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Greenfoot Top Tips



Greenfoot is an introductory visual programming environment using the “Java” programming language, a highly valued language in the Computer Science Industry. One of the benefits of using Greenfoot for an introduction into programming is, not only the helpful guides and tutorials available, but also the colourful user friendly interface. To download Greenfoot click on the following link to download to either Mac, Windows or Linux:

<http://www.greenfoot.org/download>

Java Programming Language

Java is a programming language that is in high demand from the Computer Science Industry. Java is an “Object Orientated” programming language, this means it is based on “objects”, which are blocks of code that can be reused after they have been written. This saves on any duplication of code and makes the code easy to read and understand. It was created in 1991 at Sun Microsystems, it was developed to offer a “platform independent programming language”. It closely relates to the programming languages C and C++ and their syntax, so once a familiarity and confidence with Java has been developed, progressing onto other programming languages is an option for those wanting to learn more about programming.

Task	How To
Adding objects to the World	To add an object, right click on the "Actor" class and click on "New subclass". A dialog box will pop up where you can enter the name of your character and chose an image to apply. You can import your own image if you wish. Note: When naming your object you cannot use spaces, be aware of the use of capital letters.
Adding lots of the same object to the World	To keep adding lots of objects, for instance to populate your game with collectables, add your first "Actor" onto your World and then press and hold the "SHIFT" key, continue clicking around your screen placing the objects.
Saving the World to reset objects and populate World once "Compile" is pressed	When you have the World looking the way you want it to, right click on the World and select "Save the World". This will create a method in the World for you which will prepare the World to look like the way you have set it to each time you click "Compile"
Formatting your code	To format your code automatically, you can click on "Edit" then "Auto Layout". This will make the code much easier to read and debug, particularly if you are a beginner to programming. Note: This should always be formatted using indents, making it easier for you and other programmers to read and locate errors.
Changing the colour of the code	You can change the contrast of the colours of the code text used in Greenfoot by selecting "Options" then "Preferences". Having the setting on the darkest will allow you to easily identify where each method starts and ends as the default is pale and difficult to spot.
Accessing the API	To access the API (Application Programming Interface) for the World/Actor, click on either in the Greenfoot window. They contain methods which are already programmed for your use. An API tells you all about the code you can use when coding. More information about the Greenfoot methods can be found on the Greenfoot website.

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