


Android User Interface
Android Smartphone Programming

University of Freiburg

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Outline

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- 1 Android User Interface
- 2 Multi-Language Support
- 3 Summary

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Android User Interface
From activity to widgets

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Activity Application component that provides a screen [1].
User interface of an activity is build using View and ViewGroup objects [5].

View Basis unit for user interface, base for subclasses called *widgets*.

ViewGroup Base for subclasses called *layouts*.

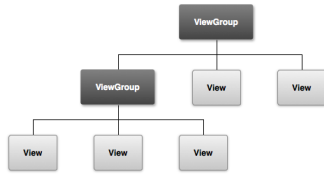



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View Hierarchy
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Android View Hierarchy containing ViewGroup objects as nodes and View objects as leaves.



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Layout
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- Can be defined in an **XML** layout file [7].
- Similar to HTML layout development.
- Each element is a View or ViewGroup object or a subclass of these.
- ViewGroup objects contain more Views or ViewGroup objects.



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Example XML layout
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```
1 <?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
2 <LinearLayout xmlns:android="http://schemas.
  android.com/apk/res/android"
3   android:layout_width="fill_parent"
4   android:layout_height="fill_parent"
5   android:orientation="vertical" >
6   <TextView android:id="@+id/text"
7     android:layout_width="wrap_content"
8     android:layout_height="wrap_content"
9     android:text="Hello, World" />
10  <Button android:id="@+id/button"
11    android:layout_width="wrap_content"
12    android:layout_height="wrap_content"
13    android:text="Hello, World" />
14 </LinearLayout>
```



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Widget
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- Subclass of View.
- Serves as interaction interface with user.
- Many fully implemented widgets available.
 - Examples: *Button*, *Checkbox*, *EditText* and many more.
 - Advanced Example *WebView*: Displays web pages and can use JavaScript [6].
- Own implementation enables full customization of behavior.



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Input Events
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- Many ways to intercept events from user interaction.
- Approach for user interface events: Capture events from View objects the user interacts with [2].
- Two ways of implementation:
 - Overwrite existing callback method.
 - Define own event listener.
- Mostly used: Defining event listeners.



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Example: Overwriting Callback Method
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```
1 public class MyActivity extends Activity {  
2     ...  
3     @Override  
4     public boolean onKeyDown (int keyCode ,  
5         KeyEvent event) {  
6         // Do something.  
7     }  
7 }
```



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```
1 public class MyActivity extends Activity {
2     private OnClickListener myListener = new
      OnClickListener() {
3         public void onClick(View v) {
4             // Do something.
5         }
6     };
7
8     public void onCreate(Bundle state) {
9         ...
10        Button button = (Button)findViewById(R.id.
      myButton);
11        button.setOnClickListener(myListener);
12        ...
13    }
14 }
```



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- Intent** Message to communicate between components. [3].
Can connect components in the same or in different applications.
Starts activities, background processes or notifies broadcast receivers.
- Broadcast Receiver** Can be registered to receive certain intents.
Example: Intent sent from system indicates incoming call and application stops playing music.



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- Intent starts activity by specifying what action should be performed.
 - Note: Activity only implicitly given though action.
- ```
1 Intent intent = new Intent(Intent.ACTION_DIAL,
 Uri.parse("tel:5905-5635"));
2 startActivity(intent);
```



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## Android User Interface

Example: Broadcast receiver to react to phone calls  
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- Step 1: Create broadcast receiver as a new class.

```
1 public class MyPhoneReceiver extends
 BroadcastReceiver {
2 @Override
3 public void onReceive(Context context, Intent
 intent) {
4 // Do something.
5 }
6 }
```



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## Android User Interface

Example: Broadcast receiver to react to phone calls  
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- Step 2: Extend *AndroidManifest.xml* to register broadcast receiver to intents.

```
1 <application ... >
2 <receiver android:name="MyPhoneReceiver" >
3 <intent-filter>
4 <action android:name="android.intent.
 action.PHONE_STATE" >
5 </action>
6 </intent-filter>
7 </receiver>
8 </application>
```



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## Multi-Language Support

Overview  
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- Done though localization: Switch language according to locale settings of the device [4].
- Helps reaching more users.
- Easy though separation of string resources and application code.
- Refer to string names in code and define strings in resource files.



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## Multi-Language Support

Resources  
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- Default resources in `res/values/strings.xml` provides all strings used.
- Special language resource files like e.g. `res/values-de/strings.xml` provides adjusted strings.
- If no special resource file exists, default is used.



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## Multi-Language Support

Example  
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- In Activity

```
1 tv = new TextView(this);
2 tv.setText(R.string.example);
```

- In `res/values/strings.xml`

```
1 <string name="example">Example</string>
```

- In `res/values-de/strings.xml`

```
1 <string name="example">Beispiel</string>
```



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## Summary

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- User interfaces of activities are build through *View* and *ViewGroup* objects.
- *ViewGroup* subclasses are *layouts* that group other *ViewGroup* or *View* objects.
- *View* subclasses are *widgets* for user interaction like button, checkbox and so on.
- Enabling user interaction is implemented by *capturing input events*.
- *Intents* are messages and can be received through broadcast receivers.
- Multi-language support is implemented through *resource files* for strings.



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