous. Let’s go through the following steps to add icons to the buttons:

1. While still on `gtk-basic-widgets.ui`, click on the left button.
2. Navigate to the General tab and find the image widget option just under the Label with optional image option.
3. Click on the ellipsis button and it will bring up a dialog.

4. Click on the New button and it will create an image widget.

5. Now find this widget on the widget list. It should be initially named `image1`.

6. Click on the image, navigate to the General tab, and find Stock ID under Edit image. Click on it and find the Left icon. The icon name is `gtk-justify-left`.

7. Repeat the process, but now use the Center (`gtk-justify-center`) and Right (`gtk-justify-right`) icons for the middle and right buttons.

8. In the code, add these lines in the constructor:
   ```javascript
   var s = Gtk.Settings.get_default();
   s.gtk_button_images = true;
   ```

9. Run it.

---

**What just happened?**

The images were created outside the widget hierarchy in the application. It means that it neither has parent widgets nor children. It is just created "somewhere" in the code. We use these images by tying them to the buttons. By default, these images will not be displayed.

```javascript
var s = Gtk.Settings.get_default();
s.gtk_button_images = true;
```

With this code, the images are then displayed by GTK+. 
Have a go hero – adjusting the icon placement

Go on, explore the available properties visible in the General tab in the Widgets dock. There is the Image position property that can be used to adjust the placement of the icon. With that property, we can set the right alignment icon to be placed on the right and the center alignment icon to be placed at the center of the button. What you need to do is just activate that switch and that’s it!

Porting the code without GtkBuilder

We’ve always been using Glade to design our UI, and GtkBuilder to load the design at runtime. We will use Glade in the rest of our book, but now let's try to do GTK+ programming at a lower level to grasp the essentials of GTK+, which is not obvious when using Glade. This knowledge becomes more important when our project becomes larger and larger, and at some point will stumble upon performance problems, layout problems, and so on.

Time for action – programming with raw GTK+

Now we will execute a JavaScript code that uses raw GTK+ programming to implement the mockup and the interaction flow.

1. Create a JavaScript file named gtk-basic-widgets-sans-glade.js inside a directory with a similar name without the .js extension.

2. Use this code for the script:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

Gtk = imports.gi.Gtk;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Main = new GType({
  parent: GObject.Object.type,
  name: "Main",
  init: function(self) {
    this.go_left = function(object) {
      if (object.active) {
        self.label.set_label("going left");
        self.label.set_alignment(0, 0.5);
      }
    }
    this.go_center = function(object) {
      if (object.active) {

        ```
Building Graphical User Interface Applications

```javascript
self.label.set_label("in the center");
self.label.set_alignment(0.5, 0.5);

this.go_right = function(object) {
    if (object.active) {
        self.label.set_label("going right");
        self.label.set_alignment(1, 0.5);
    }
}

var window = new Gtk.Window();
window.signal.destroy.connect(Gtk.main_quit);
var topBottomBox = new Gtk.Box();
topBottomBox.orientation = Gtk.Orientation.VERTICAL;
topBottomBox.set_homogeneous(false);
window.add(topBottomBox);

var label = new Gtk.Label();
this.label = label;
label.set_text("in the center");
topBottomBox.pack_start(label, true, true, 0);

var buttonBox = new Gtk.Box();
buttonBox.set_homogeneous(true);
topBottomBox.pack_start(buttonBox, false, false, 0);

var leftButton = new Gtk.RadioButton.with_label(null, "Go left");
    var centerButton = new Gtk.RadioButton.with_label_from_widget(leftButton, "Go center");
    var rightButton = new Gtk.RadioButton.with_label_from_widget(leftButton, "Go right");

    leftButton.signal.clicked.connect(this.go_left);
    centerButton.signal.clicked.connect(this.go_center);
    rightButton.signal.clicked.connect(this.go_right);

    leftButton.draw_indicator = centerButton.draw_indicator =
rightButton.draw_indicator = false;

    centerButton.active = true;
    leftButton.xalign = 0.5;
    centerButton.xalign = 0.5;
    rightButton.xalign = 0.5;
```
buttonBox.pack_start(leftButton, false, true, 0);
buttonBox.pack_start(centerButton, false, true, 0);
buttonBox.pack_start(rightButton, false, true, 0);

window.show_all();
window.resize(300, 400);

})

Gtk.init(Seed.argv);
var main = new Main();
Gtk.main();

3. Run it; it should have the exact same visual as the version that uses Glade and GtkBuilder.

What just happened?

We won't discuss the part of the code that is similar to our previous experiment, but rather look at the manual widgets' declarations more closely.

First we create a GtkWindow and connect the destroy signal so that the application will terminate gracefully whenever the window is closed.

var window = new Gtk.Window();
window.signal.destroy.connect(Gtk.main_quit);

In this part, we prepare a box that splits the window into top and bottom parts. In here, we explicitly say that our box is a vertical and non-homogeneous box. Then we add it into the window, which is a single-child container widget.

var topBottomBox = new Gtk.Box();
topBottomBox.orientation = Gtk.Orientation.VERTICAL;
topBottomBox.set_homogeneous(false);
window.add(topBottomBox);

Next, we prepare a label and pack it into the top box. In Glade, we explicitly specify the number of items to be placed into the box, while in manual GTK+ programming, we just pack it into the box, one by one without any possibilities to declare in advance the number of items. Glade requires the number just to prepare the placeholders where we can put our items.

var label = new Gtk.Label();
this.label = label;
label.set_text("in the center");
topBottomBox.pack_start(label, true, true, 0);
In this code, we pack the `label` variable with the Fill and Expand properties' values set to `true`. 0 there means that we should not add any padding during packing.

After that, we prepare the box for the buttons. We only set the `homogeneous` property without touching the orientation as it is already horizontal by default. And here, we just pack it without the Fill and Expand values set:

```javascript
var buttonBox = new Gtk.Box();
buttonBox.set_homogeneous(true);
topBottomBox.pack_start(buttonBox, false, false, 0);
```

In this part, we create the first button:

```javascript
var leftButton = new Gtk.RadioButton.with_label(null, "Go left");
```

And next, two buttons are added with `leftButton` as the group leader:

```javascript
var centerButton = new Gtk.RadioButton.with_label_from_widget(leftButton, "Go center");
var rightButton = new Gtk.RadioButton.with_label_from_widget(leftButton, "Go right");
```

This part just connects the clicked signals of these buttons:

```javascript
leftButton.signal.clicked.connect(this.go_left);
centerButton.signal.clicked.connect(this.go_center);
rightButton.signal.clicked.connect(this.go_right);
```

In here, we set the `draw_indicator` property to `false` so that our radio button will look like a plain button:

```javascript
leftButton.draw_indicator = centerButton.draw_indicator =
rightButton.draw_indicator = false;
```

This part is for activating the middle button as shown in the first state of the mockup:

```javascript
centerButton.active = true;
```

These parts are to set the alignment of the labels inside the buttons. The value of 0.5 means that all of them are aligned to the center:

```javascript
leftButton.xalign = 0.5;
centerButton.xalign = 0.5;
rightButton.xalign = 0.5;
```

After that, we pack the buttons with only the Fill property to be set to `true`. 
The rest of the code looks similar to the GtkBuilder-enabled code. What we can see from this is that manual GTK+ programming will give you more knowledge on GTK+ API.

```csharp
buttonBox.pack_start(leftButton, false, true, 0);
buttonBox.pack_start(centerButton, false, true, 0);
buttonBox.pack_start(rightButton, false, true, 0);
```

If your .ui file in your project becomes larger and larger, loading the file during startup may take a while. In this case, you can consider doing the packing manually, especially if your .ui file is stable enough, in that it has not changed a lot during the development. On the other hand, if your .ui file keeps changing, using Glade and GtkBuilder may be worth a consideration because manual GTK+ can sometimes make your head dizzy. This is because, unfortunately, the API itself is not really intuitive and can be easily misused.

However, it is a very good idea to keep your user interface clean and well structured, so you can go ahead in either way. Planning in advance about what widgets to use by using the mockup is one good practice.

## GUI programming with Clutter

Clutter is usually used for creating more compelling GUI applications as it provides rich animation and effective features, and is also used for rendering with OpenGL. Yet, it hides all OpenGL-specific programming from the developers. Different from GTK+, Clutter is a scene graph based canvas, which we can put anything into in any place we want. Every object on the stage is a 2D surface, while the stage itself is a 3D space.

### Time for action – implementing the mockup with Clutter

Let’s introduce ourselves to Clutter by implementing the mockup and its interaction flow with Clutter.

1. Create a new JavaScript file called clutter-basic.js in a directory called clutter-basic-vala.
2. Fill the script with this code:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed
Clutter = imports.gi.Clutter;
Pango = imports.gi.Pango;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;
Main = new GType{
  parent: GObject.Object.type,
  name: "Main",
```
init: function(self) {
    var stageColor = new Clutter.Color();
    stageColor.from_string("#b0b0b0");

    var labelColor = new Clutter.Color();
    labelColor.from_string("#000000");

    var buttonColor = new Clutter.Color();
    buttonColor.from_string("#505050");

    var buttonPressedColor = new Clutter.Color();
    buttonPressedColor.from_string("#a0a0a0");

    var buttonTextColor = new Clutter.Color();
    buttonTextColor.from_string("#000000");

    var buttonLeft = new Clutter.Rectangle();
    buttonLeft.width = 100;
    buttonLeft.height = 40;
    buttonLeft.x = 0;
    buttonLeft.y = 360;
    buttonLeft.color = buttonColor;
    buttonLeft.set_border_color(stageColor);
    buttonLeft.set_border_width(1);

    var buttonCenter = new Clutter.Rectangle();
    buttonCenter.width = 100;
    buttonCenter.height = 40;
    buttonCenter.x = 100;
    buttonCenter.y = 360;
    buttonCenter.color = buttonColor;
    buttonCenter.set_border_color(stageColor);
    buttonCenter.set_border_width(1);

    var buttonRight = new Clutter.Rectangle();
    buttonRight.width = 100;
    buttonRight.height = 40;
    buttonRight.x = 200;
    buttonRight.y = 360;
    buttonRight.color = buttonColor;
    buttonRight.set_border_color(stageColor);
    buttonRight.set_border_width(1);

    var s = Clutter.Stage.get_default();
    s.color = stageColor;
    this.s = s;
    s.width = 300;
    s.height = 400;
var fd = Pango.FontDescription.from_string("Sans 16");
var label = new Clutter.Text();
label.set_font_description(fd);
label.set_text("in the center");
label.color = labelColor;
label.x = (s.width - label.width)/2;
label.y = 100;

var buttonFd = Pango.FontDescription.from_string("Sans 12");

var buttonLeftText = new Clutter.Text();
buttonLeftText.set_font_description(buttonFd);
buttonLeftText.set_text("Go Left");
buttonLeftText.color = buttonTextColor;
buttonLeftText.x = (buttonLeft.width - buttonLeftText.width)/2;
buttonLeftText.y = (buttonLeft.height - buttonLeftText.height)/2 + buttonLeft.y;

var buttonCenterText = new Clutter.Text();
buttonCenterText.set_font_description(buttonFd);
buttonCenterText.set_text("Go Center");
buttonCenterText.color = buttonTextColor;
buttonCenterText.x = (buttonCenter.width - buttonCenterText.width)/2 + buttonLeft.width;
buttonCenterText.y = (buttonCenter.height - buttonCenterText.height)/2 + buttonLeft.height;

var buttonRightText = new Clutter.Text();
buttonRightText.set_font_description(buttonFd);
buttonRightText.set_text("Go Right");
buttonRightText.color = buttonTextColor;
buttonRightText.x = (buttonRight.width - buttonRightText.width)/2 + buttonLeft.width + buttonCenter.width;
buttonRightText.y = (buttonRight.height - buttonRightText.height)/2 + buttonRight.y;

buttonLeft.set_reactive(true);
buttonLeft.signal.button_press_event.connect(function(self) {
    buttonLeft.color = buttonPressedColor;
    buttonRight.color = buttonCenter.color = buttonColor;
    label.save_easing_state();
    label.set_text("going left");
    label.set_x(0);
    label.restore_easing_state();
return true;
});

buttonCenter.set_reactive(true);
buttonCenter.signal.button_press_event.connect(function(self) {
    buttonCenter.color = buttonPressedColor;
    buttonRight.color = buttonLeft.color = buttonColor;
    label.save_easing_state();
    label.set_text("in the center");
    label.set_x((s.width - label.width)/2);
    label.restore_easing_state();
    return true;
});

buttonRight.set_reactive(true);
buttonRight.signal.button_press_event.connect(function(self) {
    buttonRight.color = buttonPressedColor;
    buttonLeft.color = buttonCenter.color = buttonColor;
    label.save_easing_state();
    label.set_text("going right");
    label.set_x(s.width - label.width);
    label.restore_easing_state();
    return true;
});

buttonCenter.color = buttonPressedColor;

s.add_actor(buttonLeft);

s.add_actor(buttonRight);

s.add_actor(buttonCenter);

s.add_actor(buttonLeftText);

s.add_actor(buttonRightText);

s.add_actor(buttonCenterText);

s.add_actor(label);

s.show_all();
})

Clutter.init(Seed.argv);
var main = new Main();

Clutter.main();
3. If you want Vala instead of JavaScript code, let’s create a new Vala project using a similar setting with non-GUI application settings when creating a project in Anjuta. Let’s create a new project called clutter-basic-vala.

4. Edit the src/Makefile.am file and find this part:
   clutter_basic_vala.VALAFLAGS = \
   --pkg gtk+-3.0

   Replace the two lines and edit it to look exactly like this:
   clutter_basic_vala.VALAFLAGS = \
   --pkg clutter-1.0

5. Edit the configure.ac file and find this line:
   PKG_CHECK_MODULES(CLUTTER_BASIC_VALA, [gtk+-3.0])

   Replace the whole line with this line:
   PKG_CHECK_MODULES(CLUTTER_BASIC_VALA, [clutter-1.0])

6. To avoid repeating codes in our book, let’s try to port the JavaScript code to Vala; it is pretty straightforward and based on our previous exposure to both programming languages, this would be an easy task.

7. Run the program and it will look like the following screenshot:
Building Graphical User Interface Applications

What just happened?
We can immediately see that the code size is huge. This is because Clutter is more low-level than GTK+. It only has very basic widgets and we need to create our own widgets from scratch. We can also see that the interaction is more fluid and pleasing because of the implicit animations provided by Clutter.

In the technical aspect, we can see that the objects can be placed anywhere on the stage. We call the objects in Clutter actors. We can apply a role of animation or effects to them and move them around the stage.

Compared to JavaScript, coding Clutter with Vala requires a bit of setting up in the beginning. We need to adjust the build system by modifying the configure.ac and Makefile.am files.

The adjustment enables the build system to pick up the Clutter library both during compilation in the Vala and during the building of the generated C-code files. What we did was we removed the GTK+ library by removing the gtk+-3.0 settings both in Makefile.am and configure.ac and we replaced it instead with clutter-1.0. This is because we don't need GTK+ at all in this example. With JavaScript, it is far more easier as we don't need to do anything and it will work automatically.

Let's see the code more in depth to get a better understanding of how Clutter works.

The main code is pretty simple and similar to the GTK+ counterpart. We have init and the main loop function.

    Clutter.init(Seed.argv);
    var main = new Main();
    Clutter.main();

First, we define a few colors that are used in the application. We can see that it parses the hexadecimal RGB color format and then we store that into a variable:

    var stageColor = new Clutter.Color();
    stageColor.from_string("#b0b0b0");

Imagine this as our button widget. We hardcode the size and location to simplify the code, and then set the color to one of the colors we defined earlier.

In real applications, the size and location should be coming from either a calculation or pre-defined settings.

    var buttonLeft = new Clutter.Rectangle();
    buttonLeft.width = 100;
    buttonLeft.height = 40;
    buttonLeft.x = 0;
buttonLeft.y = 360;
buttonLeft.color = buttonColor;
buttonLeft.set_border_color(stageColor);
buttonLeft.set_border_width(1);

This part defines a stage to place all the widgets. The stage is comparable to the GtkWindow
widget that we had earlier.

var s = Clutter.Stage.get_default();
s.color = stageColor;
this.s = s;
s.width = 300;
s.height = 400;

This part of the code defines a font description. It takes the description from a string and
returns a logical representation of a font, which is then used by the labels:

var fd = Pango.FontDescription.from_string("Sans 16");

After that, we define the label's text, font, color, and location:

var label = new Clutter.Text();
label.set_font_description(fd);
label.set_text("in the center");
label.color = labelColor;
label.x = (s.width - label.width)/2;
label.y = 100;

And here we define the text of a button. A quite good improvement can be seen here,
that is, we no longer hardcode the position of the text:

var buttonFd = Pango.FontDescription.from_string("Sans 12");
var buttonLeftText = new Clutter.Text();
buttonLeftText.set_font_description(buttonFd);
buttonLeftText.set_text("Go Left");
buttonLeftText.color = buttonTextColor;
buttonLeftText.x = (buttonLeft.width - buttonLeftText.width) /2;
buttonLeftText.y = (buttonLeft.height - buttonLeftText.height) /2 +
buttonLeft.y;

Then, we set the button to be reactive. Without this code, the button would not be able
to react to an event coming into it.

buttonLeft.set_reactive(true);
This defines the handler of the `button-press-event` event. In the handler, we set the pressed button and reset the color of other buttons to achieve a pressed feeling. Then, we ask for an implicit animation by saving the easing state before changing the label's property and restoring it afterwards. Implicit animations mean that we don’t specifically ask for a certain type of animation in our code. Instead, we rely on Clutter to do animation whenever we change a property in an actor.

```javascript
buttonLeft.signal.button_press_event.connect(function(self) {
    buttonLeft.color = buttonPressedColor;
    buttonRight.color = buttonCenter.color = buttonColor;
    label.save_easing_state();
    label.set_text("going left");
    label.set_x(0);
    label.restore_easing_state();
    return true;
});
```

As soon as we change the value, Clutter will treat that value as the target value, and it will set up a timer and on each frame of the timer, it increases (or decreases) the current value of the property towards the target. All of this happens in the background and happens automatically.

Here in our actor label, we make two changes that may be transformed with animations by Clutter, which are changing the text and changing the position of the text. Please note here that we set the text first before changing the position because the position requires the new width of the text, which is available until we set the text value. If we put this in a reverse sequence, then the label position will not be correct.

One more thing to observe is that our function must return `true` whenever we have done something when reacting to the signal. If, somehow, we skip or refuse to do something about the signal, we have to return `false` so another event handler in the queue will take care of the signal.

```javascript
s.add_actor(buttonLeft);
    s.add_actor(buttonRight);
    s.add_actor(buttonCenter);
    s.add_actor(buttonLeftText);
    s.add_actor(buttonRightText);
    s.add_actor(buttonCenterText);
    s.add_actor(label);
```

In here, we add all the actors into the stage so it can be shown as follows:

```javascript
s.show_all();
```

Ultimately, we show all actors and the stage together.
Have a go hero – playing with the animations

There are numerous transformations that we can apply to the buttons or the label. For example, when the button is pressed we can scale up the button so it will be bigger, and when we release the button we scale it back down to the original size. And all of this will be animated. We can add more closures to handle the button-release-event event to restore the original values of the actors that we want to animate.

Summary

In this chapter, we have learnt about creating GUI applications using both GTK+ and Clutter. We know that the system requirements for each toolkit are different and we also learnt about the kind of applications that can be created using these toolkits.

With GTK+, we have learnt that GTK+ provides ready-to-use widgets. We have also learnt to use some of them, such as Button, Box, Window, and Label. We know how to set the alignment of the widgets and manage them by setting their properties. We know how to connect an event to a handler that will react to the event and do something useful.

With Clutter we learnt that it can create an application with pleasing visual animations. But we also know the limitations. One of them being it only provides a very basic foundation before we can easily use them to make an application.

We also learnt that the development of a GUI application can be made a lot easier by using mockup and interaction flow. We know that we can plan in advance by selecting what widgets to use in our application.

In the next chapter, we will learn to extend GTK+ by creating our own widgets.
As we have seen from our experience in the previous chapter, GTK+ provides standard widgets. In some cases, we can survive using GTK+ standard widgets in our applications. But when our application design and requirements become more and more complex, implementing our own widgets is inevitable. Especially so when we do several projects which share similar design and requirements. Otherwise, we will end up with copying code and this will become a maintenance nightmare.

Implementing our own widget can also mean customizing widgets, which is adding or removing functionalities that are not available in the original widgets. In this chapter, we will learn how to create GTK+ widgets from scratch and also extend them. We will also talk about how to paint or draw the widget internally using the Cairo canvas API.

Specifically, we will discuss the following topics:

- Overriding widgets
- Adding new functionalities to a widget
- Implementing a custom widget
- Maintaining widgets in a compiled library

So let's get started.
Before we take off

We are going to use the raw GTK+ programming instead of using Glade in this chapter. Hence, our Vala projects will use the same settings that we used in Chapter 3, Programming Languages and Chapter 4, Using GNOME Core Libraries. The project we create here is a Vala GTK+ (simple) project; disable GtkBuilder support for the user interface and enable the No license option.

Overriding the widget’s standard functions

Usually, we customize how a widget behaves and change how it looks by simply putting different default values in one of its properties. This is not a problem if we just want to customize the widget once or twice. We can just instantiate it as an object and customize the properties. But if we want to reuse the widget, we need to subclass the widget and customize the subclass further. Subclassing means that we create a new widget class based on a particular existing widget class.

Time for action – overriding the set_title function

Now let’s subclass GtkWindow and imagine that we want to change the behavior of the set_title function of GtkWindow. The function is used to set the window’s title with the specified string passed in the argument. The new behavior that we want to introduce here is to always add a special word into the window’s title whenever we set the set_title function.

1. Create a new Vala project called custom-overriding.
2. In the src/custom_overriding.vala file, use the following code:

   ```vala
   using GLib;
   using Gtk;

   public class CustomWindow : Window
   {
       public CustomWindow ()
       {
       }
   }

   public new void set_title(string newTitle)
   {
       title = "Custom: " + newTitle;
   }
   ```
3. Our JavaScript equivalent code looks like the following. Put it inside a script file called `custom-overriding.js`:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

Gtk = imports.gi.Gtk;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

CustomWindow = new GType({
    parent: Gtk.Window.type,
    name: "CustomWindow",
    class_init: function(klass, prototype) {
        prototype.set_title = function(newTitle) {
            this.title = "Custom: " + newTitle;
        }
    },
});

Gtk.init(Seed.argv);
var window = new CustomWindow();
window.set_title("My window");
window.signal.destroy.connect(Gtk.main_quit);
window.show_all();
Gtk.main();
```
4. Run it and see that the title is automatically prepended with Custom: word as shown in the following screenshot:

![Custom: My window](image.png)

**What just happened?**

Let’s take a look at the Vala code first.

In the following declaration, we tell Vala that we have a new class called CustomWindow and it is a derivative of Window:

```vala
public class CustomWindow : Window
```

There is no need to explicitly say GtkWindow here because we are using the Gtk and GLib namespaces with these lines:

```vala
using GLib;
using Gtk;
```

With the previous code, we have the possibility of the full name of Window being either Gtk.Window or GLib.Window. But because there is no such thing as GLib.Window, we are now pretty sure that we are subclassing this new CustomWindow class from Gtk.Window.

We then have an empty constructor here; because it is empty, we can omit this if we want:

```vala
public CustomWindow ()
{
}
```

In the following part, we declare a function called set_title. Here, we override the set_title function with our own function:

```vala
public void set_title(string newTitle)
{
    title = "Custom: " + newTitle;
}
```
In order to do this, the function arguments (also called method signatures) must be exactly the same, otherwise Vala will issue a warning message when we call the function with the following line of code:

```javascript
window.set_title("My window");
```

This function is called instead of the original `Gtk.Window`'s `set_title` function. Inside the body of our `set_title` function, we set the value of the `title` property with the `Custom: string` and concatenate it with `newTitle`, which is being provided as the argument of the function.

The next time we want to reuse this in our applications, we need to instantiate our `CustomWindow` class instead of the normal `Window` class by just issuing the following code:

```javascript
var window = new CustomWindow();
```

Then our newly defined window object will have all the functionalities coming from `Gtk.Window` as well as the new behavior set in the `set_title` function.

With Seed, we define the new behavior in `set_title` by using the following JavaScript code:

```javascript
class_init: function(klass, prototype) {
    prototype.set_title = function(newTitle) {
        this.title = "Custom: " + newTitle;
    }
}
```

This is a bit different from what we have learned in Chapter 4, Using GNOME Core Libraries, where we put a new function directly inside the `init` function. In the previous code, we put the function inside `prototype`, a bit similar to what we have seen in Chapter 3, Programming Languages, even though it is conceptually different.

Actually, we can directly use it inside the `init` function. However, to make it more readable and clearly identify that it is an overridden function, we put this declaration inside the `prototype` parameter of `class_init`. This mimics how GObject works in a C-language code that we connect to the virtual functions (in short, the functions that can be overridden in the derived class) in the `class_init` function.

This is how we do it in JavaScript because the language itself, as we discussed in Chapter 4, Using GNOME Core Libraries, is not a real OOP language. Actually, we can define the function in both the places at the same time, but only the function defined inside the `init` function will be used. This is because all the functions created in `class_init` are created when the class is created; and the functions created in `init` are created when the object is instantiated. Therefore, the functions that we declare in `class_init` are overridden in `init` when the object is created later on as both have the same name.
Adding new functionalities

Let’s now imagine that we want to add new functionalities in our widget, not only new behaviors of some old functionality. Imagine that we want to implement a window which has an internal text entry to perform live searches. This widget would display a text entry immediately after we press any key on the keyboard. The text inside the text entry would then be used by another entity in our application to perform a live search.

Time for action – making a composite widget

We knew earlier that a window can’t add more than one child into it, so how are we going to add a text entry and the actual content of the window? Let’s discuss it:

1. Create a script called custom-composite.js and fill it with the following code:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

Gtk = imports.gi.Gtk;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

CustomWindow = new GType(
    parent: Gtk.Window.type,
    name: "CustomWindow",
    signals: [
        {
            name: "search-updated",
            parameters: [GObject.TYPE_STRING]
        }
    ],
    class_init: function(klass, prototype) {
        prototype.show_search_box = function() {
            this.entry.show();
            this.entry.has_focus = true;
        }
        prototype.hide_search_box = function() {
            this.entry.hide();
        }
        prototype.super_add = prototype.add;
        prototype.add = function(widget) {
            if (widget != this.box) {
                this.box.pack_start(widget, true, true);
            } else {
                this.super_add(widget);
            }
        }
    }
);
```
init: function(self) {
    this.box = new Gtk.Box();
    this.box.orientation = Gtk.Orientation.VERTICAL;
    this.entry = new Gtk.Entry();
    this.add(this.box);
    this.box.pack_start(this.entry, false, true);
    this.box.show();

    this.entry.signal.key_release_event.connect(function(obj, event) {
        self.signal.search_updated.emit(self.entry.text);
        return false;
    });

    this.signal.key_press_event.connect(function(obj, event) {
        if (!self.entry.get_visible()) {
            self.show_search_box();
        }
        return false;
    });

    Gtk.init(Seed.argv);
    var window = new CustomWindow();
    var label = new Gtk.Label({label:'This is a text'});
    window.add(label);
    window.resize(400, 400);

    window.signal.connect('search-updated', function(object, value) {
        label.set_text('Searching for keyword: ' + value);
    });

    label.show();
    window.show();
    Gtk.main();
2. Alternatively, you can create a Vala project called `custom-composite` and fill `src/custom_composite.vala` with the following code snippet:

```vala
using GLib;
using Gtk;

public class CustomWindow : Window
{
    Entry entry;
    Box box;
    public signal void search_updated(string value);

    void show_search_box()
    {
        entry.show();
        entry.has_focus = true;
    }

    void hide_search_box()
    {
        entry.hide();
    }

    public override void add(Widget widget) {
        if (widget != box) {
            box.pack_start(widget, true, true);
        } else {
            base.add(widget);
        }
    }

    public CustomWindow()
    {
        box = new Box(Orientation.VERTICAL, 0);
        entry = new Entry();
        box.pack_start (entry, false, true);
        box.show();
        add(box);
        key_release_event.connect((event) =>{
            search_updated(entry.text);
            return false;
        });
        key_press_event.connect((event) =>{
            if (!entry.get_visible()) {
                show_search_box();
            }
        });
    }
}
```
return false;
});

static int main (string[] args)
{
    Gtk.init (ref args);
    var window = new CustomWindow();
    var label = new Label("This is a text");
    window.add(label);
    window.resize(400,400);
    window.search_updated.connect((value) => {
        label.set_text("Searching for keyword " + value);
    });
    label.show();
    window.show();
    Gtk.main();
    return 0;
}

3. Run the program and start typing as shown in the following screenshot:

![Screenshot of the program](image)

**What just happened?**

We have just created a composite widget, that is, a widget that is composed from a few widgets. Our new CustomWindow widget is built using GtkWindow, GtkBox, and GtkEntry and the only interface exposed to the application is the one that is coming from GtkWindow. This is because the widget that we want to extend is the GtkWindow class and not the GtkEntry class or the GtkBox class, so we pick GtkWindow to be our base class.
Creating Widgets

We also add a new signal that is triggered when the user types something into the text entry. The signal outputs the content of the text entry, making it useful to provide the data into something such as a search engine.

Let's see the JavaScript code first:

```javascript
CustomWindow = new GType({
  parent: Gtk.Window.type,
  name: "CustomWindow",
});
```

The preceding class definition tells Seed that our new CustomWindow class is a subclass of GtkWindow and we name this as CustomWindow.

Next, we declare a new signal of type string called search-updated:

```javascript
 signals: [{
  name: "search-updated",
  parameters: [GObject.TYPE_STRING]
 },],
```

We use this signal to tell that our text entry contains a new data that can be used for further processing.

To make it easier to tell the whole story, let's start with the init function first:

```javascript
init: function(self) {
  this.box = new Gtk.Box();
  this.box.orientation = Gtk.Orientation.VERTICAL;
  this.entry = new Gtk.Entry();
};
```

Here, we declare two supporting objects inside our window GtkBox and GtkEntry inside init. At this point, our CustomWindow object is about to be created. We must not put this inside class_init because the class_init function is called only once when the class is created. What we want is that these two supporting objects be created when the CustomWindow object is created, hence we put it inside the init function.

Back to the idea, what we want is to put GtkEntry inside CustomWindow. But because of the limitation of a window that it can't have more than a single child widget, we use GtkBox to take over the container's role in our CustomWindow class. We lay the widgets out vertically, with GtkEntry positioned on the top.

In the following line, we add the box directly into our window:

```javascript
this.add(this.box);
```
But what happens if, in our application, we want to add another widget to our window? Isn't the CustomWindow content now already filled with the box object? That is correct. So we need to come up with something that would put the added widget inside the box object, instead of putting it into the CustomWindow class. We will do this in class_init by redefining the add function. We will see it shortly.

The next step is to pack the GtkEntry class and show the box object:

```javascript
this.box.pack_start(this.entry, false, true);
this.box.show();
```

We add a key-release-event event handler in the following code snippet. So, whenever a key is released, we emit the signal stating that some data is available in the text entry:

```javascript
this.entry.signal.key_release_event.connect(function(obj, event) {
    self.signal.search_updated.emit(self.entry.text);
    return false;
});
```

We trigger the signal by passing the text entry's content. We do this in the key release event instead of doing it in the key press event for performance reasons. We know that when we type something, the text is only ready when we finish typing, that is, after the key is released. If we trigger the signal in the key press event, consider a case when we do a long press to input multiple duplicate characters into the text entry, the signal will be continuously emitted and if we use a not-so-effective search engine, the process could make the application run slower.

Here, we use the key-press-event event to initially show the text entry whenever a key is pressed in our application:

```javascript
this.signal.key_press_event.connect(function(obj, event) {
    if (!self.entry.get_visible()) {
        self.show_search_box();
    };
    return false;
});
```

Let's move to class_init, which contains our method declarations:

```javascript
class_init: function(klass, prototype) {
    prototype.show_search_box = function() {
        this.entry.show();
        this.entry.has_focus = true;
    }
    prototype.hide_search_box = function() {
        this.entry.hide();
    }
}
```
Creating Widgets

We add new utility functions inside our class_init function, so that it will be already available when the object is created later on. The previous functions are about displaying (including grabbing a keyboard focus) and hiding the text entry. This part that follows is about modifying the add function of GtkWindow:

```javascript
prototype.super_add = prototype.add;
prototype.add = function(widget) {
  if (widget != this.box) {
    this.box.pack_start(widget, true, true);
  } else {
    this.super_add(widget);
  }
}
```

As we've seen in the init function, we add a box into our CustomWindow class. In our previous function we have a special treatment that if the added widget is our own box object, we simply call the function in the base class, which is basically the original add function of GtkWindow. We do it by first saving the original function in the super_add variable. After saving the function, we redefine the add function by packing the added widget into our box.

Let's see how to utilize our new CustomWindow widget in an application. In the following code, we just declare a new object from our CustomWindow class:

```javascript
Gtk.init(Seed.argv);
var window = new CustomWindow();
```

Then, we create a new label and add it into our window. Note that here the label is packed into our internal box object:

```javascript
var label = new Gtk.Label({label:'This is a text'});
window.add(label);
```

Then we have the following line:

```javascript
window.resize(400, 400);
```

You can see in the preceding code line that we did not declare the resize function, but we get this for free from our base class, which is the GtkWindow class. It also means that this is not necessarily declared inside GtkWindow, but it can be declared in the GtkWindow class' parent class, or even in the parent class of GtkWindow class' parent, and so on.

This part of the code shows how to use our new signal:

```javascript
window.signal.connect('search-updated', function(object, value) {
  label.set_text('Searching for keyword: ' + value);
});
```
Whenever our signal is emitted, we display the content of the text entry inside the label. In real-world applications, we would provide the value to a search engine, which can either search the document for the word or search from some data in a database.

Next, let's dissect the Vala code. Here, we simply say that our CustomWindow class is subclassed from the Window class:

```vala
public class CustomWindow : Window
```

Now, we declare the entry and box widgets; note that we have not done anything with these:

```vala
Entry entry;
Box box;
```

Then, we declare the new signal. Remember that we use an underscore instead of a dash as a word separator for signals in Vala:

```vala
public signal void search_updated(string value);
```

We define the add function here and pack the widget if the widget is not our box:

```vala
public override void add(Widget widget) {
    if (widget != box) {
        box.pack_start(widget, true, true);
    } else {
        base.add(widget);
    }
}
```

And if it is, we use the original GtkWindow class' add function. Here, we simply use base.add() and are not doing any magic trick like we did with the JavaScript code.

We use the override keyword to indicate that this function overrides the original add function from the parent class. Without this keyword, the function is considered as a totally new function and not related to the parent class' add function.

The rest of the code is quite straightforward and similar to what we have in the JavaScript code, which was covered earlier.
Creating Widgets

Maintaining compatibility

If we look closely at our CustomWindow class, we actually break a compatibility with GtkWindow. GtkWindow can only take a single child widget, but our CustomWindow class can take more than one widget because they will be packed into our internal box. If we want to maintain compatibility with GtkWindow, then we must handle this issue by rejecting the subsequent add requests whenever our CustomWindow class already has a child inside.

We also forgot to redefine the remove function, so whenever we want to remove the child widget, we will always fail because the child widget is stored inside our internal box object, and not inside the CustomWindow class. The GtkWindow class' remove function will reject this, because the parent of the child (which is our internal box) is not the same anymore (which is CustomWindow).

We can fix this. For the first problem, we can check the number of children in our internal box object. If it is more than two (the GtkEntry class and the child itself) after we add a new widget, reject the request. For the second problem, we can just redefine the remove function and remove the child widget from our internal box object.

We can use this.box.get_children().length to get the number of children inside the internal box object.

Have a go hero – hiding the entry after use

We have prepared the hide_search_box function but we have not used it anywhere. Here is an idea: how about hiding the search box when we press the Esc key?

We can check the Esc key by checking the value of event.key.keyval in the key-press-event handler.

Implementing a GTK+ custom widget

The next step is to implement a custom widget, which is not extending from a currently existing widget, but rather creates a widget from scratch. We will need to do this if we really can't find any similar widgets from GTK+ standard widgets, which can do what we require from the widget that we want to implement.

We can only do this with Vala; unfortunately, as the version of Seed used during the writing of this book can't handle the overriding of a function properly when called from within a class.
Our example does not really reflect the real life situation just discussed because you can easily search a widget which can be readily used, instead of implementing it from scratch. However, the example is provided to simply show the effort involved and how to do it.

Imagine that we need a widget which fulfills the following requirements:

- The widget should be able to draw a decoration, such as a rectangle, inside its area
- When we click the widget with a mouse, the color changes, indicating that it is being pressed
- When we release the mouse, the color goes back to the normal state's color
- When we click the widget with a mouse, there would be a signal telling that the widget is activated, and when we release the mouse, another signal would be triggered telling that it is now deactivated

Time for action – implementing the custom widget

Ok, let's do an implementation according to our previous design:

1. **Create a new Vala project called** `custom-new`; **edit** `src/custom_new.vala` and fill it with the following code:

```vala
using GLib;
using Gtk;

public class CustomWidget : DrawingArea
{
    StateFlags state;
    const int MARGIN = 20;
    public signal void activated();
    public signal void deactivated();

    void update_state (int newState)
    {
        switch (newState) {
            case 1: state = StateFlags.SELECTED;
                break;
            case 0:
                default:
                    state = StateFlags.NORMAL;
                break;
        }
    }
```
Creating Widgets

```csharp
    queue_draw();

    public override bool draw(Cairo.Context cr) {
        StyleContext style = get_style_context();
        style.set_state(state);
        int w = get_allocated_width();
        int h = get_allocated_height();
        Gtk.render_background(style, cr, 0, 0, w, h);
        cr.rectangle(MARGIN, MARGIN,
                     w - (MARGIN * 2),
                     h - (MARGIN * 2));
        cr.stroke();
        return true;
    }

    public CustomWidget() {
        update_state(0);
        add_events(Gdk.EventMask.BUTTON_PRESS_MASK
                   | Gdk.EventMask.BUTTON_RELEASE_MASK);
        button_press_event.connect((e) => {
            update_state(1);
            activated();
            return true;
        });
        button_release_event.connect((e) => {
            update_state(0);
            deactivated();
            return true;
        });
    }

    static int main(string[] args) {
        Gtk.init(ref args);
        var window = new Window();
        var widget = new CustomWidget();
        window.add(widget);
        window.show_all();
    }
```
2. Run the program and try testing it with the requirements that we set earlier.

What just happened?

From the code, we can see that it is quite simple to implement our own widget from scratch. Let’s dig it up more.

```csharp
public class CustomWidget : DrawingArea

Our class declaration shows that we are using GtkDrawingArea as our base class. The
GtkDrawingArea class is a blank widget, doing nothing and showing nothing. The feature
of this widget is that we can draw something on top of it. In GTK+ terminology, we call this
widget as drawable. We choose GtkDrawingArea because it fits with our requirements
and it is the usual widget that developers use to implement a new widget from scratch.

StateFlags state;

The following is a variable which will hold the state of the widget, whether it is pressed
or not:

    const int MARGIN = 20;

This is a constant called MARGIN which holds a value of 20. It will be used as the margin of
the rectangle from the edge of the widget. Writing the name of a constant with all uppercase
letters is the convention used in the whole GNOME project, so it’s good to always follow this
convention when we do GNOME application development.
Creating Widgets

These are the two signals that we provide in our widget:

    public signal void activated();
    public signal void deactivated();

This is a utility function which saves the state of the widget and then calls `queue_draw`:

    void update_state (int newState)
    {
      switch (newState) {
        case 1: state = StateFlags.SELECTED;
                  break;
        case 0:
        default:
                  state = StateFlags.NORMAL;
                  break;
      }
      queue_draw ();
    }

The `state` variable basically holds our own interpretation of the state and maps it to the condition of the widget. From the requirements, we want the color to change when the widget is clicked upon or the mouse is released from it. Here, we map the color with the state. Whenever nothing is pressed (or when the mouse is released), we set the state to be in the NORMAL state. Conversely, when the mouse is pressed, we set the state to be in the SELECTED state. These two states are part of an enumeration of many possible states, such as NORMAL, SELECTED, ACTIVE, INSENSITIVE, and so on.

We can learn more about the different possible states by looking for `GtkStateFlags` in DevHelp.

We have the freedom to map these states, but we should apply common sense when doing this. It means that when the widget is pressed, we would think that the widget is now either active or selected or focused instead of being insensitive or disabled. Then we find the closest meaning of this hypothetical state with the previous flags. Hence, in our widget, for the pressed state, we map it with SELECTED and when it is not pressed, we map it with the NORMAL state.

At the end of the function, we call `queue_draw` to make the widget refresh the drawings of the widget. What it basically does is ask GTK+ to call our `draw` function as soon as possible.
The following is our `draw` function, which is responsible for the visual appearance of our widget:

```csharp
public override bool draw(Cairo.Context cr) {

We can draw anything on the top of our widget in this function. What we get from the system passed in the argument is the Cairo Context object. Cairo is the vector-based canvas system used by GTK+ for drawing the widgets. Context is a handle object created by GTK+ with which we can control what to draw, where to draw, and so on. This is similar to the canvas in HTML5.

From the requirements, we must fill the widget with a color depending on the state. So what is the color that we should use? We don't need (and we must not do it!) to declare a color in our widget directly. Instead, we should rely on the GTK+ theming system.

The first thing we do in this function is to get a style context:

```csharp
StyleContext style = get_style_context ();
style.set_state (state);
```

The context controls, among other things, the color or pattern that is used in certain states. This is the state that we set in the update function. Then we set the context with the state information. And after doing this, the style context would automatically switch to the specified state.

We call the `render_background` function, which will fill the color or pattern into our widget in the specified area:

```csharp
int w = get_allocated_width ();
int h = get_allocated_height ();
Gtk.render_background (style, cr, 0, 0, w, h);
```

In this case, we fill the whole area with our color or pattern, starting from the 0,0 coordinates along with the full width and full height of the allocated size of the widget. So we expect that the color or pattern used is specified in the GTK+ theme. If the theme says that the color for the NORMAL state is blue, GTK+ will use blue color to fill the widget, and so on.

After drawing a background according to the requirements, we should draw a foreground with a rectangle. Here, we simply draw a rectangle with the size of the widget reduced almost to the value of MARGIN which is 20 pixels. Here, we expect that the rectangle is drawn within the widget area:

```csharp
cr.rectangle (MARGIN, MARGIN,
    w - (MARGIN * 2),
    h - (MARGIN * 2));
```
In Cairo, we can give many commands, but nothing will be rendered before we really commit them. For drawing stroke commands such as the preceding `rectangle` command, we use the `stroke` function to commit the drawing to the canvas.

```cpp
cr.stroke();
```

After this, the rectangle is really drawn to the widget.

We return a `true` value from the function, indicating that there should be no more processing needed from other parts of the GTK+ system.

```cpp
return true;
```

So, what would trigger the `draw` function to be called? Many of them, including `queue_draw` that we discussed earlier. Another possibility is when we resize the window which hosts the widget, or when some other window is obscuring part of the widget, and so on. Concretely, anything that makes GTK+ think that the widget must be redrawn, will trigger the `draw` function. Because the `draw` function may be called repeatedly all the time, we must carefully design the content of this function to be as minimal as possible. In order to get a pleasing visual appearance of the widget, we should avoid heavy computations or call functions, which process slowly, in the `draw` function. For example, if our widget shows an animation, in order to get a smooth and fluid animation, we must have a frame rate of 60 frames per second (fps). This means that we would expect the `draw` function to be called 60 times a second. This also means that the `draw` function must be executed within 16.67 milliseconds. If we can't achieve this, the animation would stutter, and the whole user experience could be jeopardized.

Now let's see the constructor:

```java
public CustomWidget()
{
    update_state (0);
}
```

Here, we initialize the `state` variable to 0, meaning that the widget is expected to be drawn with the NORMAL state because no mouse press would occur initially.

The following code is essential to be called inside the constructor. This asks the GTK+ system to pass the button press and release events to the widget whenever they occur:

```java
add_events (Gdk.EventMask.BUTTON_PRESS_MASK
            | Gdk.EventMask.BUTTON_RELEASE_MASK);
```
If we don't do this, the widget will not know whether it is pressed or not, hence the following two event handlers would not be called at all:

```javascript
button_press_event.connect((e) => {
    update_state (1);
    activated();
    return true;
});

button_release_event.connect((e) => {
    update_state (0);
    deactivated();
    return true;
});
```

In these event handlers, we return `true` to indicate that the processing is final and we don't want GTK+ to pass the event to other widgets that are possibly in the event pipeline.

We should now notice in our example that the major differences between creating a widget from scratch and subclassing an existing widget in our previous example is in the `draw` function and the event subscription in the constructor. Actually, we could also subclass an existing widget and also implement our own drawing functions. In some particular cases, we could even mix our own drawing with the original drawing function by calling `base.draw()` in our `draw` function.

## Maintaining widgets in a library

When we have quite a few custom widgets that are used in many projects, it is important to make a library out of them so that we don't copy the source code around and then lose track of whether we have modified one of them or not. By collecting them into a library, we only have a single source code and a single library that we can use for those projects.

In *Chapter 3, Programming Languages*, we talked about modularization of the JavaScript code, which is conceptually the same as the preceding principle. With Vala, the process needs more efforts; but at the end of the day, we can reap the benefits of collecting our widgets in a library.
Creating Widgets

Time for action – creating a library

Let’s concentrate on how we should do it in Vala. We will create two projects, one as the example library and the other as the user of that library, using the following steps:

1. First, let’s create a Vala project called custom-library.
2. In src/custom_library.vala, we fill the code from the custom_new.vala file from the custom-new project. We can just copy and paste the code and make some slight adjustments as follows:
   1. Wrap the class declaration with a namespace declaration, so that our code will look like the following:
      ```vala
      namespace CustomWidget {
      public class CustomWidget : DrawingArea
      }
      ```
   2. Don’t forget to put the closing curly bracket at the end of the code.
   3. Remove the static main function from the class.
   4. Using the Files dock, replace the src/Makefile.am file’s whole code with the following code:
      ```make
      AM_CPPFLAGS = \ 
      -DPACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR="$(localedir)" \ 
      -DPACKAGE_SRC_DIR="$(srcdir)" \ 
      -DPACKAGE_DATA_DIR="$(pkgdatadir)" \ 
      $(CUSTOM_LIBRARY_CFLAGS)
      AM_CFLAGS =
      -Wall\ 
      -g
      lib_LTLIBRARIES = libcustomwidget.la
      libcustomwidget_la_SOURCES = \ 
      custom_library.vala config.vapi
      libcustomwidget_la_VALAFLAGS = \ 
      --pkg gtk+-3.0 --library=libcustomwidget -X -fPIC -X 
      -shared -H custom_widget.h
      libcustomwidget_la_LDFLAGS = \ 
      -Wl,-export-dynamic
      ```
3. Build the project by pressing the Shift + F7 key combination. Make sure there are no errors and you should find custom_widget.h and libcustomwidget.vapi in the src directory, and a set of library files in the .libs directory. This means that the library is now ready to be used.

4. Create another project called custom-library-client as an example on how to use the library we created previously. Fill the src/custom_library_client.vala file with the following code:

```vala
using GLib;
using Gtk;
using CustomWidget;

public class Main : Object
{
    public Main ()
    {
        Window window = new Window();
        var w = new CustomWidget.CustomWidget();
        window.set_title("Hello custom widget");

        window.add(w);
        window.show_all();
        window.destroy.connect(on_destroy);
    }

    public void on_destroy (Widget window)
    {
        Gtk.main_quit();
    }

    static int main (string[] args)
    {
        Gtk.init (ref args);
        var app = new Main ();
        Gtk.main ();
        return 0;
    }
}
```

5. Create a lib/ directory inside our project, and get these files from the custom-library project: src/custom_widget.h, src/libcustomwidget.vapi, and all files with a .libs/libcustomwidget.so prefix. Copy the files into the lib/ directory which was just created.
Creating Widgets

6. Replace and fill src/Makefile.am with the following:

```makefile
AM_CPPFLAGS = \
   -DPACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR="$(localedir)" \
   -DPACKAGE_SRC_DIR="$(srcdir)" \
   -DPACKAGE_DATA_DIR="$(pkgdatadir)" \
   $(CUSTOM_LIBRARY_CLIENT_CFLAGS)

AM_CFLAGS = \n   -Wall \n   -g -I../lib/

bin_PROGRAMS = custom_library_client

custom_library_client_SOURCES = \n   custom_library_client.vala config.vapi

custom_library_client_VALAFLAGS = \n   --pkg gtk+-3.0 --pkg libcustomwidget --vapidir ../lib

custom_library_client_LDFLAGS = \n   -Wl,--export-dynamic -lcustomwidget -L../lib

custom_library_client_LDADD = $(CUSTOM_LIBRARY_CLIENT_LIBS)
```

7. Open the Run menu and choose Program Parameters. In the upcoming dialog, expand the Environment Variables box.

8. Create a new entry LD_LIBRARY_PATH and fill the value field with the full path of the lib/ directory, which we have created. For example, in my computer, I have the custom-library-client project in /home/gnome/src/custom-library-client, so I entered /home/gnome/src/custom-library-client/lib in the value field.

9. After this, we can run the application. We should see a similar application as the previous example, but now with the window’s title set as shown in the following screenshot:
What just happened?

In the library project, we enclosed the class with the CustomWidget namespace. This enables us to put this line in the client application:

```vala
Using CustomWidget;
```

In the library, we remove the `static main` function. This is mandatory since a library should never have a `main` function. As we knew earlier that there must be exactly one `main` function as the entry point to our application, and in this case, the entry point is in the `custom-library-client` project.

Then we make modifications to `Makefile.am` to tell both Vala and C compilers that we want to create a library instead of making an application.

The following line tells that we want to create a library with the name of `libcustomwidget.la`:

```makefile
lib_LTLIBRARIES = libcustomwidget.la
```

In practice, this will produce `libcustomwidget.la` and a set of `libcustomwidget.so` library files.

Then, the following line tells that our `libcustomwidget` library is built from the following files:

```makefile
libcustomwidget_la_SOURCES = \
    custom_library.vala config.vapi
```

The following line of code tells us that when compiling the Vala code into a C-language source code and finally the Binary executable file, we want to make a library with the mentioned name, and pass `-fPIC -shared` into the C compiler (`-X` is the option to pass any flag stated after `-X` to the C compiler).

```makefile
libcustomwidget_la_VALAFLAGS = \
    --pkg gtk+-3.0 --library=libcustomwidget -X -fPIC -X -shared -H custom_widget.h
```

The preceding two flags are the most important flags when creating a library, which enables the library to be shared and to be loaded into any location in the memory (PIC itself stands for Position-independent Code). At last, we tell the compiler that we have generated a C header file called `custom_widget.h`. This file is needed by the C compiler in the client project.
Creating Widgets

We then build the project instead of running it because we don’t have the main function in this project. The resulting files must be copied either system-wide in /usr/include (for custom_widget.h), /usr/lib (for the libcustomwidget.so.* files), and /usr/share/vala/vapi (for the libcustomwidget.vapi file) or simply copy all of them into the lib directory in the client project.

Let’s move to the client project.

The only interesting part in the client project is in the src/Makefile.am file.

We specify --pkg libcustomwidget as an additional library. We also specify that the libcustomwidget.vapi would be available in the ../lib directory:

    custom_library_client_VALAFLAGS = \  
    --pkg gtk+-3.0 --pkg libcustomwidget --vapidir ../lib

Without this, Vala would not know where to find the .vapi file, except if we install it system-wide.

This part of the file that follows is for the linker, that it should resolve the symbol using the libcustomwidget library found in ../lib/libcustomwidget.so*:

    custom_library_client_LDFLAGS = \  
    -Wl,--export-dynamic -lcustomwidget -L../lib

While running the application, we set LD_LIBRARY_PATH to the full path which contains the libcustomwidget.so.* files. We don’t need to do this when we have the libraries installed system-wide.

At the end of the day, we should ship the .vapi file, the .h file, and the library files and install them system-wide so the application can easily find and use them, as it is now very easy to use the GTK+ libraries. One big advantage of this library approach is that the library is not only usable by Vala programs, but also can be directly used with C programs or any other programming languages, provided that the header file and the library can be bound into the programming languages in question.
Summary

In this chapter we have learned how to extend an existing widget, combine existing widgets into a new widget, as well as create a new widget. We see that it is quite easy to add or remove functionalities of an existing widget. We also know that it is very important to make our widget backward compatible with the original interface when we extend a widget.

When we created the custom widget, we discussed a bit about painting with Cairo canvas. We touched on the GTK+ styling API so that we can rely on the theming system for the coloring and other paint styles, and avoid hardcoding in our program. We also talked about the importance of keeping the painting function optimal, so that we can keep the performance in a good shape.

Finally, creating widgets is essentially also creating a library. We talked about how to do this with Vala. With this experience so far, we now have more confidence to develop a GNOME application not only by picking already-made widgets, but also extending and creating new ones, and integrating them in our application.

In the next chapter, we will talk about multimedia programming with GStreamer. We will discuss how to utilize the GStreamer framework to play and manipulate media files.
Multimedia capabilities are one of the strong points of GNOME. It provides numerous APIs for developers to easily present multimedia content. This opens quite a broad spectrum of application ideas that can be implemented; for example, a simple audio/video conversion tool, a music or video stream player, CCTV monitoring, or a full-blown education application, to name a few.

In this chapter, we will take a look at the basic usage of GStreamer by presenting audio and video content with the GStreamer API. Specifically, we will discuss the following:

- The GStreamer concept
- Playing audio and video
- Applying filters to stream

Let's get into more detail now.

Packages required

This chapter uses software, namely the MPEG codecs, which are not freely available in the default Linux distribution repositories. Fedora users need to add a third-party repository in order to be able to use the software. Type the following command on the terminal to add this third-party library:

```
```
The following packages need to be installed:

- **Fedora**: gstreamer-plugins-bad, gstreamer-plugins-ugly, gstreamer-ffmpeg, and gstreamer-tools
- **Ubuntu/Debian**: gstreamer0.10-plugins-bad, gstreamer0.10-plugins-ugly, gstreamer0.10-plugins-ffmpeg, gstreamer0.10-tools, and libgstreamer-plugins-base0.10-dev

### Understanding the basic concept of GStreamer

GStreamer is a media-processing framework used by GNOME to support its multimedia feature. It has a plugin infrastructure which provides an abstraction layer for opening, encoding, decoding, and filtering media streams. It means that as long as there is a plugin for a certain multimedia format, we can open or write files or play media with that format. The following diagram shows the simplified architecture of the GStreamer API:

As we can see from the diagram, the application can just use the APIs provided by GStreamer and the implementation of a particular codec or filter can also use the API. The application does not need to know the details of a codec or a filter and vice versa. Unfortunately, in the real world, there are still audio and video player applications which implement everything shown in the diagram by themselves and they differ between each other.

GStreamer has the concept of **elements**. It is the basic part of the entities involved in a media stream. There is an element where the stream originates, there is another element where the stream ends, and also additional elements in between where the stream is manipulated while being passed through it.
We can imagine the data as water. Water flows into a system where the elements are connected with pipes. They are put into the system by an element such as a water gallon, a glass, a respiratory system, or even a reactor, which hypothetically produces water from oxygen and hydrogen molecules.

Inside the system, the water can be manipulated so that the color or smell can be changed by the filter elements. We can even combine these filters.

After that, the water exits the system through an element such as a bucket, a glass, a spray, or even a vaporizer.

Each element at least has a door, which is source, sink, or both. **Source** is where the data flows from and **sink** is where the data flows into. These doors are called **pads**. An element could have more than one pad, for example, for elements which can produce both audio and video streams. These pads can be both statically or dynamically created.

We can see the visualization of the elements as shown in the following diagram:

![Element Diagram]

Each element has its own states, which is either of the following:

- **Null**: The default state of an element
- **Ready**: The state where the stream is ready and waiting to be flown
- **Paused**: The state where the stream is open but the flow is frozen
- **Playing**: The state where the stream is open and is flowing

The data is passed into the system by using buffers as the pipes pass the water into the system. The whole system is orchestrated by employing events which carry control information. The events are sent to the elements so they can react according to the events delivered.

The events—or in GStreamer terms, messages—are delivered through a bus. The bus is created by the pipeline. And by tapping into the bus, we can subscribe to the messages posted there.
Accessing the GStreamer pipeline with the command line

GStreamer provides a tool to help us test the pipeline just by using a command line. This is a very handy tool to quickly see whether the pipeline is correct or not. Let’s imagine a concrete example. Suppose that we want to play a stereo MP3 file. The source element would be the MP3 file opener, which is `filesrc`, and we pass the stream to the next element to `mad`, which is the MP3 decoder. The decoded stream can be then passed to the `audioconvert` element, which converts the raw audio stream into, say, a mono channel.

This newly-modified stream, when passed to `audiosample`, for example, converts it into an audio stream of 8 KHz. Then the final stream is passed to `alsasink` to play the stream into the sound card.

**Time for action – testing the pipeline**

We can implement this pipeline by using the command line and by using the GStreamer tool, `gst-launch`. Let us see how we can achieve this:

1. Open a terminal and type this command in a single line:
   ```
   $ gst-launch-0.10 filesrc location=bass.mp3 ! mad ! audioconvert ! audio/x-raw-int,channels=1 ! audioresample ! audio/x-raw-int, rate=8000 ! alsasink
   ```

2. Listen to the audio being played and see the following output printed on the screen:

   Setting pipeline to PAUSED ...
   Pipeline is PREROLLING ...
   Pipeline is PREROLLED ...
   Setting pipeline to PLAYING ...
   New clock: GstAudioSinkClock
   Got EOS from element "pipeline0".
   Execution ended after 9311663370 ns.
   Setting pipeline to PAUSED ...
   Setting pipeline to READY ...
   Setting pipeline to NULL ...
   Freeing pipeline ...
**What just happened?**

We can visualize the pipeline as shown in the following diagram:

The `gst-launch` tool establishes the pipeline as specified in the command line. We connect the elements involved by using an exclamation mark in between them.

First, we start the pipeline with `filesrc` and specify the property of the location by typing the filename which we want to play, as shown here:

```bash
filesrc location=bass.mp3 !
```

Then we pass the stream to the `mad` element, which is a MP3 decoder, by using the `mad` library:

```bash
mad !
```

Then we pass it to the `audioconvert` element:

```bash
audioconvert ! audio/x-raw-int,channels=1 !
```

Here, we specify the source pad to transform the stream into an integer-format audio with only one channel. Then we pass it to `audioresample` element:

```bash
audioresample ! audio/x-raw-int, rate=8000 !
```

We specify the source pad to transform the stream into an 8-KHz audio stream.

Finally, we pass the stream to the `alsasink` element, which outputs the stream into the soundcard via the **Advanced Linux Sound Architecture (ALSA)**.

```bash
alsasink
```

Finally, we hear the audio being played!
Time for action – programmatically playing the audio

Knowing how to interact with GStreamer elements using the command-line tool is very useful to check whether your pipeline design would work or not. Now let’s try to do this programmatically:

1. Create a new script called audio.js and fill it with the following code:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env node

GLib = imports.gi.GLib;
Gst = imports.gi.Gst;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Main = new GObject.Type(
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Main",
    init: function() {
        var pipeline = new Gst.Pipeline({ name: 'pipe' });
        var filesrc = Gst.ElementFactory.make ('filesrc', 'source');
        var mad = Gst.ElementFactory.make ('mad', 'decoder');
        var converter = Gst.ElementFactory.make ('audioconvert', 'converter');
        var resampler = Gst.ElementFactory.make ('audioresample', 'resampler');
        var alsasink = Gst.ElementFactory.make ('alsasink', 'sink');
        pipeline.add (filesrc);
        pipeline.add (mad);
        pipeline.add (converter);
        pipeline.add (resampler);
        pipeline.add (alsasink);
        filesrc.location = "bass.mp3";
        filesrc.link(mad);
        mad.link(converter);
        caps = Gst.caps_from_string("audio/x-raw-int,channels=1")
        converter.link_filtered(resampler, caps);
        caps = Gst.caps_from_string("audio/x-raw-int,rate=8000")
        resampler.link_filtered(alsasink, caps);
    }

```
Chapter 7

```javascript
this.play = function() {
    pipeline.set_state (Gst.State.PLAYING);
};

Gst.init(Seed.argv);
var main = new Main();
main.play();

var context = GLib.main_context_default();
var loop = new GLib.MainLoop.c_new(context);
loop.run();
```

2. Alternatively, you can also create a Vala project without UI and a license, called `audio.vala`. Fill the `src/audio.vala` file with the following code:

```vala
using Gst;
using GLib;

public class Main : GLib.Object
{
    Pipeline pipeline;

    public Main ()
    {
        pipeline = Gst.parse_launch("filesrclocation=bass.mp3!
            mad!audioconvert!audio/x-raw-int,channels=1!audioresample!
            audio/x-raw-int,rate=4000!alsasink") as Gst.Pipeline;
    }

    public void play() {
        pipeline.set_state (State.PLAYING);
    }

    static int main (string[] args)
    {
        Gst.init (ref args);
        var app = new Main ();
        app.play();
        new MainLoop().run();
        return 0;
    }
}
```
3. Modify `configure.ac` from the following code:

   ```
   PKG_CHECK_MODULES(AUDIO, [gtk+-3.0 ])
   ```

to this:

   ```
   PKG_CHECK_MODULES(AUDIO, [gstreamer-0.10 ])
   ```

4. Modify `src/Makefile.am` from this:

   ```
   audio_VALAFLAGS = \ 
       --pkg gtk+-3.0
   ```

to this:

   ```
   audio_VALAFLAGS = \ 
       --pkg gstreamer-0.10
   ```

5. Don’t forget to copy the `bass.mp3` file in the same directory where you run the program.

6. Run it, and you will hear the same audio being played from the previous experiment.

**What just happened?**

If we take a look at both versions of the code written in Vala and JavaScript, there is quite a significant difference between them. This is not because of the nature of the language but rather because both are using alternative ways to interact with GStreamer.

Let’s start with the JavaScript code. In the following code, we define all the elements involved and the pipeline:

```javascript
var pipeline = new Gst.Pipeline({ name: 'pipe' });
var filesrc = Gst.ElementFactory.make ('filesrc', 'source');
var mad = Gst.ElementFactory.make ('mad', 'decoder');
var converter = Gst.ElementFactory.make ('audioconvert', 'converter');
var resampler = Gst.ElementFactory.make ('audioresample', 'resampler');
var alsasink = Gst.ElementFactory.make ('alsasink', 'sink');
```

In each element we need to declare the name of the element we want and the name by which we want to refer to it. After that we keep it in a local variable for easy access.

We then add all the elements to the pipeline:

```javascript
pipeline.add (filesrc);
pipeline.add (mad);
pipeline.add (converter);
pipeline.add (resampler);
pipeline.add (alsasink);
```
At this point, the elements are just added but not connected to each other. Then, we specify the `location` property of the `filesrc` element as shown here:

```plaintext
filesrc.location = "bass.mp3";
filesrc.link(mad);
mad.link(converter);
```

This is to tell the element that we want to open the `bass.mp3` file. After that we connect the `filesrc` element to the `mad` element. The next step is to continue the wiring by connecting the `mad` element to the `converter` element.

The following code sets the capabilities of the `converter` element, that is, to process the integer-format raw audio stream using just a single channel.

```plaintext
var caps = Gst.caps_from_string("audio/x-raw-int,channels=1")
converter.link_filtered(resampler, caps);
```

With the capabilities in hand, we connect the `converter` element to `resampler` with the `link_filtered` function instead of using the `link` function.

This code reuses the `caps` variable and resets it with the new value:

```plaintext
caps = Gst.caps_from_string("audio/x-raw-int,rate=8000")
resampler.link_filtered(alsasink, caps);
```

In the preceding code, we set the bit rate to 8000 Hertz. Then we connect the `resampler` element with the `caps` variable to the `alsasink` element. The `alsasink` element is used to command the sound card to play the audio. At this point, we do not need to do more connection, so that’s it.

When we need to play the audio, what we need to do is to trigger the state of the pipeline with the `Gst.State.PLAYING` value.

```plaintext
pipeline.set_state (Gst.State.PLAYING);
```

When this is set, the flow starts and ends up in the sound card, so we can hear the audio.

In the Vala version, we slightly change the code to show that there is more than one way to achieve the result. But first let’s review the build infrastructure.

We modified `configure.ac` to include the `gstreamer-0.10` pkgconfig build flag into our build infrastructure so that the C compiler recognizes and knows where to pick up the header files and the required libraries. Here is the code:

```plaintext
PKG_CHECK_MODULES(AUDIO, [gstreamer-0.10 ])
```

Then, we modify the `Makefile.am` file to let the Vala compiler know that we want to use the `Gst` namespace, which comes from `gstreamer-0.10` package.

```plaintext
audio_VALAFLAGS = \
    --pkg gstreamer-0.10
```
Notice that we only have a single line of code to construct the pipeline as shown here:

```c
pipeline = Gst.parse_launch ("filesrc location=bass.mp3 ! mad !
    audioconvert ! audio/x-raw-int,channels=1 ! audioresample ! audio/x-
    raw-int, rate=4000 ! alsasink") as Gst.Pipeline;
```

In the preceding code, we just copy and paste the command-line code version into the
Gst.parse_launch function. This function returns Gst.Element, but we need to convert
that into Gst.Pipeline by just appending as Gst.Pipeline to specify the casting at the
end of the line. After that, we start the flow by setting the state.

```c
pipeline.set_state (State.PLAYING);
```

Notice that in both the versions, we use the GLib main loop so that the system knows about
the events and does not quit immediately. The result is that we need to press Ctrl + C to exit
the program because we don't handle the any event notifying the end of the stream.

## Time for action – handling the events

Now let's continue learning about getting events from the stream so that we can react
properly to each event. Imagine that we need to terminate the application after the stream
ends. Unfortunately, we can only do this with Vala as the current version of the GObject
introspection library used by Seed does not contain the necessary functions to establish
our goal. Execute the following steps to handle these events:

1. We can use the audio project and modify the audio.vala file to be like the
   following snippet of code:

   ```c
   public class Main : GLib.Object
   {
       Pipeline pipeline;
       public signal void eos();
   }

   bool bus_handler (Bus bus, Message message) {
       if (message.type == MessageType.EOS) {
           stdout.printf("End of stream!\n");
           eos();
       }
       return true;
   }

   public Main ()
   {
       pipeline = Gst.parse_launch (*"filesrc location=bass.mp3 !
           mad ! audioconvert ! audio/x-raw-int,channels=1 ! audioresample !
           audio/x-raw-int, rate=4000 ! alsasink") as Gst.Pipeline;
       var bus = pipeline.get_bus ();
       bus.add_watch(bus_handler);
   }
   ```
public void play() {
    pipeline.set_state (State.PLAYING);
}

static int main (string[] args)
{
    Gst.init (ref args);
    var loop = new MainLoop();
    var app = new Main ();
    app.play();
    app.eos.connect(() => {
        loop.quit();
    });
    loop.run();
    return 0;
}

2. Build and run it. We will see that the program just terminates after printing the following output:

    End of stream!

**What just happened?**

What we want is just to react whenever we know that the stream ends. So, we can think of calling a callback upon receiving the event and need to figure out how to trigger the event.

This part of the code gets a GStreamer bus from the pipeline:

    var bus = pipeline.get_bus ();
    bus.add_watch(bus_handler);

As we discussed earlier, the bus carries all the messages posted into it. So we just need to tap the bus by using the add_watch function.

After that, we set up the other parts; first, our own signal:

    public signal void eos();

And the second one is a signal handler:

    bool bus_handler (Bus bus, Message message) {
        if (message.type == MessageType.EOS) {
            stdout.printf("End of stream!\n");
        }
    }
In the preceding code, we set up our own signal to relay the GStreamer message as an event to the client of our class. We do it like this because our client may not know anything about the GStreamer messages, so we simplify the signal by wrapping the GStreamer event with our own event.

The message handler is quite simple, we check whether the message type is an End Of Stream (EOS) message or not. If it is, then we just print out a text and emit our own signal.

The following code shows how the client is connected to our signal:

```javascript
app.eos.connect(() => {
    loop.quit();
});
```

Upon receiving the signal, it just exits the main loop and our objective is achieved.

### Playing a video media

Now let's play a video. But first, we need to come up with the stream design. The design shown in the following diagram should fulfill our needs:
From the preceding diagram, we see that the stream from the file is split into two parts by an Ogg demultiplexer. The results are source streams containing both, audio and video. The video stream is passed into a theora decoder and a color space converter. This plugin is for decoding video content from the media. After that it is passed to the ximage sink. This is for displaying the decoded material to the screen. The audio stream is passed into a vorbis decoder and then to the audio converter and the resampler element. The vorbis plugin is to decode the audio content in the media. After that we pass it to the alsasink, which is for playing the audio into the soundcard.

**Time for action – playing video**

We will play the Ap17_spill.ogg file obtained from Wikipedia. It is an OggTheora video stream with audio. Execute the following steps to play this video:

1. Type the following into the command-line terminal:
   
   ```bash
   gst-launch-0.10 filesrc location="Ap17_spill.ogg" ! oggdemux name=demux demux. ! queue ! theoradec ! ffmpegcolorspace ! ximagesink demux. ! queue ! vorbisdec ! audioconvert ! audioresample ! alsasink
   ```

2. As shown in the following screenshot, a small window will be displayed showing the video being played along with the audio:

   ![Screenshot](image.png)

**What just happened?**

The command-line code strictly follows the design shown earlier. We open the Ap17_spill.ogg file here:

```bash
filesr location="Ap17_spill.ogg" !
```
We create an Ogg demuxer that is connected to filesrc, and we name this demuxer as demux.

```q
oggdemux name=demux demux. !
```

Here, we branch the source of the Ogg demuxer:

```q
queue !
```

The first branch is connected to the theora decoder to get the video stream from the theora stream.

```q
thoradec !
```

Then we pass it to ffmpegcolorspace to get the color space suitable for displaying to the screen:

```q
ffmpegcolorspace !
```

Finally, we pass the video stream to ximagesink to display it to the screen:

```q
ximagesink demux. !
```

We put demux with a period to state that this path, which was connected to the element called demux ends here.

```q
queue !
```

Here, we put another path in the second branch:

```q
vorbisdec !
```

In the following line of code, we use the stream to get the audio stream:

```q
audioconvert ! audioresample ! alsasink
```

This sequence is similar to what we have seen earlier when we play only the audio stream.

It does not matter which stream you want to put first in the command line, whether it is audio or video, as long as you state the end of the queue with the branch name ending with a period as demonstrated previously.

## Have a go hero – defining the audio first

How about giving it a try? Define the audio first in the pipeline, and after that define the video using the command line. There should be no difference in the result though, visually or audibly.
Chapter 7

Time for action – programmatically playing the video

Now imagine that we want to use our preceding stream flow design and implement it in our program. The UI of our program can be very simple, just a video box with a Play/Stop button below it. Let’s do this now:

1. Create a new Vala project, called video. This time, let’s use the GtkBuilder functionality.

2. Edit our video.ui file and put a vertical box with two items. For the top item, we put a DrawingArea widget and use a button at the bottom. Make sure to have the DrawingArea widget expandable.

3. Modify src/Makefile.am to contain the following:
   video_VALAFLAGS =  
   --pkg gtk+-3.0 --pkg gstreamer-0.10 --pkg gstreamer-interfaces-0.10 --pkg gdk-x11-3.0

4. Modify configure.ac to contain the following line:
   PKG_CHECK_MODULES(VIDEO, [gtk+-3.0 gstreamer-0.10 gstreamer-interfaces-0.10 gstreamer-plugins-base-0.10 gdk-x11-3.0])

5. Include a video.vala file, which is available in the code bundle of this book. The main part of the functionalities is shown here:

```vala
public class Main : GLib.Object
{
    const string UI_FILE = "src/video.ui";

    public Main ()
    {
        Builder builder;

        pipeline = new Pipeline ("video");
        src = ElementFactory.make ("filesrc", "filesrc");
        demux = ElementFactory.make ("oggdemux", "demux");
        queue1 = ElementFactory.make ("queue", "queue1");
        queue2 = ElementFactory.make ("queue", "queue2");
        theoraDecoder = ElementFactory.make ("thoradec", "thoradec");
        vorbisDecoder2 = ElementFactory.make ("vorbisdec", "vorbis");
        colorConverter = ElementFactory.make ("ffmpegcolorspace", "colorspace");
        audioConverter = ElementFactory.make ("audioconvert", "audio");
        audioResampler = ElementFactory.make ("audioresample", "resampler");
```
audioSink = ElementFactory.make ("alsasink", "audiosink");
videoSink = ElementFactory.make ("ximagesink", "videosink");

pipeline.add_many (src, demux,
theoraDecoder, vorbisDecoder,
queue1, queue2,
colorConverter, audioConverter,
audioResampler,
    audioSink, videoSink);

src.link (demux);
demux.link_many(queue1, queue2);
demux.pad_added.connect((element, src_pad) => {
    var caps = src_pad.get_caps();
    var name = caps.get_structure(0).get_name();
    Pad sink_pad = null;
    if (name == "video/x-theora") {
        sink_pad = queue1.get_pad("sink");
    } else if (name == "audio/x-vorbis") {
        sink_pad = queue2.get_pad("sink");
    } else {
        return;
    }
    if (sink_pad != null && sink_pad.is_linked() == false) {
        src_pad.link (sink_pad);
    }
});

queue1.link_many (theoraDecoder, colorConverter, videoSink);
queue2.link_many (vorbisDecoder, audioConverter,
audioResampler, audioSink);

try {
    builder = new Builder ();
    builder.add_from_file (UI_FILE);
    builder.connect_signals (this);
    videoArea = builder.get_object ("drawingareal") as Widget;
    videoArea.draw.connect(() => {
        var xoverlay = videoSink as XOverlay;
        var xid = (ulong)Gdk.X11Window.get_xid(videoArea.get_window());
        overlay.set_xwindow_id(xid);
    });
}
return false;
});

var window = builder.get_object("window") as Window;
window.show_all();
}
catch (Error e) {
    stderr.printf("Could not load UI: %s\n", e.message);
}

var bus = pipeline.get_bus();
buse.add_signal_watch();
buse.message.connect((bus, message) => {
    if (message.type == Gst.MessageType.EOS) {
        stop();
        pipeline.set_state(State.READY);
        reopen();
    }
});

playButton = builder.get_object("button1") as Button;
playButton.clicked.connect(() => {
    if (playing) {
    stop();
    } else {
    play();
    }
});
reopen();
stop();

6. Make sure that we have the Ap17_spill.og file in our project's folder.
7. Build and run the program. As shown in the following screenshot, we should now be able to play and stop the video, and also can exit the program:

What just happened?

We have several essential parts in this exercise to which we need to pay attention.

The first one is how to connect the audio and video stream sources to the sink in the next element in the queue. We can't link the demultiplexer with the queue before the stream is played. So what we need to do is attach the elements to the pad_added signal in the demultiplexer. In this case, the audio and video stream pads are created whenever the stream is played:

```javascript
demux.pad_added.connect((element, src_pad) => {
  var caps = src_pad.get_caps();
  var name = caps.get_structure(0).get_name();
  pad sink_pad = null;
```

...
What we then do in the signal handler is to check whether the stream contains a video stream (by checking against `video/x-theora`), then we link the pad with the `queue1` element.

```c
if (name == "video/x-theora") {
    sink_pad = queue1.get_pad("sink");
}
```

Conversely, if we get the audio stream, we link the pad with `queue2`. Otherwise we do nothing. After this, everything should be connected from the `filesrc` element until `audiosink` and `videosink`, as shown in the following code snippet:

```c
else if (name == "audio/x-vorbis") {
    sink_pad = queue2.get_pad("sink");
} else {
    return;
}
if (sink_pad != null && sink_pad.is_linked() == false) {
    src_pad.link (sink_pad);
}
```

The next important thing is how to display the video frames. The `ximagesink` sink has its own window to display the video. To attach the video into our `videoArea` widget, we need to hook up the `draw` signal (or any other signal which tells that the widget is ready, which means that the window object is valid).

Our handler gets `videoSink` as `XOverlay`, which is a special interface to draw the video frame onto the window we specify. Before doing any drawing, we need to find out the `xid` value, which is the handle number of the window that we want to draw into; this is done using the following code snippet:

```c
videoArea.draw.connect(() => {
    var xoverlay = videoSink as XOverlay;
    var xid = (ulong)Gdk.X11Window.get_xid(videoArea.get_window());
    xoverlay.set_xwindow_id(xid);
    return false;
});
```

This window is the `videoArea` widget's X11 window. We first get the `xid` value by calling the `Gdk.X11Window.get_xid` function against our `videoArea` widget. After getting the value of `xid`, we then tell `xoverlay` to use this `xid` value whenever it receives a frame, and render it inside the `videoArea` widget.
Next, our attention turns to how to interact with the stream. When we want to play, obviously we just set the state of the pipeline to **PLAYING**. When we want to pause, we set it to **PAUSE**. And when we receive the end of stream notification, or when we close the window, we set it to **NULL**. After setting it to **NULL**, we need to again set the location of the **filesrc** element to be able to replay the video.

**Summary**

In this chapter, we have learned how to play both audio and video files using GStreamer. We also discussed the basics of GStreamer. We know how it works and we know how to wire the elements of GStreamer in order to play our media. We can prototype the stream flow design with command line and then implement it afterwards. Finally, we learned how to put GStreamer together with GTK+ widgets.

Our next stop in *Chapter 8, Playing with Data*, is to play with data. It does not mean data only from databases, but data that comes from various sources.
When we talk about data, it is not only about databases, but data from other sources as well. It is about accessing and manipulating data and presenting them to the users. Better access to data also means better integration, and GNOME is good at this. It provides many APIs to get the job done; we will discuss them in this chapter.

What we want to concentrate on in this chapter is how to get data from multiple sources and how to present it on the screen. To present data on the screen, we will utilize the GTK+ TreeView widget. Also, we will introduce Evolution Data Server libraries with which we can collect data from address books. To keep the chapter simple, we will only use Seed and Glade.

In this chapter, we will study the following topics in greater detail:

- Presenting data with TreeView
- The Evolution Data Server architecture
- Accessing an address book with Evolution Data Server

So let's fetch the data!
Presenting data with TreeView

GTK+ TreeView is a widget used to display both the tree and list types of data. The design of the widget uses the Model-View-Controller (MVC) design pattern to logically separate the implementation of the data model, how the data is presented, and how the data is accessed and manipulated.

The preceding diagram explains the design pattern visually. To explain this diagram, let's imagine a search engine on the Web. The user, either the end user or a piece of code, triggers something in the controller. In practice, this step could be the end user pressing a Search button or a code submitting a search query to the Web, or anything that directly triggers the controller to do something. The controller then modifies the model according to the trigger.

In our search engine story, this could be the search engine on the server. It takes the query, forms them as parameters, and passes them into the model as input. The model then produces new data. This new data replaces and refreshes the presentation on the view object. The user can then view this new presentation. Concretely, the presentation could be the screen that is now displaying the search results.

With this approach, we can have different kinds of presentations while still having the same implementation of the model and controller. In the web browser, our search engine can display detailed results, while in a smartphone, the results can only be displayed in a simple form.
In GTK+, the model is defined in the TreeModel interface, which needs to be implemented by the model provider. However, GTK+ provides two simple, ready-to-use models, so we don’t need to implement the TreeModel interface by ourselves. These models are ListStore and TreeStore. ListStore is used for a simple list data structure while TreeStore is used to provide a tree data structure. In the model, we define the columns of the data that we want to keep.

When we want to access the model, we need help from the Iter object to iterate the model. The Iter object points to a specific record in the data model. We can move this object around while we travel through the data.

**Time for action – using TreeView**

Suppose that we want to make a simple application that can list data on a table. We also want to remove data from and add new data into it. This can be done by following these steps:

1. Create a new Glade UI file called treeview.ui.
2. Insert a window into it.
3. In the window, insert a Box control with two items. Make it a vertical box.
4. Place a ScrollableWindow window into the upper part of the UI and make it expandable.
5. Put another Box, which is capable of containing two items, into the bottom part; this time the box should be a horizontal box.
6. Add two buttons to each column of the vertical box, and name them btnRemove and btnAdd with Remove and Add labels respectively.
7. Add a TreeView widget (available in Control and Display) to the ScrollableWindow window.
8. A dialog will pop up asking for the model; press the ellipsis button and click New.
9. The model dialog is now automatically filled with liststore1.
10. Click on the Create button.
11. On the widget list, select liststore1.
12. In the General tab, rename the selected liststore to store.
13. In the Columns data below it, click on <define a new column>; it will be converted into a text entry of the type gchararray.
14. Do it one more time so we will have two entries with the type gchararray.
15. Rename the treeview1 object to view.
16. Find the treeselection1 object under view and rename it to selection.

17. At the moment, our Glade file should look like the one shown in the following screenshot:

![Glade file screenshot]

18. Create a new Seed script file named treeview.js.

19. Fill it with the following code:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

Gtk = imports.gi.Gtk;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Main = new GType({
  parent: GObject.Object.type,
  name: "Main",
  init: function(self) {
    var columns = {
      NAME: 0,
      ADDRESS: 1,
    }
    var ui = new Gtk.Builder();
    this.ui = ui;
    ui.add_from_file("treeview.ui");
    var window = ui.get_object("window1");
    window.resize(300, 400);
    window.show_all();
    window.signal.destroy.connect(Gtk.main_quit);
    this.clients = {};
```
var view = ui.get_object("view");
var selection = ui.get_object("selection");
selection.signal.changed.connect(function(s) {
    var btnRemove = ui.get_object("btnRemove");
    btnRemove.sensitive = true;
});

var btnRemove = ui.get_object("btnRemove");
btnRemove.signal.clicked.connect(function() {
    var selection = view.get_selection();
    if (selection) {
        var selected = {};
        var valid = selection.get_selected(selected);
        if (valid && selected.iter) {
            var model = view.get_model();
            model.remove(selected.iter);
        }
    }
});

var btnAdd = ui.get_object("btnAdd");
btnAdd.signal.clicked.connect(function() {
    var selection = view.get_selection();
    if (selection) {
        var selected = {};
        var valid = selection.get_selected(selected);
        if (valid && selected.iter) {
            var model = view.get_model();
            model.insert(selected.iter, 1);
        }
    }
});

column = new Gtk.TreeViewColumn({title:'Name'});
cell = new Gtk.CellRendererText();
cell.editable = true;
column.pack_start(cell);
column.add_attribute(cell, 'text', columns.NAME);
cell.signal.edited.connect(function(obj, path, text) {
    var store = view.get_model();
    var path = new Gtk.TreePath.from_string(path);
    var iter = {};
    store.get_iter(iter, path);
    store.set_value(iter.iter, columns.NAME, text);
});
view.append_column(column);

column = new Gtk.TreeViewColumn({title:'Address'});
cell = new Gtk.CellRendererText();
cell.editable = true;
column.pack_start(cell);
column.add_attribute(cell, 'text', columns.ADDRESS);
cell.signal.edited.connect(function(obj, path, text) {
    var store = view.get_model();
    var path = new Gtk.TreePath.from_string(path);
    var iter = {};
    store.get_iter(iter, path);
    store.set_value(iter.iter, columns.ADDRESS, text);
});
view.append_column(column);

var store = view.get_model();
var iter = {};
store.append(iter);
store.set_value(iter.iter, columns.NAME, "Robert");
store.set_value(iter.iter, columns.ADDRESS, "North Pole");

Gtk.init(Seed.argv);
var main = new Main();
Gtk.main();

20. Run the application; we can edit the data by clicking on the field. We can add new rows one after another by selecting one row and clicking Add. We can remove a selected row as well. The output is shown in the following screenshot:
What just happened?

In this exercise, we learn about how TreeView works. We have TreeView as the view, along with two CellRendererText widgets and the associated TreeView columns. For this model, we use ListStore.

We first define the data that we want to maintain. It is a two-column data, with each column having the type string. We use constants to refer to the column number. We use NAME for column number 0 and ADDRESS for column number 1, shown as follows:

```javascript
var columns = {
  NAME: 0,
  ADDRESS: 1,
}
```

We keep the TreeView reference in the view variable for quick access.

```javascript
var view = ui.get_object("view");
```

We subscribe to the selection's changed signal. Whenever a row is selected, this code will be called. At the moment, it does not have anything useful, but in a real project this could be something such as enabling some buttons, showing a notification, and so on. Following is the selection code:

```javascript
var selection = ui.get_object("selection");
  selection.signal.changed.connect(function(s) {
    var btnRemove = ui.get_object("btnRemove");
    btnRemove.sensitive = true;
  });
```

We attach the removing of a record to the Remove button's clicked signal in this part of the code:

```javascript
var btnRemove = ui.get_object("btnRemove");
btnRemove.signal.clicked.connect(function() {
```

First, we get the current selection object by executing this code:

```javascript
var selection = view.get_selection();
if (selection) {
  var selected = {};
  var valid = selection.get_selected(selected);
```

If the selection object is valid, we get the selected row object. If there is a record, the iter object inside the selected object will be obtained.
When we get the `iter` object, we can remove the record with this code snippet:

```javascript
var model = view.get_model();
model.remove(selected.iter);
```

Then, we do the same for the **Add** button. But now, instead of removing a record, we insert a new record:

```javascript
var btnAdd = ui.get_object("btnAdd");
btnAdd.signal.clicked.connect(function() {
    var selection = view.get_selection();
    if (selection) {
        var selected = {};
        var valid = selection.get_selected(selected);
        if (valid && selected.iter) {
            var model = view.get_model();
            model.insert(selected.iter, 1);
        }
    }
});
```

Then we set up the columns. Each column is represented with a `TreeViewColumn` widget. Each `TreeViewColumn` is attached with a `CellRenderer` class. Because our data is a plain string, the renderer we use is `CellRendererText`.

```javascript
column = new Gtk.TreeViewColumn({title:'Name'});
cell = new Gtk.CellRendererText();
```

Then, we make the cell editable so we can edit the data, after which we pack it into the column.

```javascript
    cell.editable = true;
column.pack_start(cell);
```

We associate the column, cell, and data in our `ListStore` model with the `add_attribute` function. The following code shows that we will modify the `text` property of the cell object with the data obtained from column number 0 (which is the value of `columns.NAME`). After everything is set, we append the column into the `view` variable:

```javascript
column.add_attribute(cell, 'text', columns.NAME);
view.append_column(column);
```

Remember in Anjuta we created two columns in the `liststore1` widget so it contains two `gchararray` items? This is to indicate that both the columns are of the type `gchararray` (which is another name for the string). The first column is for holding the `column.NAME` values and the second one for the `column.ADDRESS` values.
Then we connect the edited signal of the cell. What we do in the handler is simply get the new edited text and put it back into our model.

```javascript
    cell.signal.edited.connect(function(obj, path, text) {
        var store = view.get_model();

        We first get the path that is shown in the argument by the path variable. We get a path representation that can be interpreted by ListStore.

            var path = new Gtk.TreePath.from_string(path);
            var iter = {};

        In order to set the data, we need to get the iter object of the currently edited object. We use the path variable and convert it into an iter object. After we get the iter object, we set the model with the set_value function. In set_value, we also need to specify the columns that we want to edit.

                    store.get_iter(iter, path);
                    store.set_value(iter.iter, columns.NAME, text);

        We add another column for the address; the code for this is the same as the one for the name column.

        We add initial data to the model. We add just one line. To add the data, we first need to get the model.

            var store = view.get_model();

        Then, we append the iter object into the model.

            var iter = {};
            store.append(iter);

        After this, we put the values using the iter object:

            store.set_value(iter.iter, columns.NAME, "Robert");
            store.set_value(iter.iter, columns.ADDRESS, "North Pole");

        The process of getting and manipulating data seems straightforward. First, we get the model, then the Iter object, and then get new values from or add new ones into the model by specifying the column we want to interact with.

        Next, instead of using fake data, we use live data by utilizing Evolution Data Server.
```
The Evolution Data Server (EDS) architecture

EDS abstracts the access and manipulation of an address book, a calendar, and a task. It has a plugin architecture that enables developers to write plugins to access a particular address book, calendar, or task service. An EDS user uses the abstracted API and does not need to know about the details of the service in question. With this approach, GNOME theoretically supports any kind of address book, calendar, or task service. The following diagram briefly shows the structure of the EDS architecture:

EDS provides a daemon that stays in the memory to serve the users of EDS, which are usually e-mail clients, instant messaging applications, or any applications that need to access data. If the service requires authentication or authorization, GNOME will pop up a dialog so the end user can act upon it, for example, fill in the password, grant access, and so on.

In EDS, an address book has a concept of a data source group, which represents the source of the data, such as a local or remote data source. It is logically represented in the EBook.SourceGroup object. Each SourceGroup group could have many sources, which represent the actual data source. It is described in the EBook.Source object.

Time for action – setting up the address book and the calendar data source

Before you can access the address book and calendar data, we need to set up the data source first. Now we will discuss how to set up a Google account in GNOME. Make sure you already have an active Google account before continuing. Let's see how we can do this:

1. Open GNOME System Settings.
2. Open Online Accounts.
3. Click on the + button in the bottom-left corner of the window.
4. Choose the account type we want to use with GNOME. In this exercise, we choose Google services.
5. We will be presented with the login page of the service.
6. Make sure to successfully log in to the service.
7. Grant access to GNOME, notifying it that we want to use this service.
8. After all the online steps have been completed, enable the service we want to use in our computer. In particular, enable the **Contacts** service, which is shown in the following screenshot:

![Online Accounts](image)

**What just happened?**

We just connected to our online Google account. It means that the data residing in the Google account is available for us to consume using the GNOME APIs. That is what we are going to do next.

**Time for action – accessing the address book**

Suppose that we want to create a simple address book program. The data could come from an address book in our local computer or remotely from Google. Follow these steps to do so:

2. Add a horizontal box containing two items.
3. Place a `TreeView` widget in the left-hand side of the box. Rename it to `bookView`. When asked for the model, create a new `ListStore` model and rename it to `books`.
4. Rename the `TreeSelection` object, which is created automatically for the `TreeView` widget, to `selection`.
5. Put a ScrollableWindow window on the right-hand side of the box.

6. Then, put another TreeView widget inside ScrollableWindow. Create another ListStore model for it and rename it to contacts. Rename TreeView to contactView.

7. Edit the ListStore model named books. Add two columns inside this model, both with the type gchararray.

8. Edit the ListStore model named contact. Again, add two columns inside the model, both with the type gchararray.

9. Our UI design should look similar to the one shown in the following screenshot:

10. Create a new Seed script called address-book.js.

11. Following is a block of code that plays a very important part in the execution of the script:

```javascript
Main = new GType({
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Main",
    init: function(self) {
        var bookColumn = {
            UID: 0,
            NAME: 1,
        }

        var contactColumn = {
            NAME: 0,
            EMAIL: 1,
        }

        this.listContacts = function(e) {
            var c = {};
```
var q = EBook.BookQuery.any_field_contains("*");
var r = e.get_contacts_sync(q.to_string(), c, null);
if (r && c && c.contacts && c.contacts.length > 0) {
    var store = self.contact_view.get_model();
    c.contacts.forEach(function(contact) {
        var iter = {};
        store.append(iter);
        var name = contact.full_name;
        if (!name) {
            name = contact.nickname;
        }
        store.set_value(iter.iter, contactColumn.NAME, name);
        store.set_value(iter.iter, contactColumn.EMAIL, contact.email_1);
    });
}

this.clients = {};
var book_view = ui.get_object("bookView");
var selection = ui.get_object("selection");
selection.signal.changed.connect(function(s) {
    var selected = {};
    s.get_selected(selected);
    var book = selected.model.get_value(selected.iter, bookColumn.UID);
    var uid = book.value.get_string();
    if (uid == ")
        return;
    
    var e = null;
    if (typeof(self.clients[uid]) !== "undefined") {
        e = self.clients[uid];
        if (e) {
            self.clients[uid] = e;
            self.listContacts(e);
        }
    } else {
        var e = new EBook.BookClient.c_new(source);
        var r = e.open(false, null, function() {
if (e) {
    self.clients[uid] = e;
    self.listContacts(e);
})
});
}
});

cell = new Gtk.CellRendererText();
var column = new Gtk.TreeViewColumn({title:'Book'});
column.pack_start(cell);
column.add_attribute(cell, 'markup', bookColumn.NAME);
book_view.append_column(column);

cell = new Gtk.TreeRendererText();
var contact_view = ui.get_object("contactView");
this.contact_view = contact_view;
cell = new Gtk.TreeViewColumn({title:'Name'});
column.pack_start(cell);
column.add_attribute(cell, 'text', contactColumn.NAME);
contact_view.append_column(column);
cell = new Gtk.TreeRendererText();
column = new Gtk.TreeViewColumn({title:'E-mail'});
column.pack_start(cell);
column.add_attribute(cell, 'text', contactColumn.EMAIL);
contact_view.append_column(column);

var s = {};
var e = EBook.BookClient.get_sources(s);
this.sources = s.sources;

groups = this.sources.peek_groups();
if (groups && groups.length > 0) {
    var store = book_view.get_model();
groups.forEach(function(item) {
        var iter = {};
        store.append(iter);
        store.set_value(iter.iter, bookColumn.UID, "");
        store.set_value(iter.iter, bookColumn.NAME, "<b><i>" + item.peek_name() + "</i></b>"); 
        var sources = item.peek_sources();
        if (sources && sources.length > 0) {
Chapter 8

```javascript
sources.forEach(function(source) {
    store.append(iter);
    store.set_value(iter.iter, bookColumn.UID, source.
        peek_uid());
    store.set_value(iter.iter, bookColumn.NAME, source.
        peek_name());
});
}
```

12. Run the code. The application is executed and a window is displayed, as shown in the following screenshot:

![Address Book Window](image)

**What just happened?**

Depending on your settings, the result of our previous exercise might not look the same. (Also pardon the blurry text; they are real e-mail addresses and I want to obfuscate them for privacy reasons.) In the preceding screenshot, EDS returns four sources of address books, namely **On This Computer**, **On LDAP Servers**, **WebDAV**, and **Google**. Out of these sources, only two have the real data; these are **On This Computer** and **Google**. The names of the address books listed in the preceding screenshot are **Personal** and **Contacts**.
When we click on **Contacts**, a list of all the contacts is displayed on the right-hand side of the window. Here we only display two columns, the name and e-mail address.

Let's dig into the source code.

First we define the constants for the columns. Here we have two models, one for address book collection (we call it *books*) and one for contacts collection (we call it *contacts*). Each book has a unique identifier and name. Hence, we use this data for the columns.

```javascript
var bookColumn = {
    UID: 0,
    NAME: 1,
}
```

For the contact, we only display the name and e-mail address, so we will need only two columns.

```javascript
var contactColumn = {
    NAME: 0,
    EMAIL: 1,
}
```

We keep a reference of the `bookView` variable in the `.ui` file and save it in the `book_view` variable in the following line of code:

```javascript
var book_view = ui.get_object("bookView");
```

We also get the `selection` object of the `bookView` variable and put it in the `selection` variable.

```javascript
var selection = ui.get_object("selection");
```

The behavior we want for the selection is that when we select a book, we should get the content of that book. To do that, we need to hook the changed signal to a function, as is shown here:

```javascript
selection.signal.changed.connect(function(s) {

What we need to do in the handler first is get the `selected` object from the selection.

```javascript
var selected = {};
s.get_selected(selected);
```
In the selected object, we get the Iter object, which is kept in the iter member. We immediately get the value of column number 0 (which is symbolized with bookColumn. UID). The value is in the type string, so we use the get_string() function. One specific behavior we set is that whenever the uid value is empty, it means that the row does not point to a specific book. It is used by the program to display the address' book source.

```javascript
var book = selected.model.get_value(selected.iter, bookColumn. UID);
var uid = book.value.get_string();
if (uid == "") {
  return;
}
```

If uid does have some value, we ask EDS to get EBook.Source directly, which is identified by the uid value. This will return an EBook.Source type that has been saved in the e variable.

We keep the sources obtained in the client's cache, so we don’t need to reopen the source every time we click on the book. When the cache has the source defined with a uid value, we just call the listContacts function; otherwise, we need to open it first. After that we will keep it in the cache. Then we list the contents using listContacts, as shown in the following code snippet:

```javascript
source = self.sources.peek_source_by_uid(uid);
var e = null;
if (typeof(self.clients[uid]) !== "undefined") {
  e = self.clients[uid];
  if (e) {
    self.clients[uid] = e;
    self.listContacts(e);
  }
} else {
  var e = new EBook.BookClient.c_new(source);
  var r = e.open(false, null, function() {
    if (e) {
      self.clients[uid] = e;
      self.listContacts(e);
    }
  });
}
```
Note that we asynchronously open the source by supplying a callback as the argument of the function. With this approach, we can give time for the opening of the source without blocking our application and making it unresponsive to the user. If our source needs to be authorized and needs our attention, a dialog window will pop up at this point.

Here, we define the columns for `bookView`. Visually, we display only a single column, which is the book's title or the book's source group.

```javascript
var cell = new Gtk.CellRendererText();
var column = new Gtk.TreeViewColumn({title: 'Book'});
column.pack_start(cell);

column.add_attribute(cell, 'markup', bookColumn.NAME);
book_view.append_column(column);
```

We use a Pango markup as described in the next part of the code. So we don't use the `text` property of `CellRendererText` but instead use markup and map it to column 1 (which is denoted with `bookColumn.NAME`).

```javascript
column.add_attribute(cell, 'markup', bookColumn.NAME);
book_view.append_column(column);
```

In the following code snippet, we define the columns for the contacts. We have two visual columns, and we'll assign them with the `contactColumn.NAME` and `contactColumn.EMAIL` column names respectively:

```javascript
var contact_view = ui.get_object("contactView");
this.contact_view = contact_view;
cell = new Gtk.CellRendererText();
column = new Gtk.TreeViewColumn({title: 'Name'});
column.pack_start(cell);
column.add_attribute(cell, 'text', contactColumn.NAME);
contact_view.append_column(column);

var contact_view = ui.get_object("contactView");
this.contact_view = contact_view;
cell = new Gtk.CellRendererText();
column = new Gtk.TreeViewColumn({title: 'E-mail'});
column.pack_start(cell);
column.add_attribute(cell, 'text', contactColumn.EMAIL);
contact_view.append_column(column);
```

During initialization, we get the address book's sources with the `get_sources` function. After that, we find the available groups on the system with the `peek_groups` function.

```javascript
var s = {};
var e = EBook.BookClient.get_sources(s);
this.sources = s.sources;

var groups = this.sources.peek_groups();
if (groups && groups.length > 0) {
  var store = book_view.get_model();
```
For each group, we add the book ID and the book name into the table, but we won't fill the
uid value because we only want to keep the uid value of the actual address book source.
For the name of the group, we enclose it with a markup of bold and italic style, as shown
in the following snippet of code:

```javascript
groups.forEach(function(item) {
  var iter = {};
  store.append(iter);
  store.set_value(iter.iter, bookColumn.UID, "");
  store.set_value(iter.iter, bookColumn.NAME, "<b><i>" + item.peek_name() + "</i></b>");
```

Note that we used something that looks like HTML markups in the preceding code snippet. In
fact, they are Pango markups, the text rendering engine used in the GNOME framework that
is similar to HTML, but with comparatively fewer features. The reason we put the markups
here is because we want to style the widget on the presentation layer. Hence, we shouldn't
both touch the data and add the style here, but only style it when it is displayed. However,
the previous approach is not correct because we modify the data before putting it into the
store. If we search inside the data, we may not find the data because it is already cluttered
with markups. The correct implementation would be to style it in the rendering widget. It
means we will no longer be able to use Gtk.CellRendererWidget, but we will rather use
a custom renderer widget that styles the data before displaying it.

We also try to get the actual address book source for each group with the peek_sources
function, and put each source that is available in the table. And now we place uid in column
0 (bookColumn.UID); this is shown in the following code snippet:

```javascript
var sources = item.peek_sources();
if (sources && sources.length > 0) {
  sources.forEach(function(source) {
    store.append(iter);
    store.set_value(iter.iter, bookColumn.UID, source.peek_uid());
    store.set_value(iter.iter, bookColumn.NAME, source.peek_name());
  });
```

Note that column 0 is not visible in the table because we did not add TreeViewColumn
to it.

What the listContacts function does first is prepare the query to the address book.
EDS provides the EBook.BookQuery object to convey the query to EDS. In the following
code snippet, we'll ask EDS to get all the data by creating the query with the any_field_
contains("") function:

```javascript
this.listContacts = function(e) {
  var c = {};
```
Playing with Data

```javascript
var q = EBook.BookQuery.any_field_contains("");  
var r = e.get_contacts_sync(q.to_string(), c, null);  
if (r && c && c.contacts && c.contacts.length > 0) {

    The contacts member of the object that we passed to get_contacts_sync will be populated with the contacts from the address book. For each contact that we get (it is in the form of EBook.Contact), we get an interesting property (we want only the full_name, nickname, and email_1 properties) and put it into the model.

    var store = self.contact_view.get_model();  
    c.contacts.forEach(function(contact) {
        var iter = {};  
        store.append(iter);

        var name = contact.full_name;  
        if (!name) {
            name = contact.nickname;
        }
        store.set_value(iter.iter, contactColumn.NAME, name);  
        store.set_value(iter.iter, contactColumn.EMAIL, contact.email_1);
    });
}
```

Have a go hero – saving data to the address book

The previous exercise only displays the contents of the address book. How about making it more advanced by adding an edit button?

Whenever we get the edited signal to do this, make sure that the new text is saved back in the EBook.Contact structure. When we can call the e.modify_contact_sync function, the skeleton could look like this:

```javascript
modifiedContact.full_name = newName;  
// and/or
modifiedContact.email_1 = newEmail;
// then save it with
e.modify_contact_sync(modifiedContact, null);
```

We also need to refresh the model by rereading the source.
Summary

The centerpoint of data programming in GNOME is the TreeView widgets family. The design of the application should also follow the MVC design pattern of the TreeView widget. It is important to keep the model up-to-date, so the user always sees the real data instead of the already obsolete, rendered data. The view is represented primarily by the TreeViewColumn object and the CellRenderer class. We have many ready-to-use CellRenderer classes available in GTK+, but if we need a custom one, we could always make a new one by implementing the interface.

One data source that we examined in this chapter was the EDS. It not only includes the address book but also a calendar, a task, and an e-mail. One prominent application that was created for it was the Evolution program.

Next, we will enable our HTML5 application to be integrated with GNOME 3. Let's see how we will do it in the next chapter.
In a mobile world, there is still a debate about whether to develop HTML5 or native applications. People who favor HTML5 will develop an application with HTML5 and then run the application with a UI wrapper written in native code, while the opposite approach is to write the application completely with native code. But how about the desktop world? We will try the HTML5 approach in this chapter, and you can have your own opinion about this debate yourself!

The concept of running HTML5 applications is like running the application in a stripped-down web browser as a wrapper. The UI wrapper for our HTML5 application will be written in Vala, using the GTK+ flavor of the famous WebKit layout engine, which is called WebKitGTK+. In this chapter, we will not only learn how to run our HTML5 applications inside a UI wrapper, but will also learn to use GNOME platform as the middleware. Specifically, our topics for this chapter are as follows:

- Embedding WebKit inside our GTK+ application
- Introducing JavaScriptCore
- Interfacing with JavaScriptCore

Let’s do this right now!
Before we start

Most of the discussions in this chapter require a moderate knowledge of HTML5, JSON, and common client-side JavaScript programming. One particular exercise uses JQuery and JQuery Mobile to show how a real HTML5 application will be implemented.

Embedding WebKit

What we need to learn first is how to embed a WebKit layout engine inside our GTK+ application. Embedding WebKit means we can use HTML and CSS as our user interface instead of GTK+ or Clutter.

Time for action – embedding WebKit

With WebKitGTK+, this is a very easy task to do; just follow these steps:

1. Create an empty Vala project without GtkBuilder and no license. Name it hello-webkit.
2. Modify configure.ac to include WebKitGTK+ into the project. Find the following line of code in the file:
   
   ```
   PKG_CHECK_MODULES(HELLO_WEBKIT, [gtk+-3.0])
   ```

3. Remove the previous line and replace it with the following one:
   
   ```
   PKG_CHECK_MODULES(HELLO_WEBKIT, [gtk+-3.0 webkitgtk-3.0])
   ```

4. Modify Makefile.am inside the src folder to include WebKitGTK into the Vala compilation pipeline. Find the following lines of code in the file:
   
   ```
   hello_webkit_VALAFLAGS = \
   --vapidir . --pkg gtk+-3.0 --pkg webkit-1.0 --pkg libsoup-2.4
   ```

5. Remove it and replace it completely with the following lines:
   
   ```
   hello_webkit_VALAFLAGS = \
   --vapidir . --pkg gtk+-3.0 --pkg webkitgtk-3.0 --pkg libsoup-2.4
   ```

6. Fill the hello_webkit.vala file inside the src folder with the following lines:
   
   ```vala
   using GLib;
   using Gtk;
   using WebKit;

   public class Main : WebView 
   {
Chapter 9

```csharp
public Main ()
{
    load_html_string("<h1>Hello</h1>","/");
}

static int main (string[] args)
{
    Gtk.init (ref args);
    var webView = new Main ();
    var window = new Gtk.Window();
    window.add(webView);
    window.show_all ();

    Gtk.main ();

    return 0;
}
```

7. Copy the accompanying `webkit-1.0.vapi` file into the `src` folder. We need to do this, unfortunately, because the `webkit-1.0.vapi` file distributed with many distributions is still using GTK+ Version 2.

8. Run it, you will see a window with the message **Hello**, as shown in the following screenshot:

![Hello window screenshot](image)

**What just happened?**

What we need to do first is to include WebKit into our namespace, so we can use all the functions and classes from it.

```csharp
using WebKit;
```
Our class is derived from the WebView widget. It is an important widget in WebKit, which is capable of showing a web page. Showing it means not only parsing and displaying the DOM properly, but that it’s capable to run the scripts and handle the styles referred to by the document. The derivation declaration is put in the class declaration as shown next:

```csharp
public class Main : WebView
```

In our constructor, we only load a string and parse it as an HTML document. The string is Hello, styled with level 1 heading. After the execution of the following line, WebKit will parse and display the presentation of the HTML5 code inside its body:

```csharp
public Main()
{
    load_html_string("<h1>Hello</h1>","/");
}
```

In our main function, what we need to do is create a window to put our WebView widget into. After adding the widget, we need to call the `show_all()` function in order to display both the window and the widget.

```csharp
static int main(string[] args)
{
    Gtk.init(ref args);
    var webView = new Main();
    var window = new(Gtk.Window);
    window.add(webView);
}
```

The window content now only has a WebView widget as its sole displaying widget. At this point, we no longer use GTK+ to show our UI, but it is all written in HTML5.

### Runtime with JavaScriptCore

An HTML5 application is, most of the time, accompanied by client-side scripts that are written in JavaScript and a set of styling definition written in CSS3. WebKit already provides the feature of running client-side JavaScript (running the script inside the web page) with a component called JavaScriptCore, so we don’t need to worry about it.

But how about the connection with the GNOME platform? How to make the client-side script access the GNOME objects? One approach is that we can expose our objects, which are written in Vala so that they can be used by the client-side JavaScript. This is where we will utilize JavaScriptCore.
We can think of this as a frontend and backend architecture pattern. All of the code of business process which touch GNOME will reside in the backend. They are all written in Vala and run by the main process. On the opposite side, the frontend, the code is written in JavaScript and HTML5, and is run by WebKit internally. The frontend is what the user sees while the backend is what is going on behind the scene.

Consider the following diagram of our application. The backend part is grouped inside a grey bordered box and run in the main process. The frontend is outside the box and run and displayed by WebKit. From the diagram, we can see that the frontend creates an object and calls a function in the created object. The object we create is not defined in the client side, but is actually created at the backend. We ask JavaScriptCore to act as a bridge to connect the object created at the backend to be made accessible by the frontend code.

To do this, we wrap the backend objects with JavaScriptCore class and function definitions. For each object we want to make available to frontend, we need to create a mapping in the JavaScriptCore side. In the following diagram, we first map the `MyClass` object, then the `helloFromVala` function, then the `intFromVala`, and so on:

---

**Time for action – calling the Vala object from the frontend**

Now let’s try and create a simple client-side JavaScript code and call an object defined at the backend:

1. Create an empty Vala project, without GtkBuilder and no license. Name it `hello-jscore`.
2. Modify `configure.ac` to include WebKitGTK+ exactly like our previous experiment.
3. Modify Makefile.am inside the src folder to include WebKitGTK+ and JSCore into the Vala compilation pipeline. Find the following lines of code in the file:

```bash
hello_jscore_VALAFLAGS = \\
--pkg gtk+-3.0
```

4. Remove it and replace it completely with the following lines:

```bash
hello_jscore_VALAFLAGS = \\
--vapidir . --pkg gtk+-3.0 --pkg webkit-1.0 --pkg libsoup-2.4 --pkg javascriptcore
```

5. Fill the hello_jscore.vala file inside the src folder with the following lines of code:

```java
using GLib;
using Gtk;
using WebKit;
using JSCore;

public class Main : WebView
{
    public Main ()
    {
        load_html_string("<h1>Hello</h1>" +
                "<script>alert(HelloJSCore.hello())</script>", "/");
        window_object_cleared.connect ((frame, context) => {
            setup_js_class ((JSCore.GlobalContext) context);
        });
    }

    public static JSCore.Value helloFromVala (Context ctx,
            JSCore.Object function,
            JSCore.Object thisObject,
            JSCore.Value[] arguments,
            out JSCore.Value exception) {
        exception = null;
        var text = new String.with_utf8_c_string ("Hello from JSCore");
        return new JSCore.Value.string (ctx, text);
    }

    static const JSCore.StaticFunction[] js_funcs = {
        { "hello", helloFromVala, PropertyAttribute.ReadOnly },
    }
}
```
Chapter 9

```c
{ null, null, 0 }

static const ClassDefinition js_class = {
    0, // version
    ClassAttribute.None, // attribute
    "HelloJSCore", // className
    null, // parentClass
    null, // static values
    js_funcs, // static functions
    null, // initialize
    null, // finalize
    null, // hasProperty
    null, // getProperty
    null, // setProperty
    null, // deleteProperty
    null, // getPropertyNames
    null, // callAsFunction
    null, // callAsConstructor
    null, // hasInstance
    null // convertToType
};

void setup_js_class (GlobalContext context) {

    var theClass = new Class (js_class);
    var theObject = new JSCore.Object (context, theClass,
                                        context);
    var theGlobal = context.get_global_object ();
    var id = new String.with_utf8_c_string ("HelloJSCore");
    theGlobal.set_property (context, id, theObject,
                            PropertyAttribute.None, null);
}

static int main (string[] args)
{
    Gtk.init (ref args);
    var webView = new Main ();
    var window = new Gtk.Window();
    window.add(webView);
    window.show_all ();

    Gtk.main ();

    return 0;
}
```

[207]
6. Copy the accompanied `webkit-1.0.vapi` and `javascriptcore.vapi` files into the `src` folder. The `javascriptcore.vapi` file is needed because some distributions do not have this `.vapi` file in their repositories.

7. Run the application. The following output will be displayed:

![Image](hello_jscore.png)

**What just happened?**

The first thing we do is include the WebKit and JavaScriptCore namespaces. Note, in the following code snippet, that the JavaScriptCore namespace is abbreviated as `JSCore`:

```csharp
using WebKit;
using JSCore;
```

In the `Main` function, we load HTML content into the `WebView` widget. We display a level 1 heading and then call the `alert` function. The `alert` function displays a string returned by the `hello` function inside the `HelloJSCore` class, as shown in the following code:

```csharp
public Main ()
{
    load_html_string("<h1>Hello</h1>" + "<script>alert(HelloJSCore.hello())</script>" /*/});
```

In the preceding code snippet, we can see that the client-side JavaScript code is as follows:

```csharp
alert(HelloJSCore.hello())
```

And we can also see that we call the `hello` function from the `HelloJSCore` class as a static function. It means that we don’t instantiate the `HelloJSCore` object before calling the `hello` function.

In `WebView`, we initialize the class defined in the Vala class when we get the `window_object_cleared` signal. This signal is emitted whenever a page is cleared. The initialization is done in `setup_js_class` and this is also where we pass the `JSCore` global context into. The global context is where `JSCore` keeps the global variables and functions. It is accessible by every code.
The following snippet of code contains the function, which we want to expose to the client-side JavaScript. The function just returns a **Hello from JSCore** string message:

```java
public static JSCore.Value helloFromVala (Context ctx,
        JSCore.Object function,
        JSCore.Object thisObject,
        JSCore.Value[] arguments,
        out JSCore.Value exception) {

    exception = null;

    var text = new String.with_utf8_c_string ("Hello from JSCore");

    return new JSCore.Value.string (ctx, text);
}
```

Then we need to put a boilerplate code that is needed to expose the function and other members of the class. The first part of the code is the **static** function index. This is the mapping between the exposed function and the name of the function defined in the wrapper. In the following example, we map the **hello** function, which can be used in the client side, with the **helloFromVala** function defined in the code. The index is then ended with **null** to mark the end of the array:

```java
static const JSCore.StaticFunction[] js_funcs = {
    { "hello", helloFromVala, PropertyAttribute.ReadOnly },
    { null, null, 0 }
};
```

The next part of the code is the class definition. It is about the structure that we have to fill, so that JSCore would know about the class. All of the fields are filled with **null**, except for those we want to make use of. In this example, we use the **static** function for the **hello** function. So we fill the **static function field** with **js_funcs**, which we defined in the preceding code snippet:

```java
static const ClassDefinition js_class = {
    0, // version
    ClassAttribute.None, // attribute
    "HelloJSCore", // className
    null, // parentClass
    null, // static values
    js_funcs, // static functions
```
null,     // initialize
null,     // finalize
null,     // hasProperty
null,     // getProperty
null,     // setProperty
null,     // deleteProperty
null,     // getPropertyNames
null,     // callAsFunction
null,     // callAsConstructor
null,     // hasInstance
null     // convertToType
};

After that, in the setup js_class function, we set up the class to be made available in the JSCore global context. First, we create JSCore.Class with the class definition structure we filled previously. Then, we create an object of the class, which is created in the global context. Last but not least, we assign the object with a string identifier, which is HelloJSCore. After executing the following code, we will be able to refer HelloJSCore on the client side:

```javascript
void setup_js_class (GlobalContext context) {
    var theClass = new Class (js_class);
    var theObject = new JSCore.Object (context, theClass, context);
    var theGlobal = context.get_global_object ();
    var id = new String.with_utf8_c_string ("HelloJSCore");
    theGlobal.set_property (context, id, theObject, PropertyAttribute.None, null);
}
```

The real use case of calling Vala code would be more interesting than just calling a static function. Let’s see how to call a non-static function from an object created in Vala.

**Have a go hero – using a separate HTML file**

In our previous section, we put the HTML5 code inside our Vala code. Whenever the code gets lengthier, it will get messier and will be impossible to maintain anymore. How about putting it outside the Vala code, say, in a dedicated file?

Don’t continue to our next section just yet before finishing this task!
Time for action – connecting GNOME with client-side JavaScript

Imagine that we want to create a GNOME launcher. We display the available programs in our system with HTML5 and then will be able to launch them. Let us see how this can be done:

1. Create an empty Vala project, without GtkBuilder and no license. Name it html5-launcher.
2. Modify configure.ac to include WebKitGTK+ and Gee into the project. Find the following line in the file:
   `PKG_CHECK_MODULES(HTML5_LAUNCHER, [gtk+-3.0 ])`
3. Remove it and replace it completely with the following line:
   `PKG_CHECK_MODULES(HTML5_LAUNCHER, [gtk+-3.0 gee-1.0 webkitgtk-3.0])`
4. Modify Makefile.am inside the src folder to include WebKitGTK+, Gio, and JavaScriptCore into the Vala compilation pipeline. Find the following lines of code in the file:
   `html5_launcher_VALAFLAGS = \`
   `--pkg gtk+-3.0`
5. Remove it and replace it completely with the following lines:
   `html5_launcher_VALAFLAGS = \`
   `--vapidir . --pkg gee-1.0 --pkg gio-unix-2.0 --pkg gtk+-3.0 --pkg webkit-1.0 --pkg libsoup-2.4 --pkg javascriptcore`
6. Fill the html5_launcher.vala file inside the src folder. For brevity, the shortened content of this file is shown in the following code just to show the important parts of the entire code:

```vala
public class Main : WebView
{
    public Main ()
    {
        load_uri("file:///%s/index.html".printf(Environment.get_current_dir()));

        window_object_cleared.connect ((frame, context) => {
            LauncherJSCore.setup_js_class ((JSCore.GlobalContext) context);
        });
    }
}
// our Vala class
public class Launcher
```
{  IconTheme icon = null;
  int ICON_SIZE = 80;
  public HashMap<string,DesktopAppInfo> applications {
    get;
    private set;
  }
  
  public void launch(string name) {
    var app = applications.get(name);
    if (app != null) {
      app.launch(null, new AppLaunchContext());
    }
  }

  public Launcher () {
    icon = IconTheme.get_default();
    applications = new HashMap<string,DesktopAppInfo>();
    var dir = Dir.open("/usr/share/applications");
    if (dir != null) {
      string entry;
      while (true) {
        entry = dir.read_name();
        if (entry == null) {
          break;
        }
        var appInfo = new DesktopAppInfo.from_filename("/usr/share/applications/" + entry);
        if (appInfo != null) {
          applications.set(entry, appInfo);
        }
      }
    }
  }

  // Our JSCore wrapper
  public class LauncherJSCore {
    public static JSCore.Object js_constructor (Context ctx,
      JSCore.Object constructor,
      JSCore.Value[] arguments,
      out JSCore.Value exception) {
      exception = null;
    }
var c = new Class (js_class);
var newObject = new JSCore.Object (ctx, c, null);

// register function launch
var functionName = new String.with_utf8_c_string ("launch");
var newFunction = new JSCore.Object.function_with_callback
(ctx, functionName, js_launch);
newObject.set_property (ctx, functionName, newFunction, 0, null);

// register function getApplications
functionName = new String.with_utf8_c_string
("getApplications");
newFunction = new JSCore.Object.function_with_callback
(ctx, functionName, js_getApplications);
newObject.set_property (ctx, functionName, newFunction, 0, null);

Launcher* launcher = new Launcher ();
newObject.set_private (launcher);
return newObject;

public static JSCore.Value js_getApplications(Context ctx,
JSCore.Object function,
JSCore.Object thisObject,
JSCore.Value[] arguments,
out JSCore.Value exception) {
    exception = null;
    var launcher = thisObject.get_private() as Launcher;
    StringBuilder json = new StringBuilder("[");
    if (launcher.applications != null) {
        foreach (var key in launcher.applications.keys) {
            var entry = launcher.applications.get(key) as DesktopAppInfo;
            var name = entry.get_display_name();
            if (entry.get_icon() != null) {
                var icon = launcher.getIconPath(entry.get_icon().to_string());
                json.append(("{desktop: '%s', name: '%s', icon: '%s'},").printf (key, name, icon));
            } else {
                json.append(("{desktop: '%s', name: '%s'}").printf (key, name));
            }
        }
    }
    return json.toString();
}
Deploying HTML5 Applications with GNOME

```javascript
if (json.str [json.len - 1] == ',') {
    json.erase (json.len - 1, 1); // Remove trailing comma
} else {
    json.append(""');
}

var text = new String.with_utf8_c_string (json.str);
var obj = ctx.evaluate_script (text, null, null, 0, null);
    return obj;
}

public static JSCore.Value js_launch (Context ctx,
    JSCore.Object function,
    JSCore.Object thisObject,
    JSCore.Value[] arguments,
    out JSCore.Value exception) {

    exception = null;
    var launcher = thisObject.get_private() as Launcher;
    if (arguments.length == 1 && arguments[0].is_string(ctx)) {
        var parameter = arguments[0].to_string_copy (ctx, null);
        char buffer[1024];
        parameter.get_utf8_c_string (buffer, buffer.length - 1);
        launcher.launch((string) buffer);
    }
    return new JSCore.Value.undefined (ctx);
}

static const ClassDefinition js_class = {
    0,  // version
    ClassAttribute.None,  // attribute
    "Launcher",  // className
    null,  // parentClass
    null,  // static values
    null,  // static functions
    null,  // initialize
    null,  // finalize
    null,  // hasProperty
    null,  // getProperty
    null,  // setProperty
    null,  // deleteProperty
    null,  // getPropertyNames
    null,  // callAsFunction
};
```
null, // callAsConstructor
null, // hasInstance
null  // convertToType
};

public static void setup_js_class (GlobalContext context) {
var theClass = new Class (js_class);
var theConstructor = new JSCore.Object.constructor
(context, theClass, js_constructor);
var theGlobal = context.get_global_object ();
var id = new String.with_utf8_c_string ("Launcher");
theGlobal.set_property (context, id, theConstructor,
PropertyAttribute.None, null);
}

7. Create an HTML5 file with the name of index.html and put it in the src folder. Fill it with the following lines:

```html
<!DOCTYPE HTML>
<html>
<head>
<link rel="stylesheet" href="http://code.jquery.com/mobile/1.1.1/
jquery.mobile-1.1.1.min.css" />
<script src="http://code.jquery.com/jquery-1.7.1.min.js"></script>
<script src="http://code.jquery.com/mobile/1.1.1/jquery.mobile-
1.1.1.min.js"></script>
</head>
<body>
<div data-role="page">
<div data-role="header">
<h1>My Launcher</h1>
</div>
<div data-role="content">
<ul data-role="listview" data-theme="a">
</ul>
</div>
</div>
<script>
$(document).ready(function() {
  var launcher = new Launcher();
  var apps = launcher.getApplications();
  if (apps != null) {
    for (var i = 0; i < apps.length; i++) {
      var image = $('"img"').addClass("ui-li-icon").attr("src", apps[i].icon);
      var link = $('"a"').attr("href", ")
```
8. Copy the accompanying webkit-1.0.vapi and javascriptcore.vapi files into the src folder.

9. Build and run the application. We should see a launcher as shown in the following screenshot:
What just happened?

GNOME uses a freedesktop.org desktop system. In this system, an application is accompanied with at least one desktop file. This file has a .desktop extension and contains information about the application title, icon name, the command which the system must call in order to launch this application, and a set of translations of the application title in many languages when available. What we do in this example is get all the desktop files from the system and display the information contained in them in a menu. And when we click on one of the menu items, our application launches it. The desktop files usually reside in /usr/share/applications. So in our simple example, we just get all the files from this folder. Let’s see how we do this in detail now.

In this example, we use Gee to make use of the HashMap data structure. This means that we need to include the Gee namespace.

    using Gee;

In order to make our Vala code cleaner, we load the HTML5 file from an external file. We also put the object, which needs to be used at the client side, in a separate class, and finally, we put the code needed to set up JSCore in another class. With this separation, our code is better and easy to maintain.

In the constructor of the Main class, we load the index.html file from the current folder. In real world implementations, the location of the HTML5 file must not be hardcoded and should be flexible. Using a hardcoded location of the file would result in deployment difficulties.

    public Main ()
    {
        load_uri("file:///%s/index.html".printf(Environment.get_current_dir()));
    }

Then, we connect the LauncherJSCore.setup_js_class function in the window_object_cleared signal.

    window_object_cleared.connect ((frame, context) => {
        LauncherJSCore.setup_js_class ((JSCore.GlobalContext) context);
    });

Next, we define our Vala class. This class should not use any JSCore type system. We call our class Launcher.

    public class Launcher
    {
        //...
We have a data structure created with a HashMap type. It contains the mapping between the desktop filename and the object containing the desktop data structure. The desktop file is represented with the DesktopAppInfo object, which is provided by the Gio namespace.

```csharp
public HashMap<string,DesktopAppInfo> applications {
    get;
    private set;
}
```

In the Launcher constructor, we initialize the icon object from IconTheme in order to translate the icon name obtained from the DesktopAppInfo object into an actual path in the filesystem. We need this because HTML can’t display an icon just by its name, but we need to specify the full URI. After this, we initialize the HashMap object.

```csharp
public Launcher ()
{
    icon = IconTheme.get_default ();
    applications = new HashMap<string,DesktopAppInfo>();
}
```

Then we populate the object with all the desktop files found in /usr/share/applications. We first create a Dir object pointing to the folder mentioned previously, then iterate its read_name() function. When the function returns null, it means it no longer finds a file and we must exit the while loop. If we don’t do this, we will end up in an infinite loop and our application would be not responsive. There is no other cure for this than killing the frozen application.

```csharp
var dir = Dir.open("/usr/share/applications");
if (dir != null) {
    string entry;
    while (true) {
        entry = dir.read_name();
        if (entry == null) {
            break;
        }
    }
}
```

For each filename we get from the read_name() function, we must create a DesktopAppInfo object of that file. We just instantiate the object by using the from_filename() constructor and pass the full path of the desktop file. If the file is not a desktop file, then the instantiation will fail and the value will be null. If the value is not null, we immediately put the object into the HashMap data structure.

```csharp
var appInfo = new DesktopAppInfo.from_filename("/usr/share/applications/" + entry);
if (appInfo != null) {
    applications.set(entry, appInfo);
}
```
Then we prepare a function that does the actual translation of the icon name into the full path of the icon in the filesystem. We use the `lookup_icon()` function and try to find the icon in the current active theme. When we find it, we get the full path of the icon, otherwise we just use the original icon name.

```java
public string getIconPath(string name) {
    var i = icon.lookup_icon (name, ICON_SIZE, IconLookupFlags.GENERIC_FALLBACK);
    if (i != null) {
        return i.get_filename();
    } else {
        return name;
    }
}
```

At last, we have a function to launch an application. What we do first is to get the `DesktopAppInfo` object from the `HashMap` type and call the `launch()` function, which is supplied by `DesktopAppInfo`. For each launched application, we create a new `AppLaunchContext` object, which defines the environment setting of the application.

```java
public void launch(string name) {
    var app = applications.get(name);
    if (app != null) {
        app.launch(null, new AppLaunchContext());
    }
}
```

Now, let’s shift to our `JSCore` wrapper. The wrapper only contains static functions and by itself is not an object.

```java
// Our JSCore wrapper
public class LauncherJSCore
```

The first part of the wrapper is the constructor. This is the constructor of our object whenever we call a new `Launcher` object in our client-side JavaScript. In our constructor, we first create a `JSCore` class based on the class definition we will see later:

```java
    exception = null;
    var c = new Class (js_class);
    var newObject = new JSCore.Object (ctx, c, null);
```
Then, we register the functions that we want to expose to the client side. Here, we register the launch and getApplications functions. What we do here is to create a JSCore string containing the name of the function, then create a JSCore object mapped to the function, which we will wrap the Vala function into. In this case, we create a newFunction object from the js_launch function. Then we use the set_property() function to assign the newFunction function object with the functionName parameter. After this, our function called launch is recognized in the Launcher object. We need to do this for each function that we want to expose to the client-side JavaScript.

```javascript
// register function helloFromVala
var functionName = new String.with_utf8_c_string("launch");
var newFunction = new JSCore.Object.function_with_callback(ctx, functionName, js_launch);
newObject.set_property(ctx, functionName, newFunction, 0, null);
```

Finally, we create and keep the reference of our Launcher object and set it as private in the JSCore object. So, whenever we want to call the Vala function, we just get this object back from the private area and call it from there.

```javascript
Launcher* launcher = new Launcher();
newObject.set_private(launcher);
return newObject;
}
```

Let’s see each of the wrapping functions we expose to the client-side script. First is the getApplications() function.

```java
public static JSCore.Value js_getApplications(Context ctx, JSCore.Object function, JSCore.Object thisObject, JSCore.Value[] arguments, out JSCore.Value exception) {
    exception = null;

    As discussed earlier, we can get the Vala object by getting it from the private area with the get_private() function and immediately cast it into Launcher. Also, we prepare a StringBuilder object to keep a JSON representation of the application list. The string is initialized with '[' because we will use JSON as the array of applications. We will concatenate all JSON representations of the desktop files inside this string.

    var launcher = thisObject.get_private() as Launcher;
    StringBuilder json = new StringBuilder("[");
```
At this point, we must check whether the list's value is null or not. If not, we iterate by getting all the keys from the HashMap data structure. As we already know, the key contains the name of the desktop file and the value contains the DesktopAppInfo object. So, by using the get() function in the HashMap data structure, we can get the DesktopAppInfo object.

```java
if (launcher.applications != null) {
    foreach (var key in launcher.applications.keys) {
        var entry = launcher.applications.get(key) as DesktopAppInfo;
    }
}
```

After we get the DesktopAppInfo object, which we put into the entry variable, we get the name of the application with the get_display_name() function, and get the icon with the get_icon() function. Whenever we can get the actual path of the icon in the filesystem, we create a JSON similar to the following:

```
{desktop: '%s', name: '%s', icon: '%s'}
```

And if we cannot get the actual path of the icon in the filesystem, we create the JSON as shown here:

```
{desktop: '%s', name: '%s'}
```

We do this until all the desktop files are handled and put into the JSON string.

```java
var name = entry.get_display_name();
if (entry.get_icon() != null) {
    var icon = launcher.getIconPath(entry.get_icon().to_string());
    json.append("{desktop: '%s', name: '%s', icon: '%s'},").
        printf (key, name, icon);
} else {
    json.append("{desktop: '%s', name: '%s'},").printf (key, name);
}
```

At the end of the loop, we must remove any trailing commas, otherwise the JSCore will fail during the conversion of our JSON string into a JSCore object, which we will return in this JSCore function.

```java
if (json.str [json.len - 1] == ',') {
    json.erase (json.len - 1, 1); // Remove trailing comma
}
```

We terminate the string with ], which marks the end of the array.

```java
json.append("}]");
```
Afterwards, we convert the JSON string into a JSCore string. Then convert the JSON string into a JSCore object with the `evaluate_script()` function. Finally, we return that object.

```javascript
var text = new String.with_utf8_c_string (json.str);
var obj = ctx.evaluate_script (text, null, null, 0, null);
return obj;
```

The next one is the `launch()` function. In this function, we have an `arguments` parameter in our JavaScript code, which can simply be obtained from the `arguments` parameter in this JSCore function. If the `arguments` parameter's length property is equal to 1 and the content of the `arguments` variable is a string, then we can say that this is a valid call to this function. In this case, we just call the `launch()` function in the `launcher` object and pass the contents of the `arguments` variable to the function. But before doing so, we need to convert the string coming from the `arguments` variable, that is, the JSCore string, into the C string, which is recognized by the Vala function by using the `get_utf8_c_string()` function.

```javascript
public static JSCore.Value js_launch (Context ctx, JSCore.Object function, JSCore.Object thisObject, JSCore.Value[] arguments, out JSCore.Value exception) {
    exception = null;
    var launcher = thisObject.get_private() as Launcher;
    if (arguments.length == 1 && arguments[0].is_string(ctx)) {
        var parameter = arguments[0].to_string_copy (ctx, null);
        char buffer[1024];
        parameter.get_utf8_c_string (buffer, buffer.length - 1);
        launcher.launch((string) buffer);
    }
    return new JSCore.Value.undefined (ctx);
}
```

In case the call is invalid, then we just return an `undefined` value to the caller.

```javascript
return new JSCore.Value.undefined (ctx);
```

And the following code contains our JSCore class definition structure. We fill everything with `null`, except the name of the class with the `Launcher` value and the constructor field pointing to the `js_constructor` function, which we discussed earlier.

```javascript
static const ClassDefinition js_class = {
    0,  // version
    ClassAttribute.None,  // attribute
    "Launcher",  // className
    null,  // parentClass
```
null,    // static values
null,    // static functions
null,    // initialize
null,    // finalize
null,    // hasProperty
null,    // getProperty
null,    // setProperty
null,    // deleteProperty
null,    // getPropertyNames
null,    // callAsFunction
null,    // callAsConstructor
null,    // hasInstance
null    // convertToType

};

At last, the following code snippet shows our setup_js_class function, which is called from the WebView widget explained earlier. Here, we create an JSCore object constructor that points to our js_constructor function. Then, we connect the constructor object with the Launcher name in the global context. So, whenever the code at the client side mentions new Launcher(), the constructor will be called.

    public static void setup_js_class (GlobalContext context) {
        var theClass = new Class (js_class);
        var theConstructor = new JSCore.Object.constructor (context, theClass, js_constructor);
        var theGlobal = context.get_global_object ();
        var id = new String.with_utf8_c_string ("Launcher");
        theGlobal.set_property (context, id, theConstructor, PropertyAttribute.None, null);
    }

We will not go too deep into the index.html file, but just look at the following lines of code:

    var launcher = new Launcher();
    var apps = launcher.getApplications();

These are the lines that actually call our wrapped Vala code. Nice, isn’t it?

Actually, this HTML-based launcher was really implemented for GNOME. Manokwari. This is a desktop shell for GNOME 3 and is developed with the techniques that we just discussed. Check it out at http://manokwari.blankonlinux.or.id and study the source code.
Have a go hero – where to put index.html

It would be nice if we can put the index.html file in a different folder that does not contain the html5-launcher executable file, for example, if you not only have HTML files, but also CSS, image files, and other files as well. What we can do here is to put a string constant where we can put these assets into and deploy them nicely in the real environment. During development, we can use src/ or some other folder, but while deploying them, we can use a different folder, for example, /usr/share/html5-launcher/.

Summary

In this chapter, we learned how to create an application written in HTML5 that can also communicate with the GNOME platform underneath by utilizing JSCore. To display an HTML5 page, we use the WebKit’s WebView widget. When there is no communication with the main process, we can display any HTML5 page only by using this widget.

Then we added a business process in our Vala code. We connected the objects created in the Vala code with the client-side JavaScript code, which is defined in the HTML5 page. Unfortunately, we need to use Boilerplate code to start with, and fill the code with our implementation. We need to wrap every function that we want to expose to the client-side code with the JSCore function.

With this approach, we can create a full HTML5 application without a web server and do the business process inside our Vala code. This does not stop here as it is only limited by your imagination. For example, if you find that a certain HTML5 feature is not supported by GtkWebKit, you can create your own extension with the same API using Vala.

We will learn how to integrate our application with the GNOME desktop in the next chapter.
One of the signs that an application is a good application is that it integrates nicely with the platform. Integration means that it can access the platform seamlessly without re-implementing the features just to fake the look and feel instead it gets the features directly from the platform.

In this chapter, the context of the platform is the GNOME desktop. This is one of the central points in the GNOME platform, hence it needs a dedicated chapter. Our main goal is to learn how to utilize some of the desktop features, namely the session management, launcher, keyring, and notification system. Specifically, this is what we are going to discuss:

- Talking with the GNOME session management
- Launcher installation
- Storing secret data to GNOME Keyring
- The notification system
- Let's start by studying the D-Bus, one of our tools to get the integration done nicely

Talking to each other with D-Bus

D-Bus is an interprocess communication (IPC) and a remote procedure call (RPC) system used by freedesktop.org desktop implementations. GNOME is one of the implementers of this software. D-Bus makes it possible for the applications to talk to each other. It uses a bus system where a party can post a command or query on a bus, and the other parties which listen to the bus can take action upon the requested command. It has three separate channels: system bus, session bus, and private bus.
System bus is dedicated for system-wide messages, such as creating a user and hardware notifications. The bus is run by the system and every D-Bus-aware application run by any user in the system may listen and react to the bus. The second type is the session bus, which is run by the user of the running desktop. Every application which is run by the same user in the same session may listen and react to the bus. The third one is the private bus, which is a point-to-point bus and only the connected parties can talk to each other.

Each application can establish a connection to the bus. Each connection has a name which looks like an inverted internet domain name, for example, org.gnome.SettingsDaemon.Power. The application then can expose some services in the bus with an identifier called path. The path looks like a filesystem path, for example, /org/gnome/SettingsDaemon/Power.

The application can either expose the services according to a common interface, for example, the org.freedesktop interfaces or provide its own interfaces. An interface is exactly like an API that must be implemented properly according to the specification, both by the publisher and by the user of the interface.

Concretely, an application can post a message containing a command to the bus by specifying the connection name and path of the recipient. The application which owns the connection name and exposes the specified path would then react and reply with another message if necessary, depending on the interface.

In another case, an application could also broadcast a message that a signal has been emitted with a specified path. Another application which is interested in the signal can just tap the bus, listen for the emission, and perform something upon receiving the signal.

D-Bus is one of the primary tools to achieve a very good integration with the GNOME desktop. Many features available in the platform are accessible using D-Bus. To get an intuition on how D-Bus helps the integration with GNOME desktop, let’s try to listen to the D-Bus session.

You can find more information about D-Bus here: http://www.freedesktop.org/wiki/Software/dbus.

**Time for action – listening to D-Bus**

To see what is going on over the D-Bus session bus, let’s try this experiment:

1. Open the terminal.
2. Type `dbus-monitor` and hit Enter.
3. Our screen would be then full of messages coming from D-Bus. Try to increase the sound volume, or access a GNOME main menu, or activate an application. Each of your actions would be broadcasted on the bus.
What just happened?

The `dbus-monitor` command listens to whatever is posted to the session bus. If you are using a laptop computer and it is charging, you may see something like this:

```
signal sender=:1.6 -> dest=(null destination) serial=192 path=/org/gnome/SettingsDaemon/Power; interface=org.freedesktop.DBus.Properties; member=PropertiesChanged
   string "org.gnome.SettingsDaemon.Power"
   array [
       dict entry(
           string "Tooltip"
           variant             string "Laptop battery 1 hour 10 minutes until charged (44%)"
       )
   ]
   array []
```

The output says that it is displaying a `PropertiesChanged` signal in the `org.freedesktop.DBus.Properties` interface. According to the interface, the signal has three arguments: a string, an array, and another array. This particular signal is exposed in the `/org/gnome/SettingsDaemon/Power` path and broadcasted to everybody. It sends `org.gnome.SettingsDaemon.Power` in the first argument, an array containing a dictionary record, and an empty array.

If we are interested in what is happening on the system bus, give the system argument.

Pop quiz – a good example application?

Q1. With the previous data being posted all the time to the bus, what would be the best example of an application that is suitable to consume the data?

1. A battery system tray applet
2. A battery checker application
The GNOME session manager

The GNOME session manager is responsible for a user’s desktop environment session. It runs the startup applications and the desktop shell, enables a user to log out, and shut down the computer. The application can even ask the manager to cancel the logout or shutdown. For example, when a user wants to log out but there is an application that has an unsaved document, the logout can be stopped temporarily until the user saves the document or explicitly quits the application.

The session also keeps track of the user’s presence, whether the user is available, busy, idle, or invisible. The user can also set a text as the presence status.

Time for action – talking to the session manager

Let’s now try to talk to the session manager:

1. Create a script called session.js, (available in the source code distribution).
   The important parts are as follows:
   ```javascript
   var SessionManagerInterface = {
      name: "org.gnome.SessionManager",
      methods: [
         { name: 'CanShutdown', inSignature: '', outSignature: 'b' },
         { name: 'Logout', inSignature: 'u', outSignature: '' },
         { name: 'Shutdown', inSignature: '', outSignature: '' },
         { name: 'Inhibit', inSignature: 'susu', outSignature: 'u' },
         { name: 'Uninhibit', inSignature: 'u', outSignature: '' }
      ]
   }
   Presence.prototype = {
      _init: function() {
         DBus.session.proxifyObject(this,
            'org.gnome.SessionManager',
            '/org/gnome/SessionManager/Presence');
      }
   }
   var PresenceInterface = {
      name: "org.gnome.SessionManager.Presence",
      methods: [
         { name: 'SetStatus', inSignature: 'u', outSignature: '' },
         { name: 'SetStatusText', inSignature: 's', outSignature: '' }
      ]
   }
   ```
Main = new GObject.Type(
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Main",
    init: function(self) {
        DBus.proxifyPrototype(SessionManager.prototype, SessionManagerInterface);
        DBus.proxifyPrototype(Presence.prototype, PresenceInterface);
        this.manager = new SessionManager();
        this.presence = new Presence();
        ...

        var combo = ui.get_object("presenceStatus");
        cell = new Gtk.CellRendererText();
        combo.pack_start(cell);
        combo.add_attribute(cell, "text", 1);
        combo.signal.changed.connect(function(s) {
            var selected = {};
            s.get_active_iter(selected);
            var id = s.model.get_value(selected.iter, 0);
            self.presence.SetStatusRemote(id.value.get_int());
        });

        var textStatus = ui.get_object("textStatus");
        textStatus.signal.changed.connect(function(b) {
            self.presence.SetStatusTextRemote(textStatus.text);
        });

        var logout = ui.get_object("logOut");
        logout.signal.clicked.connect(function(b) {
            self.manager.LogoutRemoteSync(0);
        });

        var shutdown = ui.get_object("powerOff");
        shutdown.signal.clicked.connect(function(b) {
            self.manager.ShutdownRemoteSync();
        });

        var inhibit = ui.get_object("inhibit");
        inhibit.signal.toggled.connect(function(b) {
            if (inhibit.active == 1) {
                inhibit.label = "Uninhibit";
                var window = ui.get_object("window1");
                var xid = window.get_window().get_xid();
                self.inhibitCookie = self.manager.InhibitRemoteSync(applicationId,
Desktop Integration

```c
xid,
    "I forbid you to logout",
    1);

} else {
    self.manager.UninhibitRemoteSync(self.inhibitCookie);
    inhibit.label = "Inhibit";
}
}
window.show_all();
```

2. Alternatively, create a Vala project with GtkBuilder support, and name it `session-vala`.

3. Find this line in `src/Makefile.am`.
```makefile
session_vala_VALAFLAGS =  \
    --pkg gtk+-3.0 --pkg gdk-x11-3.0
```

4. Edit it to be like this:
```makefile
session_vala_VALAFLAGS =  \
    --pkg gtk+-3.0
```

5. Create `src/session_vala.vala` with the most important parts as shown in the following code:
```vala
using GLib;
using Gtk;

[DBus (name = "org.gnome.SessionManager")]
interface SessionManager : GLib.Object {
    public abstract bool can_shutdown () throws IOError;
    public abstract void logout (uint32 mode) throws IOError;
    public abstract void shutdown () throws IOError;
    public abstract uint32 inhibit (string appId, uint32 xid,
        string reason, uint32 flags) throws IOError;
    public abstract void uninhibit (uint32 cookie) throws IOError;
}

[DBus (name = "org.gnome.SessionManager.Presence")]
interface Presence: GLib.Object {
    public abstract void set_status_text (string text) throws IOError;
    public abstract void set_status (uint32 mode) throws IOError;
}
```
public class Main : Object
{
    ...,

    public Main()
    {
        manager = Bus.get_proxy_sync(BusType.SESSION,
            "org.gnome.SessionManager",
            "/org/gnome/SessionManager");

        presence = Bus.get_proxy_sync(BusType.SESSION,
            "org.gnome.SessionManager",
            "/org/gnome/SessionManager/Presence");

        ...,

        var combo = builder.get_object("presenceStatus") as ComboBox;
        var cell = new CellRendererText();
        combo.pack_start(cell, true);
        combo.add_attribute(cell, "text", 1);

        combo.changed.connect((object) => {
            TreeIter iter;
            object.get_active_iter(out iter);
            Value value;
            object.model.get_value(iter, 0, out value);
            presence.set_status(value.get_int());
        });

        var textStatus = builder.get_object("textStatus") as Entry;
        textStatus.changed.connect(() => {
            presence.set_status_text(textStatus.text);
        });

        var logout = builder.get_object("logOut") as Button;
        logout.clicked.connect(() => {
            manager.logout(0);
        });

        var shutdown = builder.get_object("powerOff") as Button;
        shutdown.clicked.connect(() => {
            manager.shutdown();
        });

        var inhibit = builder.get_object("inhibit") as ToggleButton;
        inhibit.toggled.connect((object) => {
            if (object.active == true) {
                object.label = "Uninhibit";
            }
        });
var window = builder.get_object("window1") as Window;
var xid = Gdk.X11Window.get_xid(window.get_window());
cookie = manager.inhibit("MyApplication",
 (uint32) xid,
 "I forbid you to logout",
 1);
} else {
    manager.uninhibit(cookie);
    object.label = "Inhibit";
}

6. Create a UI with Glade, call it session.ui.

7. Put Entry, ComboBox, and a set of buttons. The first button is ToggleButton and the rest are plain buttons.

8. Give the name textStatus to Entry, presenceStatus to ComboBox, inhibit to ToggleButton, and logOut and powerOff names to the rest of the Button objects respectively.

9. In ComboBox, create a new model by clicking on the ellipsis button, and call it as liststore1.

10. Following the steps we learned when we did the interaction with data source in Chapter 8, Playing With Data, put two fields in liststore1. The first data is an integer, which is noted as gint and the second one is string, which is gchararray.

11. Prefill liststore1 with these data pairs:
    0 Available
    1 Invisible
    2 Busy
    3 Idle

12. Back to the presenceStatus widget, set the Active item with 0 value.

13. Save the UI and run the application. We should see the following screenshot:
14. We can put a status text by entering text into the textbox. We can change the status of presence by selecting it from the combobox. If we press the Log Out button, the session will be closed as soon as we agree to log out, and the same with the Power Off button, with the difference that Power Off will turn off the computer. If we activate the inhibit button, the logout and power off action will be cancelled.

**What just happened?**

What we did was, we interacted with the GNOME session manager using the D-Bus API. Our first step is to create a proxy object. What this object does is to act as a bridge to the D-Bus API. So instead of calling the real D-Bus API, which is inaccessible in Seed, we call it through a proxy.

To prepare a proxy, we simply create a JavaScript object with a prototype. We define an initialization function in the object, which in turn calls the `DBus.session.proxifyObject` function. This function creates the connection between the JavaScript function with the D-Bus function calls.

In this experiment, we access two sets of API from the session manager. The first one is `SessionManager` and the second one is `Presence`. This means that we would have two proxy objects installed in our application.

The first proxy is created by specifying the connection name, which is `org.gnome.SessionManager` and the path where the functions are defined and exposed, which is `/org/gnome/SessionManager`.

```javascript
function SessionManager() {
    this._init();
}

SessionManager.prototype = {
    _init: function() {
        DBus.session.proxifyObject(this,
            'org.gnome.SessionManager',
            '/org/gnome/SessionManager');
    }
}
```
After that, we define the interface that we want to map with this object. The interface lists all methods, signals, and properties from the D-Bus world, which we want to access. For our purpose in this example, we only define the connection name and the methods. Note that we have \textit{inSignature} and \textit{outSignature} in the method descriptions. \textit{inSignature} denotes the parameters which we pass into the function and \textit{outSignature} denotes the variables which are returned by the function.

```
var SessionManagerInterface = {
  name: "org.gnome.SessionManager",
  methods: [
    { name: 'CanShutdown', inSignature: '', outSignature: 'b' },
    { name: 'Logout', inSignature: 'u', outSignature: '' },
    { name: 'Shutdown', inSignature: '', outSignature: '' },
    { name: 'Inhibit', inSignature: 'susu', outSignature: 'u' },
    { name: 'Uninhibit', inSignature: 'u', outSignature: '' }
  ]
}
```

Based on the previous description, we have five functions, \texttt{CanShutdown}, \texttt{Logout}, \texttt{Shutdown}, \texttt{Inhibit} and \texttt{Uninhibit}. These are the functions defined in the \texttt{org.gnome.SessionManager} connection.

Not all functions exposed in the connection need to be defined in our proxy. We only need to define the functions that we want to use.

The parameters are passed as a single string, where each character denotes the variable type according to the D-Bus convention. The following table lists the types as copied from the D-Bus specification Version 0.19:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conventional name</th>
<th>Code (ASCII)</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INVALID</td>
<td>0 (ASCII NUL)</td>
<td>Not a valid type code, used to terminate signatures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BYTE</td>
<td>121 (ASCII &quot;y&quot;)</td>
<td>8-bit unsigned integer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOOLEAN</td>
<td>98 (ASCII &quot;b&quot;)</td>
<td>Boolean value, 0 is FALSE and 1 is TRUE. Everything else is invalid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT16</td>
<td>110 (ASCII &quot;n&quot;)</td>
<td>16-bit signed integer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UINT16</td>
<td>113 (ASCII &quot;q&quot;)</td>
<td>16-bit unsigned integer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT32</td>
<td>105 (ASCII &quot;i&quot;)</td>
<td>32-bit signed integer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UINT32</td>
<td>117 (ASCII &quot;u&quot;)</td>
<td>32-bit unsigned integer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INT64</td>
<td>120 (ASCII &quot;x&quot;)</td>
<td>64-bit signed integer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table of Conventional Names and Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conventional name</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UINT64</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>64-bit unsigned integer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOUBLE</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>IEEE 754 double.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRING</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>UTF-8 string (must be valid UTF-8). Must be null terminated and contain no other null bytes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJECT_PATH</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>Name of an object instance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIGNATURE</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>A type signature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARRAY</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>An array.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRUCT</td>
<td>114, 40, 41</td>
<td>Struct, type code 114 &quot;r&quot;, is reserved for use in bindings and implementations to represent the general concept of a struct, and must not appear in signatures that are used on D-Bus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VARIANT</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>Variant type (the type of the value is part of the value itself).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DICT_ENTRY</td>
<td>101, 123, 125</td>
<td>Entry in a dict or map (array of key-value pairs). Type code 101 &quot;e&quot; is reserved for use in bindings and implementations to represent the general concept of a dict or dict entry, and must not appear in signatures used on D-Bus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIX_FD</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>Unix file descriptor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(reserved)</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>Reserved for a &quot;maybe&quot; type compatible with the one in GVariant, and must not appear in signatures used on D-Bus until specified here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(reserved)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Reserved for use in bindings/implementations to represent any single complete type, and must not appear in signatures used on D-Bus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(reserved)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>Reserved for use in bindings/implementations to represent any basic type, and must not appear in signatures used on D-Bus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(reserved)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Reserved for internal use by bindings/implementations, and must not appear in signatures used on D-Bus. GVariant uses these type codes to encode calling conventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(reserved)</td>
<td>38, 94</td>
<td>Reserved for use in bindings/implementations to represent any basic type, and must not appear in signatures used on D-Bus. GVariant uses these type codes to encode calling conventions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second proxy object is for the Presence API. The API is used for setting the status, both textual and numeric. The numeric status corresponds to the following constants:

- 0 is for available
- 1 is for invisible
- 2 is for busy
- 3 is for idle
The complete specification of the API can be read at http://people.gnome.org/~mccann/gnome-session/docs/gnome-session.html.

The API is defined in the `org.gnome.SessionManager.Presence` connection.

```javascript
Presence.prototype = {
  _init: function() {
   DBus.session.proxifyObject(this, 'org.gnome.SessionManager', '/org/gnome/SessionManager/Presence');
  }
}
```

The interface is shorter, as we only need two functions, `SetStatus` for the numerical status and `SetStatusText` for the textual status.

```javascript
var PresenceInterface = {
  name: "org.gnome.SessionManager.Presence",
  methods: [
    { name: 'SetStatus', inSignature: 'u', outSignature: '' },
    { name: 'SetStatusText', inSignature: 's', outSignature: '' },
  ]
}
```

After we map the functions with the proxy objects, we can't just call the function as we normally do. Seed adds `Remote` and `RemoteSync` as a postfix to all the functions that we defined in the interface in the setup process. So, what our application does is it calls the function name appended with `Remote` or `RemoteSync`. The `RemoteSync` version is the synchronous call while the `Remote` call is the asynchronous version of the function.

The setup process is done when we call the `proxifyPrototype` functions as we do here:

```javascript
  DBus.proxifyPrototype(SessionManager.prototype, SessionManagerInterface);
  DBus.proxifyPrototype(Presence.prototype, PresenceInterface);
```

It means that based on the interface defined in the interface object, Seed would populate the `Remote` and `RemoteSync` function calls in the prototype. As we learned in Chapter 3, Programming Languages, in JavaScript we can add functions as members of an object.
Next, we initialize some variables to be an instance of the newly created proxy objects:

```javascript
this.manager = new SessionManager();
this.presence = new Presence();
```

In our previous experience of handling a data source in *Chapter 8, Playing With Data*, we used a ListStore as a model to keep our data. Now, we do it again. But instead of using a TreeView, here we have a ComboBox. The ComboBox also uses the MVC design pattern and uses the ListStore as the model. Same with TreeView, we need a renderer to actually display the data on the screen. Again, we use `CellRendererText` to do this task as shown in the following code snippet:

```javascript
var combo = ui.get_object("presenceStatus");
cell = new Gtk.CellRendererText();
combo.pack_start(cell);
combo.add_attribute(cell, "text", 1);
```

After that, we connect the changed signal of the ComboBox to a handler. In this handler, what we do is to get the current `Iter` object of the ComboBox, get the integer value of the `iter` object, and call `SetStatusRemote` of the `Presence` proxy object. As we discussed previously, the `SetStatusRemote` function in Seed code is actually the `SetStatus` function in the D-Bus side. We pass an integer in `SetStatusRemote`, this matches with the value of `u` that we defined in the `SetStatus` function's `inSignature` member of the interface object.

```javascript
combo.signal.changed.connect(function(s) {
  var selected = {};
  s.get_active_iter(selected);
  var id = s.model.get_value(selected.iter, 0);
  self.presence.SetStatusRemote(id.value.get_int());
});
```

Then, we connect the changed signal of the `textStatus` widget, and upon receiving the signal we call the `SetStatusTextRemote` function. We pass `textStatus.text`, which is a string, and it matches with the `s value` inSignature of the `SetStatus` function we defined in the interface object.

```javascript
var textStatus = ui.get_object("textStatus");
textStatus.signal.changed.connect(function(b) {
  self.presence.SetStatusTextRemote(textStatus.text);
});
```
The next widget on our list is the `logOut` widget. We handle the `clicked` signal by calling `LogoutRemoteSync` by passing a 0 value into it. In the GNOME Session Manager documentation, 0 means that we simply want to log out. 1 means that the logout process is done without prompting the user. Finally, a value of 2 means that the logout process is forcefully done, without prompt and ignoring any inhibitors.

```javascript
var logout = ui.get_object("logOut");
logout.signal.clicked.connect(function(b) {
    self.manager.LogoutRemoteSync(0);
});
```

Next one is the `powerOff` widget. When this button is pressed, what we want is to initiate the shutdown process. To do this, we call the `ShutdownRemoteSync` function:

```javascript
var shutdown = ui.get_object("powerOff");
shutdown.signal.clicked.connect(function(b) {
    self.manager.ShutdownRemoteSync();
});
```

Finally, we need to handle the `inhibit` ToggleButton. We handle the two states of the button, when it is active and when it is in normal state. In the active state, we change the label to `Uninhibit` to show that the behavior has now changed, and we ask `SessionManager` to register ourselves as the inhibitor. When there is an inhibitor, any logout process will be cancelled. To do this, we call `InhibitRemoteSync`. The return value is a cookie which we must pass to `inhibit`. We use this cookie when calling `UninhibitRemoteSync` in the opposite state of the ToggleButton. After calling this, the logout process would be normal again.

```javascript
var inhibit = ui.get_object("inhibit");
inhibit.signal.toggled.connect(function(b) {
    if (inhibit.active == 1) {
        inhibit.label = "Uninhibit";
        var window = ui.get_object("window1");
        var xid = window.get_window().get_xid();
        self.inhibitCookie = self.manager.InhibitRemoteSync(applicationId,
            xid,
            "I forbid you to logout",
            1);
    } else {
        self.manager.UninhibitRemoteSync(self.inhibitCookie);
        inhibit.label = "Inhibit";
    }
});
```
Now let's inspect the Vala code. How it works is the same with the Seed code, but take a look at how we call the D-Bus functions. First, we need to create the interface of the classes and methods that we want to use.

We have a `DBus` attribute mentioned, followed with the name of the connection:

```
[DBus (name = "org.gnome.SessionManager")]
```

Then we define the interface and derive `GLib.Object` so that we can also handle signals. For each method, we convert the original function name, which is written in camel case (the first character of each word is written in uppercase and the words are concatenated together without any delimiters), into lowercase words joined together with underscores. For example, the `CanShutdown` function must be converted to `can_shutdown`. Each method must be declared to throw the `IOError` exception, and the arguments are written in Vala style using Vala-native data types.

```
interface SessionManager : GLib.Object {
  public abstract bool can_shutdown () throws IOError;
  public abstract void logout (uint32 mode) throws IOError;
  public abstract void shutdown () throws IOError;
  public abstract uint32 inhibit (string appId, uint32 xid, string reason, uint32 flags) throws IOError;
  public abstract void uninhibit (uint32 cookie) throws IOError;
}
```

We declare all interfaces first before using them, so the `Presence` interface and `SessionManager` must be declared as shown here:

```
[DBus (name = "org.gnome.SessionManager.Presence")]
interface Presence: GLib.Object {
  public abstract void set_status_text (string text) throws IOError;
  public abstract void set_status (uint32 mode) throws IOError;
}
```

Then we need to create the proxy objects of these interfaces. We use `get_proxy_sync`, mapping the connection names and the paths of these interfaces. If the results are not null, then they are ready to use.

```
manager = Bus.get_proxy_sync(BusType.SESSION,
  "org.gnome.SessionManager",
  "/org/gnome/SessionManager");

presence = Bus.get_proxy_sync(BusType.SESSION,
  "org.gnome.SessionManager",
  "/org/gnome/SessionManager/Presence");
```
**Desktop Integration**

At this point, the `manager` and `presence` objects should be already connected to the D-Bus objects.

Compared with the Seed counterpart, calling the methods in Vala is simpler. One can just call the function name directly and pass the arguments if any. For example, the `shutdown` function can be called using just the following code snippet:

```java
manager.shutdown();
```

**Have a go hero – checking all nulls**

As discussed previously, all proxy objects are not guaranteed to be connected to D-Bus. For example, when a service provider of a certain connection or path is not installed, then the connection will fail and the variable value will be null.

Go ahead, revisit our code and check on every occurrence of the proxy objects. If the value is not null, the code can go forward; but if it is null, we need to do something. Think of a good strategy for handling this case.

**Launcher**

Launcher is the place where a user runs an application by clicking on its icon. In GNOME Shell the launcher is accessible in the **Applications** tab, in the **Activities** menu. The applications are listed categorically, showing the icons, the title, and the descriptions of the application. The title and the descriptions are nicely localized. The applications can also be filtered by searching.

In the previous version of GNOME or in the GNOME Fallback mode, the launcher is in the GNOME panel. The applications are also listed categorically and the title and the descriptions are also localized.

We have seen the way to list the applications in *Chapter 9, Deploying HTML5 Applications with GNOME*, although not exactly in the same order with GNOME Shell or GNOME panel. The essential part of the experiment was to load the information contained in the desktop files. So, in order to make an application's icon appear in the launcher, we need to create a desktop file for it.

**Time for action – putting our application in the launcher**

Now let's try to create a launcher for our previous application:

1. Rename `session.js` as `session-tester` (without any extension).
2. Modify the UI loader part to open `/usr/share/session-manager-test/session.ui`, and modify the following line:

   ```java
   ui.add_from_file("session.ui");
   ```
3. Modify it to:

```cpp
ui.add_from_file("/usr/share/session-manager-test/session.ui");
```

4. Prepare a new text file, name it as `session-manager-test.desktop`, and fill it with the following code:

```plaintext
[Desktop Entry]
Name=Session Manager Test
Comment=Testing the interaction with GNOME session manager
OnlyShowIn=GNOME;
Exec=session-tester
Icon=help-browser
StartupNotify=true
Terminal=false
Type=Application
Categories=GNOME;GTK;Settings
```

5. Install the UI file into the `/usr/share/session-manager-test` directory (create the directory if you have not done so!), the desktop file to `/usr/share/applications`, and the `session-tester` script into `/usr/bin`.

6. Open the Activities menu in GNOME Shell, navigate through the Applications tab, and look for Session Manager Test, you'll find it!
**Desktop Integration**

**What just happened?**

What we did was a simple modification to the script to load the UI file in the system-wide configuration. This process must be done in all deployments of our applications, but this is a pretty bad example because we hardcode the path of the UI file. One way to avoid hardcoding the path is to keep a configuration file. Revisit *Chapter 4, Using GNOME Core Libraries*, to access the configuration system.

Next, we created a desktop file. It is started with the following line:

```
[Desktop Entry]
```

Then, we specify the name of the application. The following is the text which will be displayed in the launcher:

```
Name=Session Manager Test
Comment=Testing the interaction with GNOME session manager
```

`OnlyShowIn` defines the launcher in which this application would appear. If, for example, we add Unity, the application would only appear in Unity and GNOME.

```
OnlyShowIn=GNOME;
```

Next, we define the name of the executable. This is the name of the application that we install into `/usr/bin`.

```
Exec=session-tester
```

Then, we define the icon which is used in the launcher. Here, we just steal an icon from the `help-browser` application. In real applications, we should provide our own icon.

```
Icon=help-browser
```

```
StartupNotify=true
```

After that, we specify that we don’t need a terminal to run our application. If we provide, for example, bash script; we may need to ask the terminal to open it if there is no hashbang or missing the executable permission.

```
Terminal=false
```

Next, we define our application as, of course, Application:

```
Type=Application
```

Finally, we tell the launcher that our application should fall into these categories. In the launcher, we can simply see our application reside in *System Tools* which maps to *Settings*.

```
Categories=GNOME;GTK;Settings
```
The launcher normally listens for any changes that we did in all files in /usr/share/applications. So whenever we put a new file or modify the existing one, the changes will automatically be seen almost instantly in the launcher, so we don’t need to restart the desktop.

You can find the formal specification of the contents of desktop files at http://standards.freedesktop.org/desktop-entry-spec/latest/index.html.

** GNOME keyring **

Many use cases of real-life applications involve storing passwords, secret data, or keys. Implementing the storage for this kind of data is hard and requires special skills in the security field. GNOME Keyring is the secret data storage infrastructure available on the GNOME platform. Applications that use GNOME Keyring can save passwords, secret data, or keys in the keyring and retrieve them later when needed.

The keyring is protected and associated with the user account. It can be configured so that whenever a user logs in to the system, the keyring is automatically available to the application and when the user logs out, the keyring is also closed. Otherwise, the keyring can be opened using a password.

The keyring has an accompanying application called Seahorse. It is an application which can display the stored secret data within the user's session. The integration which we aim for is not to replace Seahorse, but just to keep the data secure in the keyring. However, we could still inspect the data using Seahorse.

** Time for action – storing passwords securely **

Unfortunately, we will do this only with Vala, as gir-1.2 which is required by Seed doesn’t include the necessary function to store the password easily.

1. Create a new empty Vala object without GtkBuilder, let's call it keyring.

2. Open configure.ac and find this line: 
   \[ \text{PKG\_CHECK\_MODULES(\text{KEYRING}, \{\text{gtk-3.0 }\})} \]. Modify the whole line to look like the following code:
   \[ \text{PKG\_CHECK\_MODULES(\text{KEYRING}, \{\text{gnome-keyring-1 }\})} \]

3. Open src/Makefile.am and find the following line:
   \[ \text{keyring\_SOURCES = } \]
   \[ \text{keyring.vala config.vapi} \]
   \[ \text{keyring\_VALAFLAGS = } \]
   \[ --\text{pkg gtk+\text{-}3.0} \]
4. Modify the whole line to look like the following:

```plaintext
keyring_SOURCES = \
   keyring.vala config.vapi gnome-keyring.vapi

keyring_VALAFLAGS = \
   --pkg gnome-keyring-1
```

5. Create a new file in the `src/` directory, call it `gnome-keyring.vapi`, and fill it with the following lines:

```plaintext
[CCode (cprefix = "GnomeKeyring", lower_case_cprefix = "gnome_keyring")]
namespace GnomeKeyringOverrides {
[Compact]
public struct PasswordSchemaAttribute {
   public unowned string name;
   public GnomeKeyring.AttributeType type;
}
[Compact]
[CCode (cheader_filename = "gnome-keyring.h")]
public struct PasswordSchema {
   public GnomeKeyring.ItemType item_type;
   [CCode(array_length = false)]
   public PasswordSchemaAttribute[] attributes;
}
[CCode (cheader_filename = "gnome-keyring.h")]
public static void* store_password (GnomeKeyringOverrides.PasswordSchema schema,
   string? keyring, string display_name, string password, owned
   GnomeKeyring.OperationDoneCallback callback, ...);
[CCode (cheader_filename = "gnome-keyring.h")]
public static void* find_password (GnomeKeyringOverrides.PasswordSchema schema,
   owned GnomeKeyring.OperationGetStringCallback callback, ...);
}
```

6. Open `src/keyring.vala` and use the following code:

```plaintext
using GnomeKeyring;

public class Main : Object {
   private const GnomeKeyringOverrides.PasswordSchema secretData = {
      ItemType.GENERIC_SECRET,
```
public void returning_password_callback(Result result, string? password) {
    if (result == Result.OK) {
        stdout.printf ("Password is: %s\n", password);
    } else {
        stdout.printf ("Failed, code: %d\n", (int) result);
    }
}

public void store_password_callback(Result result) {
    if (result == Result.OK) {
        GnomeKeyringOverrides.find_password (secretData,
            returning_password_callback,
            "name", "myuser",
            null);
    } else {
        stdout.printf ("Failed, code: %d\n", (int) result);
    }
}

public Main () {
    GnomeKeyringOverrides.store_password (secretData,
        null,
        "My Application Password",
        "this-is-a-password",
        store_password_callback,
        "name", "myuser",
        null);
}

static int main (string[] args) {
    var app = new Main ();
    var loop = new MainLoop ();
    loop.run ();
    return 0;
}
7. Build the application, but don't run it just yet!

8. Open the Activities menu in GNOME Shell, find the Seahorse application, and run it. You should see some entries inside (or even empty), but no entry with the name My Application Password. Exit Seahorse.

9. Run our application, it will display the following:
   
   Password is: this-is-a-password

10. It keeps running, but after a while you can kill it by pressing the Ctrl + C keys combination.

11. Run Seahorse again, we should see an entry called My Application Password. If we click it, we should be able to see the password, which is this-is-a-password.

![Image of Passwords and Keys]

**What just happened?**

What we did was we saved a user password into the GNOME Keyring system. This password can be recovered later when we need it, as demonstrated by the application in the previous section. Do you use the "remember password" feature in a web browser? When we use this feature, the browser prefills the password field with the saved password. But instead of keeping the password to ourselves, we store this in GNOME Keyring.
Unfortunately, the Vala function and class mapping of GNOME Keyring distributed in many popular distributions have wrong information, so we can't use them as it is. In Chapter 9, Deploying HTML5 Applications with GNOME, we tried to replace the original .vapi file with a custom .vapi file. But now, we put an override file which fixes the incorrect information rather than replacing the whole file. The override file, which we call gnome-keyring.vapi is included in the build phase as shown in point 4 of our previous action in the Time for action – storing passwords securely section.

The content of the override is the functions and class member that replace the original version, which was wrongly written. Here, we have the overrides for the store_password and find_password functions, and the PasswordSchema structure. We can't just replace the original version, but we need to use a different namespace. In this example, we use the GnomeKeyringOverrides namespace.

So whenever we want to use the original version, we use GnomeKeyring, and when we want to use the overridden version, we use the GnomeKeyringOverrides namespace.

Before using the store_password and find_password functions, we need to define the structure of the data that we want to keep. In the following code snippet, we describe a structure which we call secretData. The data only has one field, which we call name. What we want to do with this data is that we want to store a password associated with a name. We end the structure with a pair of null and 0 as the end-of-structure mark.

```csharp
private const GnomeKeyringOverrides.PasswordSchema secretData = {
    ItemType.GENERIC_SECRET,
    {
        "name", AttributeType.STRING
    },
    { null, 0 }
};
```

In the previous example, we use the asynchronous version of the store and find password functions. It means that when we call this function, it returns from the function immediately. We process the success of the function in another callback function. If we choose the synchronous version (the function names end with the sync postfix) and there is something heavy running in the GNOME Keyring side, our application could freeze until the operation is completed; but this won't happen with the asynchronous calls.
As said, we need to prepare a couple of callback functions. The first one is for the `find_password` function. We get the result in the `result` variable, and the password in the `password` variable. Note the question mark in the type definition of password which means that the content may be null. This is true whenever the result is not the value of `Result.OK`. The function is used to just simply print the password or the error code when it fails. In real applications, this should inject the returned password into a field or some other element which requires the password content.

```java
public void returning_password_callback(Result result, string? password) {
    if (result == Result.OK) {
        stdout.printf("Password is: %s\n", password);
    } else {
        stdout.printf("Failed, code: %d\n", (int) result);
    }
}
```

Then we have the callback for the `store_password` function. It checks the `result` value, and if it is a successful one, we just try to get the password with the `find_password` function. In real applications, this could just simply show a notification that the password has been saved or just quietly do something else.

```java
public void store_password_callback(Result result) {
    if (result == Result.OK) {
        GnomeKeyringOverrides.find_password(
            secretData,
            returning_password_callback,
            "name", "myuser",
            null);
    } else {
        stdout.printf("Failed, code: %d\n", (int) result);
    }
}
```

In main function, we simply store the `this-is-a-password` password in an area called **My Application Password**. We associate the password with the `myuser` string. In real applications, the association could be extended. For example, for a network password, the additional data needed could be extended to the server name, port number, service path, and so on. We end the function with `null` to mark it as the end of the data. If we have the extended data structure, we should keep passing the needed data as the parameter of the function, according to the order defined in the structure, and end it with `null`.

```java
public Main ()
{
    GnomeKeyringOverrides.store_password {
```
Notification system

An application may need to inform users about an event which is happening. When the application is active and the user is currently using it, the information may be simply displayed inside the application. But what happens if the application is currently running but stays in the background or is being minimized? The user would not be able to see the information. This is not good, especially when the piece of information is a very important one. For this purpose we should use the notification system, which is available to users at all times.

GNOME has libnotify as its notification system. The main process runs as a daemon, a program that never quits and only exits when the desktop is closed. It listens to all application requests to display the notifications. Upon receiving the request, it displays the notification text at the bottom of the screen. Application simply uses the library to send the notification to the daemon.

Time for action – sending notifications

Let’s now try to send some notification:

1. Create a new Seed script called notification.js.
2. Fill it with the following code:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed
GLib = imports.gi.GLib;
Notify = imports.gi.Notify;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Main = new GType({
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Main",
    init: function() {
        Notify.init('Test Application');
        var n = new Notify.Notification(
```
summary: 'This is a notification text',
body: 'This is a longer version of the notification text',
}

n.add_action('ok-button', 'OK', function() { n.close()});

n.show();

var main = new Main();
var context = GLib.main_context_default();
var loop = new GLib.MainLoop.c_new(context);
loop.run();

3. Run it. Note that the notification text is truncated. It is shown momentarily at the bottom of the screen and if we move our mouse close to the text, the container of the text will expand, showing all the portions of the text. It will also display the OK button. But as soon as we move out from the area, the text will disappear. If we do not press the OK button, the notification will stay at the bottom-right corner of the screen.
What just happened?
What we did was just a simple function call to libnotify. First we need to declare it by performing an import from Notify:

```javascript
Notify = imports.gi.Notify;
```

Before calling any function from libnotify, we must call the init function. Otherwise no other function can be called successfully.

```javascript
Notify.init('Test Application');
```

Then we create a new notification object. One object can hold one notification text. We set the text, the summary, and the body in the constructor. The summary section is the short text that would appear initially on the screen. The body section is the longer text that is displayed by placing the mouse cursor inside the notification area. With Seed, we could pass these texts in an object.

```javascript
var n = new Notify.Notification({
    summary: 'This is a notification text',
    body: 'This is a longer version of the notification text',
});
```

Then we add an OK button. We simply close the notification whenever the button is clicked. The action is attached with an anonymous function as defined here.

```javascript
n.add_action('ok-button', 'OK', function() { n.close()});
```

When we want to show the notification, we can just call the show function:

```javascript
n.show();
```

Our notification would remain in the notification area—even when our program is closed—until the OK button is pressed.

Have a go hero – displaying an icon
Let’s try to display an icon inside our notification. It’s very easy to do, we could just put an icon name in the icon field of the object we pass in the constructor.
Summary

In this chapter we have learned about integration to some important parts of the desktop, namely the session management, launcher, keyring, and notification system. We introduced ourselves to D-Bus. Then we discussed about accessing the features using the D-Bus API as well as the usual library API.

We now know that we can create an application which can initiate a logout or shutdown process and we also know how to inhibit the Session Manager from continuing the process. We know how to make our application visible in the launcher by installing the desktop file into the /usr/share/applications directory. We learned how to store sensitive data into the keyring and retrieve it when we need it. Finally we discussed how to display a notification that is displayed by the desktop. With these experiences, we can leverage our applications to be fully integrated with the GNOME desktop.

We also learned the trick to overcome wrong .vapi supplied by many popular distributions by creating an override file.

The next chapter discusses the aspects that we have to pay attention to when our application goes global. So if we want our application to be successful on an international level, we must not miss it.
Making Our Applications Go International

GNOME has a very good track record as far as internationalization is concerned (often abbreviated as i18n), which is a method of designing applications that can be adapted in various languages and regional settings without any engineering changes. Since its early versions, GNOME already supported many languages and regions. This provides us with a good choice to also make our applications ready to be deployed anywhere in the world.

This chapter is very important if we aim to distribute our applications in countries outside the United States. Why? Because, by default, GNOME (and other subsystems) uses English as the interface language and uses the U.S. date, time, number, and monetary formats. When we target our market outside the U.S., we need to follow the steps discussed in this chapter. Specifically, this chapter is about understanding the following topics:

- Locale introduction
- Bootstrapping an i18n infrastructure
- Translating the UI text
- The localization process

Now, let’s start!
Understanding locale

Internally, GNOME uses the Portable Operating System Interface (POSIX) locale system to make i18n work. A locale contains a set of cultural parameters written in a specified script in a particular variant of a language spoken in a certain territory. The parameters include the character set used in the locale, the language code, and the presentation of date and time, number, currency, address, telephone, and measurement.

Each locale is identified with a locale code. This code is defined in the following format:

```
language[_territory][.codeset][@modifier]
```

For example, the locale of the Aceh language spoken in Indonesia, which is written in the Jawi script in a UTF-8 character set, is coded as `ac_ID.UTF-8@Jaw`. The parts in square brackets are sometimes omitted when it is less ambiguous. The language part of the code is coded in ISO-639, the territory is coded in ISO-3166, and the script is coded in ISO-15924 standards.

Each parameter can have a different locale assigned to it. For example, we can use a fully Dutch-translated desktop, but use a Western Arabic numeric format and U.S. measurement and monetary settings. However, GNOME only provides limited settings to reduce confusion.

The settings are applied to the system usually when the user logs in to the desktop. If the user did not choose a locale during installation, the system usually uses a C locale (also known as the POSIX locale). POSIX itself is an international standard issued by IEEE for maintaining compatibility between operating systems. The standard includes the POSIX locale, which is the base locale that then can be extended to support other cultural preferences.
The preceding diagram shows an illustration on how an application uses a locale. On the right-hand side we have a collection of data. **Source string** is the text from the source code, which is intended to be shown in the application, be it a label text, a header, a caption of an image, an information text, and so on. **Translations** are a set of translations of the source string in many human languages and dialects, such as U.S. English, British English, Indonesian, Japanese, and so on. **Locale data** affects the formatting (for example, the number and the date presentation) and the content of the text (such as displaying the day of the week in the target language). The source string is then passed into the API in the middle and then transformed into the final string, which is then displayed on the right-hand side.

Translations and locale data should be prepared for all target market areas of the application. They may be missing. In this case, the source string is displayed without any transformation, meaning whatever is written in the source code will be displayed without any translations or formatting changes.

### Time for action – getting the available locales

We can see a list of the available locales on our system easily. This should be our first command, which we must master in order to make our life easier later when we need to debug why our application can’t get translated. Let’s see how to do this:

1. Open a terminal.
2. Run the following command:
   ```bash
   locale -a.
   ```
3. We will be presented with a list of the locales available in our system (the actual output in your own computer may vary). Here is a sample list:
   ```
   C
   C.UTF-8
   en_US.utf8
   POSIX
   ```

### What just happened?

In the previous list, we see that we have four locales installed in the system. We have C, both in Universal Character Set and UTF-8, POSIX, and English-US in UTF-8 locales. It means that we can only have four different translations of an application. C and POSIX usually are not used at all for translations and are only used by the source language, which is the language used in the source code (the human language used in the textual presentation, not the programming language). With this fact, it means that we can only have one translation, which is the English-US.
The character set affects how the data is presented on the screen, in the storage, and during data transfers. It is a mapping between an integer number, called a code point, to a character, the presentation of a letter, number, symbol, and many other types of characters. GNOME uses UTF-8 internally, so we will stick to this character set.

**Have a go hero – exploring the locale parameters**

Try to run `locale` without any parameter to see all the locale parameters. The parameters are affected by setting the locale environment variables (prefixed with `LC_`). Can you somehow guess which parameter is represented by which variable?

**Time for action – adding a locale**

If you only see English-US in the available locale list, let’s add a locale to the system. If you see a locale other than English-US, you can skip this action. Let’s add an Indonesian locale with an Indonesian territory, so the code for it is `id_ID`. Of course, you can use a different locale depending on your preference.

1. Edit the `/etc/locale.gen` file as a superuser.
2. Find a line that shows `id_ID.UTF-8`.
3. Remove the comment mark, which is the hash mark in front of the line.
4. Save the file.
5. Open a terminal and run the `sudo locale-gen` command.
6. Depending on the content of the `/etc/locale.gen` file, the output may vary. But if you only uncomment Indonesian and English-US, then you will see the following output:
   
   Generating locales (this might take a while)...
   
   en_US.UTF-8... done
   id_ID.UTF-8... done
   
   Generation complete.
7. To check whether our command has succeeded, let’s type `locale -a` in the terminal again.
8. We should see the `id_ID.utf-8` locale in the list, as shown here:

   ```
   C.UTF-8
   en_US.utf8
   id_ID.utf8
   POSIX
   ```
Chapter 11

What just happened?
The locale information for many cultures already exists within the system. However, they are still in the textual form and not enabled. What we did with the `locale-gen` command was generate the binary representation and enable the locales that are listed without a comment in the `/etc/locale.gen` file. With this command, it is enabled system wide. Hence, we need a root privilege and we used `sudo` to accomplish the task (note that `locale -a` does not need this privilege).

Time for action – getting different outputs with different locales
Ok, so now that we have a locale other than English-US, what's next? Let's start with a very simple one, the date program.

1. Open a terminal.
2. Type the following:
   ```bash
   LC_ALL=C date
   ```
3. See the output, as shown here:
   ```
   Sun Oct 28 15:41:38 EET 2012
   ```
4. Then type the following command (don't forget to change `id_ID.utf8` to the locale that you have enabled previously).
   ```bash
   LC_ALL=id_ID.utf8 date
   ```
5. Check the output; it will be similar to the one shown here:
   ```
   Min Okt 28 15:41:45 EET 2012
   ```

What just happened?
In this action, we configured the settings manually by using the `LC_ALL` environment variable. By setting the `LC_ALL` variable to any locale identifier, the POSIX system would immediately use the specified locale to transform the output of the application. As mentioned earlier, the system has many parameters that we can set. The `LC_ALL` variable is the magic parameter that sets all of the parameters with a single value.

Actually, the output of the date program is purely date and time data. So, the parameter affected is `LC_TIME`.

Have a go hero – using a bogus local identifier
As we can see, the output is translated into Indonesian just after we set the locale. Try to provide any bogus locale identifier (or try to make a typo!) and you will see that it no longer works. Also, if you have other locales installed, try them all!
Making Our Applications Go International

i18n in a Vala project

To make i18n work in Vala, there are several steps needed to be done. Let’s create a Vala project and do the i18n steps one by one.

**Time for action – bootstrapping the infrastructure**

The first thing we need to do is prepare the build infrastructure. This step is quite tricky because if you miss even a single detail, you could get lost for hours trying to find out why everything does not work. But don’t be afraid, let’s jump into the freezing water and get a fish out of it!

1. Create a Vala project with GtkBuilder support; let’s call it `hello-i18n`.

2. Edit the `configure.ac` file and alter this file by referencing the following code. What you need to do is insert the highlighted lines between the lines that are not highlighted. If you worry about not getting it properly, you can just copy and paste the whole file.

   ```
   AC_INIT(hello_i18n, 0.1)
   AC_CONFIG_HEADERS([config.h])
   AM_INIT_AUTOMAKE([1.11])
   AM_SILENT_RULES([yes])
   AC_PROG_CC
   LT_INIT
   IT_PROG_INTLTOOL()
   
   AH_TEMPLATE([GETTEXT_PACKAGE], [Package name for gettext])
   GETTEXT_PACKAGE=hello-i18n
   
   AC_DEFINE_UNQUOTED([GETTEXT_PACKAGE], ['$GETTEXT_PACKAGE'],
               [The domain to use with gettext])
   AC_SUBST(GETTEXT_PACKAGE)
   
   AM_GLIB_GNU_GETTEXT
   
   PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR=${datadir}/locale
   AC_SUBST(PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR)
   
   dnl Check for vala
   AM_PROG_VALAC([0.10.0])
   
   dnl Development mode
   AC_ARG_ENABLE(development,
   ```
Chapter 11

AS_HELP_STRING([--enable-development], [enable development mode]),
    enable_development="$enableval",
    enable_development=no)
if test "x$enable_development" = "y\text{es}"; then
    DEVELOPMENT_MODE="yes"
fi

AC_SUBST(DEVELOPMENT_MODE)
AH_TEMPLATE([DEVELOPMENT_MODE], [Whether in development mode or not])
AC_DEFINE_UNQUOTED([DEVELOPMENT_MODE], ["$DEVELOPMENT_MODE"],
    [Development mode])

PKG_CHECK_MODULES(HELLO_I18N, [gtk+-3.0 ])

AC_OUTPUT([
    Makefile
    src/Makefile
    po/Makefile.in
])

3. Create a folder named po in the top folder of the project.
4. Create a new file called POTFILES.in inside the po folder; fill this file with the following code:
   [type: gettext/glade]src/hello_i18n.ui

5. Also create a new file called LINGUAS inside the po folder; fill this file with the language code that we want to support. To continue with the previous example, let’s add Indonesian into the file by adding the following:
   id

6. If you are using another locale, you can just put the language code, not the whole locale identifier.
7. We need to set up an initial translation template inside this new folder. We need to open a terminal and run the following command inside the po folder:
   intltool-update --pot

8. The result of this command is a file called hello-i18n.pot. This is an empty translation file and we will use this as the base of the translation.
9. Duplicate the hello-i18n.pot file by copying it and naming it id.po. Again, if you are using a different language, adjust the filename to reflect the code of the language. The .po extension marks it as a portable object file, a translation file format that is very popular in the open source world. For now, keep the id.po file as it is, we will use it later.

10. Edit Makefile.am in the top folder; alter its content by referring to the following code. Only the parts that are highlighted were added or modified from the original generated file:

   ```
   SUBDIRS = src po
   hello_i18ndocdir = ${prefix}/doc/hello_i18n
   hello_i18ndoc_DATA = \\
   README\n   COPYING\n   AUTHORS\n   ChangeLog\n   INSTALL\n   NEWS
   EXTRA_DIST = \\
   $(hello_i18ndoc_DATA) \\
   intltool-extract.in \\
   intltool-merge.in \\
   intltool-update.in
   DISTCLEANFILES = \\
   intltool-extract \\
   intltool-merge \\
   intltool-update \\
   po/.intltool-merge-cache \\
   $(NULL)
   # Remove doc directory on uninstall
   uninstall-local:
   -rm -r $(hello_i18ndocdir)
   ```

11. Edit the src/config.vapi file and add this line to the namespace:

   ```
   public const string DEVELOPMENT_MODE;
   ```

12. Edit src/Makefile.am and append `--Xcc='--include config.h'` to the hello_i18n_VALAFLAGS declaration so that the entire code will look like the following:

   ```
   hello_i18n_VALAFLAGS = \\
   --pkg gtk+-3.0 --Xcc='--include config.h'
   ```
13. Still in the same file, insert -include config.h into the AM_CPPFLAGS declaration, so that the entire code declaration will look like the following:

```
AM_CPPFLAGS = \
-DPACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR="$(localedir)" \
-include config.h \
-DPACKAGE_SRC_DIR="$(srcdir)" \
-DPACKAGE_DATA_DIR="$(pkgdatadir)" \
$(HELLO_I18N_CFLAGS)
```

14. Edit src/hello_i18n.vala and add the following code in the main function:

```
if (Config.DEVELOPMENT_MODE == "yes") {
    Intl.bindtextdomain(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE, "src/po");
} else {
    Intl.bindtextdomain(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE, Config.PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR);
}

Intl.bind_textdomain_codeset(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE, "UTF-8");
Intl.textdomain(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE);
```

15. Configure the project by clicking Configure Project... in the Build menu, and in the upcoming dialog window add --enable-development in Configure Options.

16. Let's build the project.

17. We won't see anything particular in this first step, but our build should be successful.

**What just happened?**

We had to do the infrastructure setup by ourselves as Anjuta does not do this for us. What we did was basically set the auto tools to include gettext and intltool into the build pipeline. **Gettext** is a library that helps us to translate our applications into the target's local languages, and **intltool** is a library that helps prepare the data required for the translation system.

We also prepared the basic folder for the translation files. This **po** folder will contain translations of the UI texts. For now, though, it has nothing useful.

The other important thing we did was to add the code configuration filesystem. In **configure.ac**, we specify GETTEXT_PACKAGE and DEVELOPMENT_MODE to be configurable by the code. What we did was insert the following lines:

```
AH_TEMPLATE([DEVELOPMENT_MODE], [Whether in development mode or not])
AC_DEFINE_UNQUOTED([DEVELOPMENT_MODE], ["$DEVELOPMENT_MODE"],
    [Development mode])
```
The result is a file called `config.h` that will be generated when building the application, and these two variables would be available in that file. Then, the source code (`config.vapi` and the generated C-language code) would be able to access the values. We will discuss this further in the next action.

Last but not least, we put translation initialization steps in the main function.

```c
if (Config.DEVELOPMENT_MODE == "yes") {
    Intl.bindtextdomain(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE, "src/po");
} else {
    Intl.bindtextdomain(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE, Config.PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR);
}
Intl.bind_textdomain_codeset(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE, "UTF-8");
Intl.textdomain(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE);
```

The `bindtextdomain` function sets the lookup folder of the translation catalog (in Gettext terms, it is called `domain`) to point to the specified folder. The catalog's name and the folder are specified in the arguments. A catalog contains mapping between the source language (usually written in English) and the target language. The function basically tells us that the translations are available in the folder, and the files to look at have the names as specified by the catalog name.

We have two branches in this part depending on the `DEVELOPMENT_MODE` value. If it is in the `DEVELOPMENT_MODE` mode, the translations are set to be in the `src/po` folder, otherwise it is set to the system folder (usually `/usr/share/locale`). The `DEVELOPMENT_MODE` value itself is set when we pass `--enable-development` in the project configuration.

The `bind_textdomain_codeset` part tells that we are using a UTF-8 character set. And finally, `textdomain` attaches the catalog into the current process, so any gettext function after this initialization assumes that the catalog would be in use.

These are all the steps that we have to follow to have multilingual support in our applications. But no worries, you only need to do this once, during the start of the development.

One important thing is that we must remove `--enable-development` from the project's configuration dialog, because with this flag set, the code will look for the translation in the source code tree, and not in the system.
Time for action – creating a UI

After the infrastructure is ready, now let's move on and create the UI.

1. Open the `hello_i18n.ui` file.
2. Put a Box widget and split it into five items.
3. In the first four items, put five Label controls inside each of the items.
4. For the last item, put a Button control.
5. Edit the labels. For each label, assign a text from the following list:
   - This is a label
   - Today's date is %x
   - The price is %^=#6n
   - The weight is %.3f %s
6. For the button, set See you later as the text.
7. When editing the labels, press the ellipsis button that is on the right-hand side of the textbox. We will be presented with the following dialog:
8. For all the labels (including the button’s label), make sure the Translatable checkbox is checked. This is essential, because without this, we can’t have our application translated at all.

9. Modify the hello_i18n.vala file to look like the following code snippet:

```vala
using GLib;
using Gtk;

public class Main : Object
{
    /*
     * Uncomment this line when you are done testing and building a tarball
     * or installing
     */
    //const string UI_FILE = Config.PACKAGE_DATA_DIR + "/" + "hello_i18n.ui";
    const string UI_FILE = "src/hello_i18n.ui";
    /* ANJUTA: Widgets declaration for hello_i18n.ui - DO NOT REMOVE */
    Builder builder = null;

    public Main ()
    {
        try
        {
            builder = new Builder ();
            builder.add_from_file (UI_FILE);
            builder.connect_signals (this);

            var window = builder.get_object ("window") as Window;
            /* ANJUTA: Widgets initialization for hello_i18n.ui - DO NOT REMOVE */
            window.show_all ();
        }
        catch (Error e) {
            stderr.printf ("Could not load UI: %s\n", e.message);
        }

        var b = builder.get_object ("button1") as Button;
        b.clicked.connect((()=>{
            Gtk.main_quit();
        }));

        var dateData = new Date();
```
char buffer[100];
    Time t = Time.local(time_t());
    var date = builder.get_object("label_date") as Label;
    t.strftime(buffer, date.label);
    date.label = (string) buffer;

    var priceData = 9.99;
    var price = builder.get_object("label_price") as Label;
    Monetary.strfmon(buffer, price.label, priceData);
    price.label = (string) buffer;

    weak string measurement = LangInfo.get_info(LangInfo.Item.
        MEASUREMENT);
    bool metric = (measurement[0] == 1);

    var weightData = 11.24;
    var weight = builder.get_object("label_weight") as Label;
    weight.label = weight.label.printf(metric ? weightData :
        weightData * 2.20462, metric ? "Kg" : "Lb")
    }

    [CCode (instance_pos = -1)]
    public void on_destroy (Widget window)
    {
        Gtk.main_quit();
    }

    static int main (string[] args)
    {
        Gtk.init (ref args);
        if (Config.DEVELOPMENT_MODE == "yes") {
            Intl.bindtextdomain(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE, "src/po");
        } else {
            Intl.bindtextdomain(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE, Config.PACKAGE_
            LOCALE_DIR);
        }
        Intl.bind_textdomain_codeset(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE, "UTF-8");
        Intl.textdomain(Config.GETTEXT_PACKAGE);
        var app = new Main();
        Gtk.main();
        return 0;
    }
10. If you notice in the preceding code block, we need the `LangInfo.get_info` and `Monetary.strfmon` functions that are not available anywhere in the system. Actually, we wrap the original `nl_langinfo` and `strfmon` values from glibc in the two files we need to add, that is, `langinfo.vapi` and `monetary.vapi`. So first, let’s create a new empty file and name it `langinfo.vapi` and fill it with the following code:

```java
public class LangInfo {
    public enum Item {
        [CCode (cname="_NL_MEASUREMENT_MEASUREMENT")]
        MEASUREMENT
    }
    [CCode (cname="nl_langinfo")]
    public static weak string get_info (Item type);}
```

11. Next, create an empty `monetary.vapi` file and fill this file with the following code:

```java
public class Monetary {
    public static ssize_t strfmon(char[] s, string format, double data, ...);
}
```

12. Edit `src/Makefile.am` and add `monetary.vapi` and `langinfo.vapi` into the `hello_i18n_SOURCES` declaration, so that the code will be as follows:

```sh
hello_i18n_SOURCES =  \\hello_i18n.vala config.vapi monetary.vapi langinfo.vapi
```

13. Rebuild and run the application. We should see the following window:
What just happened?

The important part in this action is to make the labels translatable. This will enable intltool to pick up the text in the `hello_i18n.ui` file.

The next important things are the (re) introduction of the `Monetary.strfmon` and `LangInfo.get_info` functions. `Monetary.strfmon` is a wrapper of the `strfmon` function and is used to format monetary data as a string. The monetary data should be displayed completely with the currency symbol according to the locale. This function is wrapped by providing a `.vapi` file stating the corresponding C header filename and the function name, which we wrap. In this case, it is a straightforward wrapping, which means the original function’s name (`strfmon`) is the same as the wrapper function’s name (also called `strfmon`).

Then, we have the `LangInfo.get_info` function, which is a wrapper of the `nl_langinfo` function. This function takes a locale setting item and converts that into a pointer or a string. A locale item is an item that describes a particular locale setting in a locale file. In this case, we wrap two parts. The first is the locale item, which we wrap as an enumeration and name it `Item`. We only need the `LC_MEASUREMENT` item, so we only wrap it inside the enumeration. If you need other items, you can wrap and put it in the enumeration as well. The enumeration order is no longer important as we directly map the `enum` member with the actual C-language `enum` member by using the following code:

```c
[CCode (cname="_NL_MEASUREMENT_MEASUREMENT")]
MEASUREMENT
```

This means that `LangInfo.MEASUREMENT` in Vala is exactly the same as `_NL_MEASUREMENT_MEASUREMENT` in C.

After that, we wrap the `wrap nl_langinfo` function as `LangInfo.get_info`.

```c
[CCode (cname="nl_langinfo")]
public static weak string get_info (Item type);
```

We opt to use `get_info` rather than `nl_langinfo`, because a wrapper with a `nl_` prefix makes no sense here in Vala; so, `get_info` reflects what the function does. We use the `weak` keyword in the function to denote that the returned string should not be managed by Vala.

Time for action – translating UI texts

The next step is to actually translate the UI text. We will see how to extract the texts from the UI file and translate them.

1. Go to the `po` folder using a terminal.
2. Update the `id.po` file, which we duplicated from the first part of the action, by typing the following command:
   ```shell
   intltool-update id
   ```
3. From the GNOME Activities menu, launch the Gtranslator program.

4. During the first launch, we need to fill the profile. Provide a name to the profile and fill your name and e-mail address. The next window will ask you about the language properties that you are going to translate into. Make sure the language code is correct (refer to ISO-639). Enter UTF-8 and 8bit as the character set and transfer the encoding values respectively. Team email is the e-mail address used by the translators of this language. The Plural forms option determines how a word should use its plural form. In the Indonesian language, the number of plurals is two, and a word should use the plural form when the count of the object referred by the word is greater than one. Hence we choose the option nplurals=2; plural=(n>1). For the Indonesian language, it would look like this:

![Gtranslator interface](image)

5. Click Continue, finish the setup of GTranslator, and go ahead and open the id.po file using its menu.

6. After this file is opened, we are now ready to translate. Click on each text in the list and enter its translation in the Translated textbox. All formatting marks such as %x, %s, and others must not be modified or changed by translators except when it is requested to do so (for example, when adjusting the date format). The order of the appearance of these formats must not be changed as well.

7. Translate the text by referring to the following translation table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original text</th>
<th>Translated text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is a label</td>
<td>Ini adalah label</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today's date is %x</td>
<td>Tanggal hari ini adalah %x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The price is %^=#6n</td>
<td>Harganya %^=#6n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The weight is %.3f %s</td>
<td>Beratnya %.3f %s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See you later</td>
<td>Sampai jumpa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Save the file.
9. Rebuild our application.

10. In the terminal, create a po folder inside the src folder. Inside the po folder, create an id folder. After that, create the LC_MESSAGES folder inside id. So, altogether we should have a new folder called src/po/id/LC_MESSAGES.

11. Then rename the id.gmo file, which was produced after the rebuild, to hello-i18n.mo into the folder we created in the previous step. Notice the hello-i18n name must be exactly the same as the value of the GETTEXT_PACKAGE variable, which we set earlier.

12. Go to the top folder of the project by using the terminal and run the application with the Indonesian language, as shown here:
```
LANGUAGE=id LC_ALL=id_ID.utf8 src/hello-i18n
```

13. The application window should look like the one shown in the following screenshot. Be amazed!

---

**What just happened?**

This part is where the UI text is generated and translated. The resulting .po files are then taken to the translators' hand and then into the translation queue. This must be done whenever we update any text in the source code. This is exactly done by just entering the following command:

```
intltool-update id
```

Note that this will only update the id.po file; any remaining files must be updated individually. What this command actually does is it extracts new text from the files stated in the POTFILES file and merges them with the existing id.po file. If there is an ambiguity, the translator would be notified in GTranslator by being shown the text in a fuzzy state. The translator can then fix this issue by providing a new translation for those fuzzy texts.
After all the strings inside the `.po` files are translated, all translated `.po` files must be returned back to the `po` folder. We then perform a build here. Actually, what the build does is it simply issues the following command:

```
msgfmt -cv id.po -o id.gmo
```

This step converts `id.po` from a text form to `id.gmo` in a binary form. The application can only take the binary form, hence we need this step. The `bindtextdomain` function in the application sets the folder to the `src/po/` folder whenever we are in the development mode. Actually, it will look for the binary `.gmo` files in the `src/po/<language-code>/LC_MESSAGES` folder. The language code is the code specified in the `LANGUAGE` environment variable. If this variable is not specified, it will look for the language code in the `LANG`, `LC_MESSAGES`, and at last `LC_ALL` variables consecutively.

The command we execute to run the application is as follows:

```
LANGUAGE=id LC_ALL=id_ID.utf8 src/hello-i18n
```

This sets the `bindtextdomain` function to look for the translation in `src/po/id/LC_MESSAGES` (because the `LANGUAGE` variable is set to `id`) and otherwise use `id_ID.utf8` as the locale setting. The result is that the UI texts are translated to Indonesian, and the monetary, number, and measurement parameters are also set to Indonesian.

### Have a go hero – installing another locale

If you have another locale installed to try, here is a good chance. For example, try to set `LC_MEASUREMENT` to `en_US.utf8` (United States), `LC_MONETARY` to `de_DE.utf8` (German), and `LC_TIME` to `ar_SA.utf8` (Saudi Arabia). Would you be able to get an output similar to the one shown in the following screenshot?

![Screenshot of the application with translated UI texts and monetary, number, and measurement parameters set to Indonesian.](image)
The localization process

From the actions we did, we know that we need a process to do the localization. Localization (often abbreviated as L10n) is a further step after internationalization. It is where the actual work specific to the target market area is done. We need this process as it involves the translators who usually can’t even build the application.

The previous diagram shows a very simplified L10n process. The source code is produced by the developers according to the UI design. The design could be in formal documents or mockups. During the development, the developers add text into the source code and UI files. These texts are then extracted to .po files for each language of the target markets.

Here, the translators own the files until they are fully translated. The translated files are then handed over back to the developers. The developers and testers could make a build to test. Whenever a milestone is due, the product build is created along with the translation and delivered to the customer.

We need to set up a good infrastructure to make our life easier. The whole scenario described previously should be done in an automated way, so no delay should be produced between the steps.
In reality, before a build is delivered to the customer, a series of tests with each locale must be carried out thoroughly. Most of the time, the translators could easily get lost without a context while translating the UI text. This error can be minimized by using comments in the translation file; however, there is another issue that makes the test important. This is about how the text is displayed. There must be a check to find whether they are truncated in the translation or not. If it is, then check whether an engineering process must be carried out (for example, to resize the text size) or the translator must figure out an alternative translation. The tester should also check whether the text is rendered correctly or not. If the target market involves countries with Asian languages, or languages that are written in both the left and right direction, then the test must be carried out even more carefully.

**Summary**

This chapter discussed about preparing our application to be both internationalized and localized. The difference between the two is that the i18n part makes sure that our software is capable of displaying multilingual and multicultural information, whereas L10n is the actual effort to deliver the language and culture settings into the application. In short, i18n makes our software L10n ready.

We started the chapter by introducing ourselves with locale. We now know how to get the list of available locales in our system as well as how to enable a locale.

Then, using a Vala project, we learned to bootstrap the i18n architecture. This process must be done during the initial stage of a project. After that, we learned how to prepare the source code to get the UI text translated and were exposed to some of the i18n functions to get time, monetary, and measurement data to be localized. Then, we learned how the translators work with the translation files.

Finally, we discussed an example of the L10n process. This example can be adjusted depending on how the organization arranges the engineering process.

In the next chapter, we will discuss about quality control in our application. We will apply the best practices in software engineering in a GNOME way.
Software quality is not checked before releasing the product into the market. It is done way before that. Many software developers even check the quality before a single piece of code is written. Tested, well-written, and well-kept code along with a set of well-defined rules together are the essentials for software development. How to do this all in the GNOME development environment? Let’s find out.

Unit testing, among other testing required for a software, is sometimes tricky to write. This chapter will concentrate on performing unit tests. We will use the testing framework provided by Glib, GTK+, and Gdk. In this chapter, we use command lines intimately instead of Anjuta so that we can get the intuition on how to automate the testing easily. For the actions, we will use old code from previous chapters and add unit testing to them.

Specifically we will dig out:

- The concept of unit testing
-Stubbing library
-Testing GUI modules

Now, let’s get rolling.
Reasons for performing unit testing

Unit tests are localized and are specific tests carried out for a specific object in our source code. We need to make sure that the test really tackles each of the functionalities. To do unit testing, we simply do the following:

- Test each function.
- Test each branch in the function; for example, if the function contains if and else statements, or switch and case statements.
- The previous rules are to make sure that we cover all places in the source code so that there are no surprises, especially a bad one, waiting for us when we deliver the program to the customer.
- To test the functions, we need to pass data in the argument list. We should craft the data and, if necessary, repeat the test using different sets of data to make sure the second rule is fulfilled.
- Unit testing should be performed whenever a piece of code is written. Many software developers use the Test-Driven Development (TDD) methodology by creating the unit tests even before they write the code! This has an advantage in that we would know what to expect from the code so that we can focus on what the function should deliver. This is especially important when we write libraries, so we know exactly what the API looks like and how to use them, by creating the unit test first.
- Unit testing must be deterministic, meaning that we must know exactly what the output is by giving a certain input. To achieve this, the data we inject into the testing must not be random and the behavior of the API we use also must be deterministic.

Time for action – creating our first unit test

For our first action, let’s revisit our old code where we have our first encounter with Vala, the hello-vala program from the Getting to know Vala section in Chapter 3, Programming Languages. We have two objects, Book and Bookstore, which we will create unit tests for.

1. Let’s reopen the hello_vala.anjuta file from Anjuta.
2. Open the configure.ac file in the top directory of the project. Find the output section as shown in the following code:

   ```
   AC_OUTPUT([
   Makefile
   src/Makefile
   tests/Makefile
   ])
   ```
3. Make changes as shown in the following code:

```c
AC_OUTPUT({
    Makefile
    src/Makefile
    tests/Makefile
})
```

4. Open the Makefile.am file in the top directory of the project and find the SUBDIRS section.

```c
SUBDIRS = src
```

5. Make changes as shown in the following code:

```c
SUBDIRS = src tests
```

6. Create a directory called tests in the top directory.

7. Create a new Makefile.am file inside the tests directory and fill it with this code:

```c
AM_CPPFLAGS = \
    -DPACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR="$(localedir)" \
    -DPACKAGE_SRC_DIR="$(srcdir)" \
    -DPACKAGE_DATA_DIR="$(pkgdatadir)" \
    $(HELLO_VALA_CFLAGS) \
    $(atk_CFLAGS) \
    $(gee-1.0_CFLAGS)

AM_CFLAGS =\n    -Wall\n    -g

TESTS=test_book test_bookstore

check_PROGRAMS = test_book test_bookstore

test_book_SOURCES = \
    test_book.vala ../src/book.vala

test_book_VALAFLAGS = \n    --pkg gtk+-3.0 \n    --pkg gee-1.0

test_book_LDFLAGS = \n    -Wl,--export-dynamic

test_book_LDADD = $(HELLO_VALA_LIBS) \n    $(atk_LIBS) \n    $(gee-1.0_LIBS)
```
test_bookstore_SOURCES = \n   test_bookstore.vala ../src/book.vala ../src/bookstore.vala

test_bookstore_VALAFLAGS = \n   --pkg gtk+-3.0 \n   --pkg gee-1.0

test_bookstore_LDFLAGS = \n   -Wl,--export-dynamic

test_bookstore_LDADD = $(HELLO_VALA_LIBS) \n   $(atk_LIBS) \n   $(gee-1.0_LIBS)

8. Create a new Vala code called test_book.vala inside the tests directory. Fill it with this code:

```vala
public class TestBook {
    static void test_isbn ()
    {
        var b = new Book("1", "title");
        assert(b.isbn == "1");
    }

    static void test_title ()
    {
        var b = new Book("1", "title");
        assert(b.title == "title");
    }

    static void test_add_author()
    {
        var b = new Book("1", "title");
        b.addAuthor("author1");
        b.addAuthor("author2");
        b.addAuthor("author3");
        assert(b.authors.size == 3);
    }

    static int main (string[] args)
    {
        Test.init (ref args);

        Test.add_func ("/test-isbn", test_isbn);
        Test.add_func ("/test-title", test_title);
        Test.add_func ("/test-add-author", test_add_author);
    }
}
```
9. Create a new Vala file called test_bookstore.vala and also put it inside the tests directory. Copy this code into that file:

```vala
public class TestBookStore {
    static void test_add_stock()
    {
        var b = new Book("1", "title");
        var s = new BookStore(b, 1.0, 12);
        s.addStock(13);
        assert(s.getStock() == 25);
        assert(s.isAvailable() == true);
    }

    static void test_remove_stock()
    {
        var b = new Book("1", "title");
        var s = new BookStore(b, 1.0, 12);
        s.addStock(13);
        s.removeStock(10);
        assert(s.getStock() == 15);
        assert(s.isAvailable() == true);
    }

    static void test_stock_alert()
    {
        var b = new Book("1", "title");
        var s = new BookStore(b, 1.0, 12);
        var alert_emitted = false;
        s.stockAlert.connect(() => { alert_emitted = true; });
        s.removeStock(1);
        assert(alert_emitted == false);
        s.removeStock(10);
        assert(alert_emitted == true);
    }

    static void test_price_alert()
    {
    }
}
```
var b = new Book("1", "title");
var s = new BookStore(b, 1.0, 12);
var alert_emitted = false;

s.priceAlert.connect(() => {
  alert_emitted = true;
});

s.setPrice(2.5);
assert(alert_emitted == false);
s.setPrice(0.5);
assert(alert_emitted == true);
}

class Test
{
  public static void main (string[] args)
  {
    init (ref args);

    add_func="/test-add-stock", test_add_stock);
    add_func="/test-remove-stock", test_remove_stock);
    add_func="/test-stock-alert", test_stock_alert);

    run ();
    return 0;
  }
}

10. Open src/book.vala and find this piece of code in the file:
private string title;
private string isbn;
private ArrayList<string> authors;

11. Replace the previous code with this:
    internal string title;
    internal string isbn;
    internal ArrayList<string> authors;

12. In the project's top directory, issue this command on a terminal:
    ./autogen.sh

13. Make sure everything still works fine by building the project and typing the following command:
    make all
14. Build and run the unit tests by issuing this command:
   make check

15. Make sure you see an output that looks similar to these lines:

   /test-isbn: OK
   /test-title: OK
   /test-add-author: OK
   PASS: test_book
   /test-add-stock: OK
   /test-remove-stock: OK
   /test-stock-alert: OK
   PASS: test_bookstore
   ================
   All 2 tests passed
   ================

   **What just happened?**

   Wow! That was a busy action, wasn’t it?

   The end result is that we have unit tests checking the validity of our code by showing the test
   paths and test results. We saw from the previous section that we got all OKs from all of our
   test paths. It also had a statistic of the tests.

   What we did first was we prepared the autotools infrastructure by modifying configure.am and
   Makefile.am and then created a new Makefile.am file in the tests directory. We
   introduced the tests directory both into the output section of configure.am and the
   SUBDIRS section of Makefile.am. Without these, the tests directory is unknown to the
   autotools and the rest of the build infrastructure.

   Then we have the test files. In Makefile.am, we have these lines:

   TESTS=test_book test_bookstore

   check_PROGRAMS = test_book test_bookstore

   These tell the autotools that we have two programs, which are test programs; they are
   test_book and test_bookstore. The first line makes the autotools run the specified
   programs when we issue the make check command. The second line tells the autotools
   to create binaries with the specified names.
Then we have sections for both test_book and test_bookstore. The interesting part of the section for test_book is this:

```
  test_book_SOURCES = \n   test_book.vala ../src/book.vala
```

It tells autotools that the source code files for the test_book program are test_book.vala and book.vala, which are inside the ../src/ directory. The same goes for the test_bookstore program. It is a common practice to compile together the source code being tested and the unit test.

Now let's see how a unit test is written. First, take a look at test_book.vala.

```
public class TestBook {

    For each unit test, we have a class that tests a particular object. We name the class by prepending the word Test before the name of the object. In this case we have a Book object, so our unit test's name is TestBook. It is a plain class.

    Then, we define the tests that we want to carry out against the object we want to test in static functions. The functions are static because in the unit test we will not instantiate the object of the test class.

    One test should test all relevant cases. In our first test, we want to test whether the ISBN is correctly set. Here, we create the Book object with the ISBN value of 1, and we test it with the assert function to check whether the isbn member really has a value of 1.

```
    static void test_isbn ()
    {
        var b = new Book("1", "title");
        assert(b.isbn == "1");
    }
```

We might think that this is rather silly. Why would we want to check the obvious like this? For our human eyes, we think this kind of check would always pass. But believe me, when our code becomes larger and larger, and when we intentionally or accidentally make any slight changes in the code, it could make this test fail. To emphasize my argument, let's see the actual code of book.vala:

```
public Book(string isbn, string title) {
    this.isbn = isbn;
    this.title = title;
    authors = new ArrayList<string>();
}
```
Our code in the test checked the isbn member immediately after instantiating the object. Imagine that we somehow modify the constructor to look like this:

```csharp
public Book(string isbn, string title) {
    isbn = isbn;
    title = title;
    authors = new ArrayList<string>();
}
```

Note that we may accidentally remove this from the previous lines. The code still runs, but the result is wrong. Without the test, we could overlook this and what we end up with is some unhappy customer calling to say that our program produces bad calculations!

Now, really try to make the previous error and run make check again. We will be notified immediately, as you can see from the following screen output:

```
/test-isbn: **
ERROR:test_book.c:100:test_book_test_isbn: assertion failed: (g_strcmp0 (_tmp1_, "1") == 0)
/bin/bash: line 5:  9305 Aborted                 ${dir}$tst
FAIL: test_book
/test-add-stock: OK
/test-remove-stock: OK
/test-stock-alert: OK
PASS: test_bookstore
===================
1 of 2 tests failed
===================
```

We see from this that the test_isbn function correctly points out the error just as we expected. Now, imagine again that we don't have test_isbn.

We use assert to check the truth value of the expression we pass into the function. The assert function will terminate the program immediately when the value is not true, and we know that something is wrong when this happens.

We needed to modify the Book class so that it looks like this:

```csharp
internal string title;
internal string isbn;
internal ArrayList<string> authors;
```
We changed all private members to `internal`. Vala opens the internal members of all the classes in the same package. It means our unit test can access the member directly. Otherwise, our unit test would not be able to access, for example, the `authors` member. This is a quite annoying limitation as Vala does not have anything analogous to friend classes in C++ where we can keep the member as private yet allow the friend classes to still access them.

Next in line, we have a test to check the title value.

```vala
static void test_title ()
{
    var b = new Book("1", "title");
    assert(b.title == "title");
}
```

It works the same as the `test_isbn` test. Then we have a test to check whether the `addAuthor` function works as it should.

```vala
static void test_add_author()
{
    var b = new Book("1", "title");
    b.addAuthor("author1");
    b.addAuthor("author2");
    b.addAuthor("author3");
    assert(b.authors.size == 3);
}
```

Here, we check the `authors` array list. It should have a value of 3 after adding three authors into the `Book` object with the `addAuthor` function. In the `Book` object, we don’t have anymore functions that need to be tested. The rest of the functions only output data to the screen. So, let’s move on to the `main` function of the unit test.

```vala
static int main (string[] args)
{
    Test.init (ref args);
}
```

We can see that we first call the `Test.init` function. This is the initialization function from the `GLib.Test` class.

Then we register all the functions that we defined previously and assign them with test paths. Test path is a hypothetical name that we want to route the actual test function to. The `GLib.Test` class requires that each function be represented by a test path. Then we call the `Test.run` function to run all the paths starting from the root path. The root path is just like the root directory, the top-most path in the hierarchy.

```vala
Test.add_func ("/test-isbn", test_isbn);
Test.add_func ("/test-title", test_title);
```
Test.add_func ("/test-add-author", test_add_author);
Test.run ();
return 0;

**Have a go hero – checking the actual value**

In some cases we need to check the actual value that we put into a data structure, such as the authors array list in the Book class. In test_add_author, we only checked the length of the array but we did not check the actual value. The check is even required when we craft the data structure by ourselves or when the data structure is complex; for example, when the order of data after insertion is important. We could also check this by using more than one data set.

Now imagine that we have our own data structure; so now it is your task to check whether the data we enter is really entered as it should be.

**Stubbing our tests**

In our code, sometimes we use an external library that may give nondeterministic behavior, which is bad for unit testing. To avoid this, we use a stubbing technique. This technique involves creating a new library that mimics the function and API of the original library. In our unit test, we use this new fake library instead of the original library so that we can control the output of the API we use in our code.

**Time for action – creating stubs**

Now, let's bring back the core_settings project from Chapter 4, Using GNOME Core Libraries. It is an experiment of getting and setting GSettings with some value.

1. Open the project with Anjuta.
2. Prepare the infrastructure just as we did in our previous action, that is, create the tests directory and introduce it to configure.ac and Makefile.am in the top directory of the project.
3. Then, we need to make changes to the CoreSettings class. The original code has the main function inside the same file with the CoreSettings class. We need to split these two.
4. What we need to do is adjust src/Makefile.am. Modify the file specifically in the SOURCES section. This is the code in the file:

   core_settings_SOURCES = \n   core_settings.vala config.vapi
We need to change it to this:

```plaintext
core_settings_SOURCES = "\n   core_settings.vala main.vala config.vapi"
```

5. Then, we modify `src/core_settings.vala` to this:

```plaintext
using GLib;
public class CoreSettings : Object
{
    Settings settings = null;
    public CoreSettings ()
    {
        settings = new Settings("org.gnome.desktop.background");
    }

    public string get_bg()
    {
        if (settings == null) {
            return null;
        }

        return settings.get_string("picture-uri");
    }

    public void set_bg(string new_file)
    {
        if (settings == null) {
            return;
        }

        if (settings.set_string("picture-uri", new_file)) {
            Settings.sync();
        }
    }
}
```

6. Then we create a new file called `src/main.vala`, which contains the original main function. But now, let's put it inside a dedicated class called `Main`.

```plaintext
public class Main {
    static int main (string[] args)
    {
        var app = new CoreSettings();
        stdout.printf("%s\n", app.get_bg());
        return 0;
    }
}
```
7. After the splitting, we move on to the tests directory. First, create Makefile.am inside it. Use this code for the file:

```makefile
AM_CPPFLAGS = \
-DPACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR="$(localedir)" \
-DPACKAGE_SRC_DIR="$(srcdir)" \
-DPACKAGE_DATA_DIR="$(pkgdatadir)" \
$(CORE_SETTINGS_CFLAGS)

AM_CFLAGS =\n-Wall\n-g

TESTS=test_settings

check_PROGRAMS = test_settings

test_settings_SOURCES = \n../src/core_settings.vala test_settings.vala stub/gsettings.vala

test_settings_VALAFLAGS = \n--pkg gee-1.0

test_settings_LDFLAGS = \n-Wl,--export-dynamic

test_settings_LDADD = $(CORE_SETTINGS_LIBS)

8. Next, create a new file called test_settings.vala in the tests directory.

```java
public class TestSettings {
    static void test_set_get() {
        var s = new CoreSettings();
        s.set_bg("test123");
        assert (s.get_bg() == "test123");
    }

    static int main (string[] args) {
        Test.init (ref args);
        Test.add_func ("/test-set-get", test_set_get);
        Test.run ();
        return 0;
    }
}
```
9. After that, create a directory called stub inside the tests directory.

10. Then, create a new file called gsettings.vala inside the stub directory. Use this code for the file:

```java
using Gee;

public class Settings : Object {
    HashMap<string,string> map;

    [CCode(cname="g_settings_new")]
    public Settings(string s) {
        map = new HashMap<string,string>();
    }

    [CCode(cname="g_settings_sync")]
    public static void sync() {
        /* do nothing */
    }

    [CCode(cname="g_settings_set_string")]
    public bool set_string(string key, string value) {
        map.set(key, value);
        return true;
    }

    [CCode(cname="g_settings_get_string")]
    public string get_string(string key) {
        return map.get(key);
    }
}
```

11. Rebuild the project by calling this command from the terminal:

```bash
./autogen.sh
```

12. Finally, execute this command:

```bash
make check
```

13. Make sure the test passes perfectly, showing the following message:

```
/test-set-get: OK
PASS: test_settings
==========
1 test passed
```
**What just happened?**

After we built the infrastructure, we split the code into two parts, the `CoreSettings` and `Main` classes. This is essentially because we can't have more than one `main` function in a program, one from the code and one from the test. The other and more important reason is that the class we want to test contains the code that belongs to the class and nothing else. With that in place, we have a clean and organized code and it would be easier to trace when something bad happens.

We fix this by putting the original main function into its own file with its own class. We also rename the original `Main` class to `CoreSettings` to really reflect what it does (using `Settings` from GNOME's core libraries).

Then we put the test file inside the `tests` directory. We also created a new subdirectory called `stub`, inside the `tests` directory. In it, we have the `gsettings.vala` file. The file contains an imitation of the `GSettings` class. The stub contains only the functions that we really use in the code. We should not implement other functions that we do not use.

In our case here, we implement `GSettings` with a hash map implementation from `Gee`:

```vala
using Gee;

public class Settings : Object {
    HashMap<string,string> map;
}
```

The constructor is used in the code, hence we need to implement it. Inside, we initialize the hash map. The argument is not important, so we don't need to keep it anywhere. Stubbing in Vala is very tricky. This is because the functions used by Vala codes are actually the generated C functions. So, even if we have exactly the same class and function names in the stub with the original library, the generated class and function names are no longer the same in the generated C file. The discrepancies in the class and function names in the stub will not be taken into use by the test program.

To overcome this problem, we need to tell Vala to generate the names that are identical to the stubbed library. We use the `CCode` attribute just before the class or function declaration in the Vala code. In our experiment, we have this attribute followed immediately by the constructor.

```vala
[CCode(cname="g_settings_new")]
public Settings(string s) {
    map = new HashMap<string,string>();
}
```

This makes sure that Vala will generate the `g_settings_new` C function from the `Settings` constructor.
We use the Settings.sync function in the code, so we need to define the sync function. According to the GSettings API reference, the function is static so we need to create the same.

```
[CCode(cname="g_settings_sync")]
public static void sync() {
    /* do nothing */
}
```

We need to create the function, even if we don't need the functionalities. If we skip this, the compilation will fail because Vala won't find the sync function in gsettings.vala and it will not try to resolve the name from the original library.

After that, we create the set_string function. In this function, we simply wrap the hash map and insert the key and value pairs into the map:

```
[CCode(cname="g_settings_set_string")]
public bool set_string(string key, string value) {
    map.set(key, value);
    return true;
}
```

The same goes with get_string. Note that we must use the CCode attribute and define the required C function name.

```
[CCode(cname="g_settings_get_string")]
public string get_string(string key) {
    return map.get(key);
}
```

Now let's take a look at the test code:

```
public class TestSettings {
    static void test_set_get() {
        var s = new CoreSettings();
        s.set_bg("test123");
        assert (s.get_bg() == "test123");
    }
}
```
Based on the `CoreSettings` class' code, we only need to test the `set_bg` and `get_bg` functions. There is no other function that offers functionalities in the class. So we straightaway implement the main function.

```c
static int main (string[] args)
{
    Test.init (ref args);
    Test.add_func ("/test-set-get", test_set_get);
    Test.run ();
    return 0;
}
```

There we initialize the `Test` framework, add the test path, and run the test. Wait, where is our stub used? Let’s revisit `tests/Makefile.am` and unveil the mystery. Take a look at the `SOURCES` section:

```makefile
  test_settings_SOURCES = \
    ../src/core_settings.vala test_settings.vala stub/gsettings.vala
```

It says that Vala must compile these three files together at the same time. Our test code does not have any reference to GSettings, only our source code in `core_settings.vala` does. So, if we take a look at `core_settings.vala`, we see:

```vala
public CoreSettings ()
{
    settings = new Settings("org.gnome.desktop.background");
}
```

What it does is it actually instantiates the `settings` object from `gsettings.vala` instead of `GSettings`, and here what it does is it calls `get_string` from `gsettings.vala`:

```vala
public string get_bg()
{
    if (settings == null) {
        return null;
    }

    return settings.get_string("picture-uri");
}
```

The key to stubbing is to produce exactly the same API with the library we use. When building, we compile the code, the tests, and the stub together. Otherwise, either Vala will complain about using the wrong API or even if the build is successful, our stub will not get called.
Testing GUI modules

What we have done so far is straightforward testing of functions, which gives a result based on the value we pass into the arguments. GUI modules, however, expect input from user behavior, such as the click of a mouse, typing of the keyboard, and other such instances. More generally, they react by giving a certain output based on one or more events.

When testing GUI modules, we will no longer be able to use the methods we learnt previously. When testing GUI modules we must have the following aspects handled:

- Setting the environment to prepare the GUI test application
- Initialization of the graphical framework
- Emitting and handling the UI events
- Event loop management

We will discuss these now.

Time for action – testing a GTK+ module

Let’s take our old custom_composite Vala project and put a unit test in it.

1. As usual, let’s create the tests directory and include it in configure.ac and Makefile.am in the top directory.
2. Split the code into two parts. Use this code in custom_window.vala:
   ```vala
   using GLib;
   using Gtk;

   public class CustomWindow : Window
   {
     Entry entry;
     Box box;
     public signal void search_updated(string value);

     void show_search_box() {
       entry.show();
       entry.has_focus = true;
     }

     void hide_search_box() {
       entry.hide();
     }
   }
   ```
public override void add(Widget widget) {
    if (widget != box) {
        box.pack_start(widget, true, true);
    } else {
        base.add(widget);
    }
}

public CustomWindow () {
    box = new Box(Orientation.VERTICAL, 0);
    entry = new Entry();
    box.pack_start(entry, false, true);
    box.show();
    add(box);
    key_release_event.connect((event) => {
        search_updated(entry.text);
        return false;
    });
    key_press_event.connect((event) => {
        if (!entry.get_visible()) {
            show_search_box();
        }
        return false;
    });
}

3. Use this one for the main class:

    using GLib;
    using Gtk;

    public class Main {
        static int main (string[] args) {
            Gtk.init (ref args);
            var window = new CustomWindow();
            var label = new Label("This is a text");
            window.add(label);
            window.resize(400,400);
            window.search_updated.connect((value) => {
                label.set_text("Searching for keyword " + value);
            });
        }
    }
4. Then, modify the Makefile.am file to include both the implementation class and the main class.

```makefile
custom_composite_SOURCES = \n  custom_composite.vala main.vala config.vapi
```

5. Next, let’s create Makefile.am for the tests:

```makefile
AM_CPPFLAGS = \n  -DPACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR="$(localedir)" \n  -DPACKAGE_SRC_DIR="$(srcdir)" \n  -DPACKAGE_DATA_DIR="$(pkgdatadir)" \n  $(CUSTOM_COMPOSITE_CFLAGS)

AM_CFLAGS =\n  -Wall\n  -g

TESTS=test_custom_window
check_PROGRAMS = test_custom_window

test_custom_window_SOURCES = \n  ../src/custom_composite.vala test_custom_window.vala

test_custom_window_VALAFLAGS = \n  --pkg gtk+-3.0

test_custom_window_LDFLAGS = \n  -Wl,--export-dynamic

test_custom_window_LDADD = $(CUSTOM_COMPOSITE_LIBS)
```

6. Create a new file called `test_custom_window.vala` inside `tests` and use this code:

```vala
using Gtk;

public class TestCustomWindow { 
  static void process_events() 
```

while (Gtk.events_pending ()) {
    Gtk.main_iteration_do(true);
}
}

static void test_initial_child ()
{
    var window = new CustomWindow();
    var child = window.get_child () as Box;
    window.show_now();

    assert (child != null);
    window.destroy ();
}

static void test_child_visibility ()
{
    var window = new CustomWindow();
    var child = window.get_child () as Box;
    window.show_now();

    var entry_is_found = false;
    var children = child.get_children ();
    if (children != null && children.nth(0) != null) {
        var entry = children.nth_data(0) as Entry;

        assert (entry != null);
        assert (entry.visible == false);

        Gdk.test_simulate_key (window.get_window (), 1, 1, Gdk.
Key.a, 0, Gdk.EventType.KEY_PRESS);
        Gdk.test_simulate_key (window.get_window (), 1, 1, Gdk.
Key.a, 0, Gdk.EventType.KEY_RELEASE);

        process_events (); // Process events
        assert (entry.visible == true);

        entry_is_found = true;
    }

    assert (entry_is_found);
    window.destroy ();
}

static void test_search_updated ()
{
var window = new CustomWindow();
window.show_now();
var search_updated_was_emitted = false;
var search_updated_was_correct = false;

window.search_updated.connect ((text) => {
  search_updated_was_emitted = true;
  if (text == "a") {
    search_updated_was_correct = true;
  }
});

Gdk.test_simulate_key (window.get_window (), 1, 1, Gdk.Key.a, 0, Gdk.Event.Type.KEY_PRESS);
Gdk.test_simulate_key (window.get_window (), 1, 1, Gdk.Key.a, 0, Gdk.Event.Type.KEY_RELEASE);

process_events (); // process events

assert (search_updated_was_emitted);
assert (search_updated_was_correct);
window.destroy ();

}

static int main (string[] args)
{
  Gtk.test_init (ref args);

  Test.add_func ("/test-search-updated", test_search_updated);
  Test.add_func ("/test-initial-child", test_initial_child);
  Test.add_func ("/test-child-visibility", test_child_visibility);

  Idle.add (() => {
    Test.run ();
    Gtk.main_quit ();
    return true;
  });

  Gtk.main ();

  return 0;
}

7. Rebuild the project by using this command:
   ./autogen.sh
8. Set up the environment for the GUI initialization by issuing the following command:
   ```
   export DISPLAY=:0
   ```
   This only needs to be done once when we first run any GUI tests. This is needed when you run the test in the terminal console. If you run the test directly inside GNOME, you don’t need this.

9. On running the test you will see a window flashing for a moment before the test ends. Type the following command in the shell to run the test:
   ```
   make check
   ```

10. Make sure all the tests are passed successfully.
    ```
    /test-search-updated: OK
    /test-initial-child: OK
    /test-child-visibility: OK
    ```
    PASS: test_custom_window
    ============
    1 test passed
    ============

**What just happened?**

Now we just directly concentrate on how the unit test is done.

Let’s see what the CustomWindow class does:

- It is a window and creates a text entry inside
- A window can only take one child and this should not remove the text entry
- It emits the search_updated signal whenever the user presses a key in the window

This is the base of our strategy to create unit tests.

For our first test, we check whether the constructor creates the Box object as the placeholder for the Entry and other widgets correctly.

```
static void test_initial_child ()
{
    var window = new CustomWindow();
    var child = window.get_child () as Box;
    window.show_now();
}
```
assert (child != null);
    window.destroy ();
}

Here, we simply check whether the constructor has the Box object. This test is a straightforward test.

In the next test we check the visibility of the text entry. Initially, the text entry must be hidden, and after we press any key, the entry must be visible.

    static void test_child_visibility () {
        var window = new CustomWindow();
        var child = window.get_child () as Box;
        window.show_now();

        Here, we call show_now in order to display the window immediately. If we use show, the showing may be deferred until other events are processed.

        var entry_is_found = false;
        var children = child.get_children ();
        if (children != null && children.nth(0) != null) {
            var entry = children.nth_data(0) as Entry;

            Next, we try to get the text entry. The entry is the first child of the window, so we use the nth_data method and pass 0 to denote the element at index 0.

            assert (entry != null);
            assert (entry.visible == false);

            We use Entry to cast the returned widget as an Entry widget. By using this cast, it will return null if the widget returned is not an Entry widget. Here, we check whether the entry variable is really a type of an Entry widget by comparing it with the null value. If it succeeds, we continue checking whether the visibility is set to false because we want to make sure that the initial visibility for the entry must be false.

            Gdk.test_simulate_key (window.get_window (), 1, 1, Gdk.Key.a, 0, Gdk.EventType.KEY_PRESS);
            Gdk.test_simulate_key (window.get_window (), 1, 1, Gdk.Key.a, 0, Gdk.EventType.KEY_RELEASE);

            Then we simulate a key press followed with a key release by using test_simulate_key from the Gdk class. We send these events to the window object. The function requires Gdk.Window, so we use get_window to pass Gdk.Window from the window object. The usage of show_now for showing the window object is essential here, because if we use show and the showing is not yet performed, then the get_window function will return null and our test will fail.
We can use any location of the press and release events. Here, we use the (1,1) coordinate. The key we send is the a key, so we use Gdk.Key.a without any other key modifier. We send the press event first and then follow it with a release event.

```c
process_events (); // Process events
assert (entry.visible == true);

entry_is_found = true;
}
assert (entry_is_found);
window.destroy ();
}
```

Just after we send the key, we need to process the pending events by calling the `process_events` function. Then after that, we can check the visibility. Without calling `process_events`, the key events may not be processed by the system so the visibility of the `entry` object has not changed yet. We then destroy the window afterwards.

Here is what the `process_events` function does:

```c
static void process_events()
{
    while (Gtk.events_pending ()) {
        Gtk.main_iteration_do(true);
    }
}
```

It basically processes any pending events in the queue. When it finds them, it simply executes the main loop by calling `main_iteration_do` and we allow GTK+ to complete the operation even when it is blocking by providing the `true` argument.

Next, we check whether the signal is emitted properly with the correct value.

```c
static void test_search_updated ()
{
    var window = new CustomWindow();
    window.show_now();
    var search_updated_was_emitted = false;
    var search_updated_was_correct = false;

    window.search_updated.connect ((text) => {
        search_updated_was_emitted = true;
        if (text == "a") {
            search_updated_was_correct = true;
        }
    });
}```
Here, we connect the `search_updated` signal. We record the success of the handler with a local variable. We check whether the text from the signal is `a`, which is the key event that we send into the window.

```c
Gdk.test_simulate_key (window.get_window (), 1, 1, Gdk.Key.a, 0, Gdk.EventType.KEY_PRESS);
Gdk.test_simulate_key (window.get_window (), 1, 1, Gdk.Key.a, 0, Gdk.EventType.KEY_RELEASE);
process_events (); // process events
```

After we send the key events, we call `process_events`. This is to make sure that our signal handler is called so that we can assert the result.

```c
assert (search_updated_was_emitted);
assert (search_updated_was_correct);
window.destroy ();
```

In our `main` function, we first call the `Gtk.test_init` function. This is to set up the environment to be suitable for testing. Next, we add the test paths.

```c
static int main (string[] args)
{
    Gtk.test_init (ref args);
    Test.add_func ("/test-search-updated", test_search_updated);
    Test.add_func ("/test-initial-child", test_initial_child);
    Test.add_func ("/test-child-visibility", test_child_visibility);

    // We still need Gtk.main to get the GTK+ system up and running. When we run the test outside GNOME, we need to run the X11 server and set up the environment so that the test can run. We do this by setting the DISPLAY environment variable to our X11 display number. Typically the value is :0. This is a bit of a cumbersome setup especially if we do the test remotely.

    // However, once it is running, we need to ensure that our tests are run. To do this, we need to set up an idle handler. Inside the handler we simply run the test and then exit the GTK+ system.

    Idle.add (() => {
        Test.run ();
        return true;
    });

    Gtk.main ();
```
Have a go hero – adding missing tests

In our previous test, we only checked for the existence of the `Box` object inside the `window` object. We missed another essential test to check:

- Whether `Entry` is really created
- Whether `Entry` can coexist when we add a new widget into the `window` object.

Figure it out and let's create some tests!

Summary

We have now seen how to do unit testing in our GNOME code. The most tricky part for a beginner is mainly to figure out the tests that must be written. We have to discuss this by first identifying the functionalities provided by the code that we want to test. Then we narrow down to each existing branch in the code by giving different arguments so that the code path will be visited in all cases.

We know that we must create a deterministic test and we realize that the library (or even our own code) we use may give nondeterministic behavior. To solve this problem, we need to create a stub for each library, which potentially gives nondeterministic values. We also need to do stubbing when the library we use is too complex or requires a heavy setup when we run the unit test.

Finally, we know how to test our GUI modules by using GTK+’s own initialization function. We also need to process all pending events before asserting something. We also learnt that we need to use the `show_now` function to get the Gdk window immediately set up.

The tests we wrote must be run on every change we make to the code. This is to make sure that we will not see regressions in the code. Many software developers run the test before they send the code to the source code repository and they set up a nightly test by running all test cases in the suite.

In our final chapter, we will learn how to do two big projects, a browser and a twitter client. We will use all of our techniques that we learnt in the previous chapters, so brace yourself!
After spending so much time learning how to develop not so useful applications, it is time to move on to the next level. Now we will develop a web browser and a Twitter client. The applications we are going to make are simple yet useful. You can also use them as the basis for enhanced versions, if you decide to make them.

In this chapter, we will revisit most of the topics we have learnt so far, but with adding complexities and exploring them in more depth. Specifically, we will obtain more knowledge in these areas:

- Implementing a web browser using WebKitGTK
- Doing path hardcoding using the configure script
- Developing a multiscript Seed application

So, let’s start with our first project.

**Part I – web browser**

The first application we will develop is a web browser. We aim for a basic browser that is simple enough to develop. The browser includes a set of navigation buttons and the ability to open pages from the Internet.
To make the whole development easier, we create a mockup version of our browser. This is simply a drawing showing how our web browser will look. Based on this mockup, we will derive a UI layout, done in the Anjuta/Glade tool.

First, let's familiarize ourselves with the structure of the UI of our browser. The main window is split into two parts. The area which displays the web page occupies most of the window area. The top-most part is used by the navigation buttons and the URL entry.

The navigation buttons are independent buttons and represent the back, forward, and stop/reload actions, respectively. There is an additional button hidden beside the URL entry, which is the go button. The button is shown when the URL entry is being filled in.

That's it; it's just as simple as that. By the way, in GUI design terminology, the UI hosting the navigation buttons and the URL entry is called chrome.

Time for action – designing our UI

Now let's fire up Anjuta and design our UI. A Glade designer does not have GtkWebUI in its palette, so here is what we are going to do:

1. Create a new Vala project and call it web-browser. Use GtkBuilder for the UI.
2. Open web_browser.ui with Glade designer by just double-clicking the file in the Project dock.
3. Put a vertical Box object in the window with two items.
4. Put another Box object, this time a horizontal one, on the top part of the vertical Box object, leaving the bottom part empty. Split the horizontal Box object into five elements by filling the Number of elements option with 5.

5. Put a button on each empty box element, except the third one. On each button, activate the Stock button option and fill it with gtk-go-back, gtk-go-forward, gtk-refresh, and gtk-ok stock buttons on each button respectively.

6. Give the buttons names, use btn_back, btn_forward, btn_refresh, and btn_go. Put the name in each Name option of the button.

7. Put an Entry object on the third empty box and give url_entry as its name. Go to the Packing tab and make sure the Expand option is set to Yes.

8. Put a Scrolled Window object (it’s in the Containers section) into the bottom empty box. Make sure the Expand option is set to Yes.

9. Set both the Horizontal Scrollbar Policy and Vertical Scrollbar Policy values to Never.

10. We should have the UI file ready and it should look like this:

What just happened?
What we did was create the UI layout for our web browser. As we can see, it is a straightforward translation from the mockup. One thing is still missing though; the web page area is still empty. However, we have ScrolledWindow as the container for the WebView object later. The objective of using the ScrolledWindow container is to make sure that the window is not resizing depending on the content because the sizing is already handed over to ScrolledWindow. We disable the scroll bars on vertical and horizontal axes because WebView already handles the scroll bars on its own.
Browser interaction

Now let’s inspect the interaction design of our browser. At the initial stage, we have an idle browser, having all navigation buttons disabled and the URL entry empty. At this point, our web view only contains the Welcome text (or the translated word of Welcome if it is localized to another language). The next possible move by the user is to fill in the URL entry.

When a user starts to type something, the go button appears. All navigation buttons are still disabled as we don’t have any content displayed. Then, either the user keeps typing or decides to complete the process by clicking on the go button. When this happens, the web view starts to load the requested URL.
When the page is being loaded, the refresh button changes itself into a stop button. When the user presses this button, the loading is immediately stopped, cancelling everything. Then the stop button changes back into the refresh button. Either way, the browser stays at the idle state.

Whenever the user continues to interact with the loaded web page, the navigation button’s states are updated accordingly. If the browser can go back, it means the back button is active. Same thing happens with the forward button.

Based on the previous description, we have four states which are applied to our browser. It is idle when it waits for the user to start the interaction. Then it is in the typing url state when the user starts to type something. Another possibility is to enter the Clicking link state whenever the user clicks on any link on a page. After that, the state is in the loading state when some page is being loaded. The final state would be the idle state again.

With this design in our hands now, we are ready to implement the code.

Time for action – preparing the build infrastructure

Let’s now modify the project we created earlier and improve it with i18n (internationalization) and test the build infrastructure:

1. Modify the configure.ac file and make it look like this:

   ```
   AC_INIT(web_browser, 0.1)
   AC_CONFIG_HEADERS([config.h])
   AM_INIT_AUTOMAKE([1.11])
   AM_SILENT_RULES([yes])
   AC_PROG_CC
   LT_INIT
   IT_PROG_INTLTOOL()
   ```
AH_TEMPLATE([GETTEXT_PACKAGE], [Package name for gettext])
GETTEXT_PACKAGE=web-browser

AC_DEFINE_UNQUOTED([GETTEXT_PACKAGE], ["$GETTEXT_PACKAGE"],
                    [The domain to use with gettext])
AC_SUBST(GETTEXT_PACKAGE)
AM_GLIB_GNU_GETTEXT

dnl Check for vala
AM_PROG_VALAC([0.10.0])

dnl Development mode
AC_ARG_ENABLE(development,
        AS_HELP_STRING([--enable-development], [enable development
                      mode]),
        enable_development="$enableval",
        enable_development=no)
if test "x$enable_development" = "xyes"; then
    DEVELOPMENT_MODE="yes"
    PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR=${PWD}/locale
    PACKAGE_UI_DIR=${PWD}/src
else
    PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR=${datadir}/locale
    PACKAGE_UI_DIR=${datadir}/web-browser
fi

AC_SUBST(PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR)
AC_SUBST(PACKAGE_UI_DIR)
AH_TEMPLATE([PACKAGE_UI_DIR], [Location of the .ui file])
AC_DEFINE_UNQUOTED([PACKAGE_UI_DIR], ["$PACKAGE_UI_DIR"],
                    [Location of the .ui file])

AC_SUBST(DEVELOPMENT_MODE)
AH_TEMPLATE([DEVELOPMENT_MODE], [Whether in development mode or not])
AC_DEFINE_UNQUOTED([DEVELOPMENT_MODE], ["$DEVELOPMENT_MODE"],
                    [Development model])

PKG_CHECK_MODULES(WEB_BROWSER, [gtk+-3.0 webkitgtk-3.0])
PKG_CHECK_MODULES(TEST_WEB_BROWSER, [gtk+-3.0 ])

AC_OUTPUT([Makefile
     src/Makefile
tests/Makefile
     po/Makefile.in
])
2. Modify the Makefile.am file, and fill it with this:

```makefile
SUBDIRS = src tests po

web_browserdocdir = ${prefix}/doc/web_browser
web_browserdoc_DATA = \\
  README\\
  COPYING\\
  AUTHORS\\
  ChangeLog\\
  INSTALL\\
  NEWS

EXTRA_DIST = \\
  ${web_browserdoc_DATA}\\
  intltool-extract.in \\
  intltool-merge.in \\
  intltool-update.in

DISTCLEANFILES = \\
  intltool-extract \\
  intltool-merge \\
  intltool-update \\
  po/.intltool-merge-cache \\
  $(NULL)

# Remove doc directory on uninstall
uninstall-local:
  -rm -r $(web_browserdocdir)
```

3. Modify the src/Makefile.am file, and use this whole file:

```makefile
uidir = $(PACKAGE_UI_DIR)
ui_DATA = web_browser.ui

AM_CPPFLAGS = \\
  -DPACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR="$(localedir)" \\
  -DPACKAGE_SRC_DIR="$(srcdir)" \\
  -DPACKAGE_DATA_DIR="$(pkgdatadir)" \\
  $(WEB_BROWSER_CFLAGS)

AM_CFLAGS =\\
  -Wall\\
  -g

bin_PROGRAMS = web_browser
```
Exciting Projects

```plaintext
web_browser_SOURCES = \
    main.vala web_browser.vala config.vapi

web_browser_VALAFLAGS = \
    --vapidir . \
    --pkg gtk+-3.0 \
    --pkg webkit-1.0 \
    --pkg libsoup-2.4 \
    --Xcc='--include config.h'

web_browser_LDFLAGS = \
    -Wl,--export-dynamic

web_browser_LDADD = $(WEB_BROWSER_LIBS)

EXTRA_DIST = $(ui_DATA)

# Remove ui directory on uninstall
uninstall-local:
    -rm -r $(uidir)
    -rm -r $(pkgdatadir)

4. Create the po directory.
5. Add po/POTFILES.in with this content:
   [type: gettext/glade]
   src/web_browser.ui
   src/web_browser.vala

6. Add po/POTFILES.skip with this content:
   src/web_browser.c
   tests/web_browser.c

7. Add the po/LINGUAS file and fill it with the language code that we support, for example to support the Indonesian language, we put:
   id

8. Populate the translation template by running this command inside the po directory:
   intltool-update --pot

9. Copy the resulting web-browser.pot to id.po (or any other file, depending on the content of the LINGUAS file) and revisit Chapter 11, Making Our Applications Go International, on how to handle the po file.

10. Create the tests directory.
11. Add tests/Makefile.am using this content:

```makefile
AM_CPPFLAGS = \
-DPACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR="$(localedir)" \
-DPACKAGE_SRC_DIR="$(srcdir)" \
-DPACKAGE_DATA_DIR="$(pkgdatadir)" \
-I. \
$(WEB_BROWSER_CFLAGS)

AM_CFLAGS =\n-Wall\n-g

TESTS=test_web_browser
check_PROGRAMS = test_web_browser

test_web_browser_SOURCES = \n../src/config.vapi webkit.vala ../src/web_browser.vala test_web_browser.vala
test_web_browser_VALAFLAGS = \n--pkg gtk+-3.0 \n--Xcc='--include config.h'
test_web_browser_LDFLAGS = \n-Wl,--export-dynamic
test_web_browser_LDADD = $(TEST_WEB_BROWSER_LIBS)
```

12. Add tests/test_web_browser.vala and fill it with this code:

```vala
using Gtk;

public class TestWebBrowser {
    static void process_events()
    {
        while (Gtk.events_pending ()) {
            Gtk.main_iteration_do(true);
        }
    }

    static int main (string[] args)
    {
        Gtk.test_init (ref args);

        Idle.add (() => {
            Test.run ();
            Gtk.main_quit ();
            return true;
        });
```
13. Add tests/webkit.vala and use this content:

```vala
using Gtk;

[CCode (lower_case_cprefix = "webkit_")]
namespace WebKit {

    [CCode (cheader_filename="webkit/webkit.h")]
    public class WebFrame : Object {
    }

    [CCode (cheader_filename="webkit/webkit.h")]
    public class WebView : Viewport {
        public WebView() {
        }

        [CCode (cname="webkit_web_view_load_string")]
        public void load_string (string content, string mime, string encoding, string base_uri) {
        }
    }
}
```

14. Put the webkit-1.0.vapi file which accompanies this book into the src directory.

15. Use the following code for the src/web_browser.vala file:

```vala
using GLib;
using Gtk;
using WebKit;

public class WebBrowser : Object {
    internal Builder builder = null;
    WebView view = null;
    const string UI_FILE = Config.PACKAGE_UI_DIR + "/" + "web_browser.ui";

    public WebBrowser () {
```
Gtk.Settings.get_default ().gtk_button_images = true;
try {
    builder = new Builder ();
    builder.add_from_file (UI_FILE);
    view = new WebView();
    view.load_string("<h1>" + "Welcome") + "</h1>", "text/html", "UTF-8", "/");
    var box = builder.get_object ("webhost") as Container;
    box.add(view);
    var window = builder.get_object ("window") as Window;
    window.show_all ();
    window.destroy.connect (() => {
        Gtk.main_quit();
    });
} catch (Error e) {
    stderr.printf (_("Could not load UI: %s\n"), e.message);
}

16. Create src/main.vala and use this content:

    using GLib;
    using Gtk;

    public class Main : Object{
    static int main (string[] args){
        Gtk.init (ref args);
        var app = new WebBrowser ();
        Gtk.main ();
        return 0;
    }
}

17. Modify src/config.vapi to look like this:

    [CCode (cprefix = "", lower_case_cprefix = ", chader_filename = "config.h")]
    namespace Config {
        public const string DEVELOPMENT_MODE;
public const string GETTEXT_PACKAGE;
public const string SPRITE_DIR;
public const string BACKGROUND_DIR;
public const string PACKAGE_DATA_DIR;
public const string PACKAGE_UI_DIR;
public const string PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR;
public const string PACKAGE_NAME;
public const string PACKAGE_VERSION;
public const string VERSION;
}

18. Build using the --enable-development option by running:
   ./autogen.sh --enable-development

19. Alternatively, put the option in the Configure Options field in the Configure
    Project... submenu in the Build menu.

20. Go to the console and type this command:
    make check

21. You should check this output to see whether the unit tests pass or not.

22. You should also be able to run the application and it should display this UI without
    any possible interaction except closing it.

What just happened?
Wow, that was a somewhat heavy series of actions, wasn't it?

We have just set up the build infrastructure which includes i18n and unit testing. We left
the functionalities unimplemented. We also kept the implementation minimal, just enough
to get the build process successful. Now let's take a look at this more closely.
The first thing we did was to set up the configure.ac file. It is quite similar to what we had in the previous chapters, but there are a couple interesting new things introduced here. Here is the first one:

```bash
dnl Development mode
AC_ARG_ENABLE(development,
   AS_HELP_STRING([--enable-development], [enable development mode]),
   enable_development="$enableval",
   enable_development=no)
if test "x$enable_development" = "xyes"; then
   DEVELOPMENT_MODE="yes"
   PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR=\${PWD}/locale
   PACKAGE_UI_DIR=\${PWD}/src
else
   PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR=\${datadir}/locale
   PACKAGE_UI_DIR=\${datadir}/web-browser
fi
```

This snippet shows the addition of the `--enable-development` option to the configure script. It looks pretty familiar except that we added the definition of PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR and PACKAGE_UI_DIR. The values of these variables depend on the addition or omission of the `--enable-development` option from the parameter of the configure script. PACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR holds the location of the LOCALE directory as we have discussed in Chapter 11, Making Our Applications Go International. PACKAGE_UI_DIR holds the location of the .ui file.

This is a very good improvement compared to our approach in previous chapters regarding the ability to tell the code where to look for the .ui and translation files. One of the major improvements is that we do not need to detect whether it is in development mode or not in the source code. The locations are hardcoded automatically depending on whether we give the `--enable-development` option to the configure script or not.

If we did give the option, PACKAGE_UI_DIR points to the src directory while if we did not, PACKAGE_UI_DIR points to the /usr/share/web-browser directory. This is done at compile time, so don't forget to omit the `--enable-development` option before building the deployment version.

In order to get the value of PACKAGE_UI_DIR accessible from the code, we insert the value into the config.h file. And this is how we do it in the configure script:

```bash
AC_SUBST(PACKAGE_UI_DIR)
AH_TEMPLATE([PACKAGE_UI_DIR], [Location of the .ui file])
AC_DEFINE_UNQUOTED([PACKAGE_UI_DIR], ['$PACKAGE_UI_DIR'], [Location of the .ui file])
```
Then, we need to make it accessible from the Vala code by adding this into the src/config.vapi file:

```vala
public const string PACKAGE_UI_DIR;
```

And the variable can then be used as `Config.PACKAGE_UI_DIR`.

The next interesting thing is that we have these lines:

```vala
PKG_CHECK_MODULES(WEB_BROWSER, [gtk+-3.0 webkitgtk-3.0])
PKG_CHECK_MODULES(TEST_WEB_BROWSER, [gtk+-3.0])
```

The first line will export new variables of `WEB_BROWSER_CFLAGS` and `WEB_BROWSER_LIBS` automatically, while the second one will export the `TEST_WEB_BROWSER_CFLAGS` and `TEST_WEB_BROWSER_LIBS` variables. We use the first variable in `src/Makefile.am` to compile the application, as shown in the following snippets:

```makefile
AM_CPPFLAGS = \
-DPACKAGE_LOCALE_DIR="$(localedir)" \
-DPACKAGE_SRC_DIR="$(srcdir)" \
-DPACKAGE_DATA_DIR="$(pkgdatadir)" \
$(WEB_BROWSER_CFLAGS)
```

and

```makefile
web_browser_LDADD = $(WEB_BROWSER_LIBS)
```

It means that the build system picks up the flags and header files needed for compilation as well as the library names required for linking the application. All of these are required to make the stub compilation successful.

We have the `webkit.vala` code to stub the WebKit to make unit testing easier to carry out. As we can see from `tests/Makefile.am`, we compile the test files with `TEST_WEB_BROWSER_LIBS` to exclude the original WebKit library being linked into our unit test. With this, we are sure that our source code in `src` will be compiled with WebKit, and the source code in the `tests` directory will be compiled with our stub.

However, in our unit test, we still use `WEB_BROWSER_CFLAGS` and not `TEST_WEB_BROWSER_CFLAGS` in order to use the original WebKit header files. The original header is needed to compile the generated C source code.

Now, let’s move on to the i18n part.
We put our Vala code, which is src/web_browser.vala and the .ui file, into the translatable files by putting them into po/POTFILES.in. We don’t need to add all files, but only hand picked selected files which contain translatable text. Next, we add all generated C code into po/POTFILES.skip to mark them as non-translatable. This is to avoid double translation.

The rest is pretty straightforward, so let’s move on to the meat.

**Time for action – finishing up**

Now we are going to complete the implementation by following the user interaction design that we have discussed. Make sure you have src/web_browser.vala, which is distributed in this book.

1. Fill in tests/test_web_browser.vala with these lines:

```vala
using Gtk;

public class TestWebBrowser {

    static void process_events()
    {
        while (Gtk.events_pending ()) {
            Gtk.main_iteration_do(true);
        }
    }

    static void test_initial_state ()
    {
        var web = new WebBrowser();
        process_events();
        assert (web.state == WebBrowser.State.IDLE);
    }

    static void test_typing_url ()
    {
        var web = new WebBrowser();
        var window = web.builder.get_object ("window") as Window;
        window.show_now ();
        web.url_entry.show_now ();
        assert (web.btn_go.visible == false);
        var entry_w = web.url_entry.get_window ();
        web.url_entry.show_window ();
        web.url_entry.focus(0);
    }
```
assert (web.state == WebBrowser.State.IDLE);
Gdk.test_simulate_key (entry_w, 5, 5, Gdk.Key.a, 0, Gdk.
EventType.KEY_PRESS);
Gdk.test_simulate_key (entry_w, 5, 5, Gdk.Key.a, 0, Gdk.
EventType.KEY_RELEASE);
process_events ();
assert (web.state == WebBrowser.State.TYPING_URL);
assert (web.btn_go.visible == true);
var btn_w = web.btn_go.get_window ();
web.btn_go.focus (0);
Gdk.test_simulate_key (btn_w, 5, 5, Gdk.Key.Return, 0, Gdk.
EventType.KEY_PRESS);
Gdk.test_simulate_key (btn_w, 5, 5, Gdk.Key.Return, 0, Gdk.
EventType.KEY_RELEASE);
process_events ();
assert (web.state == WebBrowser.State.LOADING);
}
static int main (string[] args)
{
  Gtk.test_init (ref args);
  Test.add_func ("/test-initial-state", test_initial_state);
  Test.add_func ("/test-typing-url", test_typing_url);
  Idle.add (() => {
    Test.run ();
    Gtk.main_quit ();
    return true;
  });
  Gtk.main ();
  return 0;
}

2. Open the tests/webkit.vala stub file and use this code:

using Gtk;
[CCode (lower_case_cprefix = "webkit_")]
namespace WebKit {
  [CCode (cheader_filename="webkit/webkit.h")]
  public class WebFrame : Object {

Chapter 13

```csharp
[CCode (cheader_filename="webkit/webkit.h")]
public class WebView : Viewport {
    public bool _can_go_back;
    public bool _can_go_forward;
    public signal void load_started (WebFrame frame);
    public signal void load_finished (WebFrame frame);
    WebFrame frame;

    public WebView() {
        frame = new WebFrame();
    }

    [CCode (cname="webkit_web_view_can_go_back")]
    public bool can_go_back() {
        return _can_go_back;
    }

    [CCode (cname="webkit_web_view_can_go_forward")]
    public bool can_go_forward() {
        return _can_go_forward;
    }

    [CCode (cname="webkit_web_view_go_back")]
    public void go_back () {
    }

    [CCode (cname="webkit_web_view_go_forward")]
    public void go_forward () {
    }

    [CCode (cname="webkit_web_view_load_uri")]
    public void load_uri (string uri) {
        load_started (frame);
    }

    [CCode (cname="webkit_web_view_load_string")]
    public void load_string (string content, string mime, string encoding, string base_uri) {
    }

    [CCode (cname="webkit_web_view_stop_loading")]
    public void stop_loading () {
    }

    [CCode (cname="webkit_web_view_reload")]
    public void reload () {
    }
}
```
Exciting Projects

3. Build and run the application.

What just happened?
As we already have our infrastructure set up, we can concentrate on what this project is really about. Let's open this with the WebBrowser object.

```csharp
const string UI_FILE = Config.PACKAGE_UI_DIR + "/" + "web_browser.ui";
```

In this line, we just get the exact location of the .ui file by getting the Config.PACKAGE_UI_DIR value, appended with the filename. Because the location is already hardcoded in the build system, we don't need to put an extra if branch code to check whether this is in development mode or not, like we did in Chapter 11, Making Our Applications Go International.

```csharp
internal Button btn_back = null;
internal Button btn_forward = null;
internal Button btn_go = null;
internal Button btn_refresh = null;
internal Entry url_entry = null;
```
Those are the navigation buttons and our URL entry widget. We mark them as internal in order to be able to access them from our unit test.

```java
internal enum State {
    IDLE,
    TYPING_URL,
    LOADING
}
```

These are the states that we have discussed earlier. One state is missing, which is the clicking link state. We explicitly remove the state from the `enum` loop because the clicking is handled directly within WebKit, while the other states we handle by ourselves. So, in order to avoid cluttering, the `enum` value which we will not use, will not be put in.

However, it is not a good practice to just remove the value. It is better to put some comments in the code explaining the rationale of the removal.

First, we initialize the initial state to be in idle state.

```java
internal State state = State.IDLE;
```

Then we have the function which will be called whenever the state has changed. In this function, we will update the appearance or any other properties of the affected components.

```java
void update_state()
```

The following code is to make sure that the `builder` object exists:

```java
if (builder == null) {
    return;
}
```

In the idle state, we hide the go button and we use the refresh icon and label for the refresh button.

```java
switch (state) {
    case State.IDLE:
        btn_go.hide();
        btn_refresh.label = "gtk-refresh";
        break;
```

When we type the URL, we show the go button.

```java
case State.TYPING_URL:
    btn_go.show();
    break;
```
In the loading state, we simply hide the go button again and change the refresh button to a stop button.

```java
    case State.LOADING:
        btn_go.hide ();
        btn_refresh.label = "gtk-stop";
        break;
```

Then, depending on whether we can go forward or not, we set the forward button to be enabled or disabled.

```java
    if (view.can_go_forward ()) {
        btn_forward.sensitive = true;
    } else {
        btn_forward.sensitive = false;
    }
```

Similarly, depending on whether we can go backward or not, we set the back button to be enabled or disabled.

```java
    if (view.can_go_back ()) {
        btn_back.sensitive = true;
    } else {
        btn_back.sensitive = false;
    }
```

Then, let's see the constructor where we set up the whole interaction of the components.

```java
    public WebBrowser ()
```

Here, we use the image for the buttons rather than text only.

```java
    Gtk.Settings.get_default ().gtk_button_images = true;
```

In the following code, we simply open the .ui file and insert it into the builder object:

```java
    builder = new Builder ();
    builder.add_from_file (UI_FILE);
```

The following snippet shows where we instantiate the web view and display the **Welcome** text. We enclose the text with underscore function of gettext to make it translatable. We skip the translation of the HTML heading markup because it's not relevant. We are only interested in the actual text which is displayed rather than the formatting itself.

```java
    view = new WebView ();
    view.load_string("<h1>" + _("Welcome") + "</h1>" , "text/html", "UTF-8", "/");
```
Then, we connect the `load_started` signal of the view. This is actually called when a link is clicked, which maps to the clicking link state. But just after this is called, the state is moved into loading state. We then update the appearance of the UI by calling the `update_state` function.

```javascript
view.load_started.connect(() => {
    state = State.LOADING;
    update_state();
});
```

However, note that this is also called whenever any other resource is loaded from the Internet such as images, scripts, and any other files.

The `load_finished` signal is called whenever the loading has finished. In this case, we return back to the idle state.

```javascript
view.load_finished.connect(() => {
    state = State.IDLE;
    update_state();
});
```

Here, we handle the key press event in the URL entry. As we designed earlier, whenever we type something, we will update the state to the typing url state. So this is the place we do that.

```javascript
url_entry = builder.get_object("url_entry") as Entry;
url_entry.key_press_event.connect(() => {
    state = State.TYPING_URL;
    update_state();
    return false;
});
```

The following code simply inserts the view into the container that we prepared in the `.ui` file:

```javascript
var box = builder.get_object("webhost") as Container;
box.add(view);
```

Then, we handle the click signal of the back button. When the button is clicked, we ask the view to go back by one page.

```javascript
btn_back = builder.get_object("btn_back") as Button;
btn_back.clicked.connect(() => {
    view.go_back();
});
```
And the same for the forward button.

```
btn_forward = builder.get_object("btn_forward") as Button;
btn_forward.clicked.connect(() => {
    view.go_forward();
});
```

Our refresh button has dual functionalities, so here we check first whether it is in refresh role or stop role. We call `reload` on the view if it is the former role and `stop_loading` if it is the latter role.

```
btn_refresh = builder.get_object("btn_refresh") as Button;
btn_refresh.clicked.connect(() => {
    if (btn_refresh.label == "gtk-refresh") {
        view.reload();
    } else {
        view.stop_loading();
    }
});
```

The go button needs to be clicked or activated (by pressing `Enter`). Both actions lead to the loading of the address typed in the URL entry.

```
btn_go = builder.get_object("btn_go") as Button;
btn_go.activate.connect(() => {
    view.load_uri(url_entry.text);
});
btn_go.clicked.connect(() => {
    view.load_uri(url_entry.text);
});
```

This simply shows the window:

```
var window = builder.get_object("window") as Window;
window.show_all();
```

And as usual, this will exit the application whenever the window is closed:

```
window.destroy.connect(() => {
    Gtk.main_quit();
});
```

We call `update_state` to initialize the state:

```
update_state();
```
The code is quite simple, isn't it? What we are going to do next is test the `update_state` function in our unit test and prepare a stub of the view. Let's take a look at the test first. Here, we declare all tests inside the `TestWebBrowser` class.

```java
public class TestWebBrowser {

The first function is the `process_events` function. This function is exactly the same as we had in Chapter 12, *Quality Made Easy*. It simply processes all pending events in the queue and explicitly waits until all are done.

```java
static void process_events()
{
    while (Gtk.events_pending ()) {
        Gtk.main_iteration_do(true);
    }
}
```

Then we test the initial state of the browser in this test function. We simply create the `WebBrowser` object and check whether the state is really in idle state. Next, we test the typing url state.

```java
static void test_initial_state ()
{
    var web = new WebBrowser();
    process_events();
    assert (web.state == WebBrowser.State.IDLE);
}
```

In this function, we create the `WebBrowser` object and immediately show the window as well as the URL entry with `show_all`. This is to ensure that the widgets can be used immediately.

```java
static void test_typing_url ()
{
    var web = new WebBrowser();
    var window = web.builder.get_object ("window") as Window;
    window.show_now ();
    web.url_entry.show_now ();
    var entry_w = web.url_entry.get_window ();
    web.url_entry.focus(0);
```

Then, we check whether the go button is visible or not. It must be hidden as we designed.

```java
assert (web.btn_go.visible == false);
```

Here, we prepare the URL entry by putting the mouse focus into it, so that we can type in it.

```java
var entry_w = web.url_entry.get_window ();
web.url_entry.focus(0);
```
Before checking anything, we make sure that it is in idle state.

```
assert (web.state == WebBrowser.State.IDLE);
```

Then we simulate the pressing (and releasing) of the `a` key:

```
Gdk.test_simulate_key (entry_w, 5, 5, Gdk.Key.a, 0, Gdk.EventType.KEY_PRESS);
Gdk.test_simulate_key (entry_w, 5, 5, Gdk.Key.a, 0, Gdk.EventType.KEY_RELEASE);
```

Note that we must call this earlier on to make sure that the events are really sent to the widget and the handlers are properly called.

```
process_events ();
```

Here, we check that the state now must be in the typing url state:

```
assert (web.state == WebBrowser.State.TYPING_URL);
```

Also we check that the go button must be now visible.

```
assert (web.btn_go.visible == true);
```

Then, after typing, we move the focus to the go button.

```
var btn_w = web.btn_go.get_window ();
web.btn_go.focus (0);
```

And we press the `Enter` key on the button.

```
Gdk.test_simulate_key (btn_w, 5, 5, Gdk.Key.Return, 0, Gdk.EventType.KEY_PRESS);
Gdk.test_simulate_key (btn_w, 5, 5, Gdk.Key.Return, 0, Gdk.EventType.KEY_RELEASE);
process_events ();
```

The state should now change to loading state, because now the web view is loading the page.

```
assert (web.state == WebBrowser.State.LOADING);
```

So far, we have two tests. And it is time to see the `main` function. Here, we initialize the test suite framework:

```
static int main (string[] args)
{
    Gtk.test_init (ref args);
```
And we register the two tests that map to the functions defined previously:

```c
Test.add_func("/test-initial-state", test_initial_state);
Test.add_func("/test-typing-url", test_typing_url);
```

After that, we set up the idle handler so the test can be run just after we call `Gtk.main`. We immediately quit the application after running all the tests:

```c
Idle.add (() => {
    Test.run ();
    Gtk.main_quit ();
    return true;
});
```

Here, we start the event loop and hand it over to GTK.

```c
Gtk.main ();
```

Note that we don't use any network connection to run the test. As we talked about this earlier, we don't even use the WebKit. Instead, we use our own stub to take WebKit's place during the testing.

In our stub, we must use exactly the same name of the object that we want to stub. Here, we also declare the `WebKit` namespace so that we can use the `using WebKit;` clause in our code. We ask Vala to generate the C code with the `webkit_` prefix. Without this, Vala will generate the `web_kit_` prefix (note the underscore in between the words).

```c
namespace WebKit {

    public class WebFrame : Object {
    }
}
```

This is a helper class that is used in the `load_started` and `load_finished` signals.

```c
public class WebView : Viewport {
    public bool _can_go_back;
    public bool _can_go_forward;
    public signal void load_started (WebFrame frame);
    public signal void load_finished (WebFrame frame);
    WebFrame frame;
}
```
Here, we simply initialize the frame object.

    public WebView() {
        frame = new WebFrame();
    }

The rest are pretty straightforward and do not require a detailed discussion as we already talked about this in *Chapter 12, Quality Made Easy*. They are only empty functions while in the stub, we only define functions which are really used in the implementation code.

### Have a go hero – creating more tests

As you have noticed, we only tested two functionalities. We did not test all of the possible states. Now, please go ahead and craft more tests!

### Part II – A Twitter client

Now let's move on to the next project, a twitter client. The feature of this application is to display a stream of tweets with the text that we search for. This is simpler than the web browser, as we are going to use Seed to develop it.

The UI is once again not complex. We basically have two parts of the screen—the Content area and the search area. The search area is divided into two parts, the Search box and the Search button. Whenever we click on the button, the Content area is updated with a stream of tweets with the search text.
Chapter 13

Time for action – implementing the Twitter client

We will have three Seed scripts and we need to put them in a directory. Don’t forget that we need an Internet connection to run the application.

1. Create a new script called `tweet-feed.js` and fill it with this code:

```javascript
#!/usr/bin/env seed

Gtk = imports.gi.Gtk;
Gdk = imports.gi.Gdk;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

f = imports.feedEntry;
t = imports.twitter;

var twitter = new t.Twitter();
Gtk.init(Seed.argv);
var window = new Gtk.Window();
window.resize(400,400);
window.title = "Tweet Feed";
var box = new Gtk.Box({orientation: Gtk.Orientation.VERTICAL});
window.add(box);

var scroll = new Gtk.ScrolledWindow();
var viewport = new Gtk.Viewport();
box.pack_start(scroll, true, true);

var search_box = new Gtk.Box({orientation: Gtk.Orientation.HORIZONTAL});
var entry = new Gtk.Entry();
entry.placeholder_text = "Enter your search topic";
search_box.pack_start(entry, true, true);

var search_button = new Gtk.Button({label: "gtk-find"});
search_button.use_stock = true;
search_button.signal.clicked.connect(function() {
   twitter.search(entry.text);
});
search_box.pack_start(search_button, false, false);

box.pack_start(search_box, false, false);

var entries = new Gtk.Box({orientation: Gtk.Orientation.VERTICAL});
scroll.add(viewport);
viewport.add(entries);
```
window.show_all();

twitter.signal.connect("data-available", function(object) {
    entries.foreach(function(content) {
        entries.remove(content);
    });
    for (var i = 0; i < twitter.data.results.length; i++) {
        var entry = new FeedEntry(twitter.data.results[i]);
        entries.pack_start(entry, false, false);
    }
});

Gtk.main();

2. Add a new file called feedEntry.js and use this code:

```javascript
Gtk = imports.gi.Gtk;
Gdk = imports.gi.Gdk;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

FeedEntry = new GType({
    parent: Gtk.TextView.type,
    name: "FeedEntry",
    properties: [
        {
            name: 'from_user_name',
            type: GObject.TYPE_STRING,
            default_value: "",
            flags: (GObject.ParamFlags.CONSTRUCT
                | GObject.ParamFlags.READABLE
                | GObject.ParamFlags.WRITABLE),
        },
        {
            name: 'from_user',
            type: GObject.TYPE_STRING,
            default_value: "",
            flags: (GObject.ParamFlags.CONSTRUCT
                | GObject.ParamFlags.READABLE
                | GObject.ParamFlags.WRITABLE),
        },
        {
            name: 'text',
            type: GObject.TYPE_STRING,
            default_value: "",
```
flags: (GObject.ParamFlags.CONSTRUCT
 | GObject.ParamFlags.READABLE
 | GObject.ParamFlags.WRITABLE),
},

class_init: function(klass, prototype) {
    prototype.update_data = function() {
        var writer_tag = new Gtk.TextTag(
            name: "writer",
            size_points: 12,
            weight: 700,
            style: 3,
            foreground: "#000000"));
        this.buffer.tag_table.add(writer_tag);

        var user_tag = new Gtk.TextTag(
            name: "user",
            style: 0,
            foreground: "#888888"));
        this.buffer.tag_table.add(user_tag);

        var content_tag = new Gtk.TextTag(
            name: "content",
            size_points: 12,
            style: 0,
            weight: 400,
            foreground: "#000000"
        );
        this.buffer.tag_table.add(content_tag);

        this.buffer.insert_at_cursor (this.text + "\n", -1);
        var start_iter = this.buffer.get_start_iter ();
        var end_iter = this.buffer.get_end_iter ();
        this.buffer.apply_tag_by_name ("content", start_iter.iter, end_iter.iter);

        var cursor_pos = this.buffer.cursor_position;
        this.buffer.insert_at_cursor (this.from_user_name + " ", -1);
        var start_iter = this.buffer.get_iter_at_offset(cursor_pos);
        var end_iter = this.buffer.get_end_iter ();
        this.buffer.apply_tag_by_name ("writer", start_iter.iter, end_iter.iter);
var cursor_pos = this.buffer.cursor_position;
this.buffer.insert_at_cursor (@ + this.from_user + 
"\n", -1);
var start_iter = this.buffer.get_iter_at_offset(cursor_pos);
var end_iter = this.buffer.get_end_iter ();
this.buffer.apply_tag_by_name ("user", start_iter.iter, end_iter.iter);
}
}
init: function(self) {
    self.wrap_mode = Gtk.WrapMode.WORD;
    self.editable = false;
    self.update_data();
    self.show_all();
}
});

3. Add another new file called twitter.js and fill it with this code:

```javascript
Gio = imports.gi.Gio;
GObject = imports.gi.GObject;

Twitter = new GType({
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Twitter",
    signals: [
        {
            name: "data-available",
            parameters: []
        }
    ],
    class_init: function(klass, prototype) {
        prototype.search = function(keyword) {
            var url = "http://search.twitter.com/search.json?q= + keyword;
            var data_source = Gio.file_new_for_uri(url);
            var self = this;
            data_source.read_async(0, null,
            function(source, result) {
                var input = source.read_finish(result);
                var stream = new Gio.DataInputStream.c_new(input);
                self.data = JSON.parse(stream.read_until("", 0));
                self.signal["data-available"].emit();
            }
        }
    }
})
```
4. Give executable permission on the tweet-feed.js file, for example, by typing the following command in the shell:
   
   chmod +x tweet-feed.js

5. Run it, type any search text, and press the Find button.

What just happened?

Here, we employ the knowledge of reading a resource from the network as well as the skill of extending an existing widget. We also learn how to develop a Seed application with multiple scripts to modularize and simplify the development.

We divide the application into three modules. The first one is for the main application, another one for reading the twitter data, and the last one is for the newly derived widget to display the tweets.
Let's start from the last one, that is, the FeedEntry widget. First, we derive a new widget from the TextView widget:

```javascript
FeedEntry = new GType(
    parent: Gtk.TextView.type,
    name: "FeedEntry",
)
```

This is because we want the text wrapping functionality, which is available in TextView. Here, we define some properties with the names that exactly follow the data that comes from the Twitter API.

```javascript
properties: [
    {
        name: 'from_user_name',
        type: GObject.TYPE_STRING,
        default_value: "",
        flags: (GObject.ParamFlags.CONSTRUCT |
                GObject.ParamFlags.READABLE |
                GObject.ParamFlags.WRITABLE),
    }
]
```

In the API, we have from_user_name, from_user and text which contains the full name of the tweep (the person who posted the tweet), the username, and the tweet itself. So we just use a direct map between the Twitter API and the properties in our new widget.

Then, we define the update_data function in the prototype. It means that the function is available in the class.

```javascript
class_init: function(klass, prototype) {
    prototype.update_data = function() {
}
```

Then, we define a few tags. The tags are used to style text that we enter into the text buffer.

```javascript
var writer_tag = new Gtk.TextTag(
    name: "writer",
    size_points: 12,
    weight: 700,
    style: 3,
    foreground: "#000000"));
this.buffer.tag_table.add(writer_tag);
```

We want to use a normal style for the tweet, bold style for the name of the tweep, and a lighter one for the twitter user ID. But before using the tags, we need to add them into the tag table and we do this for all tags. Then, we insert the tweet first, followed by a newline.

```javascript
this.buffer.insert_at_cursor (this.text + "\n", -1);
```
Here, we remember the start location of the text by getting the `Iter` object. The `Iter` object is used to point to a certain place in the text buffer. We can think of this with an analogy of text selection.

```javascript
var start_iter = this.buffer.get_start_iter ();
```

And here, we mark the end of the text selection:

```javascript
var end_iter = this.buffer.get_end_iter ();
```

Then, we apply the tag with the specified name to the text which is covered by the start and end iter.

```javascript
this.buffer.apply_tag_by_name ("content", start_iter.iter, end_iter.iter);
```

Back to the selection analogy, we can think of this like giving a formatting style to the selected text in a text document.

Here, we can no longer use the `get_start_iter` function to get the start of the `Iter` object.

```javascript
var cursor_pos = this.buffer.cursor_position;
```

Instead, we get the current cursor position to mark as the start of the text which will be inserted below.

Then, we get the start iter by pointing the cursor position that we recorded earlier.

```javascript
this.buffer.insert_at_cursor (this.from_user_name + " ", -1);
var start_iter = this.buffer.get_iter_at_offset(cursor_pos);
```

This one is the same as the previous one; we just get the end of the text to get the end iter.

```javascript
var end_iter = this.buffer.get_end_iter ();
```

Then we apply the tag into the text in between the `iter` parameters.

```javascript
this.buffer.apply_tag_by_name ("writer", start_iter.iter, end_iter.iter);
```

Naturally, `TextView` is for editing text, but here, we disable the editing during the instantiation of the object:

```javascript
init: function(self) {
    self.wrap_mode = Gtk.WrapMode.WORD;
    self.editable = false;
```
During initialization, we immediately update the data which in turns renders the data.

```javascript
self.update_data();
self.show_all();
```

That's it. Now let's take a look at the twitter.js file which functions as the data source.

Here we define our Twitter object as a simple GObject object.

```javascript
Twitter = new GType({
    parent: GObject.Object.type,
    name: "Twitter",
}

We have a signal called data-available and it is called without any parameters.

```javascript
signals: [
    {
        name: "data-available",
        parameters: []
    }
],
```

The signal is called whenever we have new data in the JSON format coming from the Twitter API. This is the search function which we make available in the class. What it does is it simply gets the stream from the mentioned URL, and appends it with the keyword. We use Gio to open the stream.

```javascript
class_init: function(klass, prototype) {
    prototype.search = function(keyword) {
        var url = "http://search.twitter.com/search.json?q=" + keyword;
        var data_source = Gio.file_new_for_uri(url);
        var self = this;

        data_source.read_async(0, null, function(source, result) {
            var input = source.read_finish(result);
            var stream = new Gio.DataInputStream.c_new(input);
            self.data = JSON.parse(stream.read_until("", 0));
            self.signal["data-available"].emit();
        });
    }
};
```
Our initialization function is as simple as this. It just initializes the \texttt{data} member as an empty object.

\begin{verbatim}
init: function(self) {
  this.data = {};
}
\end{verbatim}

Then let's see the main application code in \texttt{tweet-feed.js}. Here, we import the other two scripts and make them accessible from the \texttt{f} and \texttt{t} variables:

\begin{verbatim}
f = imports.feedEntry;
t = imports.twitter;
\end{verbatim}

This could become one of the bad examples when the code base gets larger. Something like \texttt{feedEntryScript} or \texttt{twitterScript} could be a better name to use.

In the following line, we instantiate a Twitter object:

\begin{verbatim}
var twitter = new t.Twitter();
\end{verbatim}

Then we initialize \texttt{Gtk} and create the window. We set the initial size and we give it a title:

\begin{verbatim}
Gtk.init(Seed.argv);
var window = new Gtk.Window();
window.resize(400,400);
window.title = "Tweet Feed";
\end{verbatim}

We have a Box object to be used as a layout and we put it in the window.

\begin{verbatim}
var box = new Gtk.Box({orientation: Gtk.Orientation.VERTICAL});
window.add(box);
\end{verbatim}

Now, we can add more than one widget into it.

Here, we have a new ScrolledWindow object called \texttt{scroll}, created together with \texttt{viewport}. This is required so that we can scroll the tweets when they overflow the size of the window.

\begin{verbatim}
var scroll = new Gtk.ScrolledWindow();
var viewport = new Gtk.Viewport();
box.pack_start(scroll, true, true);
\end{verbatim}

Then, we add a new horizontal box to be put at the bottom of the screen. This would be the place of the text entry and the search button.

\begin{verbatim}
var search_box = new Gtk.Box({orientation: Gtk.Orientation.HORIZONTAL});
\end{verbatim}
Here, we create the text entry for the user to type the search text into. We use a placeholder text as a hint to the user to tell him or her what to do. Then we pack the entry into the horizontal box.

```javascript
var entry = new Gtk.Entry();
entry.placeholder_text = "Enter your search topic";
search_box.pack_start(entry, true, true);
```

Here, we create the search button. It is a simple button with a stock item, so we don’t need to create a label ourselves. Then we connect the clicked signal by calling the `twitter.search` function and initiating the stream downloading.

```javascript
var search_button = new Gtk.Button({label: "gtk-find"});
search_button.use_stock = true;
search_button.signal.clicked.connect(function() {
    twitter.search(entry.text);
});
search_box.pack_start(search_button, false, false);
```

Furthermore, we create a vertical box to host all the incoming tweets. The box is then put into the viewport, which is inside the scrolled window.

```javascript
var entries = new Gtk.Box({orientation: Gtk.Orientation.VERTICAL});
scroll.add(viewport);
viewport.add(entries);
```

This is the `data-available` signal handler. As we discussed earlier, the signal is emitted when we receive the entire Twitter stream.

```javascript
twitter.signal.connect("data-available", function(object) {
    entries.foreach(function(content) {
        entries.remove(content);
    });
    for (var i = 0; i < twitter.data.results.length; i ++) {
        var entry = new f.FeedEntry(twitter.data.results[i]);
        entries.pack_start(entry, false, false);
    }
});
```

So what we do here is we first remove existing entries, if any. Then we iterate all the tweets we have in the `twitter.data.results` array. For each tweet, we simply create a `FeedEntry` object. We pass the entry structure directly as the members of the structure are already mapped in the `FeedEntry` class. Then, we add the entry object inside the `entries` array.
Summary

Now, we have two real applications on our hands. However, there are still missing pieces here and there. And they are waiting for you to fix them.

In our first project, we learnt a new trick to avoid making code to check whether it is now in development mode or not, by hardcoding the path directly from the configure script. We discussed how to load a web page and interact with the rest of chrome.

Later on, in our second project, we learnt how to extend a widget and a multiple-scripts application. This is important to know as in the real world, our application would resemble this situation.

Then in both projects, we discussed the logic and UI building separation by putting the non-UI code in a dedicated class. This way, we can easily add more complex business processes and not get confused because it got mixed with the UI codes.

Congratulations, you have reached the end of this book! But, what's next?

After reading this book, of course, we still need to dig the details of the skin of knowledge we read so far. However, as we already get the essentials, it would be easy for you to learn those details. One thing which is important to remember is that the GNOME platform is an open source project. Like any other project, it is awesome because of the contributions of hackers around the world. Now, you are more than capable of doing the same!
Pop Quiz Answers

Chapter 2, Preparing Our Weapons

Pop quiz – naming a signal

Q1 A. server_on_connection_started. This is because the first word refers to the class (server) and the rest followed by on means that there is some kind of event happening.

Chapter 3, Programming Languages

Pop quiz – how to fix this?

Q1 A. public, because we want to access it from Main class which is outside the Book class.

Pop quiz – what is the value now?

Q1 A. JavaScript will think this is an error because we try to access .length from an undefined value. This is because JavaScript can't get a property value from an undefined value.
Pop Quiz Answers

Pop quiz – can you see the difference now?

Q1  A. Circle is a class because it has the definition, and circle is an object, instantiated from the Circle class.

Pop quiz – how to make it global

Q1  A. Just add printAuthor in the Book class prototype, and then all objects created from Book will have the function. If we put the method in every instantiated object, it would be too cumbersome to do it, while having it on prototype guarantees that the method is always created.

Chapter 4, Using GNOME Core Libraries

Pop quiz – why the value of zero is printed out

Q1  A. Both answers are right. The default value is set in the construction phase.

Chapter 5, Building Graphical User Interface Applications

Pop quiz

Q1  A. Slightly to the left.
   This is because 0.3 is less than 0.5. The value of 0.0 means the alignment is totally on the left.

Q2  A. None of the provided answers is right, the correct one is slightly to the top
   This is because 0.3 vertically means it is closer to the top which has the value of 0.0.
Chapter 10, Desktop Integration

Pop quiz – a good example application

Q1  A. A battery system tray applet. This is because the data are posted all the time meaning it is good for monitoring applications such as the system tray applet. A battery checker usually just polls the data once or when needed, not all the time.
Index

A
access specifiers, Vala
  about 68
  internal 68
  private 68
  protected 68
  public 68
actors 126
Add/Remove Software tool 13
address book
  accessing 189-198
  setting up 188, 189
  used, for saving data 198
add_watch function 169
Advanced Linux Sound Architecture (ALSA) 163
alert function 208
animations
  playing with 129
Anjuta
  about 11, 24, 25
  features 25
  IDE layout 25, 26
  program, running 29-31
  Vala project, creating 24, 25
Anjuta, features
  code completion 25
  line numbering 25
  syntax highlighting 25
anonymous function 78
Application Programming Interface (API) 41
array
  manipulating 51, 52
ATK 11
audio
  playing, programmatically 164-168
audioconvert element 162, 163
B
bindtextdomain function 262
block
  commenting 28, 29
  uncommenting 29
bogus local identifier
  using 257
bookmarks tool 26
breakpoints tool 26
browser interaction
  build infrastructure, preparing 305-314
  user interaction design, implementing 315-326
build infrastructure
  preparing 305-314
buttons
  icons, adding to 115, 116
C
C 43, 255
C# 43
C++ 43
Cairo 11
calendar data source
  setting up 188, 189
CamelCase 56
capabilities, Gee 72-75
chrome 302
class 56
client-side JavaScript
   GNOME, connecting with 211-223
   running, with JavaScriptCore 204, 205
closure function 78
Clutter
   about 11, 107, 121, 202
   used, for implementing mockup 121-128
code
   porting, without GtkBuilder 117
code point 256
command line
   used, for accessing GStreamer pipeline 162
comment block 28
compatibility
   maintaining 144
composite widget
   creating 136-143
configuration files
   about 91
   reading 91-93
connect_signals method 39
constructors
   about 55
   using 54, 55
core libraries, GNOME
   GIO 10
   GLib 10
   GObject 10
custom widget
   implementing 145-151
CustomWindowTitle class 144

d
daemon 249
data
   presenting, with TreeView 180
   saving, to address book 198
data storage, GNOME
   Evolution Data Storage (EDS) 11
data types
   JavaScript, playing with 47-49
data types, Vala 68-71
D-Bus
   about 225, 226
   listening to 226, 227
   URL, for info 226
Debian Testing
   about 18
   GNOME, installing 18
   SDK, installing 18
desktop architecture, GNOME 3 9, 10
Desktop Entry Specification document 93
development requisites, GNOME 3 9
Devhelp 11, 23
docks 25
domain 262
draw function 149

E
echo server
   about 102
   creating 102
elements
   about 160
   states 161
elements, states
   null 161
   paused 161
   playing 161
   ready 161
End Of Stream (EOS) 170
error
   creating, in program 32
events
   handling 168-170
Evolution Data Server (EDS)
   about 179, 188
   architecture 188

F
Fedora 17
   about 12
   GNOME, installing 12, 13
   SDK, installing 12, 13
files
   accessing 94-97
files tool 26
frames per second (fps) 150
freedesktop.org 217, 225
frontend
   Vala object, calling from 205-210
functionalities
   adding, to widgets 136-143
functions, GLib main loop 80-83

G
GDataOutputStream class 101
Gdk 273
Gee
   about 71
   capabilities 72-75
   members, initializing 75
Gee library
   adding, to project 71, 72
generics programming 74
Gettext 261
GFile API 96
GFileInputStream object 97
GIMP toolkit 11
GIO
   about 10, 79, 94
   files, accessing 94-97
   used, for accessing network 97-101
Gjs 44
Glade 11, 25, 34
GLib
   about 10, 13, 79, 273
   configuration files, reading 91-93
glib2-devel package 13
GLib main loop
   about 80
   functions 80-83
GLib properties
   about 86
   accessing 86-90
GNOME
   about 7, 225, 254
   and SDK 12
   connecting, with client-side JavaScript 211-223
   core libraries 10
   data storage 11
   multimedia libraries 11
   programming, with JavaScript 44
   tools 11
   URL, for platform reference 10
   user interface libraries 11

GNOME 3
   about 7, 43
desktop architecture 9, 10
development requisites 9
   system requisites 8
GNOME core libraries 79
GNOME, installing
   in Debian Testing 18
   in Fedora 17 12, 13
   in openSUSE 12 15, 17
   in Ubuntu 12.04 20
GNOME. Manokwari 223
GNOME Panel/Fallback 8
GNOME session manager
   about 228
talking to 228-240
GNOME Shell 8
GObject 10
GObject signals
   about 84
   handling, in JavaScript 84-86
GSettings
   about 102, 103
   accessing, programmatically 104, 105
GSettings API 103
gst-launch tool 162, 163
GStreamer
   about 11, 160
   architecture 160, 161
   audio, playing 164-168
   events, handling 168-170
   video media, playing 170, 171
   video, playing 171-177
GStreamer pipeline
   accessing, with command line 162
testing 162, 163
GTK+ 11, 107, 273
GTK+ application
   creating 108, 109
   icon placement, adjusting 117
   icons, adding to buttons 115, 116
mockup, implementing 109-115
Vala version, creating 115
WebKit, embedding 202-204

Gtk+ custom widget
implementing 144-151

GtkDrawingArea class 147
GtkLabel 109

GTK+ module
testing 290-298

GtkRadioButton 109
GtkWindow 109

Gtranslator 11, 269
Gtranslator program 268

GUI modules
testing 290-298

H

HTML5 201

I

i18n infrastructure
bootstrapping 258-262

i18n (internationalization) 253, 305

i18n, in Vala project
about 258
infrastructure, bootstrapping 258-262
UI, creating 263-267
UI texts, translating 267-269

icon placement
adjusting 117
icons
adding, to buttons 115, 116

IDE layout 25
index.html file 224
installation, GNOME
in Debian Testing 18
in Fedora 17 12, 13
in openSUSE 12 15, 17
in Ubuntu 12.04 20

installation, locale 270

installation, SDK
in Debian Testing 18
in Fedora 17 12, 13
in openSUSE 12 15, 17
in Ubuntu 12.04 20

Integrated Development Environment (IDE) 23

interaction design
inspecting, of browser 304, 305
interaction flow 109
interprocess communication (IPC) 225

intltol 261

iteration
controlling, steps 49, 50

J

JavaScript
about 43, 47
GObject signals, handling 84-86
iteration, controlling 49, 50
playing, with data types 47-49
used, for programming GNOME 44

JavaScript code
trying 45

JavaScriptCore
about 204
used, for running client-side JavaScript 204, 205

JavaScript Object Notation. See JSON

JavaScript objects
constructing 54, 55
using 52, 53

JavaScript prototypes
using 56-58

Jawi script 254

JQuery 202

JQuery Mobile 202

JSON 54, 202

K

keyring 243

L

L10n 271

launcher
creating, for application 240-243

libebook 11
libecal 11
libnotify 249
library
    creating  152-156
    widgets, maintaining  151-156
link_filtered function  167
locale
    about  254
    adding, to system  256, 257
    installing  270
    obtaining  255
    output, obtaining with  257
locale data  255
locale-gen command  257
locale parameters
    exploring  256
localization process  271, 272
loosely typed language  47

M
member access specifiers
    about  65
    defining  65, 67
messages  26
mockup
    about  35
    implementing  109-115
    implementing, raw GTK+ programming used  117-121
    implementing, with Clutter  121-128
Model-View-Controller (MVC)  180
modularization  61
MPEG codecs  159
multimedia
    third-party library  159, 160
multimedia capabilities  159
multimedia libraries, GNOME
    GSTreamer  11

N
navigation
    between tabs  27, 28
network
    accessing, Gio used  97-101
new operator  56
notifications
    sending  249, 251
notification system  249

O
object
    about  56
    constructing  54, 55
    prototypes, modifying  59, 60
object-oriented programming. See  OOP
Ogg demultiplexer  171
OOP
    with JavaScript  52
openSUSE  12
    about  15
    GNOME, installing  15, 17
    SDK, installing  15, 17
outputs
    obtaining, with locales  257
override keyword  143

P
packages
    marking  14
pads  161
pallete  34
Pango  11
passwords
    storing, securely  243-248
Portable Operating System Interface. See  POSIX
POSIX  254
printCounter function  82
private bus  225
program
    modularizing  61, 62
    running, Seed used  45-47
project
    Gee library, adding  71, 72
project tool  26
properties, Glib
    about  86
    accessing  86-90
prototype
    modifying, of object  59, 60
    using  56-58
Python  43
R

raw GTK+ programming
used, for implementing mockup 117-121
read function 97
read_name() function 218
remote procedure call (RPC) 225
responsive button
about 37
creating 37-39

S

SDK
and GNOME 12
SDK, installing
in Debian Testing 18
in Fedora 17 12, 13
in openSUSE 12, 15, 17
in Ubuntu 12.04 20
SDK packages
marking 17, 19
Seahorse 243
seed 11
Seed
about 44
used, for running program 45-47
working 44
session bus 225
session manager, GNOME
about 228
talking to 228-240
set_title function
about 132
overriding 132-135
signal
naming 39
signals, GObject
about 84
handling 84-86
sink 161
Software Development Kit. See SDK
source 161
source string 255
Spidermonkey 44
stream 97
stubbing technique 283
stubs
creating 283-289
subclasing 132
symbols
about 40
tracking 40, 41
symbols tool 26
system
locale, adding to 256, 257
system bus 225, 226
system requisites, GNOME 3 8

T

tabs
navigating between 27, 28
terminal 27
Test-Driven Development (TDD) 274
tests
stubbing 283
tools, GNOME
Anjuta 11
Devhelp 11
Glade 11
Gtranslator 11
seed 11
vala 11
translations 255
TreeView
about 180
used, for presenting data 180
using 181-187
tweep 332
twitter client
about 326
implementing 327-336

U

Ubuntu 12.04
GNOME, installing 20
SDK, installing 20
Ubuntu Software Center tool 21
UI layout
creating, for web browser 302, 303
UI texts
translating 267-269
unit testing
  about 273
  procedure 274
  reasons, for performing 274
unit tests
  about 274
  creating 274-282
Unity 20
Universal Character Set 255
User Experience (UX), GNOME 3
  about 8
  GNOME Panel/Fallback 8
  GNOME Shell 8
user interaction design
  implementing 315-326
user interface
  creating 263-267
  editing 33, 34
user interface libraries, GNOME
  ATK 11
  Cairo 11
  Clutter 11
  Gtk+ 11
  Pango 11
  WebKit 11
UTF-8 256

V

Vala
  about 11, 43, 63
  access specifiers 68
  data types 68-71
  entry point, to program 64
  signals, emitting 75-77
  signals, watching 75-77
Vala object
  calling, from frontend 205-210
Vala project
  creating 24, 25
Vala version
  creating 115

var directive 47
video
  playing 171, 172
  playing, programmatically 173-177
video media
  playing 170, 171
VirtualBox 9
vorbis plugin 171

W

watches tool 26
web browser
  implementing, WebKitGTK used 301, 302
  interaction design, inspecting 304, 305
  UI layout, creating for 302, 303
WebKit
  about 11, 202
  embedding, inside Gtk+ application 202-204
WebKitGTK
  used, for implementing web browser 301, 302
WebKitGTK+ 201
WebView widget 204
Wheezy. See Debian Testing
widget properties
  modifying 36
widgets
  about 34
  button, adding 35, 36
  functionalities, adding to 136-143
  label, adding 35, 36
  maintaining, in library 151-156
  overriding 132-135
  properties, modifying 36

X

ximage sink 171

Y

Yet another Setup Tool (YaST) 16
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