

Introduction to REALbasic

“Part 3: Designing a User Interface”

by Wally Wang

Previously,

“Part 1: The Roots of REALbasic”

“Part 2: Getting to Know REALbasic”

When you first start REALbasic, you'll probably see a welcome screen that provides links to video tutorials and other information about using REALbasic. Get rid of this welcoming screen, and you'll be staring at the REALbasic IDE (Integrated Development Editor), where you can start designing your user interface.

To place a control on the window to create your user interface, you have two choices:

- Double-click on a control in the Toolbox
- Drag a control off the Toolbox and place it on the window

If you double-click on a control in the Toolbox, REALbasic displays that control in the window. After REALbasic places a control on the window, you'll probably need to drag it to put it where you want it to appear. If this method of double-clicking and then dragging a control seems too cumbersome, you can just drag a control off the Toolbox and place it on the window yourself.

To create a simple program, place two radio buttons (from the RadioButton item in the Toolbox) on the window, as shown in Figure 4.

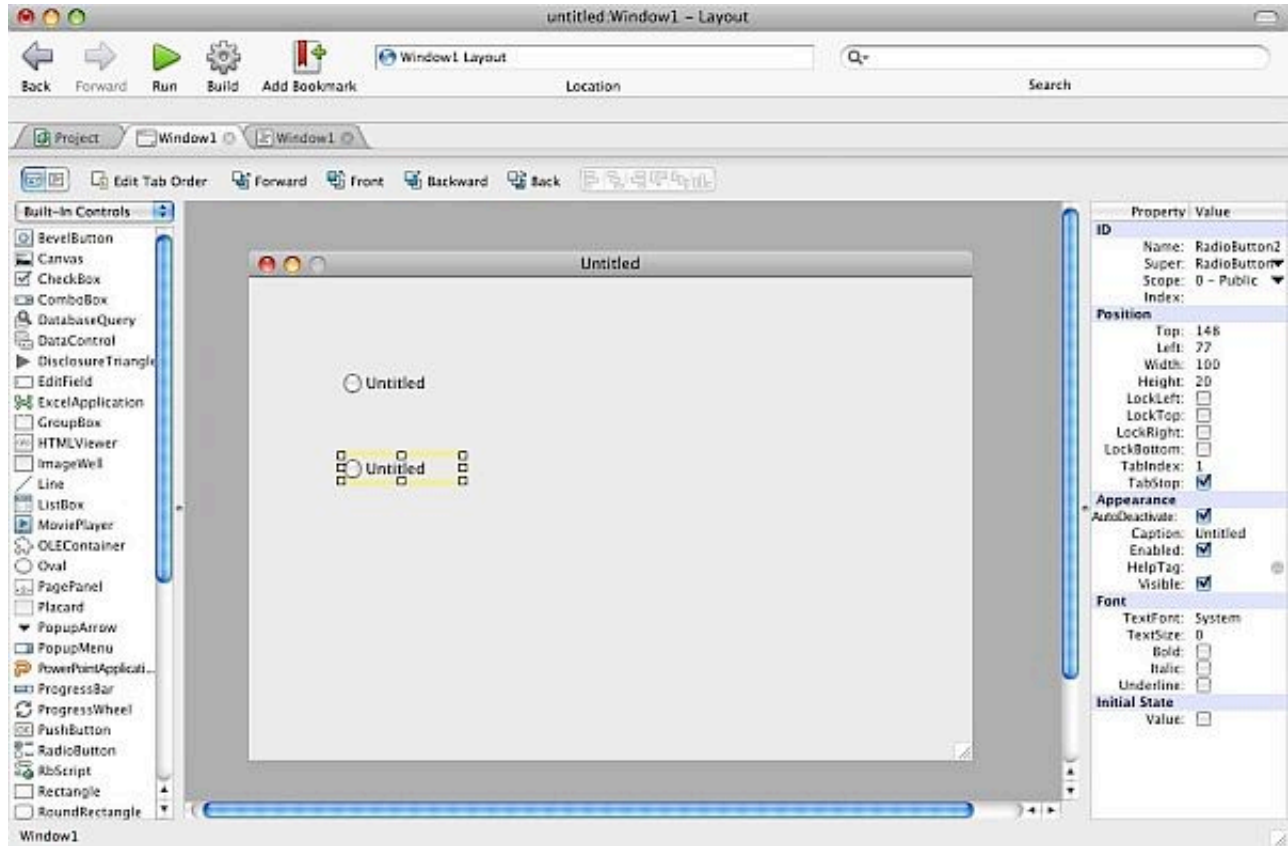


Figure 4. Placing two radio buttons on the window.

Notice that each radio button displays the generic caption of "Untitled." Don't worry, we'll change this later.

Now place a text field (called an EditField on the Toolbox) and two buttons (called PushButton on the Toolbox) on the window, as shown in Figure 5.

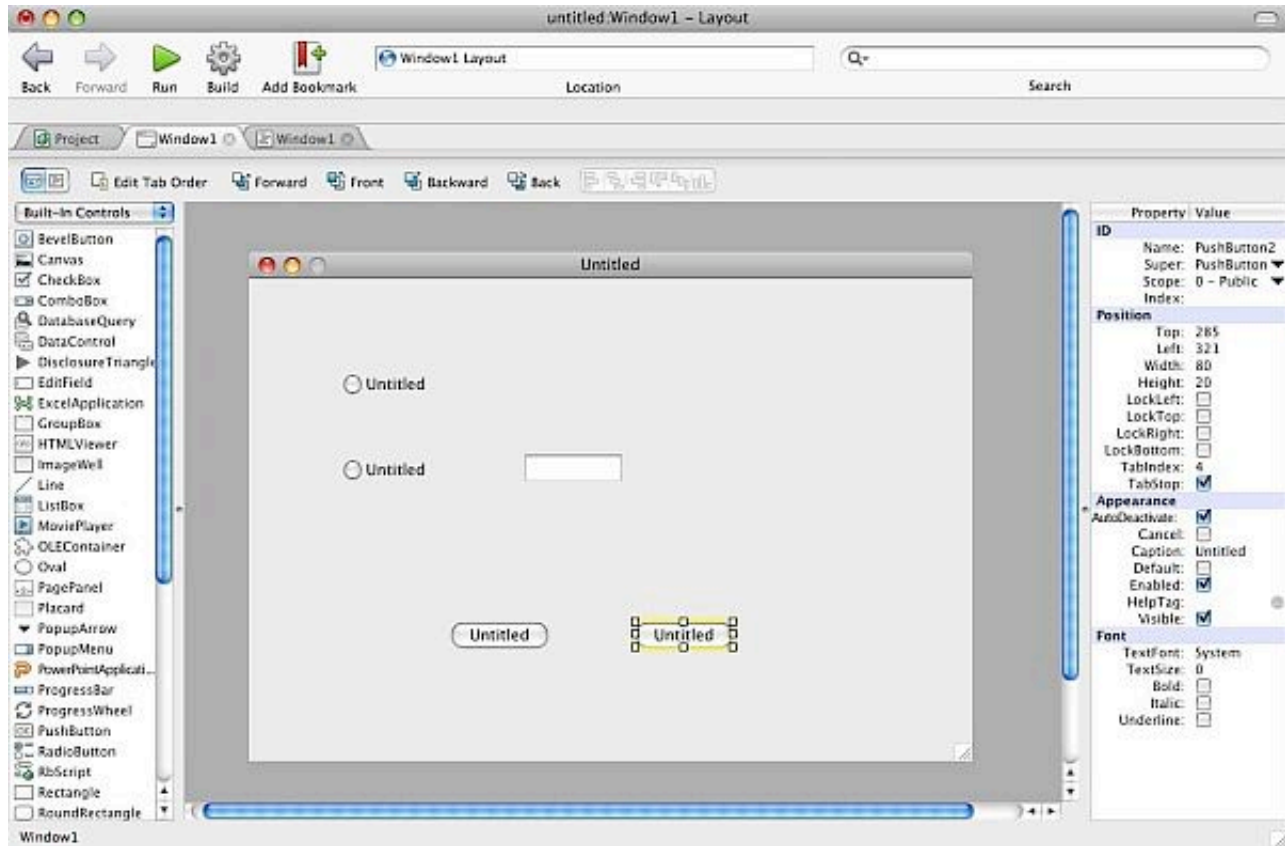


Figure 5. Your complete generic user interface.

After creating your controls and arranging them on the window, the next step is to customize your controls by changing each control's properties. To change a control's properties, click on that control once. The Properties palette now displays all the properties for that control.

Click on the push button closest to the left side of the window. Its properties appear in the Properties palette.

Click in the Default check box, which appears under the Appearance group. Notice that the push button now appears highlighted in blue.

Click to the right of the Caption field and type OK. Notice that the caption on your push button now displays "OK."

Click to the right of the Name field in the ID group and type PushButtonOK. The Name property does not affect the appearance of a control. Instead, the Name property is used strictly when writing BASIC commands.

After making all these changes, the properties on the left push button should appear as follows:

<u>Property</u>	<u>Data</u>
Default	Checked
Caption	OK
Name	PushButtonOK

Property

Use the following table to modify the properties of the other controls on the window:

<u>Control</u>	<u>Property</u>	<u>Data</u>
Top radio button	Caption	Display "Hello, world!"
	Name	RadioButtonHello
Bottom radio button	Caption	Display your own text:
	Name	RadioButtonText
Right push button	Caption	Quit
	Name	PushButtonQuit

You'll need to widen each radio button so the entire caption appears on a single line. Your entire user interface should look as shown in Figure 6. By simply placing controls on windows and customizing each control's properties, you can quickly and easily create your program's user interface.

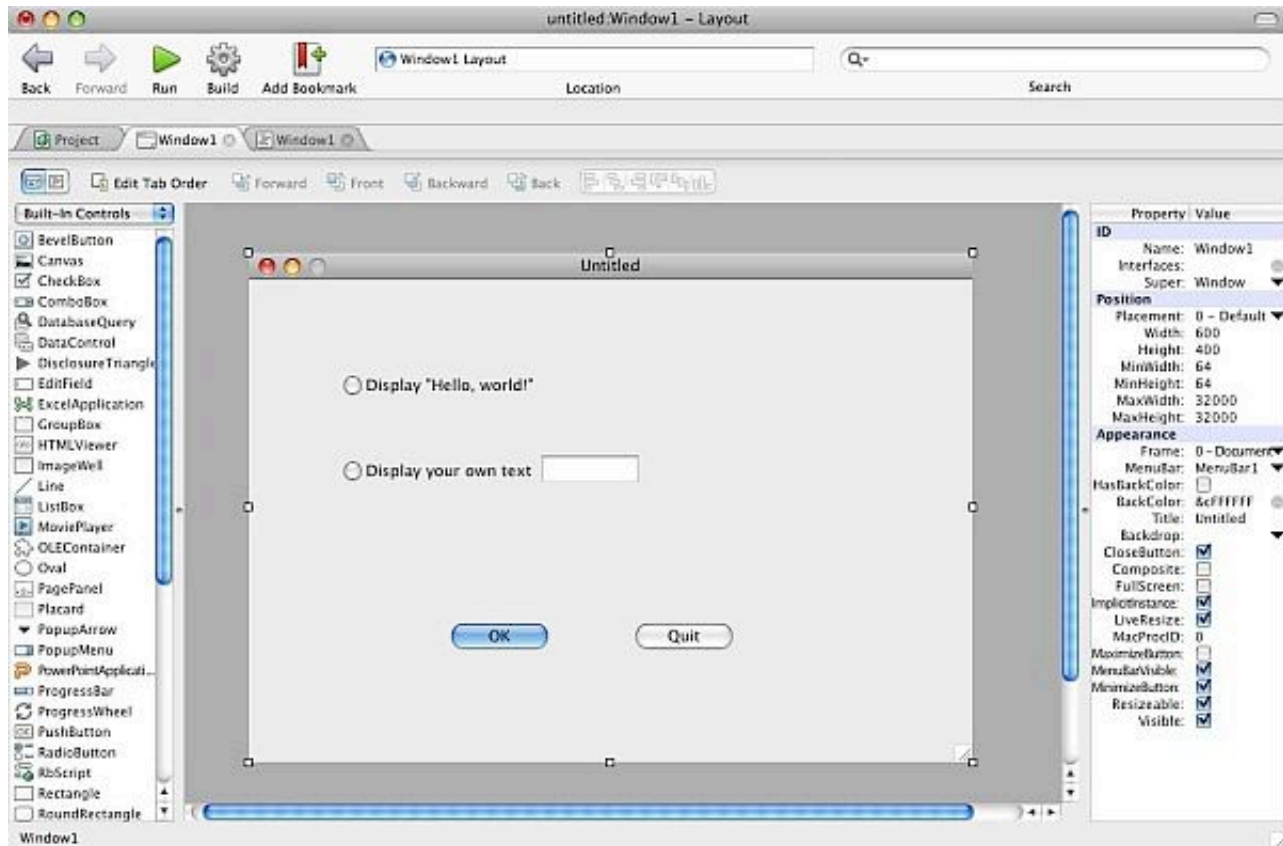


Figure 6. The complete customized user interface.

Click on the File menu and choose Save, and then type a project name such as "MyFirstProject." You may want to choose a drive and folder to store your program.

Right now, your program just looks good, but doesn't actually do anything. To make your program work, the final step is to write BASIC commands, which you'll learn about next week.

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In the early days, before Wally became an Internationally renowned comedian, computer book writer, and generally cool guy, Wally Wang used to hang around The Byte Buyer dangling participles with Jack Dunning and go to the gym to pump iron with Dan Gookin.

Wally is responsible for Microsoft Office 2007 for Dummies, Breaking Into Acting for Dummies, Beginning Programming All-in-One Reference for Dummies, and Mac All-in-One Reference for Dummies from www.dummies.com, as well as, Steal This Computer Book 4.0, Visual Basic Express 2005: Now Playing, and My New Mac from www.nostarch.com. He is also the co-author of Strategic Entrepreneurism from www.selectbooks.com.

Every Saturday morning from 9:00 am - 10:00 am in San Diego, you can hear Wally with fellow co-

hosts Dane Henderson and Candace Lee, on the radio show CyberSports Today (www.cybersportstoday.com), which covers the video gaming industry on ESPN Radio 800 AM. Wally covers the military history side of the video game industry.

When not performing stand-up comedy or writing computer books, he likes to paper trade stocks with the video game Stock Reflex (www.plimus.com/jsp/download_trial.jsp?contractId=1722712&referrer=wwang).

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