Using JavaBeans Components in JSP Documents

For live Struts training, please see JSP/servlet/Struts/JSF training courses at http://courses.coreservlets.com/. 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.
Agenda

- Understanding the benefits of beans
- Creating beans
- Installing bean classes on your server
- Accessing bean properties
- Explicitly setting bean properties
- Automatically setting bean properties from request parameters
- Sharing beans among multiple servlets and JSP pages

Uses of JSP Constructs

Simple Application

- Scripting elements calling servlet code directly
- Scripting elements calling servlet code indirectly (by means of utility classes)
- Beans
- Servlet/JSP combo (MVC)

Complex Application

- MVC with JSP expression language
- Custom tags
- Struts
  - Struts always uses beans, but not vice versa
Background: What Are Beans?

- **Java classes that follow certain conventions**
  - Must have a zero-argument (empty) constructor
    - You can satisfy this requirement either by explicitly defining such a constructor or by omitting all constructors
  - Should have no public instance variables (fields)
    - I hope you already follow this practice and use accessor methods instead of allowing direct access to fields
  - Persistent values should be accessed through methods called `getXxx` and `setXxx`
    - If class has method `getTitle` that returns a String, class is said to have a String property named `title`
    - Boolean properties use `isXxx` instead of `getXxx`
  - For more on beans, see http://java.sun.com/beans/docs/

Why You Should Use Accessors, Not Public Fields

- **To be a bean, you cannot have public fields**
- **So, you should replace**
  
  ```java
  public double speed;
  
  with
  
  private double speed;
  
  public double getSpeed() {
    return(speed);
  }
  public void setSpeed(double newSpeed) {
    speed = newSpeed;
  }
  
  ```
- **You should do this in all your Java code anyhow. Why?**
Why You Should Use Accessors, Not Public Fields

1) You can put constraints on values

```java
public void setSpeed(double newSpeed) {
    if (newSpeed < 0) {
        sendErrorMessage(...);
        newSpeed = Math.abs(newSpeed);
    }
    speed = newSpeed;
}
```

- If users of your class accessed the fields directly, then they would each be responsible for checking constraints.

2) You can change your internal representation without changing interface

```java
// Now using metric units (kph, not mph)

public void setSpeed(double newSpeed) {
    setSpeedInKPH = convert(newSpeed);
}

public void setSpeedInKPH(double newSpeed) {
    speedInKPH = newSpeed;
}
```
Why You Should Use Accessors, Not Public Fields

3) You can perform arbitrary side effects

```java
public double setSpeed(double newSpeed) {
    speed = newSpeed;
    updateSpeedometerDisplay();
}
```

– If users of your class accessed the fields directly, then they would each be responsible for executing side effects. Too much work and runs huge risk of having display inconsistent from actual values.

Using Beans: Basic Tasks

- `jsp:useBean`
  – In the simplest case, this element builds a new bean. It is normally used as follows:
    ```
    <jsp:useBean id="beanName" class="package.Class" />
    ```

- `jsp:getProperty`
  – This element reads and outputs the value of a bean property. It is used as follows:
    ```
    <jsp:getProperty name="beanName" property="propertyName" />
    ```

- `jsp:setProperty`
  – This element modifies a bean property (i.e., calls a method of the form `setXxx`). It is normally used as follows:
    ```
    <jsp:setProperty name="beanName" property="propertyName" />
    ```
Building Beans: jsp:useBean

• Format
  – `<jsp:useBean id="name" class="package.Class" />`

• Purpose
  – Allow instantiation of Java classes without explicit Java programming (XML-compatible syntax)

• Notes
  – Simple interpretation:
    `<jsp:useBean id="book1" class="coreservlets.Book" />`
    can be thought of as equivalent to the scriptlet
    `<% coreservlets.Book book1 = new coreservlets.Book(); %>`
  – But jsp:useBean has two additional advantages:
    • It is easier to derive object values from request parameters
    • It is easier to share objects among pages or servlets

Accessing Bean Properties: jsp:getProperty

• Format
  – `<jsp:getProperty name="name" property="property" />`

• Purpose
  – Allow access to bean properties (i.e., calls to getXXX methods) without explicit Java programming

• Notes
  – `<jsp:getProperty name="book1" property="title" />`
    is equivalent to the following JSP expression
    `<%= book1.getTitle() %>`
Setting Simple Bean Properties: 
**jsp:setProperty**

- **Format**
  - `<jsp:setProperty name="name" property="property" value="value"/>

- **Purpose**
  - Allow setting of bean properties (i.e., calls to setXxx methods) without explicit Java programming

- **Notes**
  - `<jsp:setProperty name="book1" property="title" value="Core Servlets and JavaServer Pages"/>
  
  is equivalent to the following scriptlet
  `<% book1.setTitle("Core Servlets and JavaServer Pages"); %>`

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**Example: StringBean**

```java
package coreservlets;

public class StringBean {
  private String message = "No message specified";

  public String getMessage() {
    return(message);
  }

  public void setMessage(String message) {
    this.message = message;
  }
}
```

- **Beans installed in normal Java directory**
  - `…/WEB-INF/classes/directoryMatchingPackageName`
- **Beans (and utility classes) must **always** be in packages!**
<ol>
    <li>Initial value (from jsp:getProperty):</li>
    <ol>
        <li><code>&lt;jsp:getProperty name="stringBean" property="message" /&gt;</code></li>
    </ol>
    <li>Initial value (from JSP expression):</li>
    <ol>
        <li><code>&lt;%= stringBean.getMessage() %&gt;</code></li>
        <li><code>&lt;jsp:setProperty name="stringBean" property="message" value="Best string bean: Fortex" /&gt;</code></li>
        <li><code>&lt;jsp:getProperty name="stringBean" property="message" /&gt;</code></li>
    </ol>
</ol>
Setting Bean Properties Case 1: Explicit Conversion & Assignment

```jsp
<!DOCTYPE ...
...
<jsp:useBean id="entry"
class="coreservlets.SaleEntry" />

<%-- setItemID expects a String --%>
<jsp:setProperty
   name="entry"
   property="itemID"
   value='<%= request.getParameter("itemID") %>' />
```

```jsp
<% int numItemsOrdered = 1;
try {
   numItemsOrdered =
   Integer.parseInt(request.getParameter("numItems"));
} catch(NumberFormatException nfe) {} %>

<%-- setNumItems expects an int --%>
<jsp:setProperty
   name="entry"
   property="numItems"
   value="<%= numItemsOrdered %>">
```
Setting Bean Properties Case 1: Explicit Conversion & Assignment

```
<%  
double discountCode = 1.0;  
try {  
    String discountString =  
        request.getParameter("discountCode");  
    discountCode =  
        Double.parseDouble(discountString);  
} catch(NumberFormatException nfe) {}  
%>

<-- setDiscountCode expects a double -->

<jsp:setProperty  
    name="entry"  
    property="discountCode"  
    value="<%= discountCode %>>" />
```
Case 2: Associating Individual Properties with Input Parameters

- Use the `param` attribute of `jsp:setProperty` to indicate that
  - Value should come from specified request parameter
  - Simple automatic type conversion should be performed for properties that expect values of standard types
    - boolean, Boolean, byte, Byte, char, Character, double, Double, int, Integer, float, Float, long, or Long.

```jsp
<jsp:useBean id="entry" class="coreservlets.SaleEntry" />
<jsp:setProperty name="entry" property="itemID" param="itemID" />
<jsp:setProperty name="entry" property="numItems" param="numItems" />
<jsp:setProperty name="entry" property="discountCode" param="discountCode" />
```
Case 3: Associating All Properties with Input Parameters

- Use "*" for the value of the property attribute of jsp:setProperty to indicate that
  - Value should come from request parameter whose name matches property name
  - Simple automatic type conversion should be performed

```
<jsp:useBean id="entry" class="coreservlets.SaleEntry" />
<jsp:setProperty name="entry" property="*" />
```

- This is extremely convenient for making "form beans" -- objects whose properties are filled in from a form submission.
  - You can even divide the process up across multiple forms, where each submission fills in part of the object.
Sharing Beans

- You can use the `scope` attribute to specify additional places where bean is stored
  - Still also bound to local variable in `_jspService`
  - `<jsp:useBean id="..." class="..." scope="..."/>

- Lets multiple servlets or JSP pages share data
- Also permits conditional bean creation
  - Creates new object only if it can't find existing one

Values of the scope Attribute

- `page` (`<jsp:useBean ... scope="page"/>` or `<jsp:useBean.../>`)
  - Default value. Bean object should be placed in the PageContext object for the duration of the current request. Lets methods in same servlet access bean

- `application` (`<jsp:useBean ... scope="application"/>`)
  - Bean will be stored in ServletContext (available through the application variable or by call to `getServletContext()`). ServletContext is shared by all servlets in the same Web application (or all servlets on server if no explicit Web applications are defined).
Values of the scope Attribute

• **session**
  
  `<jsp:useBean ... scope="session"/>`
  
  – Bean will be stored in the HttpSession object associated with the current request, where it can be accessed from regular servlet code with `getAttribute` and `setAttribute`, as with normal session objects.

• **request**
  
  `<jsp:useBean ... scope="request"/>`
  
  – Bean object should be placed in the ServletRequest object for the duration of the current request, where it is available by means of `getAttribute`.

Conditional Bean Operations

• **Bean conditionally created**
  
  – `jsp:useBean` results in new bean being instantiated only if no bean with same id and scope can be found.
  
  – If a bean with same id and scope is found, the preexisting bean is simply bound to variable referenced by id.

• **Bean properties conditionally set**
  
  – `<jsp:useBean ... />` replaced by
  
    `<jsp:useBean ...>statements</jsp:useBean>`
  
  – The statements (`jsp:setProperty` elements) are executed only if a new bean is created, not if an existing bean is found.
Conditional Bean Creation: AccessCountBean

```java
public class AccessCountBean {
    private String firstPage;
    private int accessCount = 1;

    public String getFirstPage() {
        return(firstPage);
    }

    public void setFirstPage(String firstPage) {
        this.firstPage = firstPage;
    }

    public int getAccessCount() {
        return(accessCount);
    }

    public void setAccessCountIncrement(int increment) {
        accessCount = accessCount + increment;
    }
}
```

Conditional Bean Creation: SharedCounts1.jsp

```html
<jsp:useBean id="counter"
    class="coreservlets.AccessCountBean"
    scope="application">
    <jsp:setProperty name="counter"
        property="firstPage"
        value="SharedCounts1.jsp" />
</jsp:useBean>

Of SharedCounts1.jsp (this page),
<A HREF="SharedCounts2.jsp">SharedCounts2.jsp</A>, and
<A HREF="SharedCounts3.jsp">SharedCounts3.jsp</A>,
<jsp:getProperty name="counter" property="firstPage" />
was the first page accessed.

Collectively, the three pages have been accessed
<jsp:getProperty name="counter" property="accessCount" />
times.
<jsp:setProperty name="counter"
    property="accessCountIncrement"
    value="1" />
```
Accessing SharedCounts1, SharedCounts2, SharedCounts3

- SharedCounts2.jsp was accessed first.
- Pages have been accessed twelve previous times by an arbitrary number of clients.

Sharing Beans in Four Different Ways

- Using unshared (page-scoped) beans.
- Sharing request-scoped beans.
- Sharing session-scoped beans.
- Sharing application-scoped (i.e., ServletContext-scoped) beans.

- Note:
  - Use different names (i.e., id in jsp:useBean) for different beans
Sharing Beans Four Ways: Bean Code

package coreservlets;

public class BakedBean {
    private String level = "half-baked";
    private String goesWith = "hot dogs";

    public String getLevel() {
        return(level);
    }
    public void setLevel(String newLevel) {
        level = newLevel;
    }
    public String getGoesWith() {
        return(goesWith);
    }
    public void setGoesWith(String dish) {
        goesWith = dish;
    }
}

Sharing Beans Example 1: Page-Scoped (Unshared)

• **Create the bean**
  – Use jsp:useBean with scope="page" (or no scope at all, since page is the default).

• **Modify the bean**
  – Use jsp:setProperty with property="*".
  – Then, supply request parameters that match the bean property names.

• **Access the bean**
  – Use jsp:getProperty.
Sharing Beans Example 1: Page-Scoped (Unshared)

...<BODY>
<H1>Baked Bean Values: page-based Sharing</H1>
<jsp:useBean id="pageBean"
class="coreservlets.BakedBean" />
<jsp:setProperty name="pageBean" property="*" />
<H2>Bean level:
<jsp:getProperty name="pageBean"
property="level" />
</H2>
<H2>Dish bean goes with:
<jsp:getProperty name="pageBean"
property="goesWith" />
</H2>
</BODY></HTML>
Sharing Beans Example 1: Result (Later Request)

Baked Bean Values: page-based Sharing

Bean level: half-baked

Dish bean goes with: hot dogs

Sharing Beans Example 2: Request-Based Sharing

- **Create the bean**
  - Use `jsp:useBean` with `scope="request"`.
- **Modify the bean**
  - Use `jsp:setProperty` with `property="*"`.
  - Then, supply request parameters that match the bean property names.
- **Access the bean in the 1st (main) page**
  - Use `jsp:getProperty`.
  - Then, use `jsp:include` to invoke the second page.
- **Access the bean in the 2nd (included) page**
  - Use `jsp:useBean` with the same `id` as on the first page, again with `scope="request"`.
  - Then, use `jsp:getProperty`.

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Request-Based Sharing: Code for Main Page

... BODY>
<H1>Baked Bean Values: request-based Sharing</H1>
<jsp:useBean id="requestBean"
class="coreservlets.BakedBean"
scope="request" />
<jsp:setProperty name="requestBean"
property="*" />

<H2>Bean level:
<jsp:getProperty name="requestBean"
property="level" /></H2>

<H2>Dish bean goes with:
<jsp:getProperty name="requestBean"
property="goesWith" /></H2>

<jsp:include page="BakedBeanDisplay-snippet.jsp" />
</BODY></HTML>

Request-Based Sharing: Code for Included Page

<H1>Repeated Baked Bean Values: request-based Sharing</H1>
<jsp:useBean id="requestBean"
class="coreservlets.BakedBean"
scope="request" />

<H2>Bean level:
<jsp:getProperty name="requestBean"
property="level" />
</H2>

<H2>Dish bean goes with:
<jsp:getProperty name="requestBean"
property="goesWith" /></H2>
Request-Based Sharing: Result (Initial Request)

Baked Bean Values: request-based Sharing
Bean level: raw
Dish bean goes with: sashimi

Repeated Baked Bean Values: request-based Sharing
Bean level: raw
Dish bean goes with: sashimi

Request-Based Sharing: Result (Later Request)

Baked Bean Values: request-based Sharing
Bean level: half-baked
Dish bean goes with: hot dogs

Repeated Baked Bean Values: request-based Sharing
Bean level: half-baked
Dish bean goes with: hot dogs
Sharing Beans Example 3: Session-Based Sharing

- **Create the bean**
  - Use `<jsp:useBean>` with `scope="session"`.

- **Modify the bean**
  - Use `<jsp:setProperty>` with `property="*"`.
  - Then, supply request parameters that match the bean property names.

- **Access the bean in the initial request**
  - Use `<jsp:getProperty>` in the request in which `<jsp:setProperty>` is invoked.

- **Access the bean later**
  - Use `<jsp:getProperty>` in a request that does not include request parameters and thus does not invoke `<jsp:setProperty>`. If this request is from the same client (within the session timeout), the previously modified value is seen. If this request is from a different client (or after the session timeout), a newly created bean is seen.

---

Session-Based Sharing: Code

```html
<BODY>
<H1>Baked Bean Values: session-based Sharing</H1>
<jsp:useBean id="sessionBean"
            class="coreservlets.BakedBean"
            scope="session" />
<jsp:setProperty name="sessionBean"
                 property="*" />

<H2>Bean level:</H2>
<jsp:getProperty name="sessionBean"
                 property="level" />

<H2>Dish bean goes with:</H2>
<jsp:getProperty name="sessionBean"
                 property="goesWith" />
</H2></BODY></HTML>
```
Session-Based Sharing: Result (Initial Request)

Baked Bean Values: session-based Sharing

Bean level: inedible

Dish bean goes with: hot dogs

Session-Based Sharing: Result (Later Request -- Same Client)

Baked Bean Values: session-based Sharing

Bean level: inedible

Dish bean goes with: hot dogs
Session-Based Sharing: Result
(Later Request -- New Client)

Baked Bean Values:
session-based Sharing

Bean level: half-baked

Dish bean goes with: hot dogs

Sharing Beans Example 4:
Application-Based Sharing

- **Create the bean**
  - Use `jsp:useBean` with `scope="application"`.

- **Modify the bean**
  - Use `jsp:setProperty` with `property="*"`.
  - Then, supply request parameters that match the bean property names.

- **Access the bean in the initial request**
  - Use `jsp:getProperty` in the request in which `jsp:setProperty` is invoked.

- **Access the bean later**
  - Use `jsp:getProperty` in a request that does not include request parameters and thus does not invoke `jsp:setProperty`. Whether this request is from the same client or a different client (regardless of the session timeout), the previously modified value is seen.
Application-Based Sharing: Code

```html
<BODY>
<H1>Baked Bean Values: application-based Sharing</H1>
<jsp:useBean id="applicationBean" class="coreservlets.BakedBean" scope="application" />
<jsp:setProperty name="applicationBean" property="*" />

<H2>Bean level:
<jsp:getProperty name="applicationBean" property="level" />
</H2>

<H2>Dish bean goes with:
<jsp:getProperty name="applicationBean" property="goesWith" />
</H2></BODY></HTML>`
Application-Based Sharing: Result (Later Request -- Same Client)

**Baked Bean Values:**
application-based Sharing

Bean level: half-baked

Dish bean goes with: steak

---

Application-Based Sharing: Result (Later Request -- New Client)

**Baked Bean Values:**
application-based Sharing

Bean level: half-baked

Dish bean goes with: steak
Summary

- **Benefits of jsp:useBean**
  - Hides the Java syntax
  - Makes it easier to associate request parameters with Java objects (bean properties)
  - Simplifies sharing objects among multiple requests or servlets/JSPs

- **jsp:useBean**
  - Creates or accesses a bean

- **jsp:getProperty**
  - Puts bean property (i.e. get\(Xxx\) call) into servlet output

- **jsp:setProperty**
  - Sets bean property (i.e. passes value to set\(Xxx\))