

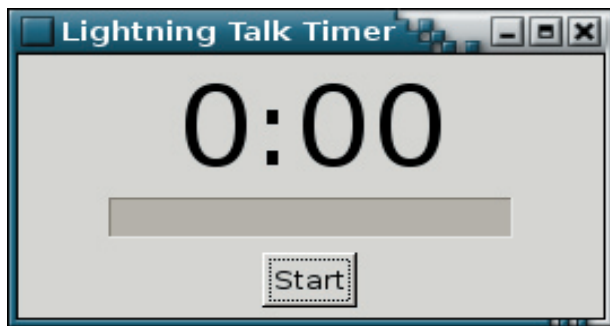


# Building GTK Apps with Glade

Grant McLean  
grantm@cpan.org

If you've looked at a Perl program that uses a GUI toolkit then you may have found yourself looking at big ugly mess of code. It's common to find code for creating and laying out widgets mixed in with the callback code that will be triggered by different GUI events. As well as being a nightmare to maintain, it's also fairly tedious to write in the first place. If you're using the Gtk2 toolkit, the Glade GUI builder can save you from all that.

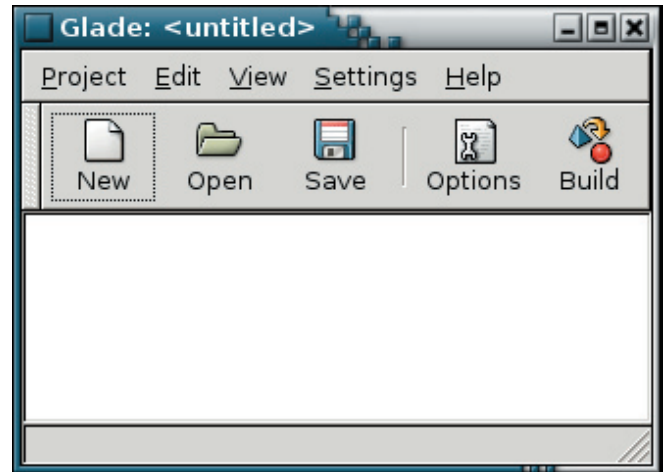
Recently, I needed some GUI code fast. The local Perl Mongers group was having a lightning talk evening and I wanted a simple application to time the talks and trigger sound effects to warn the speakers when their time was up. What I had in mind was something like this (actually, what I had in mind was the slightly more complex version at the end of the article, but we have to start somewhere):



This simple interface provides one button which will toggle between start and stop just like a real stopwatch. It also provides a label and a progress bar to show the elapsed time.

## Building the Interface

When I launched the Glade interface designer, three windows appeared—the project, palette and properties windows. I used the 'New' button on the toolbar in the main project window to create a new project.



At this point Glade offered me the choice of creating a 'New GTK+ Project' or a 'New GNOME Project'. Since I didn't need any GNOME-specific widgets, I selected the GTK+ option.

Next, I used the very first icon in Glade's widget palette to add an application window to the new project. This gave me a new blank window called 'window1' to serve as the container for the user interface elements.



Before adding any more widgets, I used Glade's properties window to change the widget name from 'window1' to 'appwin' and the title to 'Lightning Talk Timer'.

Although it is possible to place widgets at fixed positions within a window, it's not particularly good idea. An arrangement that looks good on your system may well look a mess on a system with different fonts installed or