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# View Programming Guide for iOS

User Experience: Windows & Views



2010-07-07



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# About Windows, Views, and Controls

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Like Mac OS X, iOS uses windows and views to present graphical content on the screen. Although there are many similarities between the window and view objects on both platforms, the roles played by both windows and views differ slightly on each platform.

**Important:** This document contains information that used to be in *iOS Application Programming Guide*. The information in this document has not been updated specifically for iOS 4.0.

## The Role of UIWindow

In contrast with Mac OS X applications, iPhone applications typically have only one **window**, represented by an instance of the `UIWindow` class. Your application creates this window at launch time (or loads it from a nib file), adds one or more views to it, and displays it. After that, you rarely need to refer to the window object again.

In iOS, a window object has no visual adornments such as a close box or title bar and cannot be closed or manipulated directly by the user. All manipulations to a window occur through its programmatic interfaces. The application also uses the window to facilitate the delivery of events to your application. For example, the window object keeps track of its current first responder object and dispatches events to it when asked to do so by the `UIApplication` object.

One thing that experienced Mac OS X developers may find unusual about the `UIWindow` class is its inheritance. In Mac OS X, the parent class of `NSWindow` is `NSResponder`. In iOS, the parent class of `UIWindow` is `UIView`. Thus, in iOS, a window is also a view object. Despite its parentage, you typically treat windows in iOS the same as you would in Mac OS X. That is, you typically do not manipulate the view-related properties of a `UIWindow` object directly.

When creating your application window, you should always set its initial frame size to fill the entire screen. If you load your window from a nib file, Interface Builder does not permit you to create a window smaller than the screen size. If you create your window programmatically, however, you must specifically pass in the desired frame rectangle at creation time. There is no reason to pass in any rectangle other than the screen rectangle, which you can get from the `UIScreen` object as shown here:

```
UIWindow* aWindow = [[[UIWindow alloc] initWithFrame:[UIScreen mainScreen]
bounds]] autorelease];
```

Although iOS supports layering windows on top of each other, your application should never create more than one window. The system itself uses additional windows to display the system status bar, important alerts, and other types of messages on top of your application's windows. If you want to display alerts on top of your content, use the alert views provided by UIKit rather than creating additional windows.

## The Role of UIView

A **view**, an instance of the `UIView` class, defines a rectangular area on the screen. In iPhone applications, views play a key role in both presenting your interface and responding to interactions with that interface. Each view object has the responsibility of rendering content within its rectangular area and for responding to touch events in that area. This dual behavior means that views are the primary mechanism for interacting with the user in your application. In a Model-View-Controller application, view objects are the View portion of the application.

In addition to displaying its own contents and handling events, a view may also manage one or more subviews. A **subview** is simply a view object embedded inside the frame of the original view object, which is referred to as the parent view or **superview**. Views arranged in this manner form what is known as a **view hierarchy** and may contain any number of views. Views can also be nested at arbitrarily deep levels by adding subviews to subviews. The organization of views inside the view hierarchy controls what appears on screen, as each subview is displayed on top of its parent view. The organization also controls how the views react to events and changes. Each parent view is responsible for managing its direct subviews, by adjusting their position and size as needed and even responding to events that its subviews do not handle.

Because view objects are the main way your application interacts with the user, they have a number of responsibilities. Here are just a few:

- Drawing and animation
  - Views draw content in their rectangular area.
  - Some view properties can be animated to new values.
- Layout and subview management
  - Views manage a list of subviews.
  - Views define their own resizing behaviors in relation to their parent view.
  - Views can manually change the size and position of their subviews as needed.
  - Views can convert points in their coordinate system to the coordinate systems of other views or the window.
- Event handling
  - Views receive touch events.
  - Views participate in the responder chain.

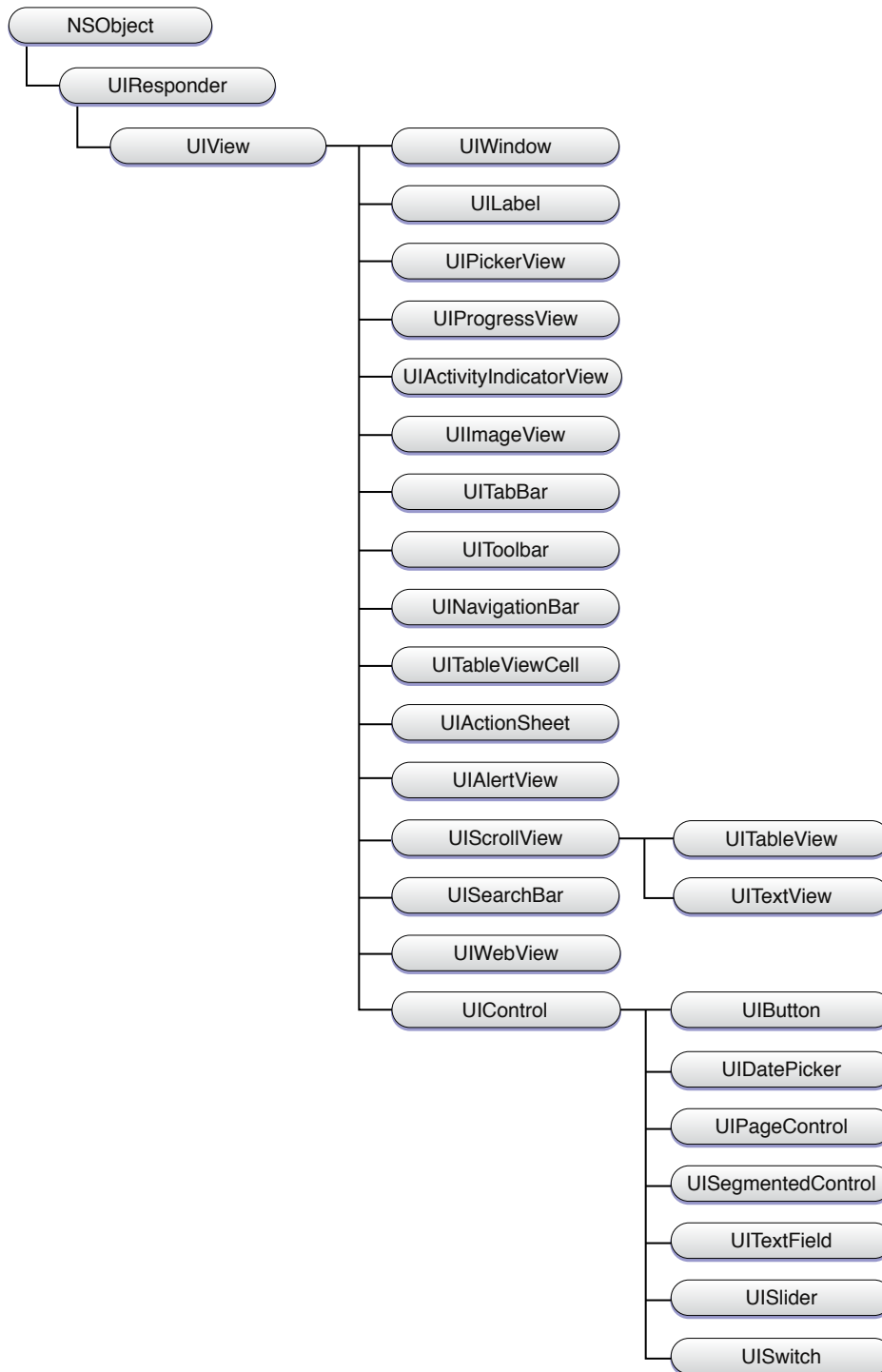
In iPhone applications, views work closely with view controllers to manage several aspects of the views' behavior. View controllers handle the loading and unloading of views, interface rotations caused by the user physically rotating the device, and interactions with the high-level navigation objects used to construct complex user interfaces. For more information, see [“The Role of View Controllers”](#) (page 12).



## UIKit View Classes

The `UIView` class defines the basic properties of a view but not its visual representation. Instead, UIKit uses subclasses to define the specific appearance and behavior for standard system elements such as text fields, buttons, and toolbars. Figure I-1 shows the class hierarchy diagram for all of the views in UIKit. With the exception of the `UIView` and `UIControl` classes, most of the views in this hierarchy are designed to be used as-is or in conjunction with a delegate object.

Figure I-1 View class hierarchy



This view hierarchy can be broken down into the following broad categories:

- Containers

Container views enhance the function of other views or provide additional visual separation of the content. For example, the `UIScrollView` class is used to display views whose contents are too large to fit onscreen all at once. The `UITableView` class is a subclass of `UIScrollView` that manages lists of data. Because table rows are selectable, tables are commonly used for hierarchical navigation too—for example, to drill down into a hierarchy of objects.

A `UIToolbar` object is a special type of container that visually groups one or more button-like items. A toolbar typically appears along the bottom of the screen. The Safari, Mail, and Photos applications all use toolbars to display buttons representing frequently used commands. Toolbars can be shown all the time or only as needed by the application.

#### ■ Controls

Controls are used to create most of a typical application's user interface. A control is a special type of view that inherits from the `UIControl` superclass. Controls typically display a specific value and handle all of the user interactions required to modify that value. Controls also use standard system paradigms, such as target-action and delegation, to notify your application when user interactions occur. Controls include buttons, text fields, sliders, and switches.

#### ■ Display views

Although controls and many other types of views provide interactive behavior, some views simply display information. The UIKit classes that exhibit this behavior include `UIImageView`, `UILabel`, `UIProgressView`, and `UIActivityIndicatorView`.

#### ■ Text and web views

Text and web views provide a more sophisticated way to display multiline text content in your application. The `UITextView` class supports the display and editing of multiple lines of text in a scrollable area. The `UIWebView` class provides a way to display HTML content, which lets you incorporate graphics and advanced text-formatting options and lay out your content in custom ways.

#### ■ Alert views and action sheets

Alert views and action sheets are used to get the user's attention immediately. They present a message to the user, along with one or more optional buttons that the user can use to respond to the message. Alert views and action sheets are similar in function but look and behave differently. For example, the `UIAlertView` class displays a blue alert box that pops up on the screen and the `UIActionSheet` class displays a box that slides in from the bottom of the screen.

#### ■ Navigation views

Tab bars and navigation bars work in conjunction with view controllers to provide tools for navigating from one screen of your user interface to another. You typically do not create `UITabBar` and `UINavigationController` items directly but configure them through the appropriate controller interface or using Interface Builder instead.

#### ■ The window

A window provides a surface for drawing content and is the root container for all other views. There is typically only one window per application. For more information, see [“The Role of UIWindow”](#) (page 7).

## The Role of View Controllers

Applications running in iOS have many options for organizing their content and presenting it to the user. An application that contains a lot of content might divide that content up into multiple screens' worth of information. At runtime, each screen would then be backed by a set of view objects responsible for displaying the data for that particular screen. The views for a single screen would themselves be backed by a view controller object, whose job is to manage the data displayed by those views and coordinate updates with the rest of the application.

The `UIViewController` class is responsible for creating the set of views it manages and for flushing them from memory during low-memory situations. View controllers also provide automatic responses for some standard system behaviors. For example, in response to a change in the device's orientation, the view controller can resize its managed views to fit the new orientation, if that orientation is supported. You can also use view controllers to display new views modally on top of the current view.

In addition to the base `UIViewController` class, UIKit includes more advanced subclasses for handling some of the sophisticated interface behaviors common to the platform. In particular, navigation controllers manage the display of multiple hierarchical screens worth of content. Tab bar controllers let the user switch between different sets of screens, each of which represents a different operating mode for the application.

For information on how to use view controllers to manage the views in your user interface, see *View Controller Programming Guide for iOS*.

## Organization of This Document

This document contains the following chapters:

- [“Windows and Views”](#) (page 13) provides an overview of the window and view architecture used in iOS.
- [“Graphics and Drawing”](#) (page 37) describes the drawing model used by views to render content to the screen.

# Windows and Views

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**Important:** This document contains information that used to be in *iOS Application Programming Guide*. The information in this document has not been updated specifically for iOS 4.0.

This chapter provides a basic overview of windows and views and how they work together to present your application's content.

## View Architecture and Geometry

Because views are focal objects in iPhone applications, it is important to understand a little about how views interact with other parts of the system. The standard view classes in UIKit provide a considerable amount of behavior to your application for free. They also provide well-defined integration points where you can customize that behavior and do what you need to do for your application.

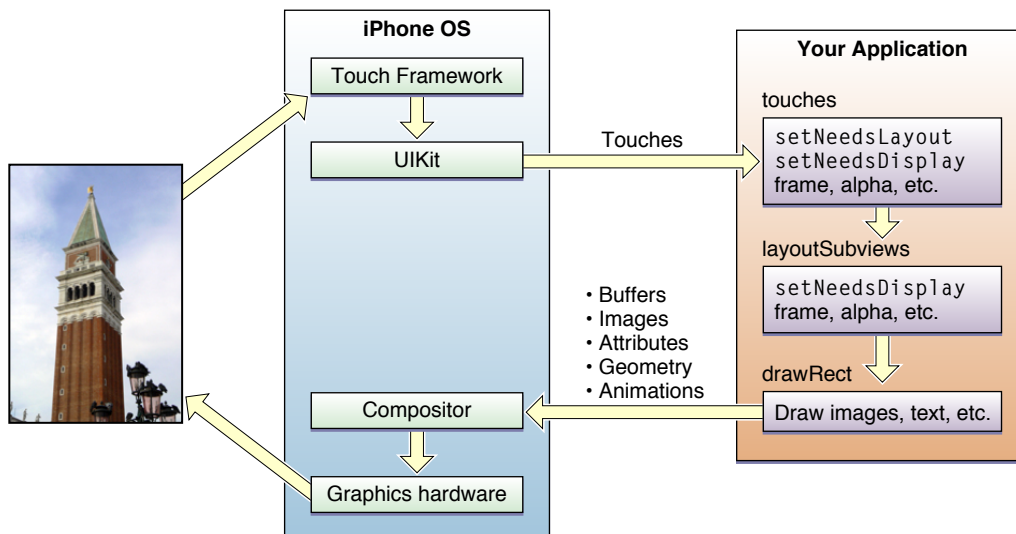
The following sections explain the standard behavior of views and call out the places where you can integrate your custom code. For information about the integration points of specific classes, see the reference document for that class. You can get a list of all the class reference documents in *UIKit Framework Reference*.

## The View Interaction Model

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Any time a user interacts with your user interface, or your own code programmatically changes something, a complex sequence of events takes place inside of UIKit to handle that interaction. At specific points during that sequence, UIKit calls out to your view classes and gives them a chance to respond on behalf of your application. Understanding these callout points is important to understanding where your views fit into the system. Figure 1-1 shows the basic sequence of events that starts with the user touching the screen and ends with the graphics system updating the screen content in response. Programmatic events follow the same basic steps without the initial user interaction.

Figure 1-1 UIKit interactions with your view objects



The following steps break the event sequence in [Figure 1-1](#) (page 14) down even further and explain what happens at each stage and how your application might want to react in response.

1. The user touches the screen.
2. The hardware reports the touch event to the UIKit framework.
3. The UIKit framework packages the touch into a `UIEvent` object and dispatches it to the appropriate view. (For a detailed explanation of how UIKit delivers events to your views, see *Event Handling Guide for iOS*.)
4. The event-handling methods of your view might respond to the event by doing any of the following:
  - Adjust the properties (frame, bounds, alpha, and so on) of the view or its subviews.
  - Mark the view (or its subviews) as needing a change in its layout.
  - Mark the view (or its subviews) as needing to be redrawn.
  - Notify a controller about changes to some piece of data.

Of course, it is up to the view to decide which of these things must be done and call the appropriate methods to do it.

5. If a view is marked as requiring layout, UIKit calls the view's `layoutSubviews` method.

You can override this method in your custom views and use it to adjust the position and size of any subviews. For example, a view that provides a large scrollable area would need to use several subviews as “tiles” rather than create one large view, which is not likely to fit in memory anyway. In its implementation of this method, the view would hide any subviews that are now offscreen or reposition them and use them to draw newly exposed content. As part of this process, the view can also mark the new tiles as needing to be redrawn.

6. If any part of the view is marked as needing to be redrawn, UIKit calls the view's `drawRect:` method.

UIKit calls this method for only those views that need it. Each view's implementation of this method should redraw the specified area as quickly as possible. Each view should draw only its own contents and not the contents of any subviews. Views should not attempt to make any further changes to their properties or layout at this point.

7. Any updated views are composited with the rest of visible content and sent to the graphics hardware for display.
8. The graphics hardware transfers the rendered content to the screen.

**Note:** The preceding update model applies primarily to applications that use native views and drawing techniques. If your application draws its content using OpenGL ES, you would typically configure a single full-screen view and then draw directly to your OpenGL graphics context. Your view would still handle touch events, but it would not need to lay out subviews or implement a `drawRect:` method. For more information about using OpenGL ES, see [“Drawing with OpenGL ES”](#) (page 46).

Given the preceding set of steps, the primary integration points for your own custom views are as follows:

1. These event-handling methods:
  - `touchesBegan:withEvent:`
  - `touchesMoved:withEvent:`
  - `touchesEnded:withEvent:`
  - `touchesCancelled:withEvent:`
2. The `layoutSubviews` method
3. The `drawRect:` method

These are the methods that most custom views implement to get the behavior they want; you may not need to override all of them. For example, if you are implementing a view whose size never changes, you might not need to override the `layoutSubviews` method. Similarly, if you are implementing a view that displays simple content, such as text and images, you can often avoid drawing altogether by simply embedding `UIImageView` and `UILabel` objects as subviews.

It is also important to remember that these are the primary integration points but not the only ones. Several methods of the `UIView` class are designed to be override points for subclasses. You should look at the method descriptions in *UIView Class Reference* to see which methods might be appropriate for you to override in your custom implementations.

## The View Rendering Architecture

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Although you use views to represent content onscreen, the `UIView` class itself actually relies heavily on another object for much of its basic behavior. Each view object in UIKit is backed by a Core Animation layer object, which is an instance of the `CALayer` class. This layer class provides the fundamental support for the layout and rendering of a view's contents and for compositing and animating that content.

In contrast with Mac OS X (in which Core Animation support is optional) iOS integrates Core Animation into the heart of the view rendering implementation. Although Core Animation has a central role, UIKit streamlines the programming experience by providing a transparent layer on top of Core Animation. This transparent layer eliminates the need to access Core Animation layers directly most of the time, instead letting you access similar behaviors using the methods and properties of the `UIView` class. Where Core Animation becomes important, however, is when the `UIView` class does not provide everything you need. At that point, you can dive down into the Core Animation layers and do some pretty sophisticated rendering for your application.

The following sections provide an introduction to Core Animation and describe some of the features it provides to you for free through the `UIView` class. For more detailed information about how to use Core Animation for advanced rendering, see *Core Animation Programming Guide*.

## Core Animation Basics

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Core Animation takes advantage of hardware acceleration and an optimized architecture to implement fast rendering and real-time animations. The first time a view's `drawRect:` method is called, the layer captures the results into a bitmap. Subsequent redraw calls use this cached bitmap whenever possible to avoid calling the `drawRect:` method, which can be expensive. This process allows Core Animation to optimize its compositing operations and deliver the desired performance.

Core Animation stores the layers associated with your view objects in a hierarchy referred to as the **layer tree**. Like views, each layer in the layer tree has a single parent and can have any number of embedded sublayers. By default, objects in the layer tree are organized exactly like the views in your view hierarchy. You can add layers, however, without adding a corresponding view. You might do this to implement special visual effects for which a view is not required.

Layer objects are actually the driving force behind the rendering and layout system in iOS, and most view properties are actually thin wrappers for properties on the underlying layer object. When you change the property of a layer in the layer tree (directly using the `CALayer` object), the changed value is reflected immediately in the layer object. If the change triggers a corresponding animation, however, that change may not be reflected onscreen immediately; instead, it must be animated onto the screen over time. To manage these sorts of animations, Core Animation maintains two additional sets of layer objects in what are referred to as the **presentation tree** and the **render tree**.

The presentation tree reflects the state of the layers as they are currently presented to the user. When you animate the changing of a layer value, the presentation layer reflects the old value until the animation commences. As the animation progresses, Core Animation updates the value in the presentation-tree layer based on the current frame of the animation. The render tree then works together with the presentation tree to render the changes on the screen. Because the render tree runs in a separate process or thread, the work it does does not impact your application's main run loop. While both the layer tree and the presentation tree are public, the render tree is a private API.

The placement of layer objects behind your views has many important implications for the performance of your drawing code. The upside to using layers is that most geometry changes to your views do not require redrawing. For example, changing the position and size of a view does not require the system to redraw the contents of a view; it can simply reuse the cached bitmap created by the layer. Animating this cached content is significantly more efficient than trying to redraw that content every time.

The downside to using layers is that the additional cached data can add memory pressure to your application. If your application creates too many views or creates very large views, you could run out of memory quickly. You should not be afraid to use views in your application, but do not create new view objects if you have existing views that can be reused. In other words, pursue approaches that minimize the number of views you keep in memory at the same time.



For a more detailed overview of Core Animation, the object trees, and how you create animations, see *Core Animation Programming Guide*.

## Changing the Layer of a View

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Because views are required to have an associated layer object in iOS, the `UIView` class creates this layer automatically at initialization time. You can access the layer that is created through the `layer` property of the view, but you cannot change the layer object after the view is created.

If you want a view to use a different type of layer, you must override the view's `layerClass` class method and return the class object for the layer you want it to use. The most common reason to return a different layer class is to implement an OpenGL-based application. To use OpenGL drawing commands, the layer for the underlying view must be an instance of the `CAEAGLLayer` class. This type of layer interacts with the OpenGL rendering calls to present the desired content on the screen.

**Important:** You should never modify the `delegate` property of a view's layer; that property stores a pointer to the view and should be considered private. Similarly, because a view can operate as the delegate for only one layer, you must not assign it as the delegate for any other layer objects. Doing so will cause your application to crash.

## Animation Support

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One of the benefits of having a layer object behind every view in iOS is that you can animate content more easily. Remember that animation is not necessarily about creating visual eye candy. Animations provide the user with a context for any changes that occur in your application's user interface. For example, when you use a transition to move from one screen to another, you are indicating to users that the screens are related. The system provides automatic support for many of the most commonly used animations, but you can also create animations for other parts of your interface.

Many properties of the `UIView` class are considered to be animatable. An **animatable** property is one for which there is semiautomatic support for animating from one value to another. You must still tell UIKit that you want to perform the animation, but Core Animation assumes full responsibility for running the animation once it has begun. Among the properties you can animate on a `UIView` object are the following:

- `frame`
- `bounds`
- `center`
- `transform`
- `alpha`

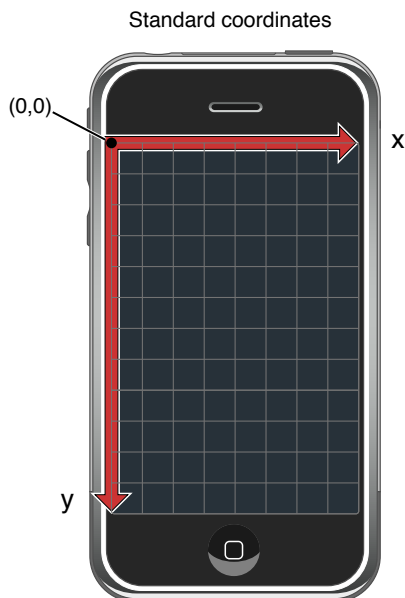
Even though other view properties are not directly animatable, you can create explicit animations for some of them. Explicit animations require you to do more of the work in managing the animation and the rendered contents, but they still use the underlying Core Animation infrastructure to obtain good performance.

For more information about creating animations using the `UIView` class, see [“Animating Views”](#) (page 30). For more information about creating explicit animations, see *Core Animation Programming Guide*.

## View Coordinate Systems

Coordinates in UIKit are based on a coordinate system whose origin is in the top-left corner and whose coordinate axes extend down and to the right from that point. Coordinate values are represented using floating-point numbers, which allow for precise layout and positioning of content and allow for resolution independence. Figure 1-2 shows this coordinate system relative to the screen, but this coordinate system is also used by the `UIWindow` and `UIView` classes. This particular orientation was chosen to make it easier to lay out controls and content in user interfaces, even though it differs from the default coordinate systems in use by Quartz and Mac OS X.

**Figure 1-2** View coordinate system



As you write your interface code, be aware of the coordinate system currently in effect. Every window and view object maintains its own local coordinate system. All drawing in a view occurs relative to the view's local coordinate system. The frame rectangle for each view, however, is specified using the coordinate system of its parent view, and coordinates delivered as part of an event object are specified relative to the coordinate system of the enclosing window. For convenience, the `UIWindow` and `UIView` classes each provide methods to convert back and forth between the coordinate systems of different objects.

Although the coordinate system used by Quartz does not use the top-left corner as the origin point, for many Quartz calls this is not a problem. Before invoking your view's `drawRect:` method, UIKit automatically configures the drawing environment to use a top-left origin. Quartz calls made within this environment draw correctly in your view. The only time you need to consider these different coordinate systems is when you set up the drawing environment yourself using Quartz.

For more information about coordinate systems, Quartz, and drawing in general, see [“Graphics and Drawing”](#) (page 37).

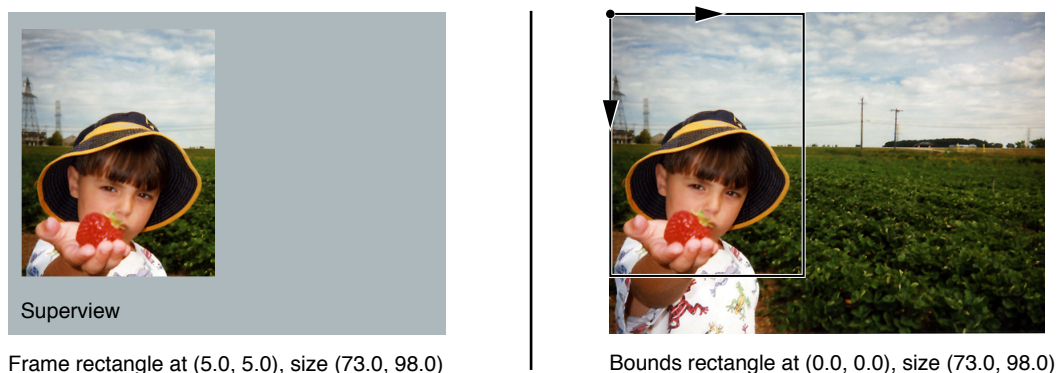
## The Relationship of the Frame, Bounds, and Center

A view object tracks its size and location using its `frame`, `bounds`, and `center` properties. The `frame` property contains a rectangle, the **frame rectangle**, that specifies the view's location and size relative to its parent view's coordinate system. The `bounds` property contains a rectangle, the **bounds rectangle**, that defines the view's position and size relative to its own local coordinate system. And although the origin of the bounds rectangle is typically set to (0, 0), it need not be. The `center` property contains the **center point** of the frame rectangle.

You use the `frame`, `bounds`, and `center` properties for different purposes in your code. Because the bounds rectangle represents the view's local coordinate system, you use it most often during drawing or event-handling code when you need to know where in your view something happened. The center point represents the known center point of your view and is always the best way to manipulate the position of your view. The frame rectangle is a convenience value that is computed using the `bounds` and `center` point and is valid only when the view's transform is set to the identity transform.

Figure 1-3 shows the relationship between the frame and bounds rectangles. The complete image on the right is drawn in the view starting at (0, 0). Because the size of the bounds does not match the full size of the image, however, only part of the image outside the bounds rectangle is clipped automatically. When the view is composited with its parent view, the position of the view inside its parent is determined by the origin of the view's frame rectangle, which in this case is (5, 5). As a result, the view's contents appear shifted down and to the right from the parent view's origin.

**Figure 1-3** Relationship between a view's frame and bounds



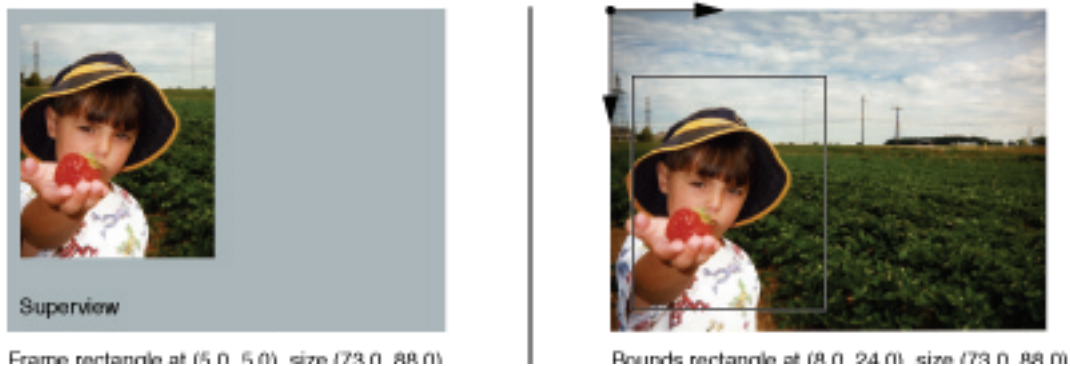
When there is no transform applied to the view, the location and size of the view are determined by these three interrelated properties. The `frame` property of a view is set when a view object is created programmatically using the `initWithFrame:` method. That method also initializes the `bounds` rectangle to originate at (0.0, 0.0) and have the same size as the view's frame. The `center` property is then set to the center point of the frame.

Although you can set the values of these properties independently, setting the value for one changes the others in the following ways:

- When you set the `frame` property, the size of the `bounds` property is set to match the size of the `frame` property. The `center` property is also adjusted to match the center point of the new frame.
- When you set the `center` property, the origin of the `frame` changes accordingly.
- When you set the size of the `bounds` rectangle, the size of the `frame` rectangle changes to match.

You can change the `bounds` origin without changing the other two properties. When you do, the view displays the portion of the underlying image that you have identified. In [Figure 1-3](#) (page 19), the original `bounds` origin is set to (0.0, 0.0). In [Figure 1-4](#), that origin is moved to (8.0, 24.0). As a result, a different portion of the underlying image is displayed by the view. Because the frame rectangle did not change, however, the new content is displayed in the same location inside the parent view as before.

**Figure 1-4** Altering a view's bounds



**Note:** By default, a view's frame is not clipped to its parent view's frame. If you want to force a view to clip its subviews, set the view's `clipsToBounds` property to `YES`.

## Coordinate System Transformations

Although coordinate system transformations are commonly used in a view's `drawRect:` method to facilitate drawing, in iOS, you can also use them to implement visual effects for your view. For example, the `UIView` class includes a `transform` property that lets you apply different types of translation, scaling, and zooming effects to the entire view. By default, the value of this property is the identity transform, which causes no changes to the view. To add transformations, get the `CGAffineTransform` structure stored in this property, use the corresponding Core Graphics functions to apply the transformations, and then assign the modified transform structure back to the view's `transform` property.

**Note:** When applying transforms to a view, all transformations are performed relative to the center point of the view.

Translating a view shifts all subviews along with the drawing of the view's content. Because coordinate systems of subviews inherit and build on these alterations, scaling also affects the drawing of the subviews. For more information about how to control the scaling of view content, see [“Content Modes and Scaling”](#) (page 21).

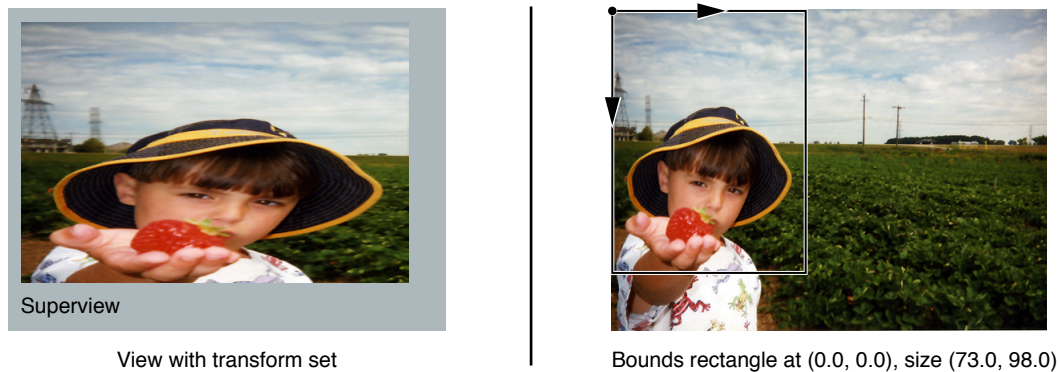
**Important:** If the `transform` property is not the identity transform, the value of the `frame` property is undefined and must be ignored. After setting the transform, use the `bounds` and `center` properties to get the position and size of the view.

For information about using transforms in conjunction with your `drawRect:` method, see “[Coordinates and Coordinate Transforms](#)” (page 38). For information about the functions you use to modify the `CGAffineTransform` structure, see *CGAffineTransform Reference*.

## Content Modes and Scaling

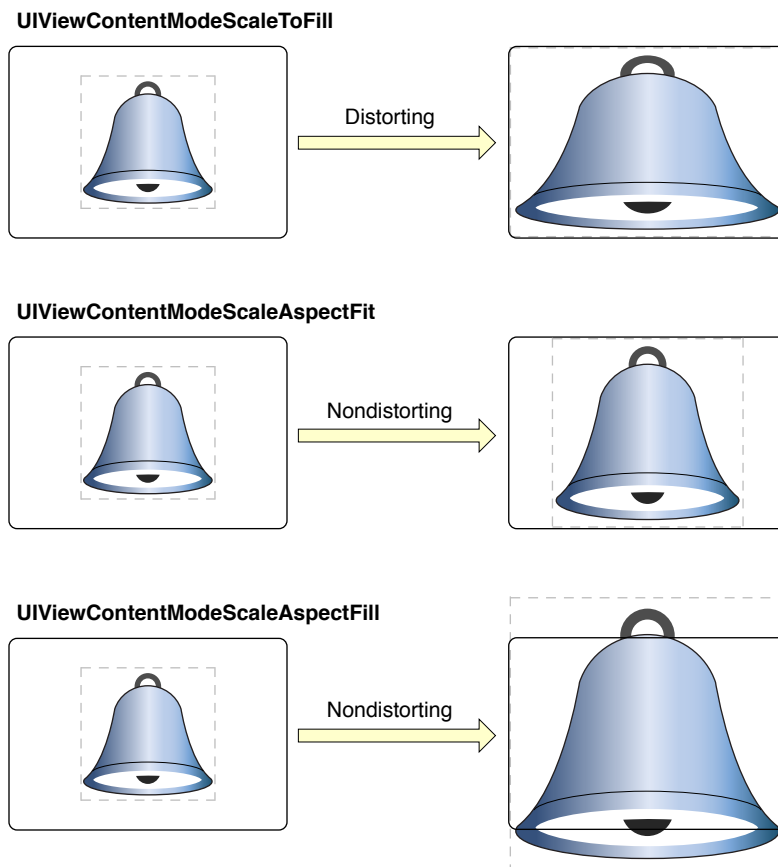
When you change the bounds of a view or apply a scaling factor to the `transform` property of a view, the frame rectangle is changed by a commensurate amount. Depending on the content mode associated with the view, the view’s content may also be scaled or repositioned to account for the changes. The view’s `contentMode` property determines the effect that bounds changes and scaling operations have on the view. By default, the value of this property is set to `UIViewContentModeScaleToFill`, which always causes the view’s contents to be scaled to fit the new frame size. For example, Figure 1-5 shows what happens when the horizontal scaling factor of the view is doubled.

**Figure 1-5** View scaled using the scale-to-fill content mode



Scaling of your view’s content occurs because the first time a view is shown, its rendered contents are cached in the underlying layer. Rather than force the view to redraw itself every time its bounds change or a scaling factor is applied, UIKit uses the view’s content mode to determine how to display the cached content. Figure 1-6 compares the results of changing the bounds of a view or applying a scaling factor to it using several different content modes.

Figure 1-6 Content mode comparisons



Although applying a scaling factor always scales the view's contents, there are content modes that do not scale the view's contents when the bounds of the view change. Several `UIViewContentMode` constants (such as `UIViewContentModeTop` and `UIViewContentModeBottomRight`) display the current content in different corners or along different edges of the view. There is also a mode for displaying the content centered inside the view. Changing the bounds rectangle with one of these content modes in place simply moves the existing contents to the appropriate location inside the new bounds rectangle.

Do consider using content modes when you want to implement resizable controls in your application; by doing so you can avoid both control distortion and the writing of custom drawing code. Buttons and segmented controls are particularly suitable for content mode–based drawing. They typically use several images to create the appearance of the control. In addition to having two fixed-size end cap images, a button that can grow horizontally uses a stretchable center image that is only 1 pixel wide. By displaying each image in its own image view and setting the content mode of the stretchable middle image to `UIViewContentModeScaleToFill`, the button can grow in size without distorting the appearance of the end caps. More importantly, the images associated with each image view can be cached by Core Animation and animated without any custom drawing code, which results in much better performance.

Although content modes are good to avoid redrawing the contents of your view, you can also use the `UIViewContentModeRedraw` content mode when you specifically want control over the appearance of your view during scaling and resizing operations. Setting your view's content mode to this value forces Core Animation to invalidate your view's contents and call your view's `drawRect:` method rather than scale or resize them automatically.

## Autosizing Behaviors

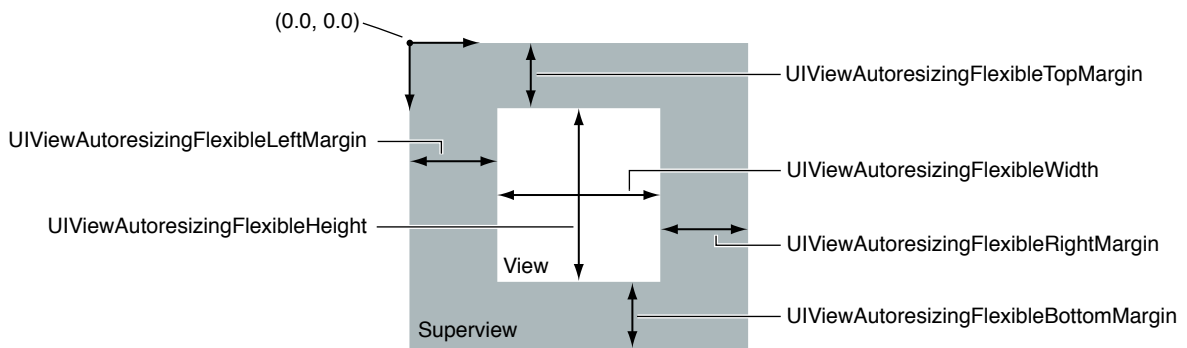
When you change the frame rectangle of a view, the position and size of embedded subviews often needs to change to match the new size of the original view. If the `autoresizesSubviews` property of a view is set to YES, its subviews are automatically resized according to the values in the `autoresizingMask` property. Often, simply configuring the autosizing mask for a view provides the appropriate behavior for an application. Otherwise, it is the application's responsibility to reposition and resize the subviews by overriding the `layoutSubviews` method.

To set a view's autosizing behaviors, combine the desired autosizing constants using a bitwise OR operator and assign the resulting value to the view's `autoresizingMask` property. Table 1-1 lists the autosizing constants and describes how each one affects the size and placement of a given view. For example, to keep a view pinned to the lower-left corner of its superview, add the `UIViewAutoresizingFlexibleRightMargin` and `UIViewAutoresizingFlexibleTopMargin` constants and assign them to the `autoresizingMask` property. When more than one aspect along an axis is made flexible, the resize amount is distributed evenly among them.

**Table 1-1** Autosizing mask constants

Autosizing mask	Description
<code>UIViewAutoresizingNone</code>	If set, the view doesn't autosize.
<code>UIViewAutoresizingFlexibleHeight</code>	If set, the view's height changes proportionally to the change in the superview's height. Otherwise, the view's height does not change relative to the superview's height.
<code>UIViewAutoresizingFlexibleWidth</code>	If set, the view's width changes proportionally to the change in the superview's width. Otherwise, the view's width does not change relative to the superview's width.
<code>UIViewAutoresizingFlexibleLeftMargin</code>	If set, the view's left edge is repositioned proportionally to the change in the superview's width. Otherwise, the view's left edge remains in the same position relative to the superview's left edge.
<code>UIViewAutoresizingFlexibleRightMargin</code>	If set, the view's right edge is repositioned proportionally to the change in the superview's width. Otherwise, the view's right edge remains in the same position relative to the superview.
<code>UIViewAutoresizingFlexibleBottomMargin</code>	If set, the view's bottom edge is repositioned proportionally to the change in the superview's height. Otherwise, the view's bottom edge remains in the same position relative to the superview.
<code>UIViewAutoresizingFlexibleTopMargin</code>	If set, the view's top edge is repositioned proportionally to the change in the superview's height. Otherwise, the view's top edge remains in the same position relative to the superview.

Figure 1-7 provides a graphical representation of the position of the constant values. When one of these constants is omitted, the view's layout is fixed in that aspect; when a constant is included in the mask, the view's layout is flexible in that aspect.

**Figure 1-7** View autoresizing mask constants

If you are using Interface Builder to configure your views, you can set the autoresizing behavior for each view by using the Autosizing controls in the Size inspector. Although the flexible width and height constants from the preceding figure have the same behavior as the Interface Builder springs located in the same position have, the behavior of the margin constants is effectively reversed. In other words, to apply the flexible right margin autoresizing behavior to a view in Interface Builder, you must leave the space on that side of the Autosizing control empty, not place a strut there. Fortunately, Interface Builder provides an animation to show you how changes to the autoresizing behaviors affect your view.

If the `autoresizesSubviews` property of a view is set to `NO`, any autoresizing behaviors set on the immediate subviews of that view are ignored. Similarly, if a subview's autoresizing mask is set to `UIViewAutoresizingNone`, the subview does not change size and so its immediate subviews are never resized either.

**Note:** For autoresizing to work correctly, the view's `transform` property must be set to the identity transform. The behavior is undefined if it is not.

Although autoresizing behaviors may be suitable for some layout needs, if you want more control over the layout of your views, you should override the `layoutSubviews` method in the appropriate view classes. For more information about managing the layout of your views, see [“Responding to Layout Changes”](#) (page 32).

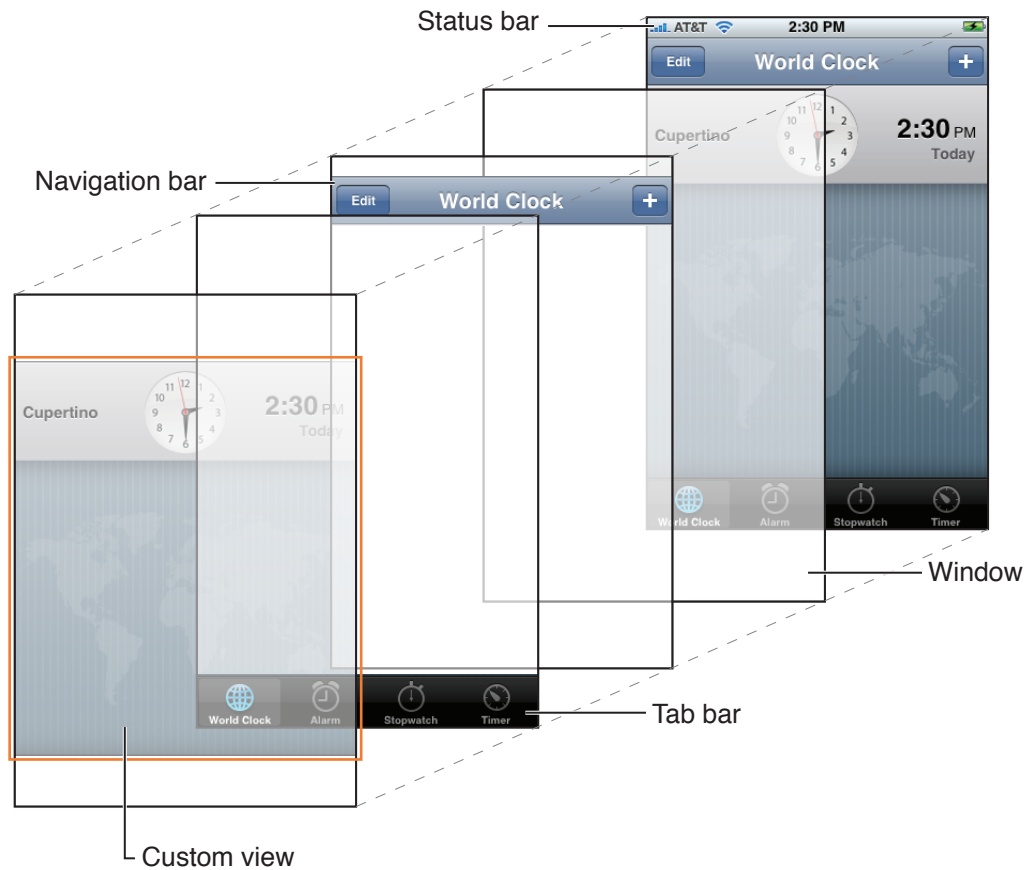
## Creating and Managing the View Hierarchy

Managing the view hierarchy of your user interface is a crucial part of developing your application's user interface. How you organize your views defines not only the way your application appears visually but also how your application responds to changes. The parent-child relationships in the view hierarchy help define the chain of objects that is responsible for handling touch events in your application. When the user rotates the device, parent-child relationships also help define how each view's size and position are altered by changes to the user interface orientation.

Figure 1-8 shows a simple example of how the layering of views creates a desired visual effect. In the case of the Clock application, tab-bar and navigation-bar views are mixed together with a custom view to implement the overall interface.

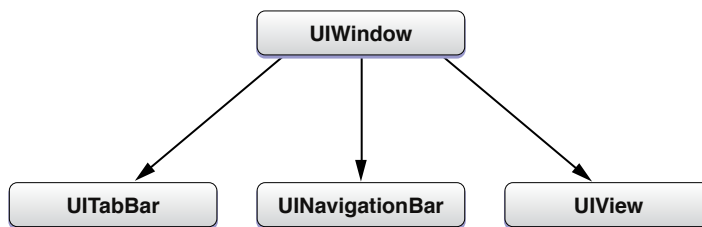


**Figure 1-8** Layered views in the Clock application



If you look at the object relationships for the views in the Clock application, you see that they look something like the relationships shown in Figure 1-9. The window object acts as the root view for the application's tab bar, navigation bar, and custom view.

**Figure 1-9** View hierarchy for the Clock application



There are several ways to build view hierarchies in iPhone applications, including graphically in Interface Builder and programmatically in your code. The following sections show you how to assemble your view hierarchies and, having done that, how to find views in the hierarchy and convert between different view coordinate systems.

## Creating a View Object

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The simplest way to create views is to use Interface Builder and load them from the resulting nib file. From Interface Builder's graphical environment, you can drag new views out of the library and drop them onto a window or another view and build your view hierarchies quickly. Because Interface Builder uses live view objects, when you build your interface graphically you see exactly how it will appear when you load it at runtime. And there is no need to write tedious code to allocate and initialize each view in your view hierarchy.

If you prefer not to use Interface Builder and nib files to create your views, you can create them programmatically. To create a new view object, allocate memory for the view object and send that object an `initWithFrame:` message to initialize it. For example, to create a new instance of the `UIView` class, which you could use as a container for other views, you would use the following code:

```
CGRect viewRect = CGRectMake(0, 0, 100, 100);
UIView* myView = [[UIView alloc] initWithFrame:viewRect];
```

**Note:** Although all system objects support the `initWithFrame:` message, some may have a preferred initialization method that you should use instead. For information about any custom initialization methods, see the reference documentation for the class.

The frame rectangle that you specify when you initialize the view represents the position and size of the view relative to its intended parent view. You must add views to a window or to another view to make them appear on the screen. When you do, UIKit uses the frame rectangle you specify to place the view inside its parent. For information on how to add views to your view hierarchy, see [“Adding and Removing Subviews”](#) (page 26).

## Adding and Removing Subviews

---

Interface Builder is the most convenient way to build view hierarchies because it lets you see exactly how those views will appear at runtime. It then saves the view objects and their hierarchical relationships in a nib file, which the system uses at runtime to recreate the objects and relationships in your application. When a nib file is loaded, the system automatically calls the `UIView` methods needed to recreate the view hierarchy.

If you prefer not to use Interface Builder and nib files to create your view hierarchies, you can create them programmatically instead. A view that has required subviews should create them in its own `initWithFrame:` method to ensure that they are present and initialized with the view. Subviews that are part of your application design (and not required for the operation of your view) should be created outside of your view's initialization code. In iPhone applications, the two most common places to create views and subviews programmatically are the `applicationDidFinishLaunching:` method of your application delegate and the `loadView` method of your view controllers.

To manipulate views in the view hierarchy, you use the following methods:

- To add a subview to a parent, call the `addSubview:` method of the parent view. This method adds the subview to the end of the parent's list of subviews.
- To insert a subview in the middle of the parent's list of subviews, call any of the `insertSubview:...` methods of the parent view.
- To reorder existing subviews inside their parent, call the `bringSubviewToFront:`, `sendSubviewToBack:`, or `exchangeSubviewAtIndex:withSubviewAtIndex:` methods of the parent view. Using these methods is faster than removing the subviews and reinserting them.

- To remove a subview from its parent, call the `removeFromSuperview` method of the subview (not the parent view).

When adding subviews, the current frame rectangle of the subview is used as the initial position of that view inside its parent. You can change that position at any time by changing the `frame` property of the subview. Subviews whose frame lies outside of their parent's visible bounds are not clipped by default. To enable clipping, you must set the `clipsToBounds` property of the parent view to `YES`.

Listing 1-1 shows a sample `applicationDidFinishLaunching:` method of an application delegate object. In this example, the application delegate creates its entire user interface programmatically at launch time. The interface consists of two generic `UIView` objects, which display primary colors. Each view is then embedded inside a window, which is also a subclass of `UIView` and can therefore act as a parent view. Because parents retain their subviews, this method releases the newly created views to prevent them from being over retained.

#### Listing 1-1 Creating a window with views

```
(void)applicationDidFinishLaunching:(UIApplication *)application {
    // Create the window object and assign it to the
    // window instance variable of the application delegate.
    UIWindow *window = [[UIWindow alloc] initWithFrame:[UIScreen mainScreen] bounds];
    window.backgroundColor = [UIColor whiteColor];

    // Create a simple red square
    CGRect redFrame = CGRectMake(10, 10, 100, 100);
    UIView *redView = [[UIView alloc] initWithFrame:redFrame];
    redView.backgroundColor = [UIColor redColor];

    // Create a simple blue square
    CGRect blueFrame = CGRectMake(10, 150, 100, 100);
    UIView *blueView = [[UIView alloc] initWithFrame:blueFrame];
    blueView.backgroundColor = [UIColor blueColor];

    // Add the square views to the window
    [window addSubview:redView];
    [window addSubview:blueView];

    // Once added to the window, release the views to avoid the
    // extra retain count on each of them.
    [redView release];
    [blueView release];

    // Show the window.
    [window makeKeyAndVisible];
}
```

**Important:** When you're considering memory management, think of the subviews as any other collection object. Specifically, when you insert a view as a subview using `addSubview:`, that subview is retained by its superview. Inversely, when you remove the subview from its superview using the `removeFromSuperview` method, the subview is autoreleased. Releasing views after adding them to your view hierarchy prevents them being over retained, which could cause memory leaks.

For more information about Cocoa memory management conventions, see *Memory Management Programming Guide*.

When you add a subview to a parent view, UIKit sends several messages to both the parent and child to let them know what is happening. You can override methods such as `willMoveToSuperview:`, `willMoveToWindow:`, `willRemoveSubview:`, `didAddSubview:`, `didMoveToSuperview:`, and `didMoveToWindow` in your custom views to process changes before and after they occur and to update the state information in your view accordingly.

After you create a view hierarchy, you can use the `superview` property of a view to get its parent or the `subviews` property to get its children. You can also use the `isDescendantOfView:` method to determine whether a view is in the view hierarchy of a parent view. Because the root view in a view hierarchy has no parent, its `superview` property is set to `nil`. For views currently onscreen, the window object is typically the root view of the hierarchy.

You can use the `window` property of a view to get a pointer to the window that currently contains the view (if any). This property is set to `nil` if the view is not currently attached to a window.

## Converting Coordinates in the View Hierarchy

---

At various times, particularly when handling events, an application may need to convert coordinate values from one frame of reference to another. For example, touch events usually report the touch location using the coordinate system of the window, but view objects need that information in the local coordinate system of the view, which may be different. The `UIView` class defines the following methods for converting coordinates to and from the view's local coordinate system:

```
convertPoint:fromView:
convertRect:fromView:
convertPoint:toView:
convertRect:toView:
```

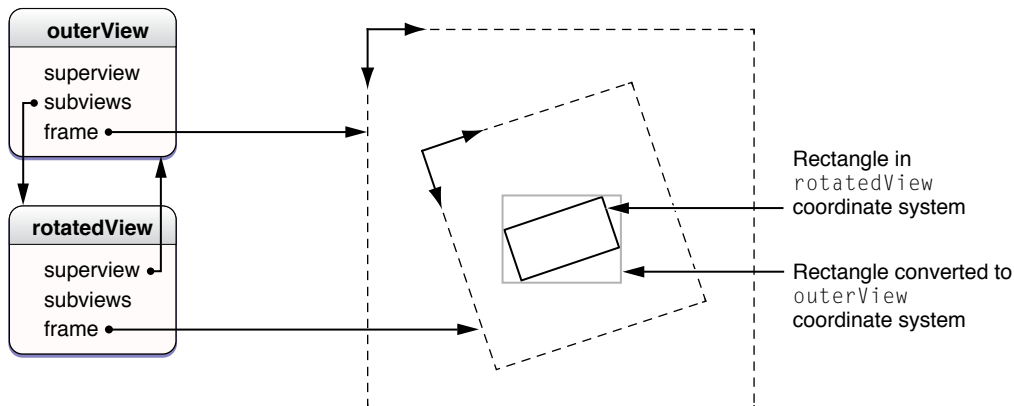
The `convert...:fromView:` methods convert coordinates to the view's local coordinate system, while the `convert...:toView:` methods convert coordinates from the view's local coordinate system to the coordinate system of the specified view. If you specify `nil` as the reference view for any of the methods, the conversions are made to and from the coordinate system of the window that contains the view.

In addition to the `UIView` conversion methods, the `UIWindow` class also defines several conversion methods. These methods are similar to the `UIView` versions except that instead of converting to and from a view's local coordinate system, these methods convert to and from the window's coordinate system.

```
convertPoint:fromWindow:
convertRect:fromWindow:
convertPoint:toWindow:
convertRect:toWindow:
```

Coordinate conversions are straightforward when neither view is rotated or when dealing only with points. When converting rectangles or sizes between views with different rotations, the geometric structure must be altered in a reasonable way so that the resulting coordinates are correct. When converting a rectangle, the `UIView` class assumes that you want to guarantee coverage of the original screen area. To this end, the converted rectangle is enlarged so that when located in the appropriate view, it completely covers the original rectangle. Figure 1-10 shows the conversion of a rectangle in the `rotatedView` object's coordinate system to that of its superview, `outerView`.

**Figure 1-10** Converting values in a rotated view



When converting size information, `UIView` simply treats it as a delta offset from (0.0, 0.0) that you need to convert from one view to another. Though the offset distance remains the same, the balance along the two axes shifts according to the rotation. When converting sizes, UIKit always returns sizes that consist of positive numbers.

## Tagging Views

The `UIView` class contains a `tag` property that you can use to tag individual view objects with an integer value. You can use tags to uniquely identify views inside your view hierarchy and to perform searches for those views at runtime. (Tag-based searches are faster than iterating the view hierarchy yourself.) The default value for the `tag` property is 0.

To search for a tagged view, use the `viewWithTag:` method of `UIView`. This method searches the receiver's subviews using a depth-first search, starting with the receiver itself.

## Modifying Views at Runtime

As applications receive input from the user, they adjust their user interface in response to that input. An application might rearrange the views in its interface, refresh existing views that contain changed data, or load an entirely new set of views. When deciding which techniques to use, consider your interface and what you are trying to achieve. How you initiate these techniques, however, is the same for all applications. The following sections describe these techniques and how you use them to update your user interface at runtime.

**Note:** For background information about how UIKit moves events and messages between itself and your custom code, see “[The View Interaction Model](#)” (page 13) before proceeding.

## Animating Views

Animations provide fluid visual transitions between different states of your user interface. In iOS, animations are used extensively to reposition views, change their size, and even change their alpha value to make them fade in or out. Because this support is crucial for making easy-to-use applications, UIKit simplifies the process of creating animations by integrating support for them directly into the `UIView` class.

The `UIView` class defines several properties that are inherently **animatable**—that is, the view provides built-in support for animating changes in the property from their current value to a new value. Although the work needed to perform the animation is handled for you automatically by the `UIView` class, you must still let the view know that you want the animation to happen. You do this by wrapping changes to the given property in an animation block.

An **animation block** starts with a call to the `beginAnimations:context:` class method of `UIView` and ends with a call to the `commitAnimations` class method. Between these calls, you configure the animation parameters and change the properties you want to animate. As soon as you call the `commitAnimations` method, UIKit performs the animations, animating changes from their current values to the new values you just set. Animation blocks can be nested, but nested animations do not start until the outermost animation block is committed.

Table 1-2 lists the animatable properties of the `UIView` class.

**Table 1-2** Animatable properties

Property	Description
<code>frame</code>	The view's frame rectangle, in superview coordinates.
<code>bounds</code>	The view's bounding rectangle, in view coordinates.
<code>center</code>	The center of the frame, in superview coordinates.
<code>transform</code>	The transform applied to the view, relative to the center of its bounds.
<code>alpha</code>	The view's alpha value, which determines the view's level of transparency.

## Configuring Animation Parameters

In addition to changing property values inside an animation block, you can configure additional parameters that determine how you want the animation to proceed. You do this by calling the following class methods of `UIView`:

- Use the `setAnimationStartDate:` method to set the start date of the animations after the `commitAnimations` method returns. The default behavior is to schedule the animation for immediate execution on the animation thread.
- Use the `setAnimationDelay:` method to set a delay between the time the `commitAnimations` method returns and the animations actually begin.

- Use the `setAnimationDuration:` method to set the number of seconds over which the animations occur.
- Use the `setAnimationCurve:` method to set the relative speed of the animations over their course. For example, the animations can gradually speed up at the beginning, gradually slow down near the end, or remain the same speed throughout.
- Use the `setAnimationRepeatCount:` method to set the number of times the animations repeat.
- Use the `setAnimationRepeatAutoreverses:` method to specify whether the animations reverse automatically when they reach their target value. Combined with the `setAnimationRepeatCount:` method, you can use this method to toggle each property between its initial and final values smoothly over a period of time.

The `commitAnimations` class method returns immediately and before the animations begin. UIKit performs animations in a separate thread and away from your application's main event loop. The `commitAnimations` method posts its animations to this separate thread where they are queued up until they are ready to execute. By default, Core Animation finishes the currently running animation block before starting animations currently on the queue. You can override this behavior and start your animation immediately, however, by passing YES to the `setAnimationBeginsFromCurrentState:` class method within your animation block. This causes the current in-flight animation to stop and the new animation to begin from the current state.

By default, all animatable property changes within an animation block are animated. If you want to prevent some changes made within the block from being animated, use the `setAnimationsEnabled:` method to disable animations temporarily, make your changes, and then reenable them. Any changes made after a `setAnimationsEnabled:` call with the value NO are not animated until a matching call with the value YES occurs or you commit the animation block. Use the `areAnimationsEnabled` method to determine whether animations are currently enabled.

## Configuring an Animation Delegate

---

You can assign a delegate to an animation block and use that delegate to receive messages when the animations begin and end. You might do this to perform additional tasks immediately before and after the animation. You set the delegate using the `setAnimationDelegate:` class method of `UIView`, and use the `setAnimationWillStartSelector:` and `setAnimationDidStopSelector:` methods to specify the selectors that will receive the messages. The signatures of the corresponding methods are as follows:

```
- (void)animationWillStart:(NSString *)animationID context:(void *)context;
- (void)animationDidStop:(NSString *)animationID finished:(NSNumber *)finished
  context:(void *)context;
```

The `animationID` and `context` parameters for both methods are the same parameters that were passed to the `beginAnimations:context:` method at the beginning of the animation block:

- `animationID` - an application-supplied string used to identify animations in an animation block.
- `context` - another application-supplied object you can use to pass additional information to the delegate.

The `setAnimationDidStopSelector:` selector method has an additional argument—a Boolean value that is YES if the animation ran to completion and was not canceled or stopped prematurely by another animation.

## Responding to Layout Changes

---

Whenever the layout of your views changes, UIKit applies each view's autoresizing behaviors and then calls its `layoutSubviews` method to give it a chance to adjust the geometry of its contained subviews further. Layout changes can occur when any of the following happens:

- The size of a view's bounds rectangle changes.
- The content offset value—that is, the origin of the visible content region—of a scroll view changes.
- The transform associated with the view changes.
- The set of Core Animation sublayers associated with the view's layer changes.
- Your application forces layout to occur by calling the `setNeedsLayout` or `layoutIfNeeded` methods of the view.
- Your application forces layout by calling the `setNeedsLayout` method of the view's underlying layer object.

A view's autoresizing behaviors handle the initial job of positioning any subviews. Applying these behaviors guarantees that your views are close to their intended size. For information about how autoresizing behaviors affect the size and position of your views, see [“Autoresizing Behaviors”](#) (page 23).

Sometimes, you might want to adjust the layout of subviews manually using `layoutSubviews`, rather than rely exclusively on autoresizing behaviors. For example, if you are implementing a custom control that is built from several subview elements, by adjusting the subviews manually you can precisely configure the appearance for your control over a range of sizes. Alternatively, a view representing a large scrollable content area could display that content by tiling a set of subviews. During scrolling, views going off one edge of the screen would be recycled and repositioned at the incoming screen edge along with any new content.

**Note:** You can also use the `layoutSubviews` method to adjust the size and position of custom `CALayer` objects attached as sublayers to your view's layer. Managing custom layer hierarchies behind your view lets you perform advanced animations directly using Core Animation. For more information about using Core Animation to manage layer hierarchies, see *Core Animation Programming Guide*.

When writing your layout code, be sure to test your code in each of your application's supported interface orientations. Applications that support both landscape and portrait orientations should verify that layout is handled properly in each orientation. Similarly, your application should be prepared to deal with other system changes, such as the height of the status bar changing. This occurs when a user uses your application while on an active phone call and then hangs up. At hang-up time, the managing view controller may resize its view to account for the shrinking status bar size. Such a change would then filter down to the rest of the views in your application.

## Redrawing Your View's Content

---

Occasionally, changes to your application's data model require that you also change the corresponding user interface. To make those changes, you mark the corresponding views as dirty and in need of an update (using either the `setNeedsDisplay` or `setNeedsDisplayInRect:` methods). Marking views as dirty, as opposed to simply creating a graphics context and drawing, gives the system a chance to process drawing operations more efficiently. For example, if you mark several regions of the same view as dirty during a given cycle, the



system coalesces the dirty regions into a single call to the view's `drawRect:` method. As a result, only one graphics context is created to draw all of the affected regions. This practice is much more efficient than creating several graphics contexts in quick succession.

Views that implement a `drawRect:` method should always check the rectangle passed to the method and use it to limit the scope of their drawing operations. Because drawing is a relatively expensive operation, limiting drawing in this way is a good way to improve performance.

By default, geometry changes to a view do not automatically cause the view to be redrawn. Instead, most geometry changes are handled automatically by Core Animation. Specifically, when you change the `frame`, `bounds`, `center`, or `transform` properties of the view, Core Animation applies the geometry changes to the cached bitmap associated with the view's layer. In many cases, this approach is perfectly acceptable, but if you find the results undesirable, you can force UIKit to redraw your view instead. To prevent Core Animation from applying geometry changes implicitly, set your view's `contentMode` property to `UIViewContentModeRedraw`. For more information about content modes, see [“Content Modes and Scaling”](#) (page 21).

## Hiding Views

---

You can hide or show a view by changing the value in the view's `hidden` property. Setting this property to `YES` hides the view; setting it to `NO` shows it. Hiding a view also hides any embedded subviews as if their own `hidden` property were set.

When you hide a view, it remains in the view hierarchy, but its contents are not drawn and it does not receive touch events. Because it remains in the view hierarchy, a hidden view continues to participate in autoresizing and other layout operations. If you hide a view that is currently the first responder, the view does not automatically resign its first responder status. Events targeted at the first responder are still delivered to the hidden view. For more information about the responder chain, see *Event Handling Guide for iOS*.

## Creating a Custom View

The `UIView` class provides the underlying support for displaying content on the screen and for handling touch events, but its instances draw nothing but a background color using an alpha value and its subviews. If your application needs to display custom content or handle touch events in a specific manner, you must create a custom subclass of `UIView`.

The following sections describe some of the key methods and behaviors you might implement in your custom view objects. For additional subclassing information, see *UIView Class Reference*.

## Initializing Your Custom View

---

Every new view object you define should include a custom `initWithFrame:` initializer method. This method is responsible for initializing the class at creation time and putting your view object into a known state. You use this method when creating instances of your view programmatically in your code.

Listing 1-2 shows a skeletal implementation of a standard `initWithFrame:` method. This method calls the inherited implementation of the method first and then initializes the instance variables and state information of the class before returning the initialized object. Calling the inherited implementation is traditionally performed first so that if there is a problem, you can simply abort your own initialization code and return `nil`.

**Listing 1-2** Initializing a view subclass

```
- (id)initWithFrame:(CGRect)aRect {
    self = [super initWithFrame:aRect];
    if (self) {
        // setup the initial properties of the view
        ...
    }
    return self;
}
```

If you plan to load instances of your custom view class from a nib file, you should be aware that in iOS, the nib-loading code does not use the `initWithFrame:` method to instantiate new view objects. Instead, it uses the `initWithCoder:` method that is defined as part of the `NSCoding` protocol.

Even if your view adopts the `NSCoding` protocol, Interface Builder does not know about your view's custom properties and therefore does not encode those properties into the nib file. As a result, your own `initWithCoder:` method does not have the information it needs to properly initialize the class when it is loaded from a nib file. To solve this problem, you can implement the `awakeFromNib` method in your class and use it to initialize your class specifically when it is loaded from a nib file.

## Drawing Your View's Content

As you make changes to your view's content, you notify the system that parts of that view need to be redrawn using the `setNeedsDisplay` or `setNeedsDisplayInRect:` methods. When the application returns to its run loop, it coalesces any drawing requests and computes the specific parts of your interface that need to be updated. It then begins traversing your view hierarchy and sending `drawRect:` messages to the views that require updates. The traversal starts with the root view of your hierarchy and proceeds down through the subviews, processing them from back to front. Views that display custom content inside their visible bounds must implement the `drawRect:` method to render that content.

Before calling your view's `drawRect:` method, UIKit configures the drawing environment for your view. It creates a graphics context and adjusts its coordinate system and clipping region to match the coordinate system and bounds of your view. Thus, by the time your `drawRect:` method is called, you can simply begin drawing using UIKit classes and functions, Quartz functions, or a combination of them all. If you need to access the current graphics context, you can get a pointer to it using the `UIGraphicsGetCurrentContext` function.

**Important:** The current graphics context is valid only for the duration of one call to your view's `drawRect:` method. UIKit may create a different graphics context for each subsequent call to this method, so you should not try to cache the object and use it later.

Listing 1-3 shows a simple implementation of a `drawRect:` method that draws a 10-pixel-wide red border around the view. Because UIKit drawing operations use Quartz for their underlying implementations, you can mix drawing calls as shown here and still get the results you expect.

**Listing 1-3** A drawing method

```
- (void)drawRect:(CGRect)rect {
    CGContextRef context = UIGraphicsGetCurrentContext();
    CGRect myFrame = self.bounds;

    CGContextSetLineWidth(context, 10);

    [[UIColor redColor] set];
    UIRectFrame(myFrame);
}
```

If you know that your view's drawing code always covers the entire surface of the view with opaque content, you can improve the overall efficiency of your drawing code by setting the `opaque` property of your view to YES. When you mark a view as opaque, UIKit avoids drawing content that is located immediately behind your view. This not only reduces the amount of time spent drawing but also minimizes the work that must be done to composite that content together. You should set this property to YES only if you know your view provides opaque content. If your view cannot guarantee that its contents are always opaque, you should set the property to NO.

Another way to improve drawing performance, especially during scrolling, is to set the `clearsContextBeforeDrawing` property of your view to NO. When this property is set to YES, UIKit automatically fills the area to be updated by your `drawRect:` method with transparent black before calling your method. Setting this property to NO eliminates the overhead for that fill operation but puts the burden on your application to completely redraw the portions of your view inside the update rectangle passed to your `drawRect:` method. Such an optimization is usually a good tradeoff during scrolling, however.

## Responding to Events

---

The `UIView` class is a subclass of `UIResponder` and is therefore capable of receiving touch events corresponding to user interactions with the view's contents. Touch events start at the view in which the touch occurred and are passed up the responder chain until they are handled. Because views are themselves responders, they participate in the responder chain and therefore can receive touch events dispatched to them from any of their associated subviews.

Views that handle touch events typically implement all of the following methods, which are described in more detail in *Event Handling Guide for iOS*.

```
touchesBegan:withEvent:
touchesMoved:withEvent:
touchesEnded:withEvent:
touchesCancelled:withEvent:
```

Remember that, by default, views respond to only one touch at a time. If the user puts a second finger down, the system ignores the touch event and does not report it to your view. If you plan to track multifinger gestures from your view's event-handler methods, you need to reenable multi-touch events by setting the `multipleTouchEnabled` property of your view to YES.

Some views, such as labels and images, disable event handling altogether initially. You can control whether a view handles events at all by changing the value of the view's `userInteractionEnabled` property. You might temporarily set this property to NO to prevent the user from manipulating the contents of your view while a long operation is pending. To prevent events from reaching any of your views, you can also use the

`beginIgnoringInteractionEvents` and `endIgnoringInteractionEvents` methods of the `UIApplication` object. These methods affect the delivery of events for the entire application, not just for a single view.

As it handles touch events, UIKit uses the `hitTest:withEvent:` and `pointInside:withEvent:` methods of `UIView` to determine whether a touch event occurred in a given view. Although you rarely need to override these methods, you could do so to implement custom touch behaviors for your view. For example, you could override these methods to prevent subviews from handling touch events.

## Cleaning Up After Your View

---

If your view class allocates any memory, stores references to any custom objects, or holds resources that must be released when the view is released, you must implement a `dealloc` method. The system calls the `dealloc` method when your view's retain count reaches zero and your view is about to be deallocated itself. Your implementation of this method should release the objects and resources it holds and then call the inherited implementation, as shown in Listing 1-4.

### Listing 1-4 Implementing the `dealloc` method

```
- (void)dealloc {
    // Release a retained UIColor object
    [color release];

    // Call the inherited implementation
    [super dealloc];
}
```

# Graphics and Drawing

---

**Important:** This document contains information that used to be in *iOS Application Programming Guide*. The information in this document has not been updated specifically for iOS 4.0.

High-quality graphics are an important part of your application's user interface. Providing high-quality graphics not only makes your application look good, but it also makes your application look like a natural extension to the rest of the system. iOS provides two primary paths for creating high-quality graphics in your system: OpenGL or native rendering using Quartz, Core Animation, and UIKit.

The OpenGL frameworks are geared primarily toward game development or applications that require high frame rates. OpenGL is a C-based interface used to create 2D and 3D content on desktop computers. iOS supports OpenGL drawing through the OpenGL ES framework, which provides support for both the OpenGL ES 2.0 and OpenGL ES v1.1 specifications. OpenGL ES is designed specifically for use on embedded hardware systems and differs in many ways from desktop versions of OpenGL.

For developers who want a more object-oriented drawing approach, iOS provides Quartz, Core Animation, and the graphics support in UIKit. Quartz is the main drawing interface, providing support for path-based drawing, anti-aliased rendering, gradient fill patterns, images, colors, coordinate-space transformations, and PDF document creation, display, and parsing. UIKit provides Objective-C wrappers for Quartz images and color manipulations. Core Animation provides the underlying support for animating changes in many UIKit view properties and can also be used to implement custom animations.

This chapter provides an overview of the drawing process for iPhone applications, along with specific drawing techniques for each of the supported drawing technologies. This chapter also provides tips and guidance on how to optimize your drawing code for the iOS platform.

**Important:** The UIKit classes are generally not thread safe. All drawing-related operations should be performed on your application's main thread.

## The UIKit Graphics System

In iOS, all drawing—regardless of whether it involves OpenGL, Quartz, UIKit, or Core Animation—occurs within the confines of a `UIView` object. Views define the portion of the screen in which drawing occurs. If you use system-provided views, this drawing is handled for you automatically. If you define custom views, however, you must provide the drawing code yourself. For applications that draw using OpenGL, once you set up your rendering surface, you use the drawing model specified by OpenGL.

For Quartz, Core Animation, and UIKit, you use the drawing concepts described in the following sections.

## The View Drawing Cycle

---

The basic drawing model for `UIView` objects involves updating content on demand. The `UIView` class makes the update process easier and more efficient, however, by gathering the update requests you make and delivering them to your drawing code at the most appropriate time.

Whenever a portion of your view needs to be redrawn, the `UIView` object's built-in drawing code calls its `drawRect:` method. It passes this method a rectangle indicating the portion of your view that needs to be redrawn. You override this method in your custom view subclasses and use it to draw the contents of your view. The first time your view is drawn, the rectangle passed to the `drawRect:` method contains your view's entire visible area. During subsequent calls, however, this rectangle represents only the portion of the view that actually needs to be redrawn. There are several actions that can trigger a view update:

- Moving or removing another view that was partially obscuring your view
- Making a previously hidden view visible again by setting its `hidden` property to `NO`
- Scrolling a view off the screen and then back on
- Explicitly calling the `setNeedsDisplay` or `setNeedsDisplayInRect:` method of your view

After calling your `drawRect:` method, the view marks itself as updated and waits for new actions to arrive and trigger another update cycle. If your view displays static content, then all you need to do is respond to changes in your view's visibility caused by scrolling and the presence of other views. If you update your view's content periodically, however, you must determine when to call the `setNeedsDisplay` or `setNeedsDisplayInRect:` method to trigger an update. For example, if you were updating content several times a second, you might want to set up a timer to update your view. You might also update your view in response to user interactions or the creation of new content in your view.

## Coordinates and Coordinate Transforms

---

As described in “[View Coordinate Systems](#)” (page 18), the origin of a window or view is located in its top-left corner, and positive coordinate values extend down and to the right of this origin. When you write your drawing code, you use this coordinate system to specify the location of individual points for the content you draw.

If you need to make changes to the default coordinate system, you do so by modifying the current transformation matrix. The **current transformation matrix (CTM)** is a mathematical matrix that maps points in your view's coordinate system to points on the device's screen. When your view's `drawRect:` method is first called, the CTM is configured so that the origin of the coordinate system matches the your view's origin and its positive axes extend down and to the right. However, you can change the CTM by adding scaling, rotation, and translation factors to it and thereby change the size, orientation, and position of the default coordinate system relative to the underlying view or window.

Modifying the CTM is the standard technique used to draw content in your view because it involves much less work. If you want to draw a 10 x 10 square starting at the point (20, 20) in the current drawing system, you could create a path that moves to (20, 20) and then draws the needed set of lines to complete the square. If you decide later that you want to move that square to the point (10, 10), however, you would have to recreate the path with the new starting point. In fact, you would have to recreate the path every time you changed the origin. Creating paths is a relatively expensive operation, but creating a square whose origin is at (0, 0) and modifying the CTM to match the desired drawing origin is cheap by comparison.

In the Core Graphics framework, there are two ways to modify the CTM. You can modify the CTM directly using the CTM manipulation functions defined in *CGContext Reference*. You can also create a `CGAffineTransform` structure, apply any transformations you want, and then concatenate that transform onto the CTM. Using an affine transform lets you group transformations and then apply them to the CTM all at once. You can also evaluate and invert affine transforms and use them to modify point, size, and rectangle values in your code. For more information on using affine transforms, see *Quartz 2D Programming Guide* and *CGAffineTransform Reference*.

## Graphics Contexts

---

Before calling your custom `drawRect:` method, the view object automatically configures its drawing environment so that your code can start drawing immediately. As part of this configuration, the `UIView` object creates a graphics context (a `CGContextRef` opaque type) for the current drawing environment. This graphics context contains the information the drawing system needs to perform any subsequent drawing commands. It defines basic drawing attributes such as the colors to use when drawing, the clipping area, line width and style information, font information, compositing options, and several others.

You can create custom graphics context objects in situations where you want to draw somewhere other than your view. In Quartz, you primarily do this when you want to capture a series of drawing commands and use them to create an image or a PDF file. To create the context, you use the `CGBitmapContextCreate` or `CGPDFContextCreate` function. Once you have the context, you can pass it to the drawing functions needed to create your content.

When creating custom contexts, the coordinate system for those contexts is different than the native coordinate system used by iOS. Instead of the origin being in the upper-left corner of the drawing surface, it is in the lower-left corner and the axes point up and to the right. The coordinates you specify in your drawing commands must take this into consideration or the resulting image or PDF file may appear wrong when rendered.

**Important:** Because you use a lower-left origin when drawing into a bitmap or PDF context, you must compensate for that coordinate system when rendering the resulting content into a view. In other words, if you create an image and draw it using the `CGContextDrawImage` function, the image will appear upside down by default. To correct for this, you must invert the y axis of the CTM (by multiplying it by  $-1$ ) and shift the origin from the lower-left corner to the upper-left corner of the view.

If you use a `UIImage` object to wrap a `CGImageRef` you create, you do not need to modify the CTM. The `UIImage` object automatically compensates for the inverted coordinate system of the `CGImageRef` type.

For more information about graphics contexts, modifying the graphics state information, and using graphics contexts to create custom content, see *Quartz 2D Programming Guide*. For a list of functions used in conjunction with graphics contexts, see *CGContext Reference*, *CGBitmapContext Reference*, and *CGPDFContext Reference*.

## Points Versus Pixels

---

The Quartz drawing system uses a vector-based drawing model. Compared to a raster-based drawing model, in which drawing commands operate on individual pixels, drawing commands in Quartz are specified using a fixed-scale drawing space, known as the **user coordinate space**. iOS then maps the coordinates in this drawing space onto the actual pixels of the device. The advantage of this model is that graphics drawn using vector commands continue to look good when scaled up or down using an affine transform.

In order to maintain the precision inherent in a vector-based drawing system, drawing coordinates are specified using floating-point values instead of integers. The use of floating-point values for coordinates makes it possible for you to specify the location of your program's content very precisely. For the most part, you do not have to worry about how those values are eventually mapped to the device's screen.

The user coordinate space is the environment that you use for all of your drawing commands. The units of this space are measured in points. The **device coordinate space** refers to the native coordinate space of the device, which is measured in pixels. By default, one point in user coordinate space is equal to one pixel in device space, which results in 1 point equaling 1/160th of an inch. You should not assume that this 1-to-1 ratio will always be the case, however.

## Color and Color Spaces

---

iOS supports the full range of color spaces available in Quartz; however, most applications should need only the RGB color space. Because iOS is designed to run on embedded hardware and display graphics on a screen, the RGB color space is the most appropriate one to use.

The `UIColor` object provides convenience methods for specifying color values using RGB, HSB, and grayscale values. When creating colors in this way, you never need to specify the color space. It is determined for you automatically by the `UIColor` object.

You can also use the `CGContextSetRGBStrokeColor` and `CGContextSetRGBFillColor` functions in the Core Graphics framework to create and set colors. Although the Core Graphics framework includes support for creating colors using other color spaces, and for creating custom color spaces, using those colors in your drawing code is not recommended. Your drawing code should always use RGB colors.

## Supported Image Formats

---

Table 2-1 lists the image formats supported directly by iOS. Of these formats, the PNG format is the one most recommended for use in your applications.

**Table 2-1** Supported image formats

Format	Filename extensions
Portable Network Graphic (PNG)	.png
Tagged Image File Format (TIFF)	.tiff, .tif
Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG)	.jpeg, .jpg
Graphic Interchange Format (GIF)	.gif
Windows Bitmap Format (DIB)	.bmp, .BMPf
Windows Icon Format	.ico
Windows Cursor	.cur
XWindow bitmap	.xbm



## Drawing Tips

The following sections provide tips on how to write quality drawing code while ensuring that your application looks appealing to end users.

### Deciding When to Use Custom Drawing Code

---

Depending on the type of application you are creating, it may be possible to use little or no custom drawing code. Although immersive applications typically make extensive use of custom drawing code, utility and productivity applications can often use standard views and controls to display their content.

The use of custom drawing code should be limited to situations where the content you display needs to change dynamically. For example, a drawing application would need to use custom drawing code to track the user's drawing commands and a game would be updating the screen constantly to reflect the changing game environment. In those situations, you would need to choose an appropriate drawing technology and create a custom view class to handle events and update the display appropriately.

On the other hand, if the bulk of your application's interface is fixed, you can render the interface in advance to one or more image files and display those images at runtime using `UIImageView` objects. You can layer image views with other content as needed to build your interface. For example, you could use `UILabel` objects to display configurable text and include buttons or other controls to provide interactivity.

### Improving Drawing Performance

---

Drawing is a relatively expensive operation on any platform, and optimizing your drawing code should always be an important step in your development process. Table 2-2 lists several tips for ensuring that your drawing code is as optimal as possible. In addition to these tips, you should always use the available performance tools to test your code and remove hotspots and redundancies.

**Table 2-2** Tips for improving drawing performance

Tip	Action
Draw minimally	During each update cycle, you should update only the portions of your view that actually changed. If you are using the <code>drawRect:</code> method of <code>UIView</code> to do your drawing, use the update rectangle passed to that method to limit the scope of your drawing. For OpenGL drawing, you must track updates yourself.
Mark opaque views as such	Compositing a view whose contents are opaque requires much less effort than compositing one that is partially transparent. To make a view opaque, the contents of the view must not contain any transparency and the <code>opaque</code> property of the view must be set to <code>YES</code> .
Remove alpha channels from opaque PNG files	If every pixel of a PNG image is opaque, removing the alpha channel avoids the need to blend the layers containing that image. This simplifies compositing of the image considerably and improves drawing performance.

Tip	Action
Reuse table cells and views during scrolling	Creating new views during scrolling should be avoided at all costs. Taking the time to create new views reduces the amount of time available for updating the screen, which leads to uneven scrolling behavior.
Avoid clearing the previous content during scrolling	By default, UIKit clears a view's current context buffer prior to calling its <code>drawRect:</code> method to update that same area. If you are responding to scrolling events in your view, clearing this region repeatedly during scrolling updates can be expensive. To disable the behavior, you can change the value in the <code>clearsContextBeforeDrawing</code> property to <code>NO</code> .
Minimize graphics state changes while drawing	Changing the graphics state requires effort by the window server. If you need to draw content that uses similar state information, try to draw that content together to reduce the number of state changes needed.

## Maintaining Image Quality

---

Providing high-quality images for your user interface should be a priority in your design. Images provide a reasonably efficient way to display complicated graphics and should be used wherever they are appropriate. When creating images for your application, keep the following guidelines in mind:

- **Use the PNG format for images.** The PNG format provides high-quality image content and is the preferred image format for iOS. In addition, iOS includes an optimized drawing path for PNG images that is typically more efficient than other formats.
- **Create images so that they do not need resizing.** If you plan to use an image at a particular size, be sure to create the corresponding image resource at that size. Do not create a larger image and scale it down to fit, because scaling requires additional CPU cycles and requires interpolation. If you need to present an image at variable sizes, include multiple versions of the image at different sizes and scale down from an image that is relatively close to the target size.

## Drawing with Quartz and UIKit

Quartz is the general name for the native window server and drawing technology in iOS. The Core Graphics framework is at the heart of Quartz, and is the primary interface you use for drawing content. This framework provides data types and functions for manipulating the following:

- Graphics contexts
- Paths
- Images and bitmaps
- Transparency layers
- Colors, pattern colors, and color spaces
- Gradients and shadings
- Fonts

- PDF content

UIKit builds on the basic features of Quartz by providing a focused set of classes for graphics-related operations. The UIKit graphics classes are not intended as a comprehensive set of drawing tools—Core Graphics already provides that. Instead, they provide drawing support for other UIKit classes. UIKit support includes the following classes and functions:

- `UIImage`, which implements an immutable class for displaying images
- `UIColor`, which provides basic support for device colors
- `UIFont`, which provides font information for classes that need it
- `UIScreen`, which provides basic information about the screen
- Functions for generating a JPEG or PNG representation of a `UIImage` object
- Functions for drawing rectangles and clipping the drawing area
- Functions for changing and getting the current graphics context

For information about the classes and methods that comprise UIKit, see *UIKit Framework Reference*. For more information about the opaque types and functions that comprise the Core Graphics framework, see *Core Graphics Framework Reference*.

## Configuring the Graphics Context

By the time your `drawRect:` method is called, your view's built-in drawing code has already created and configured a default graphics context for you. You can retrieve a pointer to this graphics context by calling the `UIGraphicsGetCurrentContext` function. This function returns a reference to a `CGContextRef` type, which you pass to Core Graphics functions to modify the current graphics state. Table 2-3 lists the main functions you use to set different aspects of the graphics state. For a complete list of functions, see *CGContext Reference*. This table also lists UIKit alternatives where they exist.

**Table 2-3** Core graphics functions for modifying graphics state

Graphics state	Core Graphics functions	UIKit alternatives
Current transformation matrix (CTM)	<code>CGContextRotateCTM</code> <code>CGContextScaleCTM</code> <code>CGContextTranslateCTM</code> <code>CGContextConcatCTM</code>	None
Clipping area	<code>CGContextClipToRect</code>	None
Line: Width, join, cap, dash, miter limit	<code>CGContextSetLineWidth</code> <code>CGContextSetLineJoin</code> <code>CGContextSetLineCap</code> <code>CGContextSetLineDash</code> <code>CGContextSetMiterLimit</code>	None

Graphics state	Core Graphics functions	UIKit alternatives
Accuracy of curve estimation (flatness)	<code>CGContextSetFlatness</code>	None
Anti-aliasing setting	<code>CGContextSetAllowsAntialiasing</code>	None
Color: Fill and stroke settings	<code>CGContextSetRGBFillColor</code> <code>CGContextSetRGBStrokeColor</code>	UIColor class
Alpha value (transparency)	<code>CGContextSetAlpha</code>	None
Rendering intent	<code>CGContextSetRenderingIntent</code>	None
Color space: Fill and stroke settings	<code>CGContextSetFillColorSpace</code> <code>CGContextSetStrokeColorSpace</code>	None
Text: Font, font size, character spacing, text drawing mode	<code>CGContextSetFont</code> <code>CGContextSetFontSize</code> <code>CGContextSetCharacterSpacing</code>	UIFont class
Blend mode	<code>CGContextSetBlendMode</code>	The UIImage class and various drawing functions let you specify which blend mode to use.

The graphics context contains a stack of saved graphics states. When Quartz creates a graphics context, the stack is empty. Using the `CGContextSaveGState` function pushes a copy of the current graphics state onto the stack. Thereafter, modifications you make to the graphics state affect subsequent drawing operations but do not affect the copy stored on the stack. When you are done making modifications, you can return to the previous graphics state by popping the saved state off the top of the stack using the `CGContextRestoreGState` function. Pushing and popping graphics states in this manner is a fast way to return to a previous state and eliminates the need to undo each state change individually. It is also the only way to restore some aspects of the state, such as the clipping path, back to their original settings.

For general information about graphics contexts and using them to configure the drawing environment, see “Graphics Contexts” in *Quartz 2D Programming Guide*.

## Creating and Drawing Images

iOS provides support for loading and displaying images using both the UIKit and Core Graphics frameworks. How you determine which classes and functions to use to draw images depends on how you intend to use them. Whenever possible, though, it is recommended that you use the classes of UIKit for representing images in your code. Table 2-4 lists some of the usage scenarios and the recommended options for handling them.

**Table 2-4** Usage scenarios for images

Scenario	Recommended usage
Display an image as the content of a view	Use a <code>UIImageView</code> class to load and display the image. This option assumes that your view's only content is an image. You can still layer other views on top of the image view to draw additional controls or content.
Display an image as an adornment for part of a view	Load and draw the image using the <code>UIImage</code> class.
Save some bitmap data into an image object	Use the <code>UIGraphicsBeginImageContext</code> function to create a new image-based graphics context. After creating this context, you can draw your image contents into it and then use the <code>UIGraphicsGetImageFromCurrentImageContext</code> function to generate an image based on what you drew. (If desired, you can even continue drawing and generate additional images.) When you are done creating images, use the <code>UIGraphicsEndImageContext</code> function to close the graphic context.  If you prefer using Core Graphics, you can use the <code>CGBitmapContextCreate</code> function to create a bitmap graphics context and draw your image contents into it. When you finish drawing, use the <code>CGBitmapContextCreateImage</code> function to create a <code>CGImageRef</code> from the bitmap context. You can draw the Core Graphics image directly or use it to initialize a <code>UIImage</code> object.
Save an image as a JPEG or PNG file	Create a <code>UIImage</code> object from the original image data. Call the <code>UIImageJPEGRepresentation</code> or <code>UIImagePNGRepresentation</code> function to get an <code>NSData</code> object, and use that object's methods to save the data to a file.

The following example shows how to load an image from your application's bundle. You can subsequently use this image object to initialize a `UIImageView` object, or you can store it and draw it explicitly in your view's `drawRect:` method.

```
NSString* imagePath = [[NSBundle mainBundle] pathForResource:@"myImage"
ofType:@"png"];
UIImage* myImageObj = [[UIImage alloc] initWithContentsOfFile:imagePath];
```

To draw an image explicitly in your view's `drawRect:` method, you can use any of the drawing methods available in `UIImage`. These methods let you specify where in your view you want to draw the image and therefore do not require you to create and apply a separate transform prior to drawing. Assuming you stored the previously loaded image in a member variable called `anImage`, the following example draws that image at the point (10, 10) in the view.

```
- (void)drawRect:(CGRect)rect
{
    // Draw the image
    [anImage drawAtPoint:CGPointMake(10, 10)];
}
```

**Important:** If you use the `CGContextDrawImage` function to draw bitmap images directly, the image data is inverted along the y axis by default. This is because Quartz images assume a coordinate system with a lower-left corner origin and positive coordinate axes extending up and to the right from that point. Although you can apply a transform before drawing, the simpler (and recommended) way to draw Quartz images is to wrap them in a `UIImage` object, which compensates for this difference in coordinate spaces automatically. For more information on creating and drawing images using Core Graphics, see *Quartz 2D Programming Guide*.

## Creating and Drawing Paths

---

A path is a description of a 2D geometric scene that uses a sequence of lines and Bézier curves to represent that scene. UIKit includes the `UIRectFrame` and `UIRectFill` functions (among others) for drawing simple paths such as rectangles in your views. Core Graphics also includes convenience functions for creating simple paths such as rectangles and ellipses. For more complex paths, you must create the path yourself using the functions of the Core Graphics framework.

To create a path, you use the `CGContextBeginPath` function to configure the graphics context to receive path commands. After calling that function, you use other path-related functions to set the path's starting point, draw lines and curves, add rectangles and ellipses, and so on. When you are done specifying the path geometry, you can paint the path directly or create a `CGPathRef` or `CGMutablePathRef` data type to store a reference to that path for later use.

When you want to draw a path in your view, you can stroke it, fill it, or do both. Stroking a path with a function such as `CGContextStrokePath` creates a line centered on the path using the current stroke color. Filling the path with the `CGContextFillPath` function uses the current fill color or fill pattern to fill the area enclosed by the path's line segments.

For more information on how to draw paths, including information about how you specify the points for complex path elements, see "Paths" in *Quartz 2D Programming Guide*. For information on the functions you use to create paths, see *CGContext Reference* and *CGPath Reference*.

## Creating Patterns, Gradients, and Shadings

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The Core Graphics framework includes additional functions for creating patterns, gradients, and shadings. You use these types to create non monochrome colors and use them to fill the paths you create. Patterns are created from repeating images or content. Gradients and shadings provide different ways to create smooth transitions from color to color.

The details for creating and using patterns, gradients, and shadings are all covered in *Quartz 2D Programming Guide*.

## Drawing with OpenGL ES

The **Open Graphics Library (OpenGL)** is a cross-platform C-based interface used to create 2D and 3D content on desktop systems. It is typically used by games developers or anyone needing to perform drawing with high frame rates. You use OpenGL functions to specify primitive structures such as points, lines, and polygons

and the textures and special effects to apply to those structures to enhance their appearance. The functions you call send graphics commands to the underlying hardware, where they are then rendered. Because rendering is done mostly in hardware, OpenGL drawing is usually very fast.

OpenGL for Embedded Systems is a pared-down version of OpenGL that is designed for mobile devices and takes advantage of modern graphics hardware. If you want to create OpenGL content for iOS-based devices—that is, iPhone or iPod Touch—you'll use OpenGL ES. The OpenGL ES framework (`OpenGLES.framework`) provided with iOS supports both the OpenGL ES v1.1 and OpenGL ES v2.0 specifications.

For more information about OpenGL ES support in iOS, see *OpenGL ES Programming Guide for iOS*.

## Applying Core Animation Effects

Core Animation is an Objective-C framework that provides infrastructure for creating fluid, real-time animations quickly and easily. Core Animation is not a drawing technology itself, in the sense that it does not provide primitive routines for creating shapes, images, or other types of content. Instead, it is a technology for manipulating and displaying content that you created using other technologies.

Most applications can benefit from using Core Animation in some form in iOS. Animations provide feedback to the user about what is happening. For example, when the user navigates through the Settings application, screens slide in and out of view based on whether the user is navigating further down the preferences hierarchy or back up to the root node. This kind of feedback is important and provides contextual information for the user. It also enhances the visual style of an application.

In most cases, you may be able to reap the benefits of Core Animation with very little effort. For example, several properties of the `UIView` class (including the view's frame, center, color, and opacity—among others) can be configured to trigger animations when their values change. You have to do some work to let UIKit know that you want these animations performed, but the animations themselves are created and run automatically for you. For information about how to trigger the built-in view animations, see [“Animating Views”](#) (page 30).

When you go beyond the basic animations, you must interact more directly with Core Animation classes and methods. The following sections provide information about Core Animation and show you how to work with its classes and methods to create typical animations in iOS. For additional information about Core Animation and how to use it, see *Core Animation Programming Guide*.

## About Layers

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The key technology in Core Animation is the layer object. Layers are lightweight objects that are similar in nature to views, but that are actually model objects that encapsulate geometry, timing, and visual properties for the content you want to display. The content itself is provided in one of three ways:

- You can assign a `CGImageRef` to the `contents` property of the layer object.
- You can assign a delegate to the layer and let the delegate handle the drawing.
- You can subclass `CALayer` and override one of the display methods.

When you manipulate a layer object's properties, what you are actually manipulating is the model-level data that determines how the associated content should be displayed. The actual rendering of that content is handled separately from your code and is heavily optimized to ensure it is fast. All you must do is set the layer content, configure the animation properties, and then let Core Animation take over.

For more information about layers and how they are used, see *Core Animation Programming Guide*.

## About Animations

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When it comes to animating layers, Core Animation uses separate animation objects to control the timing and behavior of the animation. The `CAAnimation` class and its subclasses provide different types of animation behaviors that you can use in your code. You can create simple animations that migrate a property from one value to another, or you can create complex keyframe animations that track the animation through the set of values and timing functions you provide.

Core Animation also lets you group multiple animations together into a single unit, called a transaction. The `CATransaction` object manages the group of animations as a unit. You can also use the methods of this class to set the duration of the animation.

For examples of how to create custom animations, see *Animation Types and Timing Programming Guide*.



# Document Revision History

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This table describes the changes to *View Programming Guide for iOS*.

Date	Notes
2010-07-07	Changed the title from "View Programming Guide for iPhone OS."
2010-05-17	New document describing the creation and management of views, windows, and other visual interface elements.

**REVISION HISTORY**

Document Revision History