

The Android Widget Toolbox

Android supplies a toolbox of standard Views to help you create simple interfaces. By using these controls (and modifying or extending them as necessary), you can simplify your development and provide consistency between applications.

The following list highlights some of the more familiar toolbox controls:

- TextView** A standard read only text label. It supports multiline display, string formatting, and automatic word wrapping.
- EditText** An editable text entry box. It accepts multiline entry and word wrapping.
- ListView** A View Group that creates and manages a group of Views used to display the items in a List. The standard ListView displays the string value of an array of objects using a Text View for each item.
- Spinner** Composite control that displays a TextView and an associated ListView that lets you select an item from a list to display in the textbox. It's made from a Text View displaying the current selection, combined with a button that displays a selection dialog when pressed.
- Button** Standard push-button
- CheckBox** Two-state button represented with a checked or unchecked box
- RadioButton** Two-state grouped buttons. Presents the user with a number of binary options of which only one can be selected at a time.

This is only a selection of the widgets available. Android also supports several more advanced View implementations including date-time pickers, auto-complete input boxes, maps, galleries, and tab sheets. For a more comprehensive list of the available widgets, head to

<http://code.google.com/android/reference/view-gallery.html>.

It's only a matter of time before you, as an innovative developer, encounter a situation in which none of the built-in controls meets your needs. Later in this chapter, you'll learn how to extend and combine the existing controls and how to design and create entirely new widgets from scratch.