

Supplement V.B: Enumerated Types

For Introduction to Java Programming, 6E
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This supplement introduces JDK 1.5 enumerated types.

1 Simple Enumerated Types

An enumerated type defines a list of enumerated values. Each value is an identifier. For example, the following statement declares a type, named MyFavoriteColor, with values RED, BLUE, GREEN, and YELLOW in this order.

```
enum MyFavoriteColor {RED, BLUE, GREEN, YELLOW};
```

Once a type is defined, you can declare a variable of that type:

```
MyFavoriteColor color;
```

The variable color can hold one of the values defined in the enumerated type MyFavoriteColor or null, but nothing else. Java enumerated type is *type-safe*, meaning that an attempt to assign a value other than one of the enumerated values or null will result in a compilation error.

The enumerated values can be accessed using the syntax

```
enumeratedTypeName.valueName
```

For example, the following statement assigns enumerated value BLUE to variable color:

```
color = MyFavoriteColor.BLUE;
```

An enumerated type is treated as a special class. An enumerated type variable is therefore a reference variable. An enumerated type is a subtype of the Object class and the Comparable interface. Therefore, an enumerated type inherits all the methods in the Object class and the compareTo method in the Comparable interface. Additionally, you can use the following methods on an enumerated object:

- `public String name();`
Returns a name of the value for the object.
- `public int ordinal();`
Returns the ordinal value associated with the enumerated value. The first value in an enumerated type

has an ordinal value of 0, the second has an ordinal value of 1, the third one 3, and so on.

Listing 1 gives a program that demonstrates the use of enumerated types. Figure 1 shows a sample run of the program.

Listing 1 EnumeratedTypeDemo.java (Declaring enumerated type inside a class)

<Side remark: Line 2: declare enumerated type>
<Side remark: Line 6: enumerated type variable>
<Side remark: Line 9: methods for enumerated type objects>

```
public class EnumeratedTypeDemo {
    static enum Day {SUNDAY, MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY,
        FRIDAY, SATURDAY};

    public static void main(String[] args) {
        Day day1 = Day.FRIDAY;
        Day day2 = Day.THURSDAY;

        System.out.println("day1's name is " + day1.name());
        System.out.println("day2's name is " + day2.name());
        System.out.println("day1's ordinal is " + day1.ordinal());
        System.out.println("day2's ordinal is " + day2.ordinal());

        System.out.println("day1.equals(day2) returns " +
            day1.equals(day2));
        System.out.println("day1.toString() returns " +
            day1.toString());
        System.out.println("day1.compareTo(day2) returns " +
            day1.compareTo(day2));
    }
}
```

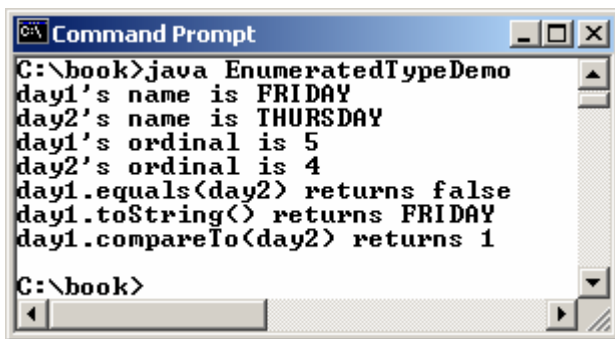


Figure 1

An enumerated type is a class type.

An enumerated type is defined in Lines 2-3. Variables day1 and day2 are declared as the Day type and assigned enumerated values in Lines 6-7. Since day1's value is

FRIDAY, its ordinal value is 5 (Line 11). Since day2's value is THURSDAY, its ordinal value is 4 (Line 12).

An enumerated type is a subclass of the Object class and the Comparable interface, so you can invoke the methods equals, toString, and compareTo from an enumerated object reference variable (Lines 14-19). day1.equals(day2) returns true if day1 and day2 have the same ordinal value. day1.compareTo(day2) returns the difference between day1's ordinal value to day2's.

Alternatively, you can rewrite the code in Listing 1 into Listing 2.

Listing 2 EnumeratedTypeDemo1.java (Declaring enumerated type standalone)

<Side remark: Line 2: declare enumerated type>

<Side remark: Line 6: enumerated type variable>

<Side remark: Line 9: methods for enumerated type objects>

```
public class EnumeratedTypeDemo1 {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        Day day1 = Day.FRIDAY;
        Day day2 = Day.THURSDAY;

        System.out.println("day1's name is " + day1.name());
        System.out.println("day2's name is " + day2.name());
        System.out.println("day1's ordinal is " + day1.ordinal());
        System.out.println("day2's ordinal is " + day2.ordinal());

        System.out.println("day1.equals(day2) returns " +
            day1.equals(day2));
        System.out.println("day1.toString() returns " +
            day1.toString());
        System.out.println("day1.compareTo(day2) returns " +
            day1.compareTo(day2));
    }
}
```

```
enum Day {SUNDAY, MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY,
    FRIDAY, SATURDAY}
```

An enumerated type can be defined inside a class, as shown in Lines 2-3 in Listing 1, or standalone as shown in Lines 20-21 Listing 2. In the former case, the type is treated as an inner class. After the program is compiled, a class named EnumeratedTypeDemo\$Day.class is created. In the latter case, the type is treated as a standalone class. After the program is compiled, a class named Day.class is created.

NOTE

<note remark: enumerated type and value naming convention>

Since an enumerated type is like a class, the type should be named in the same way as a class with the first letter capitalized. Since the enumerated values are constants, they should be named as regular constants.

NOTE

<note remark: enumerated type inside a class>

When an enumerated type is declared inside a class, the type must be declared as a member of the class and cannot be declared inside a method. Furthermore, the type is always static. For this reason, the static keyword in Line 2 in Listing 1 may be omitted. The visibility modifiers on inner class can be also be applied to enumerated types defined inside a class.

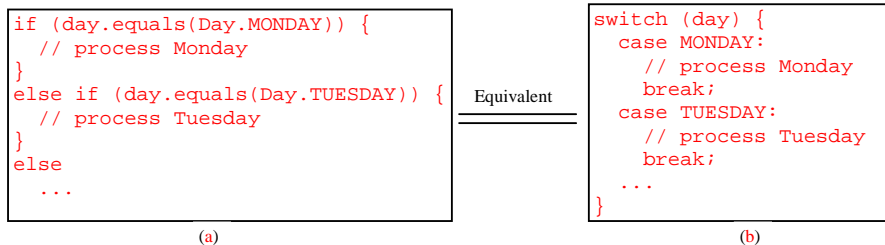
TIP

<note remark: Enumerated values vs. integer literals>

Using enumerated values (e.g., Day.MONDAY, Day.TUESDAY, and so on) rather than literal integer values (e.g., 0, 1, and so on) can make program easier to read and maintain.

2 Using if or switch Statements with an Enumerated Variable

An enumerated variable holds a value. Often your program needs to perform a specific action depending on the value. For example, if the value is Day.MONDAY, play soccer; if the value is Day.TUESDAY, take piano lesson, and so on. You can use an if statement or a switch statement to test the value in the variable, as shown in (a) and (b)



In the switch statement in (b), the case label is an unqualified enumerated value (e.g., MONDAY, but not

Day.MONDAY).

3 Processing Enumerated Values Using Enhanced for Loop

Each enumerated type has a static method values() that returns all enumerated values for the type in an array. For example,

```
Day[] days = Day.values();
```

You can use a regular for loop in (a) or an enhanced for loop in (b) to process all the values in the array.

```
for (int i = 0; i < days.length; i++)  
    System.out.println(days[i]);
```

Equivalent

```
for (Day day: days)  
    System.out.println(day);
```

(a)

(b)

4 Enumerated Types with Attributes and Methods

The simple enumerated types introduced in the preceding section define a type with a list of enumerated values. You can also define an enumerated type with attributes and methods, as shown in Listing 3.

Listing 3 TrafficLight.java (Enumerated type with attributes and methods)

<Side remark: Line 2: enumerated values>

<Side remark: Line 4: attribute>

<Side remark: Line 6: constructor>

<Side remark: Line 10: method>

```
public enum TrafficLight {  
    red ("Please stop"), GREEN ("Please go"), YELLOW ("Please caution");  
  
    private String description;  
  
    private TrafficLight(String description) {  
        this.description = description;  
    }  
  
    public String getDescription() {  
        return description;  
    }  
}
```

The enumerated values are defined in Line 2. The value declaration must be the first statement in the type declaration. A data field named description is declared in Line 4 to describe an enumerated value. The constructor TrafficLight is declared in Lines 6-8. The constructor is invoked whenever an enumerated value is accessed. The

enumerated value's argument is passed to the constructor, which is then assigned to description.

Listing 4 gives a test program to use TrafficLight.

Listing 4 TestTrafficLight.java

<Side remark: Line 2: enumerated values>

<Side remark: Line 4: attribute>

<Side remark: Line 6: constructor>

<Side remark: Line 10: method>

```
public class TestTrafficLight {  
    public static void main(String[] args) {  
        TrafficLight light = TrafficLight.red;  
        System.out.println(light.getDescription());  
    }  
}
```

An enumerated value TrafficLight.red is assigned to variable light (Line 3) Accessing TrafficLight.red causes the JVM to invoke the constructor with argument "please stop". The methods in enumerated type are invoked in the same way as the methods in a class. light.getDescription() returns the description for the enumerated value (Line 4).

NOTE

<note title: private constructor>

The Java syntax requires that the constructor for enumerated types be private to prevent it from being invoked directly. The private modifier may be omitted. In this case, it is considered private by default.