

CMSC131

Some guidelines for naming identifiers (variables, constants, etc) and formatting your code.

Naming Identifiers (I)

There are some Java-enforced rules like...

- The first character must be a letter, the underscore or a dollar sign.
- Names are CaSeSensitive
- There are reserved words that you cannot use (such as **if**, **else**, **class**, *etc.*)
- Names cannot contain certain special characters (such as -, %, +, &, !, *etc.*)

Naming Identifiers (II)

There are naming "conventions" that we want you to follow like...

- Don't start a name with a \$ (this is usually an indication of a system-level identifier).
- Don't differ identifiers JUST by CasE.
- Use meaningful names (eg: the name should express what is being held there).
- Use English words (at least when coding here).
- This isn't Twitter 😊 so don't go to crazy dropping vowels and consonants.
- Use "Camel Case" formatting.

"Camel Case"

- Your variable names and method names start with lower case letters.
- Your class and interface names start with upper case letters.
- Each word other than the first word starts with an upper case letter.

```
int myFirstInteger;  
public class MyFirstClass {
```

- Constants are ALL UPPERCASE with underscores between words.

```
final int DAYS_IN_A_WEEK = 7;
```

Speaking of CONSTANTS...

- If there is a value that we will be using that will never have to change while our program is running, it should really be stored in a meaningful CONSTANT.
- Even if you only plan to use it ONE TIME we want you to do this.
- Even if it is a simple "flag" condition (type 1 for cat, type 2 for dog, ...) we want named constants like

```
final    int    CAT_CHOICE    =    1;
...
if (userInput == CAT_CHOICE) { ...
```

Other formatting conventions...

- Use placement of braces { } as you have seen in the posted full examples.
- Use indenting similar to what you have seen in my posted examples.
 - If in doubt, Eclipse can help you if you highlight your code and then press **Control+I** (it will autofix your indentation).
- Don't have any lines that are longer than 80 characters long (that includes spacing).
 - This is in part because we need to be able to print your projects for parts of grading.

Which are valid variable names?

1. For
2. success%
3. x
4. i
5. starting_val

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