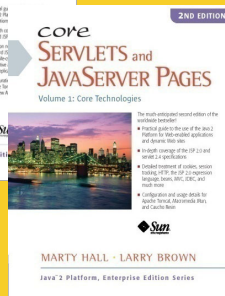
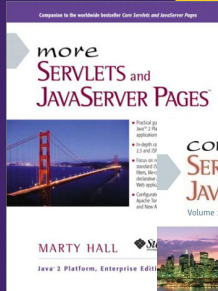




JavaScript: A Crash Course Part IV: Parsing XML

Originals of Slides and Source Code for Examples:
<http://courses.coreservlets.com/Course-Materials/ajax.html>

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Taught by the author of *Core Servlets and JSP*, *More Servlets and JSP*, and this tutorial. Available at public venues, or customized versions can be held on-site at your organization.

- Courses developed and taught by Marty Hall
 - Java 6, servlets/JSP (intermediate and advanced), Struts, JSF 1.x, JSF 2.0, Ajax, GWT 2.0 (with GXT), custom mix of topics
 - Ajax courses can concentrate on 1 library (jQuery, Prototype/Scriptaculous, Ext-JS, Dojo, Google Closure) or survey several
- Courses developed and taught by coreservlets.com experts (edited by Marty)
 - Spring, Hibernate/JPA, EJB3, Web Services, Ruby/Rails

Contact hall@coreservlets.com for details

Topics in This Section

- **Motivation**
- **Getting document**
 - Via Ajax
 - The current HTML page as DOM
 - From string (for interactive testing)
- **Main XML-related classes**
 - Document
 - Element
 - Node

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Intro

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Why Know XML Techniques in JavaScript?

- **Primary reason**
 - To extract information from XML sent by server in response to an Ajax request.
 - We will discuss pros and cons of sending HTML, JSON, and XML in a later lecture
- **Secondary reason**
 - Browser represents page internally as DOM (even if the page is written in HTML 4 or otherwise violates XML syntax).
 - So, XML-related methods can also be used to extract information from the current page
- **Note**
 - If you know DOM API from Java or another language, the JavaScript API is very similar

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API Overview

- **API is very similar to Java DOM API**
 - If you know Java org.w3c.dom classes and methods, they are almost the same in JavaScript
- **Document class**
 - Represents top-level document
 - Also a specialized version representing the HTML page
- **Element class**
 - Represents XML/HTML element
 - Inherits Node methods plus has some extras
- **Node class**
 - Represents node in XML tree
 - Element is main node type, but there are also text nodes, CDATA notes, and a few others
 - Most Element methods inherited from here

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Most Important Topics

- **Very important methods and variables**
 - How to treat the Ajax response as XML
 - `var xmlDoc = response.responseXML;`
 - Some browsers let you take `response.responseText` and then treat it as an XML document, but this is not portable.
 - How to get an array of subelements
 - `xmlDoc.getElementsByTagName(...)`
 - How to get an attribute of an element
 - `someElement.getAttribute(...)`
 - How to get the body content of an element
 - `someElement.firstChild.nodeValue`

You can do many Ajax applications (if they use XML at all!) using only these four techniques!

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Second-Most Important Topics

- **Medium important topics**
 - The top-level element
 - `xmlDoc.documentElement` (and `...nodeName`)
 - An element's main tag name
 - `someElement.nodeName`
 - All attributes of an element
 - `someElement.attributes`
 - Child nodes of an element
 - `someElement.childNodes`

This section cover a lot of other topics, and unless you have XML/DOM experience already, you won't follow all of it. But, for most Ajax applications, these two slides are by far the most important topics to know.

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Summary of Main Classes

- **Document class**
 - Properties
 - documentElement
 - Methods
 - getElementsByTagName, getElementById (HTML *only*)
- **Element class**
 - Methods
 - getAttribute, getElementsByTagName, hasAttribute
- **Node**
 - Properties
 - attributes, childNodes, firstChild, lastChild, nextSibling, nodeName, nodeType, nodeValue, parentNode, previousSibling
 - Methods
 - hasAttributes, hasChildNodes, normalize

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The Document Class

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Getting Document: Real Life

- **Getting general XML document**
 - You get XML document as the result of an Ajax request
 - `var xmlDocument = request.responseXML;`
- **Getting XML doc representing HTML page**
 - Use builtin “document” variable
 - Many special features apply to this specialized version
 - getElementById method, innerHTML property for elements, forms and anchors and images properties, case-insensitivity for getElementsByTagName, lots more specific to HTML
 - These are not general to XML, and do not apply to an XML doc that comes in over the network in response to Ajax request
 - http://www.w3schools.com/html/dom/dom_obj_document.asp

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Getting Document: Practice and Learning

- **Firefox**

```
var xmlString = "<blah>...</blah>";
var parser = new DOMParser();
var xmlDocument =
    parser.parseFromString(xmlString, "application/xml");
```
- **Internet Explorer**

```
var xmlDocument =
    new ActiveXObject("Microsoft.XMLDOM");
xmlDocument.async = false;
xmlDocument.loadXML(xmlString);
return(xmlDocument);
```
- **Figuring out which is which**
 - Check if (typeof DOMParser !== "undefined")
 - True: use Firefox approach
 - False: use IE approach
 - Warning: just for practice

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The Document Class

- **documentElement** property
 - The root Element of the document
- **getElementById** method
 - Returns the Element with the specified ID.
 - For HTML documents only!
 - Refers to attribute that the DTD defines as an “id attribute”, not necessarily named “id”. Does not match attributes named “id” in regular XML docs.
 - Is supposed to be case-sensitive, but IE is case-insensitive
- **getElementsByTagName**
 - Returns an array of Elements that have that tag name
 - Can use “*” for all Elements in document
 - Unsupported in IE 5
 - Is case-sensitive for regular XML documents
 - Is case-insensitive for HTML documents
 - Even when using XHTML

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The Document Class: Examples (Code)

```
function getXmlDoc(xmlString) {
    var parser = new DOMParser();
    var xmlDocument =
        parser.parseFromString(xmlString, "application/xml");
    return(xmlDocument);
}
var test =
    "<customers rating='vip'>" +
    "  <customer id='a1234'>" +
    "    <firstName>Rafael</firstName>" +
    "    <lastName>Nadal</lastName>" +
    "  </customer>" +
    "  <customer id='a1235'>" +
    "    <firstName>Roger</firstName>" +
    "    <lastName>Federer</lastName>" +
    "  </customer>" +
    "</customers>";
var testDoc = getXmlDoc(test);
```

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The Document Class: Examples (Results)

```
Firebug - Document Class
File View Help
Inspect Clear Profile
Console HTML CSS Script DOM Net Options
>>> testDoc.documentElement.nodeName;
"customers"
>>> testDoc.documentElement.getAttribute("rating");
"vip"
>>>
testDoc.getElementsByTagName("lastName")[1].firstChild.nodeValue;
"Federer"
>>> var rafie = testDoc.getElementsByTagName("customer")[0];
>>> rafie.getAttribute("id");
"a1234"
>>> testDoc.getElementById("a1234");
null
>>> |
```

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Nodes and Elements

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The Element Class

- **getAttribute**
 - Gets value of designated attribute.
 - E.g., if element refers to `<foo bar="a" baz="b">...</foo>`, `element.getAttribute("baz")` returns "b"
- **getElementsByTagName**
 - Returns an array of subelements that have this tag name
 - Subelements can be arbitrarily nested
- **hasAttribute**
 - Tests if element has attribute of given name
- **Also inherits from Node class**
 - See next slides
 - All Elements are Nodes, but not vice versa

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The Node Class: Properties

- **attributes**
 - An array of the attributes (call `nodeName` on each to get names)
- **childNodes**
 - An array of direct child nodes. 0-length if no children.
- **firstChild, lastChild, parentNode**
 - Specific child nodes. Parent node (null for top element).
- **nextSibling, previousSibling**
 - Related children of the parent node
- **nodeName**
 - For Element nodes, the XML element name
- **nodeType**
 - `Node.ELEMENT_NODE`, `Node.TEXT_NODE`, `Node.ATTRIBUTE_NODE`, `Node.CDATA_SECTION_NODE`, and a few other options. **Fails on some IE versions!**
- **nodeValue**
 - For Text nodes, the body content.
 - Call `normalize` first. See next slide.

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Fixing Node Types in Internet Explorer

- **Problem**

- Official standards Node.TEXT_NODE etc., unsupported through Internet Explorer 6 (OK in IE 7)

- **Solution**

- Redefine them
 - <http://www.ibm.com/developerworks/xml/library/x-matters41.html>

```
if (!window['Node']) {  
    window.Node = new Object();  
    Node.ELEMENT_NODE = 1;  
    Node.ATTRIBUTE_NODE = 2;  
    Node.TEXT_NODE = 3;  
    Node.CDATA_SECTION_NODE = 4;  
    ...  
    Node.DOCUMENT_NODE = 9; ... }  
}
```

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The Node Class: Methods

- **hasAttributes**

- Does this Node have any attributes at all?

- **hasChildNodes**

- Does this Node have any children at all?

- **normalize**

- Merges multiline text nodes.
 - Important if element has body content that spans multiple lines or has extra white space.
 - But you can still have empty text nodes
- You can call it on root element just once.
 - `xmlDoc.documentElement.normalize();`

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Summary

- **How to treat the Ajax response as XML**
 - `var xmlDoc = response.responseXML;`
 - For practice and learning, you can also make a string containing XML tags and turn it into an XML document using Firefox or IE-specific functions.
- **How to get an array of subelements**
 - `xmlDoc.getElementsByTagName(...)`
- **How to get an attribute of an element**
 - `someElement.getAttribute(...)`
- **How to get the body content of an element**
 - `someElement.firstChild.nodeValue`

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Questions?

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