

Lab 2 – Extending the UI with Multiple Activities and Intents

Getting started

This is the second in a series of labs that allow you to develop the MyRuns App. The goal of the app is to capture and display (using maps) walks and runs using your Android phone.

The second lab introduces extensions to the UI (e.g., new views such as tabs and ActivityPreference and category), expands the number of activities to deal with the new screens we design, and importantly, exposes us to intents and interaction with built-in apps. The new version of the MyRuns App will invoke built-in apps such as the browser, camera and gallery. Our activities will use intents as a means to pass information between activities; for example we will “fire” the android built-in web browser to display our class project page; use intents to fire the camera app which will pass back an image to the calling activity.

This lab extends lab 1. So to start with create a copy of lab 1 and rename/refactor it and call it lab 2. That way you can extend the code in lab 2 and keep your lab 1 untouched.

We are going to start this lab by having you download the lab 2 app from my website and install it on your emulator. Once you install it you can run it and play with the app. You can get a good sense of what is needed since your code will have to functionally be the same – you can change the style or do more things but the downloaded app serves as a baseline for the design of your lab 2.

This is a challenging programming exercise. You will have to do some digging and self-learning using the book and web to craft your solution.

OK. Let's get started.

Play with the real app

You can run lab 2 by downloading the .apk file using the browser on your emulator and installing it. Here are detailed set of instructions and screen shots to work your way through the installation – once done it's a breeze the next time.

- 1) Run your emulator and go to the home screen (you can do this by clicking the home button on the emulator) as shown in Figure 1(b).

- 2) First go to Settings and select Applications Settings and select unknown sources – you do this so you can download the app over the network (from my website) to your phone (well your emulator) – in the next step.
- 3) Hit the home button again as Figure 1(b). You should see the Google search box. Type in the following URL into Google: www.cs.dartmouth.edu/~campbell/lab2.apk and then hit the Go key, as shown in Figure 1(c). The app should download. You should see the download icon in the status bar appear, as shown in Figure 1(c).



Figure 1 (a) set unknown sources; (b) hit home button; (c) enter the URL hit Go

- 4) Now go to the download directory as shown in Figure 1(d) and you will see the downloaded file called lab2.apk. Click on the icon of the file to install as shown in Figure 1(e). It might prompt you for some answers, hit install. After the app is installed you will get a screen like Figure 1(f).
- 5) You can click done and go find the app called MyRunsLab2 and click it or just hit open to start the app. Assume you hit done. Now hit the home button again and you will go back to home as shown in Figure 1(b). Now you want to find the app MyRunsLab2 to start it. Click on the button between the phone and browser icons – looks like a matrix of dots. That brings you to a view of all the apps on your phone. Now tab down on that screen and you will find your MyRunLab2 app.

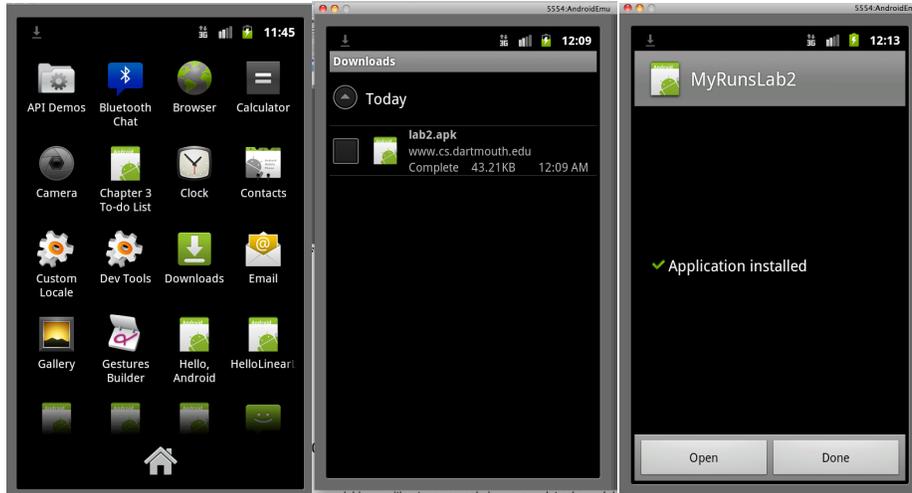


Figure 1 (d) go to downloads; (e) click on lab2.apk icon to install; (f) hit done or open

5) Click MyRunLab2 to start the app. You can now run the actual lab 2 and understand in detail what the UI is and how the components work together. This is a great way to start designing and coding up your app – sort of reverse engineering the app. We will add lots of details for helping you do the lab as well.

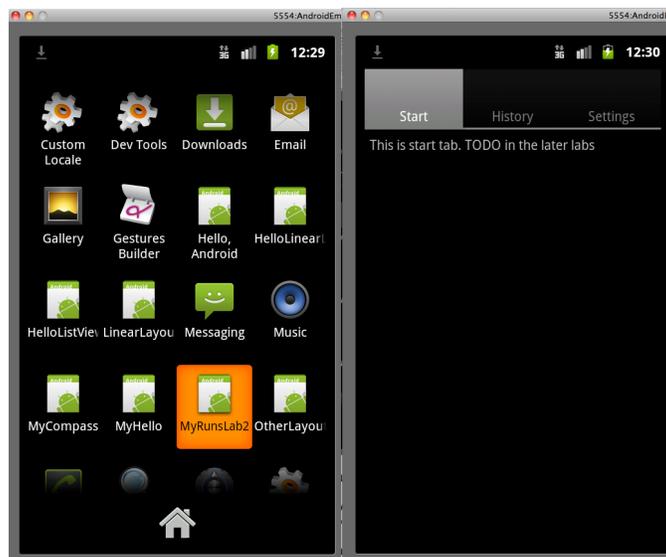


Figure 1 (g) navigate to the app; (h) start it - no play with it

Create a new lab

We will create multiple activities to handle the extended UI – the figure 2 below shows the names of all the activities we need to code. The diagram also shows that we will be creating some new layout and xml files – we will come back to those.

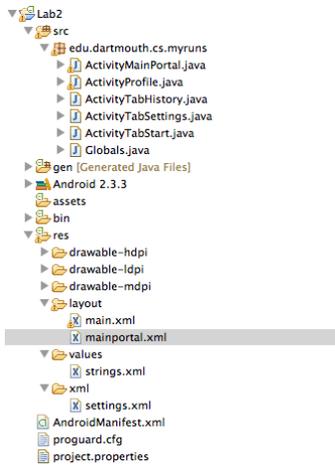


Figure 2: Lab 2 Project Files

Create the tab activities

Create an activity to manage the main portal that implements the tabs as shown in Figure 3 below.

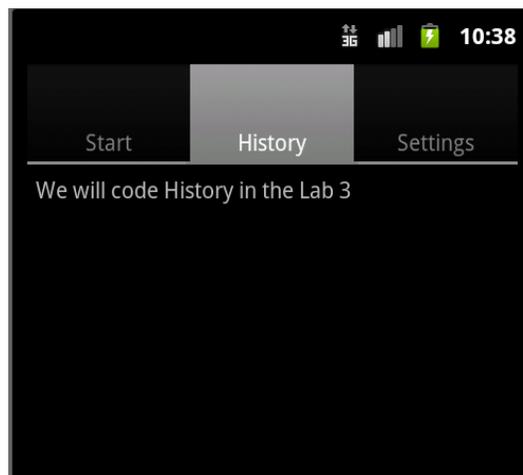


Figure 3: The ActivityMainPortal used three tabs

Setting up tabs is similar to the views tutorial (but in that case nice icons were used for the tabs – you can do that if you wish). Checkout the tutorial again:

<http://developer.android.com/resources/tutorials/views/hello-tabwidget.html>

This activity will render the tab layout captured in mainportal.xml, as shown below. mainportal.xml uses a TabHost and a TabWidget to create a tabbed UI. TabHost

must be the root node for the layout. It contains TabWidget for displaying the tabs and a FrameLayout for displaying the tab content. Feel free to use the xml below, which is the same as in the tutorial, linked above. You will need to create the mainportal.xml in layouts.



```
1 <?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
2 <TabHost xmlns:android="http://schemas.android.com/apk/res/android"
3     android:id="@android:id/tabhost"
4     android:layout_width="fill_parent"
5     android:layout_height="fill_parent">
6     <LinearLayout
7         android:orientation="vertical"
8         android:layout_width="fill_parent"
9         android:layout_height="fill_parent"
10        android:padding="5dp">
11         <TabWidget
12             android:id="@android:id/tabs"
13             android:layout_width="fill_parent"
14             android:layout_height="wrap_content" />
15         <FrameLayout
16             android:id="@android:id/tabcontent"
17             android:layout_width="fill_parent"
18             android:layout_height="fill_parent"
19             android:padding="5dp" />
20     </LinearLayout>
21 </TabHost>
```

Figure 4: mainportal.xml shows the TabHost

As mentioned above you create 3 activities one to manage each tab: ActivityTabHistory, ActivityTabSettings and ActivityTabStart. To create these activities we need to update the Manifest, as below. Note that each of these activities is defined in the Manifest.



```
1 <?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
2 <manifest xmlns:android="http://schemas.android.com/apk/res/android"
3     package="edu.dartmouth.cs.myruns"
4     android:versionCode="1"
5     android:versionName="1.0" >
6
7     <uses-sdk android:minSdkVersion="10" />
8
9     <application
10        android:icon="@drawable/ic_launcher"
11        android:label="@string/app_name" >
12        <activity android:name=".ActivityProfile" >
13        </activity>
14        <activity
15            android:name=".ActivityMainPortal"
16            android:label="@string/app_name"
17            android:theme="@android:style/Theme.NoTitleBar" >
18            <intent-filter>
19                <action android:name="android.intent.action.MAIN" />
20
21                <category android:name="android.intent.category.LAUNCHER" />
22            </intent-filter>
23        </activity>
24        <activity android:name=".ActivityTabStart" >
25        </activity>
26        <activity android:name=".ActivityTabHistory" >
27        </activity>
28        <activity android:name=".ActivityTabSettings" >
29        </activity>
30    </application>
31 </manifest>
```

Figure 5: Setting up multiple activities in the Manifest

There is also an entry for the ActivityMainPortal – which is the MAIN activity that is the first activity launched when the application is run by the android system.

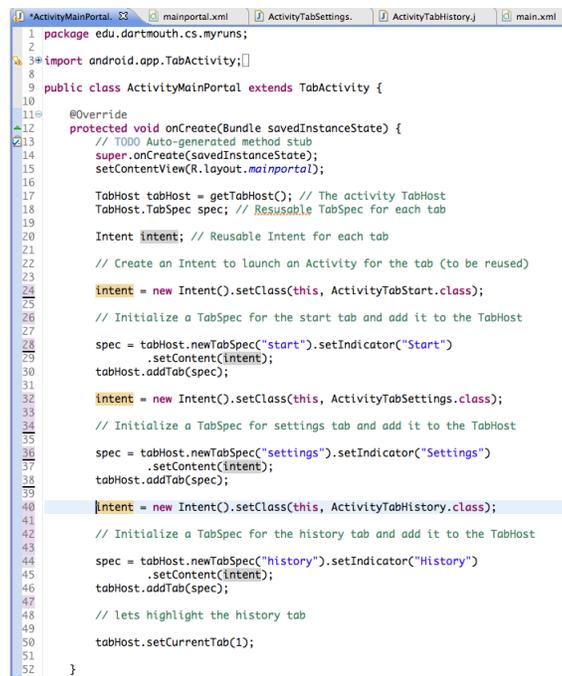
You need to create new classes for each activity. For this lab we simply create the ActivityTabHistory and ActivityTabStart activities and simply get these activities to display a message if the user clicks these tabs, as shown in the UI diagram above.

ActivityMainPortal

The ActivityMainPortal will have to render the tab views when it starts up. It will also have to create three additional activities – one for managing each view.

The heavy lifting for this lab occurs in the ActivityTabSettings activity. This activity will do a number of complex UI interactions including linking in with the ActivityProfile that we created in Lab 1 (note we extend this activity in a fairly significant manner) and creating a settings screen (which will include a number of new concepts). So create new classes for all these activities. A good idea is to use a Log.d() at the start of onCreate for these activities.

Note, that some of these activities extend other root classes than the base Activity class used for ActivityProfile; for example, the ActivityMainPortal extends TabActivity – makes sense because it handles the tab widget layout, as shown in the Figure below.



```
1 package edu.dartmouth.cs.myruns;
2
3 import android.app.TabActivity;
4
5 public class ActivityMainPortal extends TabActivity {
6
7     @Override
8     protected void onCreate(Bundle savedInstanceState) {
9         // TODO Auto-generated method stub
10        super.onCreate(savedInstanceState);
11        setContentView(R.layout.mainportal);
12
13        TabHost tabHost = getTabHost(); // The activity TabHost
14        TabHost.TabSpec spec; // Reusable TabSpec for each tab
15
16        Intent intent; // Reusable Intent for each tab
17
18        // Create an Intent to launch an Activity for the tab (to be reused)
19
20        intent = new Intent().setClass(this, ActivityTabStart.class);
21
22        // Initialize a TabSpec for the start tab and add it to the TabHost
23
24        spec = tabHost.newTabSpec("start").setIndicator("Start")
25        .setContent(intent);
26        tabHost.addTab(spec);
27
28        intent = new Intent().setClass(this, ActivityTabSettings.class);
29
30        // Initialize a TabSpec for settings tab and add it to the TabHost
31
32        spec = tabHost.newTabSpec("settings").setIndicator("Settings")
33        .setContent(intent);
34        tabHost.addTab(spec);
35
36        intent = new Intent().setClass(this, ActivityTabHistory.class);
37
38        // Initialize a TabSpec for the history tab and add it to the TabHost
39
40        spec = tabHost.newTabSpec("history").setIndicator("History")
41        .setContent(intent);
42        tabHost.addTab(spec);
43
44        // lets highlight the history tab
45
46        tabHost.setCurrentTab(1);
47
48    }
49 }
```

Figure 6: The ActivityMainPortal updates the spec of the TabHost object with intents to start each activity

Things to note about the code snippet: first, it renders the view from mainportal and then creates a TabHost and a spec for each of the three tabs. An intent is created to fire each activity. This means that if the user clicks a certain tab then the intent that is set up during initialization -- in onCreate when the ActivityMainPortal is created -- will be used to start the respective activity stored in the spec added to the TabHost object. There are three specs added to the object and each activity name is added by name so it can be correctly fired.

ActivityTabSettings

The layout design for settings.xml that uses ActivityPreference and category is shown in Figure 7 below. We need to use the xml file to code up the preferences for the settings UI shown in Figure 1. In this section, we will first discuss how to design the screen and then discuss each of the user input options in turn.

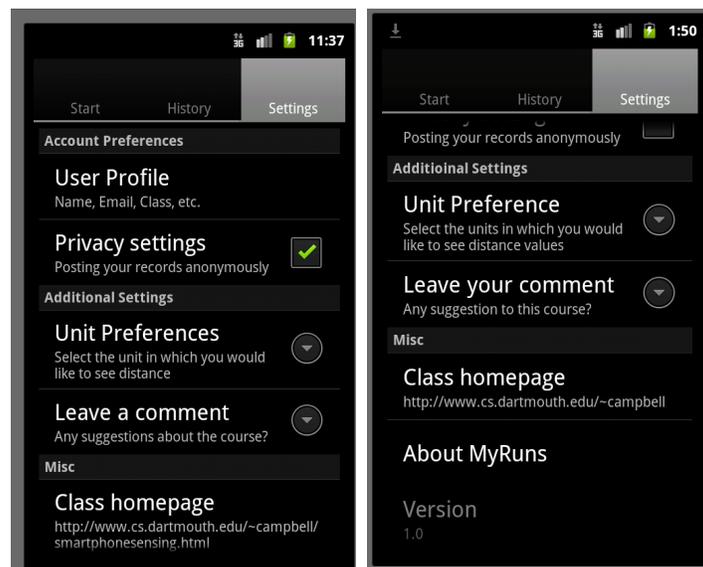


Figure 7: Settings view using preference category

Setting up preferences: Looking at the settings.xml below you can build your screen using the structure or xml views. In structure you can build your categories by adding PreferenceCategory to the PreferenceScreen. On the right you fill in the key, title and summary. The key is used to refer to the particular category for example prefKeyProfile. You can use that key to for example fire an activity if the user selects the category

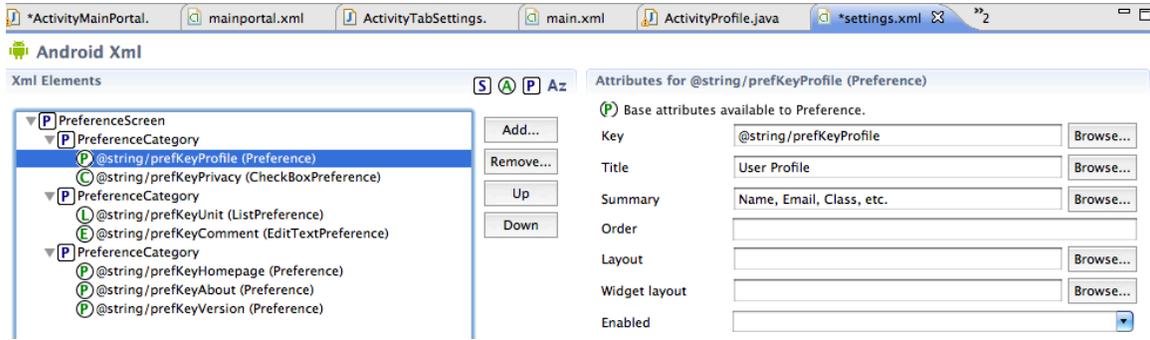


Figure 8: structure view of settings.xml: you can create a view by added different preferences



Figure 9: the xml view of the structure view for settings.xml

If you flip from structure to xml view of settings.xml you can see the code representation – shown in Figure 8 and Figure 9.

For details on ActivityPreference and PreferenceCategory see:

<http://developer.android.com/reference/android/preference/PreferenceActivity.html>

In preference activity, Android allows you to incorporate normal preference for firing another activity, special preferences like CheckBoxPreference, EditTextPreference and ListPreference.

Preferences allow us to design more sophisticated UIs – they are different from layout views. We need to define preferences in the xml and then add code in activities to make the UI usable. The tutorial doesn't cover everything -- you can save typing quite a lot of java code by using a few tips – see Figure 10; for example, to use the preference format of creating resources you should select “preference” instead of “layout” in the Resource Type field in the dialog box when you select a “New Android XML File” when creating the settings.xml. In the same creation dialog box select “PreferenceScreen” as the root element to complete the creation of setting.xml. The setting.xml file opens in the structure viewpoint (you can switch between structure and setting.xml modes. In the structure view you can now add the necessary preferences for the ActivityTabSetting view.

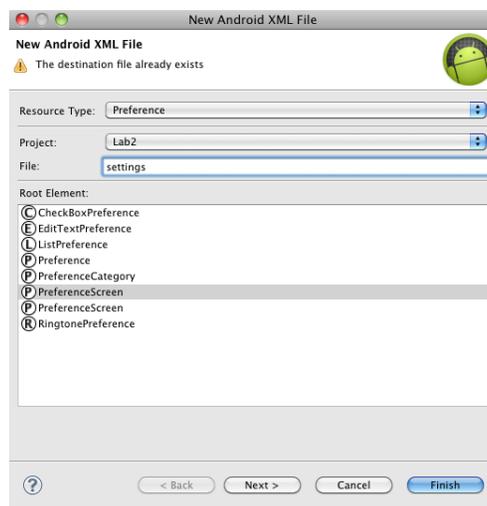


Figure 10: Creating the settings.xml file

In the “Structure” view of the generated file, you can add different type of preferences entries.

The user can select from a number of different inputs on the settings page. For example, if the user clicks on User Profile the ActivityTabSetting simply activates the ActivityProfile to handle that screen. With the exception of the Class Homepage (which invokes the android web browser) all control stays within the ActivityTabSetting activity.

Let's discuss each of the user input options.

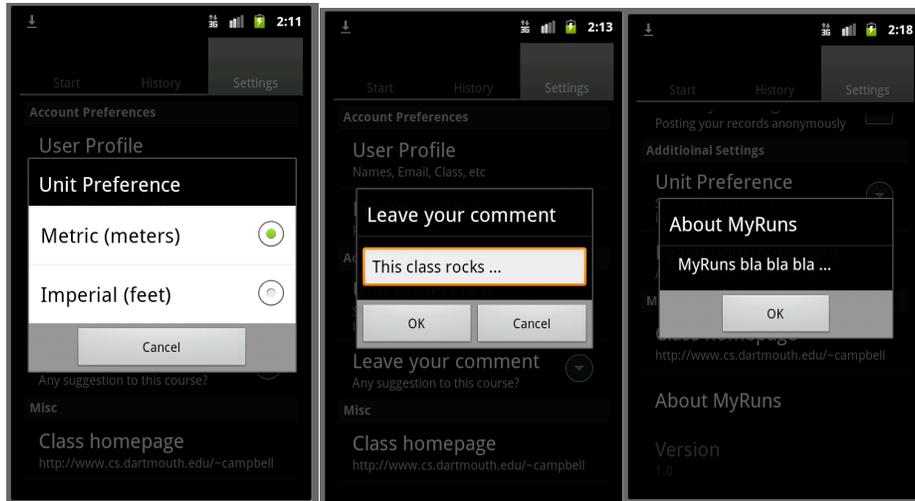


Figure 11: Unit preference; Leave a comment; About my runs

Privacy settings: This is simply a click box where the user click to set or unset the state of the box. The activity maintains this value – no need to save as context. The settings.xml has to set up CheckBoxPreference to manage this.

Unit Preference: This allows the user to enter the units of distance – km or miles. It uses a ListPreference as shown in Figure 11.

Class homepage: The ActivityTabSettings also fires the Android web browser to display the class homepage – you could use your own homepage. This is an example of our code invoking a built-in app, as shown in Figure 12.

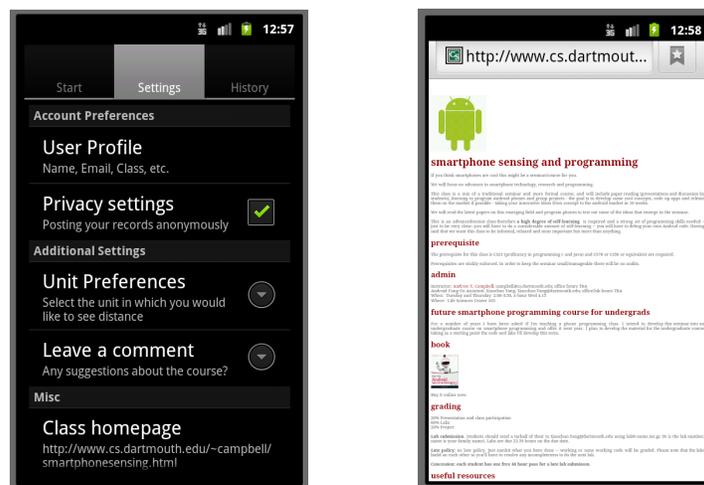
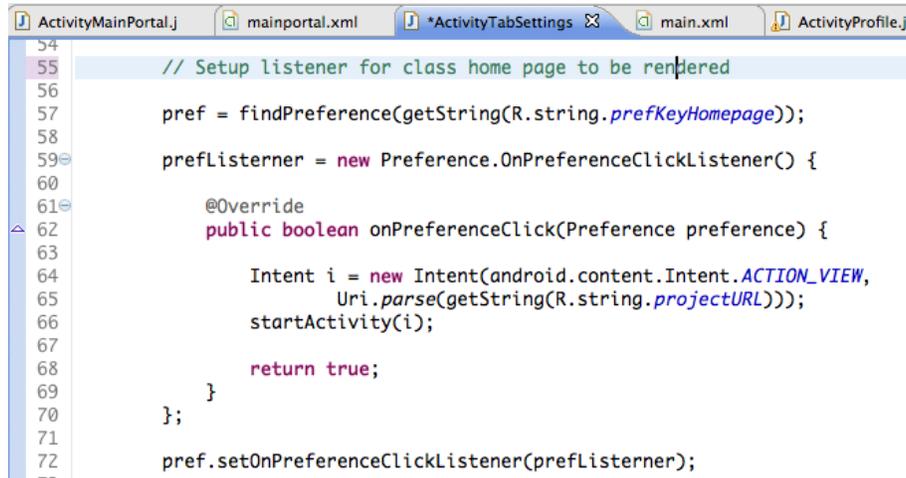


Figure 12 Display a homepage using built-in browser

ActivityTabSettings (code snippet shown in Figure 13) uses an intent to pass the URL of the class home page to the browser to display. It creates an intent and then explicitly starts the browse using `startActivity()`. As discussed in class there are a number of ways to start activities depending on what you want them to do. Intents are the glue that connects activities: they allow one activity to link to another; they allow you to pass between activities; and they allow you to call other activities e.g., our activities or built in apps/activities (camera, browser, etc.)



```
54
55 // Setup listener for class home page to be rendered
56
57 pref = findPreference(getString(R.string.prefKeyHomepage));
58
59 prefListener = new Preference.OnPreferenceClickListener() {
60
61     @Override
62     public boolean onPreferenceClick(Preference preference) {
63
64         Intent i = new Intent(android.content.Intent.ACTION_VIEW,
65             Uri.parse(getString(R.string.projectURL)));
66         startActivity(i);
67
68         return true;
69     }
70 };
71
72 pref.setOnPreferenceClickListener(prefListener);
73
```

Figure 13: ActivityTabSettings uses an intent and startActivity to render the class homepage

About My Runs: A dialog is created (see the discussion below on date picker dialog) and onCreateDialog customizes the dialog as shown in the code snippet below.

```

106
107 @Override
108 protected Dialog onCreateDialog(int id) {
109     AlertDialog dialog;
110
111     //
112
113     switch (id) {
114     case DIALOG_ABOUT_ID:
115
116         // Create listener
117
118         DialogInterface.OnClickListener myListener;
119
120         myListener = new DialogInterface.OnClickListener() {
121
122             public void onClick(DialogInterface dialog, int id) {
123                 dialog.dismiss();
124             }
125         };
126
127         // Create dialog
128
129         AlertDialog.Builder builder = new AlertDialog.Builder(this);
130         builder.setMessage(getString(R.string.about));
131         builder.setTitle("About MyRuns");
132
133         // execute onClick if users clicks "OK"
134         builder.setNeutralButton("OK", myListener);
135
136         dialog = builder.create();
137         break;
138     default:
139         dialog = null;
140     }
141     return dialog;
142 }
143
144 }
145
146 }

```

Figure 14 Code snippet from ActivityTabSettings for About MyRuns

Version: Version is used to simply present the current version of the application code as shown in the code snippet below.

```

87
88 // When user clicks on Version setting
89
90 String version = "";
91 try {
92     PackageManager manager = this.getPackageManager();
93     PackageInfo info = manager.getPackageInfo(
94         this.getPackageName(), 0);
95     version = info.versionName;
96 } catch (Exception e) {
97     Log.e(Globals.TAG, "Error getting version");
98 }
99 pref = (Preference) findPreference(getString(R.string.prefKeyVersion));
100 // write the summary in the preference item
101 pref.setSummary(version);

```

Figure 15 Code snippet from ActivityTabSettings for Version

ActivityProfile

Part of this lab requires that you extend the ActivityProfile that you created in lab 1; specifically, we need to add:

- Birthday input using a dialog and date picker for input. Your birthday needs to be then written to the screen as shown in Figure 16.
- Profile image where you can take a picture or select a photo from the galley and render it. This requires the ActivityProfile to invoke built-in apps such as the camera and the galley. In addition, the image provided by the camera and galley needs to be cropped to fit the dimensions of the image on the screen.
- The view for the ActivityProfile screen is scrollable (which means that the user can scroll up and down through the various views – the birthday to the

type of major). However, the save and cancel buttons remain static at the bottom of the screen, as shown in Figure 16.

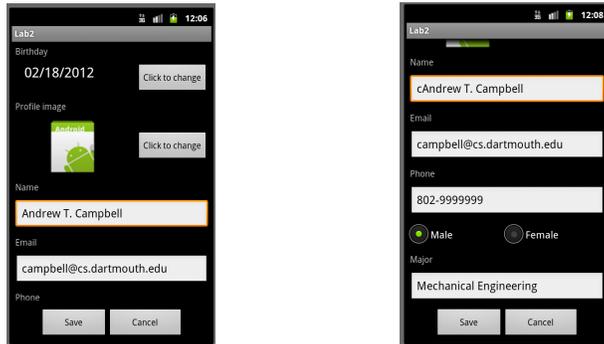


Figure 16: ActivityProfile UI defined in main.xml: The user can select and image and input their birthday

Birthday UI: Figure 17 below shows the UI design for birthday input. The snippet of main.xml show that a text view and button is defined. When the user clicks on Click to change the catches the event and displays the dialog. ShowDialog() is used to set this on in the on click listener code.

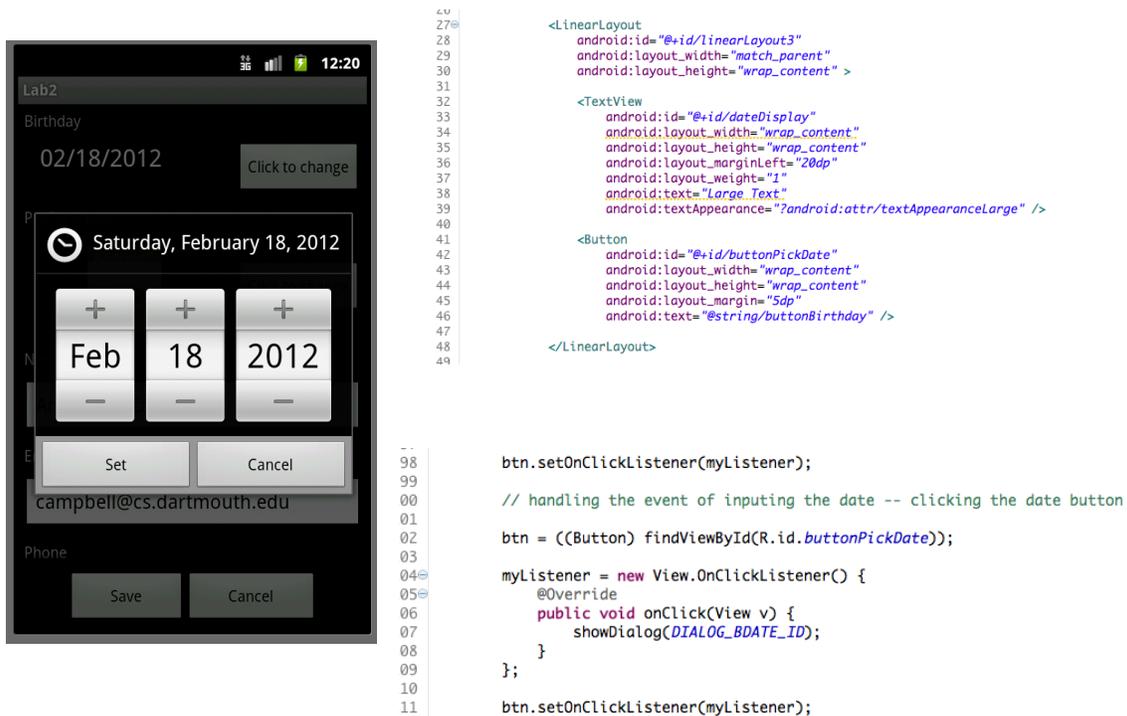


Figure 17: Birthday UI, snippet on main.xml and listener code

When the showDialog() method executes it calls onCreateDialog(), which renders the picker and saves and updates the birthday input using updateBirthday(), which you also have to code up.

```

82 // when showDialog is executed it will execute this -- the ID defines what
83 // is done
84
85
86
87 @Override
88 protected Dialog onCreateDialog(int id) {
89     // Override onDateSet method, save date into member variables and update
90     // birthday textView
91     switch (id) {
92         case DIALOG_BDATE_ID:
93
94         // if set is clicked on the picker date widget the onDateSet
95
96         DatePickerDialog.OnDateSetListener myListener = new DatePickerDialog.OnDateSetListener() {
97
98         @Override
99         public void onDateSet(DatePicker view, int year,
100             int monthOfYear, int dayOfMonth) {
101
102             mYear = year;
103             mMonth = monthOfYear;
104             mDay = dayOfMonth;
105             updateBirthdayDisplay();
106
107         }
108     };
109
110     DatePickerDialog myDialog = new DatePickerDialog(this, myListener,
111         mYear, mMonth, mDay);
112     return myDialog;
113 }
114
115 return super.onCreateDialog(id);
116
117 }

```

Figure 18: OnCreatDialog() for DatePicker

Image Profile UI: A very cool part of Android is using intents to invoke built-in apps to work with our application. Here we use the camera and the chooser (galley) to provide services: that is, the user can take a picture or select a picture from their stored photos/images and use the image for their profile.

We discussed how activities use intents to invoke other activities. In this case we want to pass information between activities and in the case of the camera and galley information is passed back from the built-in apps – that is the image. So we need to write the code to invoke built-ins and get data back from them.

Note, this part of the lab is the trickiest and will require you to apply effort to get it to work correctly.

Here is a link to a resource that is very useful:

<http://www.londatiga.net/featured-articles/how-to-select-and-crop-image-on-android/>

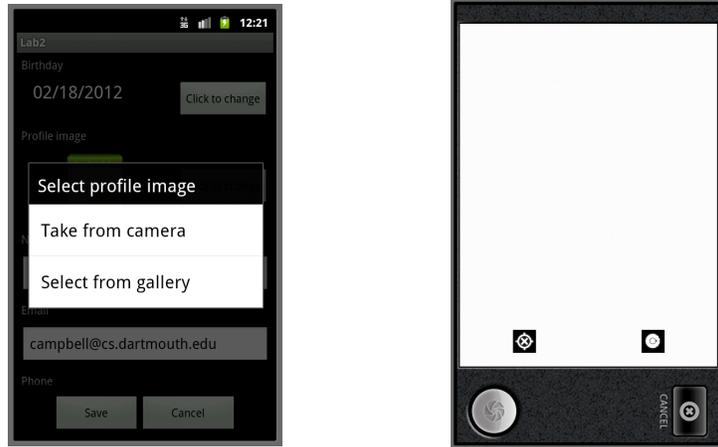


Figure 19 the dialog allows the user to select options - e.g., the camera

The camera and galley (and crop activity that is also use) pass data back to the calling activity – that is ActivityProfile; for example, the galley activity needs to pass back the chosen picture to the ActivityProfile activity -- here is the setup with startActivityResult()

```

33         // Select from gallery
34         Intent intent = new Intent();
35         intent.setType(IMAGE_UNSPECIFIED);
36         intent.setAction(Intent.ACTION_GET_CONTENT);
37         // Start a gallery choosing activity
38         // REQUEST_CODE_SELECT_FROM_GALLERY is an integer tag you
39         // defined to
40         // identify the activity in onActivityResult() when it
41         // returns
42         startActivityForResult(Intent.createChooser(intent,
43             "Complete action using"),
44             REQUEST_CODE_SELECT_FROM_GALLERY);
45     }

```

Figure 20 startActivityForResult() used for galley

You have to implement an onActivityResult method to get data back from the called activity; for example, the galley passes back a data object (the image), which we crop to size. The code snippet below from ActivityProfile is a single entry (or callback) from activities that are started by ActivityProfile – that is, camera, galley and crop. The code shows how onActivityResult() deals with the call back from these built-in apps.

```

L28 // Handle data after activity returns -- camera and galley
L29
L30
L31 @Override
L32 protected void onActivityResult(int requestCode, int resultCode, Intent data) {
L33     if (resultCode != RESULT_OK)
L34         return;
L35
L36     switch (requestCode) {
L37     case REQUEST_CODE_TAKE_FROM_CAMERA:
L38         // Send image taken from camera for cropping
L39         cropImage();
L40         break;
L41
L42     case REQUEST_CODE_SELECT_FROM_GALLERY:
L43         // Send selected image from gallery for cropping
L44         mImageCaptureUri = data.getData();
L45         cropImage();
L46         break;
L47
L48     case REQUEST_CODE_CROP_PHOTO:
L49         // Update image view after image crop
L50         Bundle extras = data.getExtras();
L51         // Set the profile image in UI
L52         if (extras != null) {
L53             mImageView
L54                 .setImageBitmap((Bitmap) extras.getParcelable("data"));
L55         }
L56         // Delete temporary image taken by camera after crop.
L57         File f = new File(mImageCaptureUri.getPath());
L58         if (f.exists())
L59             f.delete();
L60         break;
L61     }
L62 }

```

Figure 21 Snippet from ActivityProfile for handling call backs from built-in apps

Tips

Don't miss this step: Download the real app to your emulator and play with it

Use command shift f to correctly format your code

Use command shift o to import classes automatically

Reading: The links in the lab are important to read plus read chapter two in the book on Intents:

- Read Intents and Intent filters on the dev site
- <http://developer.android.com/guide/topics/intents/intents-filters.html>

Again, to complete these assignments you will need to sort a number of problems out and self-learning is needed.

Debugging: Use Log.d() as printf style debugging to start with. It helps answer the obvious problems. You can print out data using Log.d(). More sophisticated debugging would help in addition start getting use to the messages printed out on LogCat.