GUIB Chapter 2:
GUI Control Bloopers

Amy Falk

2 kinds of GUI Control Bloopers

- Using Wrong Controls

- Using Controls Wrongly

12 Bloopers Total

7 "Wrong Controls" Bloopers

5 "Controls Wrongly" Bloopers

Using Controls Wrongly

Blooper 1: Confusing Checkboxes and Radio Buttons

Checkboxes Buttons

- No limit to how many can be selected

- Binary States: On/Off, Yes/No, 1/0

- Used for form submission and consent

Radio

- Only one can be selected out of a group

- Used to select from a series of choices

- One should always be marked

6

○ I have read and understood the terms of service, and I agree to abide by them.
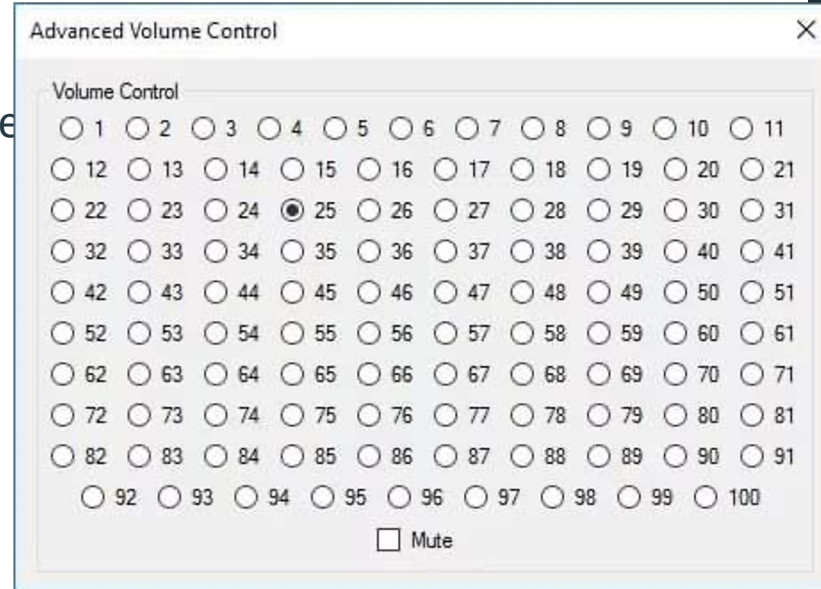
What is your class year?

☐ 2023

☐ 2024

☐ 2025

☐ 2026

Blooper Solutions:

- When this blooper is discovered, replace the wrong element with the correct element.

- Use GUI software that makes switching between elements easy.

- Consider alternative input options

Blooper 2: Should THAT be a checkbox??

● Checkboxes should only be used for YES/NO, ON/OFF type input.

Do you prefer dogs or cats?

☐ Dogs

Blooper Solutions

- Switch to different input methods, such as radio buttons

- Reframe the label in a way that puts it in the YES/NO format
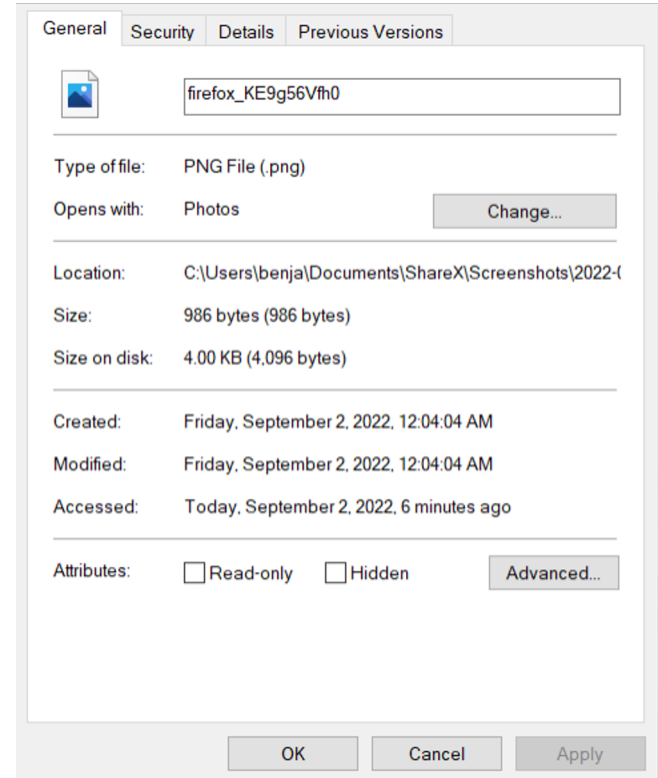
Blooper 3:
Command Button Toggles

Launch/Unlaunch Nukes

Problems with this setup:

- No feedback

- Users unfamiliar with this usage

- Use checkboxes or other toggle controls

Blooper 4: Tabs as Radio Buttons

- Tabs should be for navigation, never for input

- Don't completely reorient your user's expectations!

Blooper 5: Too Many Tabs!!

- Keep the number of tabs small enough where you can fit them all on a single row without abbreviation.

- Continuity with real folder tabs is key

- If this is impossible, choose a different navigation method

Blooper 6: Using input displays for control-only data

- The functionality of input displays should be maintained

- Input displays should not be used for their visual features alone
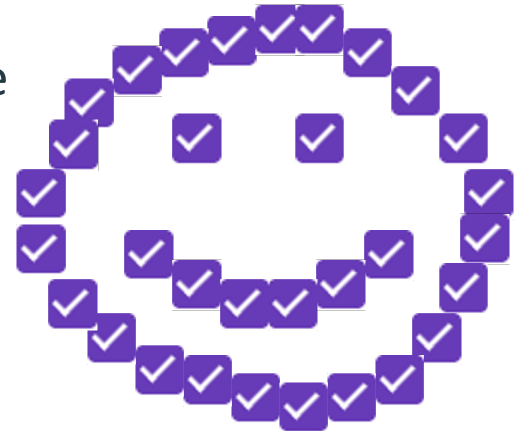
Blooper 7: Overusing text fields for constrained input

- Descended from text-based UIs, GUIs tend to over-use text input features.

Date	Day	Time In
08/21/22	Sunday	

- Done for "Ease of Programmer"

Blooper Solutions

- Use text fields only when needed

- Social security, phone numbers, addresses, date, time, email addresses, etc. are all better suited to other forms of input.
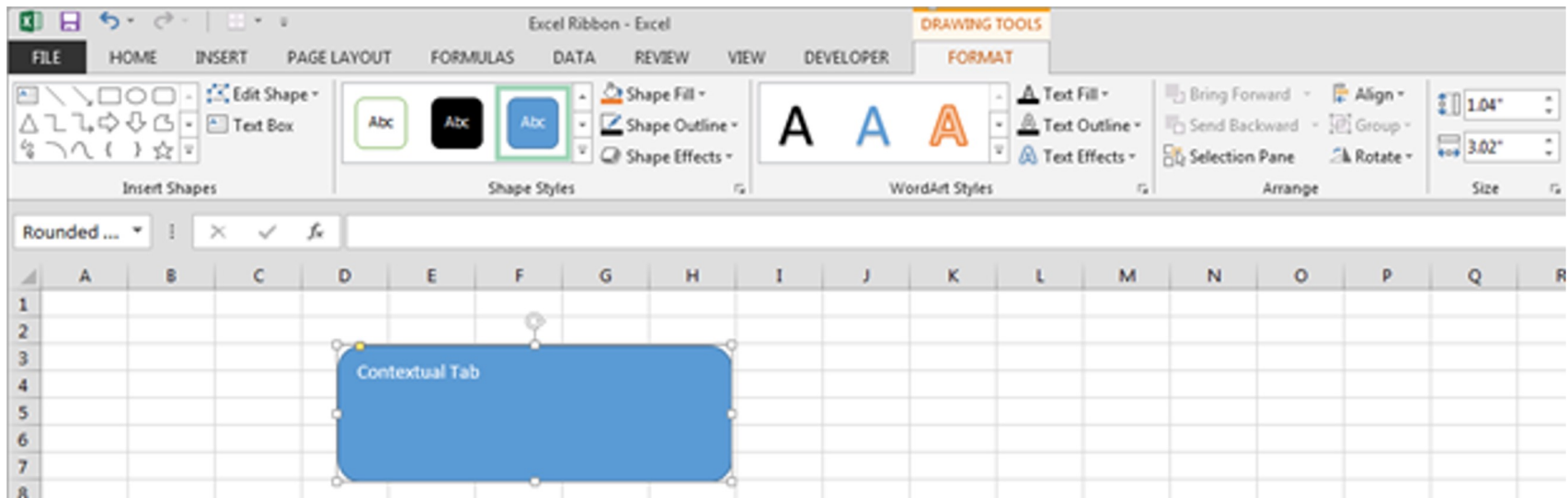
Using Controls Wrongly

Blooper 8: Dynamic Menus

Dynamic Menu Problems

- Not clear to the user why things are being moved around

- Failure to respect object permanence

- Justifiable when dealing with third party plug-ins

Dynamic Tabs: A Better Way

Blooper 9: Intolerant Data Fields

Payment Options

○ **Credit Card**

[VISA] [MasterCard] [DINERS CLUB]
[DISCOVER] [DINERS CLUB] [JCB]

(* Please, do NOT use spaces or dashes. Example: 4321432143214321)

Blooper 10: Input fields with no default

- Problematic as an input method
- A radio button cannot be unclicked when it has been clicked
- Not a valid "null" or "none of the above" option
- Just add another radio button

What's your favorite color?

○ Red

○ Yellow

○ Blue

○ Green

○ None of the above

Blooper 11: Poor Defaults

Pick your favorite dorm

Bissman ▾

How to pick a good default option:

- Common Sense
- Business Logic
- Customer Observation
- User Data
- Arbitrary Choice

Blooper 12: No negative check boxes!

- Negative check boxes confuse users!

- For simplicity's sake, flip the functionality and remove the negative.

Don't do what Donny Don't does.

Questions?