GtkAda User's Guide

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1 Introduction: What is GtkAda ?

GtkAda is a high-level portable graphical toolkit, based on the gtk+ toolkit, one of the official GNU toolkits. It makes it easy to create portable user interfaces for multiple platforms, including most platforms that have a X11 server and Win32 platforms.

Although it is based on a C library, GtkAda uses some advanced Ada features such as tagged types, generic packages, access to subprograms, and exceptions to make it easier to use and design interfaces. For efficiency reasons, it does not use controlled types, but takes care of all the memory management for you in other ways.

As a result, this library provides a *secure*, *easy to use* and *extensible* toolkit.

Compared to the C library, GtkAda provides type safety (especially in the callbacks area), and object-oriented programming. As opposed to common knowledge, it requires *less* type casting than with in C. Its efficiency is about the same as the C library through the use of inline subprograms.

GtkAda comes with a complete integration to the graphical interface builder `Glad`. This makes it even easier to develop interfaces, since you just have to click to create a description of the window and all the dialogs. Ada code can simply import that description to bring the windows to life.

Under some platforms, GtkAda also provides a bridge to use OpenGL, with which you can create graphical applications that display 3D graphics, and display them in a GtkAda window, as with any other 2D graphics. This manual does not document OpenGL at all, see any book on OpenGL, or the specification that came with your OpenGL library, for more information.

The following Internet sites will always contain the latest public packages for `GtkAda`, `gtk+`, `Glade` and `Cairo`

`http://libre.adacore.com/libre/tools/GtkAda/`

`http://www.gtk.org/`

`http://glade.gnome.org/`

`http://www.cairographics.org/`

The scheme used for GtkAda's version numbers is the following: the major and minor version number is the same as for the underlying gtk+ library (e.g 2.18). The micro version number depends on GtkAda's release number.

This toolkit was tested on the following systems:

- GNU Linux/x86
- GNU Linux/x86-64
- GNU Linux/ia64
- Solaris/sparc
- Windows XP/Vista/2003

with the latest version of the `GNAT` compiler, developed and supported by Ada Core Technologies (see `http://www.adacore.com`).

This version of GtkAda is known to be compatible with `gtk+` **2.16.x** and **2.18.x**. This release may or may not be compatible with older versions of gtk+.

This version of GtkAda is compatible with `Glade` **version 3.7.3**.

This document does not describe all the widgets available in GtkAda, nor does it try to explain all the subprograms. The GtkAda Reference Manual provides this documentation instead, as well as the GtkAda sources spec files themselves, whose extension is '`.ads`'.

No complete example is provided in this documentation. Instead, please refer to the examples that you can find in the '`testgtk/`' and '`examples/`' directory in the GtkAda distribution, since these are more up-to-date (and more extensive). They are heavily commented, and are likely to contain a lot of information that you might find interesting.

If you are interested in getting support for GtkAda–including priority bug fixes, early releases, help in using the toolkit, help in designing your interface, and on site consulting–please contact AdaCore (`mailto:sales@adacore.com`).

2 Getting started with GtkAda

This chapter describes how to start a new GtkAda application. It explains the basic features of the toolkit, and shows how to compile and run your application.

It also gives a brief overview of the extensive widget hierarchy available in GtkAda.

2.1 How to build and install GtkAda

This section explains how to build and install GtkAda on your machine.

On Windows systems, we provide an automatic installer that installs GtkAda along with dependent components like gtk+ libraries and `Glade`. If you are a Windows user, you can skip the rest of this section which will address installation on Unix systems.

On Unix systems, you first need to install the glib and gtk+ libraries. Download the compatible packages from the gtk+ web site (`http://www.gtk.org`), compile and install it. Alternatively, if your operating system vendor provides glib and gtk+ development packages, you can install the libraries they provide.

Change your PATH environment variable so that the script `pkg-config`, which indicates where gtk+ was installed and what libraries it needs is automatically found by GtkAda. You will no longer need this script once GtkAda is installed, unless you develop part of your application in C.

OpenGL support will not be activated in GtkAda unless you already have the OpenGL libraries on your systems. You can for instance look at Mesa, which is free implementation.

Optionally, you can also install the `Glade` interface builder. Get the compatible package from the Glade web site, compile and install it.

You can finally download the latest version of GtkAda from the web site. Untar and uncompress the package, then simply do the following steps:

```
$ ./configure
$ make
$ make tests     (this step is optional)
$ make install
```

As usual with the `configure` script, you can specify where you want to install the GtkAda libraries by using the `--prefix` switch.

You can specify the switch `--disable-shared` to prevent building shared libraries, even if your system supports them (by default, both shared and static libraries are installed). By default, your application will be linked statically with the GtkAda libraries. You can override this default by specifying `--enable-shared` as a switch to `configure`, although you can override it later through the LIBRARY_TYPE scenario variable.

If you have some OpenGL libraries installed on your system, you can make sure that `configure` finds them by specifying the `--with-GL-prefix` switch on the command line. `configure` should be able to automatically detect the libraries however.

You must then make sure that the system will be able to find the dynamic libraries at run time if your application uses them. Typically, you would do one of the following:

- run `ldconfig` if you installed GtkAda in one of the standard location and you are super-user on your machine

- edit /etc/ld.conf if you are super-user but did not install GtkAda in one of the standard location. Add the path that contains libgtkada.so (by default '/usr/local/lib' or '$prefix/lib'.
- modify your LD_LIBRARY_PATH environment variable if you are not super-user. You should simply add the path to libgtkada.

In addition, if you are using precompiled Gtk+ binary packages, you will also need to set the FONTCONFIG_FILE environment variable to point to the 'prefix/etc/fonts/fonts.conf' file of your binary installation.

For example, assuming you have installed Gtk+ under '/opt/gtk' and using bash:

```
$ export FONTCONFIG_FILE=/opt/gtk/etc/fonts/fonts.conf
```

If your application is using printing, on UNIX and Linux you will need to point your environment variable GTK_EXE_PREFIX to the root directory of your Gtk+ installation:

```
$ export GTK_EXE_PREFIX=/opt/gtk/
```

2.2 How to distribute a GtkAda application

Since GtkAda depends on Gtk+, you usually need to distribute some Gtk+ libraries along with your application.

Under some OSes such as Linux, Gtk+ comes preinstalled, so in this case, a simple solution is to rely on the preinstalled Gtk+ libraries. See below for more information on the gtkada library itself.

Under other unix systems, GtkAda usually comes with a precompiled set of Gtk+ libraries that have been specifically designed to be easily redistributed.

In order to use the precompiled Gtk+ binaries that we distribute with GtkAda, you need to distribute all the Gtk+ .so libraries along with your application, and use the LD_LIBRARY_PATH environment variable to point to these libraries.

The list of libraries needed is '<gtkada-prefix>/lib/lib*.so.?' along with your executable, and set LD_LIBRARY_PATH.

You may also need the 'libgtkada-xxx.so' file. This dependency is optional since gtkada supports both static and dynamic linking, so by e.g. using gtkada-config --static or by using 'gtkada_static.gpr', you will end up linking with 'libgtkada.a'.

Under Windows, you need to distribute the following files and directories along with your application, and respect the original directory set up:

- 'bin/*.dll'
- 'etc/'
- 'lib/gtk-2.0'

2.3 Organization of the GtkAda package

In addition to the full sources, the GtkAda package contains a lot of heavily commented examples. If you haven't been through those examples, we really recommend that you look at them and try to understand them, since they contain some examples of code that you might find interesting for your own application.

- 'testgtk/' directory:

  This directory contains the application testgtk that tests all the widgets in GtkAda. It gives you a quick overview of what can be found in the toolkit, as well as some detailed information on the widgets and their parameters.

  Each demo is associated with contextual help pointing to aspects worth studying.

  It also contains an OpenGL demo, if GtkAda was compiled with support for OpenGL.

  This program is far more extensive that its C counterpart, and the GtkAda team has added a lot of new examples.

  This directory also contains the application testcairo which demonstrates the use of various Cairo functions in GtkAda.

- 'examples/' directory:

  This directory contains some small examples, unrelated to 'testgtk'. For instance, this is where you will find new widgets created directly in Ada, as examples of how to create your own callback marshallers.

  On the whole these examples are a little more complex than 'testgtk' but since they focus on demonstrating a precise concept, they are still quite easy to understand.

- 'docs/' directory:

  It contains the html, info, text and TEX versions of the documentation you are currently reading. Note that the documentation is divided into two subdirectories, one containing the user guide, which you are currently reading, the other containing the reference manual, which gives detailed information on all the widgets found in GtkAda. The docs directory also contains a subdirectory with some slides that were used to present GtkAda at various shows.

2.4 How to compile an application with GtkAda

This section explains how you can compile your own applications.

There are several ways to use GtkAda in your applications

2.4.1 Using project files

A set of project files is installed along with GtkAda. If you have installed GtkAda in the same location as GNAT itself, nothing else needs to be done.

Otherwise, you need to make the directory that contains these project files visible to the compiler. This is done by adding the directory to the ADA_PROJECT_PATH environment variable. Assuming you have installed the library in 'prefix', the directory you need to add is 'prefix/lib/gnat'.

On Unix, this is done with

```
csh:
   setenv ADA_PROJECT_PATH $prefix/lib/gnat:$ADA_PROJECT_PATH
sh:
   ADA_PROJECT_PATH=$prefix/lib/gnat:$ADA_PROJECT_PATH
   export ADA_PROJECT_PATH
```

To build your own application, you should then setup a project file (see the GNAT documentation for more details on project files), which simply contains the statement

```
with "gtkada";
```

This will automatically set the right compiler and linker options, so that your application is linked with GtkAda.

By default, the linker will use GtkAda's shared library, if it was built. If you would prefer to link with the static library, you can set the environment variable LIBRARY_TYPE=static export LIBRARY_TYPE before launching the compiler or linker, which will force it to use the static library instead.

2.4.2 Using the command line

The procedure is system-dependent, and thus is divided into two subsections.

2.4.2.1 Unix systems

On Unix systems, a script called `gtkada-config` is automatically created when you build GtkAda. This script is copied in a subdirectory '`bin/`' in the installation directory.

The easiest and recommended way to build a GtkAda application is to use the `gnatmake` program distributed with GNAT, that takes care of all the dependencies for you. Use the `gtkada-config` to specify where GtkAda and gtk+ libraries have been installed.

```
> gnatmake <main-file> `gtkada-config`
```

Note the use of back-ticks around gtkada-config, which force the shell to evaluate the script and put the output on the command line.

However, on complex systems, gnatmake might not be enough. Users frequently like to create `Makefile`s. The script `gtkada-config` remains useful in that case, since you can call it from your Makefile (same syntax as above with the back-ticks) to create variables like FLAGS and LIBS. See the switches of `gtkada-config` below for more information.

The script `gtkada-config` understands the following command line switches (chosen to be compatible with the ones set by `gtk-config`):

- `--cflags`: Output only the compiler flags, i.e the include directories where the GtkAda spec files are found. This should be used if you only want to compile your files, but do not want to bind or link them.
- `--libs`: Output only the switches for the linker. This lists the directories where all the GtkAda, gtk+, and dependant libraries are found. For instance, if GtkAda was compiled with support for OpenGL, the OpenGL libraries will automatically be present.
- `--static`: Forces linking with the static gtkada library. This option will still use the dynamic gtk+ libraries.

2.4.2.2 Windows systems

Things are somewhat easier on Windows systems. You don't have access to the `gtkada-config` script. On the other hand you also don't have to specify which libraries to use or where to find them.

The only thing you should specify on the `gnatmake` command line is where the GtkAda spec files are found, as in:

```
> gnatmake <main-file> -Ic:\gtkada\include\gtkada
```

if GtkAda was installed under '`c:\gtkada`'.

2.5 Architecture of the toolkit

The gtk+ toolkit has been designed from the beginning to be portable. It is made of two libraries: `gtk` and `gdk`. In addition, GtkAda provides binding to three supporting libraries: `pango`, `cairo` and `glib`.

`Glib` is a non-graphical library that includes support for lists, h-tables, threads, and so on. It is a highly optimized, platform-independent library. Since most of its contents are already available in Ada (or in the '`GNAT.*`' hierarchy in the GNAT distribution), GtkAda does not include a complete binding to it. For the parts of `Glib` that we do depend on, we provide '`Glib.*`' packages in the GtkAda distribution.

`Gdk` is the platform-dependent part of gtk+, and so there are different implementations (for instance, for Win32 and X11 based systems) that implement a common API. `Gdk` provides basic graphical functionality to, for instance, draw lines, rectangles and pixmaps on the screen, as well as manipulate colors. The '`Gdk.*`' packages provide a full Ada interface to `Gdk`.

`Pango` is a modern font handling system. Bindings in GtkAda gives access to the API to manipulate font descriptions and text attributes.

`Cairo` is the low-level 2D drawing library used by `Gdk` to render widgets. `Cairo` provides a rich set of vector drawing features, supporting anti-aliasing, transparency, and 2D matrix transformations.The '`Cairo.*`' packages provide a complete Ada binding to `Cairo`.

`Gtk` is the top level library. It is platform independent, and does all its drawing through calls to Gdk and Cairo. This is where the high-level widgets are defined. It also includes support for callbacks. Its equivalent in the GtkAda libraries are the '`Gtk.*`' packages. It is made of a fully object-oriented hierarchy of widgets (see Section 2.6 [Widgets Hierarchy], page 8).

Since your application only calls GtkAda, it is fully portable, and can be recompiled as-is on other platforms.

```
+------------------------------ ----------+
|             Your Application            |
+-----------------------------------------+
|                 GtkAda                  |
|              +-----------------+        |
|              |      GTK        |        |
|         +----+-----------------+----+   |
|         |           GDK             |   |
|    +----+------+         +----------+----+
|    |  Pango    |         |     Cairo     |
+----+-----------+----+----+---------------+
|       GLIB          |   X-Window / Win32  |
+---------------------+--------------------+
```

Although the packages have been evolving a lot since the first versions of GtkAda, the specs are stabilizing now. We will try as much as possible to provide backward compatibility whenever possible.

Since GtkAda is based on gtk+ we have tried to stay as close to it as possible while using high-level features of the Ada language. It is thus relatively easy to convert external examples from C to Ada.

We have tried to adopt a consistent naming scheme for Ada identifiers:

- The widget names are the same as in C, except that an underscore sign (_) is used to separate words, e.g

  `Gtk_Button` `Gtk_Color_Selection_Dialog`

- Because of a clash between Ada keywords and widget names, there are two exceptions to the above general rule:

  `Gtk.GEntry.Gtk_Entry` `Gtk.GRange.Gtk_Range`

- The function names are the same as in C, ignoring the leading `gtk_` and the widget name, e.g

  `gtk_misc_set_padding` ⇒ `Gtk.Misc.Set_Padding`
  `gtk_toggle_button_set_state` ⇒ `Gtk.Toggle_Button.Set_State`

- Most enum types have been grouped in the '`gtk-enums.ads`' file
- Some features have been implemented as generic packages. These are the timeout functions (see `Gtk.Main.Timeout`), the idle functions (see `Gtk.Main.Idle`), and the data that can be attached to any object (see `Gtk.Object.User_Data`). Type safety is ensured through these generic packages.
- Callbacks were the most difficult thing to interface with. These are extremely powerful and versatile, since the callbacks can have any number of arguments and may or may not return values. These are once again implemented as generic packages, that require more explanation (see Chapter 4 [Signal handling], page 12).

WARNING: all the generic packages allocate some memory for internal structures, and call internal functions. This memory is freed by gtk itself, by calling some Ada functions. Therefore the generic packages have to be instantiated at library level, not inside a subprogram, so that the functions are still defined when gtk needs to free the memory.

WARNING Before any other call to the GtkAda library is performed, `Gtk.Main.Init` must be invoked first. Most of the time, this procedure is invoked from the main procedure of the application, in which case no use of GtkAda can be done during the application elaboration.

2.6 Widgets Hierarchy

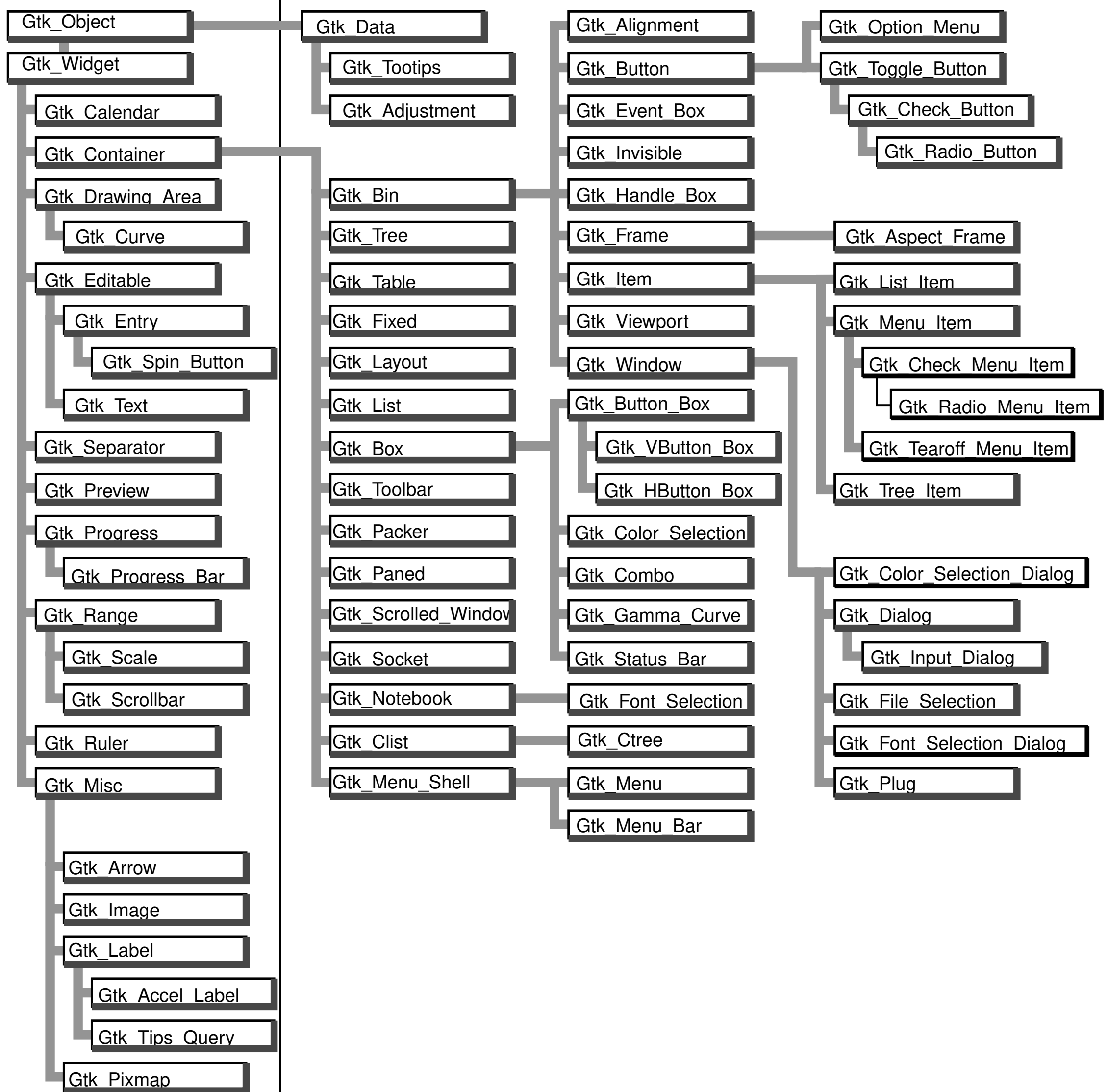
All widgets in `GtkAda` are implemented as tagged types. They all have a common ancestor, called `Gtk.Object.Gtk_Object`. All visual objects have a common ancestor called `Gtk.Widget.Gtk_Widget`.

The following table describes the list of objects and their inheritance tree. As usual with tagged types, all the primitive subprograms defined for a type are also known for all of its children. This is a very powerful way to create new widgets, as will be explained in Section 10.3 [Creating new widgets in Ada], page 24.

Although gtk+ was written in C its design is object-oriented, and thus GtkAda has the same structure. The following rules have been applied to convert from C names to Ada names: a widget `Gtk_XXX` is defined in the Ada package `Gtk.XXX`, in the file '`gtk-xxx.ads`'. This follows the GNAT convention for file names. For instance, the `Gtk_Text` widget is defined in the package `Gtk.Text`, in the file '`gtk-text.ads`'.

Note also that most of the documentation for GtkAda is found in the spec files themselves.

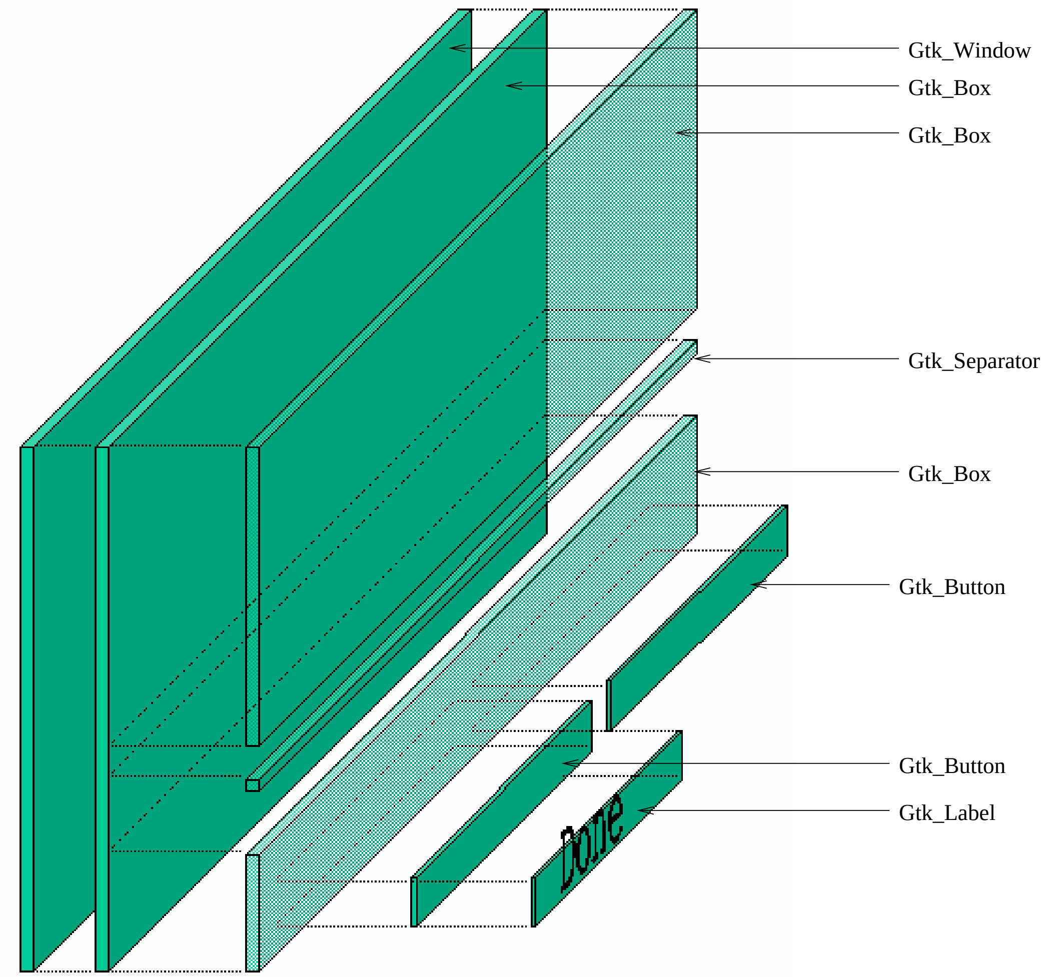
It is important to be familiar with this hierarchy. It is then easier to know how to build and organize your windows. Most widgets are demonstrated in the '`testgtk/`' directory in the GtkAda distribution.



Hierarchy of widgets in GtkAda

3 Hierarchical composition of a window

Interfaces in GtkAda are built in layers, as in Motif. For instance, a typical dialog is basically a Gtk_Window, that in turn contains a Gtk_Box, itself divided into two boxes and a Gtk_Separator, and so on.



Altough this may seem more complicated than setting absolute positions for children, this is the simplest way to automatically handle the resizing of windows. Each container that creates a layer knows how it should behave when it is resized, and how it should move its children. Thus almost everything is handled automatically, and you don't have to do anything to support resizing.

If you really insist on moving the children to a specific position, look at the `Gtk_Fixed` widget and its demo in '`testgtk/`'. But you really should not use this container, since you will then have to do everything by hand.

All the containers are demonstrated in '`testgtk/`', in the GtkAda distribution. This should help you understand all the parameters associated with the containers. It is very important to master these containers, since using the appropriate containers will make building interfaces a lot easier.

If you look at the widget hierarchy (see Section 2.6 [Widgets Hierarchy], page 8), you can see that a Gtk_Window inherits from Gtk_Bin, and thus can have only one child. In most cases, the child of a Gtk_Window will thus be a Gtk_Box, which can have any number of children.

Some widgets in GtkAda itself are built using this strategy, from the very basic `Gtk_Button` to the more advanced `Gtk_File_Selection`.

For example, by default a Gtk_Button contains a Gtk_Label, which displays the text of the button (like "OK" or "Cancel").

However, it is easy to put a pixmap in a button instead. When you create the button, do not specify any label. Thus, no child will be added, and you can give it your own. See '`testgtk/create_pixmap.adb`' for an example on how to do that.

4 Signal handling

In GtkAda, the interaction between the interface and the core application is done via signals. Most user actions on the graphical application trigger some signals to be '`emitted`'.

A signal is a message that an object wants to broadcast. It is identified by its name, and each one is associated with certain events which happen during the widget's lifetime. For instance, when the user clicks on a Gtk_Button, a "clicked" signal is emitted by that button. More examples of signals can be found in the GtkAda reference manual.

It is possible to cause the application to react to such events by '`connecting`' to a signal a special procedure called a '`handler`' or '`callback`'. This handler will be called every time that signal is emitted, giving the application a chance to do any processing it needs. More than one handler can be connected to the same signal on the same object; the handlers are invoked in the order they were connected.

4.1 Predefined signals

Widgets, depending on their type, may define zero or more different signals. The signals defined for the parent widget are also automatically inherited; thus every widget answers many signals.

The easiest way to find out which signals can be emitted by a widget is to look at the GtkAda reference manual. Every widget will be documented there. The GtkAda RM explains when particular signals are emitted, and the general form that their handlers should have (although you can always add a `User_Data` if you wish, see below).

You can also look directly at the C header files distributed with the gtk+ library. Each widget is described in its own C file and has two C structures associated with it. One of them is the "class" structure, which contains a series of pointers to functions. Each of these functions has the same name as the signal name.

For instance, consider the following extract from gtkbutton.h:

```
struct _GtkButtonClass
{
  GtkBinClass        parent_class;

  void (* pressed)  (GtkButton *button);
  void (* released) (GtkButton *button);
  void (* clicked)  (GtkButton *button);
  void (* enter)    (GtkButton *button);
  void (* leave)    (GtkButton *button);
};
```

This means that the Gtk_Button widget redefines five new signals called `pressed`, `released`, and so on, respectively.

The profile of the handler can also be deduced from those pointers: The handler has the same arguments, plus an optional `User_Data` parameter that can be used to pass any kind of data to the handler. When the `User_Data` parameter is used, the value of this data is specified when connecting the handler to the signal. It is then given back to the handler when the signal is raised.

Therefore, the profile of a handler should look like:

```
procedure Pressed_Handler
  (Button    : access Gtk_Button_Record'Class;
```

```
   User_Data : ...);
```

The callback does not need to use all the arguments. It is legal to use a procedure that "drops" some of the last arguments. There is one special case, however: if, at connection time, you decided to use `User_Data`, your callback must handle it. This is checked by the compiler.

Any number of arguments can be dropped as long as those arguments are the last ones in the list and you keep the first one. For instance, the signal "button_press_event" normally can be connected to a handler with any of the following profiles:

```
--  with a user_data argument
procedure Handler
  (Widget    : access Gtk_Widget_Record'Class;
   Event     : Gdk.Event.Gdk_Event;
   User_Data : ...);
procedure Handler
  (Widget    : access Gtk_Widget_Record'Class;
   User_Data : ...);

--  without a user_data argument
procedure Handler
  (Widget : access Gtk_Widget_Record'Class;
   Event  : Gdk.Event.Gdk_Event);
procedure Handler (Widget : access Gtk_Widget_Record'Class);
```

Beware that adding new arguments is not possible, since no value would be provided for them. When connecting a handler, GtkAda will not always verify that your handler does not have more arguments than expected, so caution is recommended (it only does so if you use the `Gtk.Marshallers` package, see below).

4.2 Connecting signals

All signal handling work is performed using services provided by the `Gtk.Handlers` package. This package is self-documented, so please read the documentation for this package either in the GtkAda Reference Manual or in the specs themselves. The rest of this section assumes that you have this documentation handy.

A short, annotated example of connecting signals follows; a complete example can be found in create_file_selection.adb (inside the '`testgtk/`' directory). In our example, an application opens a file selector to allow the user to select a file. GtkAda provides a high-level widget called Gtk_File_Selection which can be used in this case:

```
declare
   Window : Gtk_File_Selection;
begin
   Gtk.File_Selection.Gtk_New (Window, Title => "Select a file");
end;
```

When the "OK" button is pressed, the application needs to retrieve the selected file and then close the dialog. The only information that the handler for the button press needs is which widget to operate upon. This can be achieved by the following handler:

```
procedure OK (Files : access Gtk_File_Selection_Record'Class) is
begin
   Ada.Text_IO.Put_Line ("Selected " & Get_Filename (Files));
   --  Prints the name of the selected file.
   Destroy (Files);
   --  Destroys the file selector dialog
end Ok;
```

We now need to connect the object we created in the first part with the new callback we just defined. `Gtk.Handlers` defines four types of generic packages, depending on the arguments one expects in the callback and whether the callback returns a value or not. Note that you can not use an arbitrary list of arguments; this depends on the signal, as explained in the previous section.

In our example, since the callback does not return any value and does not handle any `User_Data` (that is, we don't pass it extra data, which will be specified at connection time), the appropriate package to use is `Gtk.Handlers.Callback`. We thus instantiate that package.

Remember that generic package instantiations in GtkAda must be present in memory at all times, since they take care of freeing allocated memory when finished. GtkAda generic package instantiations must therefore always be performed at the library level, and not inside any inner block.

```
package Files_Cb is new
  Handlers.Callback (Gtk_File_Selection_Record);
```

The `Files_Cb` package now provides a set of Connect subprograms that can be used to establish a tie between a widget and a handler. It also provides a set of other subprograms which you can use to emit the signals manually, although most of the time, the signals are simply emitted internally by GtkAda. We will not discuss the Emit_By_Name subprograms here.

The general form of handler, as used in `Gtk.Handlers`, expects some handlers that take two or three arguments: the widget on which the signal was applied, an array of all the extra arguments sent internally by GtkAda, and possibly some user data given when the connection was made.

This is the most general form of handler and it covers all the possible cases. However, it also expects the user to manually extract the needed values from the array of arguments. This is not always the most convenient solution. This is why GtkAda provides a second package related to signals, `Gtk.Marshallers`.

The `Gtk.Marshallers` package provides a set of functions that can be used as callbacks directly for GtkAda, and that will call your application's handlers after extracting the required values from the array of arguments. Although this might sound somewhat complicated, in practice it simplifies the task of connecting signals. In fact, the techniques employed are similar to what is done internally by gtk+ in C. Because of the similarity of techniques, there is no overhead involved in using `Gtk.Marshallers` with Ada over the C code in gtk+.

A set of functions `To_Marshaller` is found in every generic package in `Gtk.Handlers`. They each take a single argument, the name of the function you want to call, and return a handler that can be used directly in `Connect`.

The connection is then done with the following piece of code:

```
Files_Cb.Object_Connect
  (Get_Ok_Button (Window),  --  The object to connect to the handler
   "clicked",               --  The name of the signal
   Files_Cb.To_Marshaller (Ok'Access),  --  The signal handler
   Slot_Object => Window);
```

Note that this can be done just after creating the widget, in the same block. As soon as it is created, a widget is ready to accept connections (although no signals will be emitted before the widget is shown on the screen).

We use `To_Marshaller` since our handler does not accept the array of arguments as a parameter, and we use the special `Object_Connect` procedure. This means that the parameter to our callback (Files) will be the Slot_Object given in Object_Connect, instead of being the button itself.

4.3 Handling user data

As described above, it is possible to define some data that is that passed to the callback when it is called. This data is called user_data, and is passed to the `Connect` or `Object_Connect` subprograms.

GtkAda will automatically free any memory it has allocated internally to store this user data. For instance, if you instantiated the generic package `User_Callback` with a String, it means that you want to be able to have a callback of the form:

```
procedure My_Callback (Widget : access Gtk_Widget_Record'Class;
                       User_Data : String);
```

and connect it with a call similar to:

```
Connect (Button, "Clicked", To_Marshaller (My_Callback'Access),
         User_Data => "any string");
```

GtkAda needs to allocate some memory to store the string (an unconstrained type). However, this memory is automatically freed when the callback is destroyed.

There are a few subtleties in the use of user_data, most importantly when the user data is itself a widget.

The following four examples do exactly the same thing: each creates two buttons, where clicking on the first one will destroy the second one. They all work fine the first time, while both buttons exist. However, some of them will fail if you press on the first button a second time.

Complete, compilable source code for these examples can be found in the distribution's '`examples/user_data`' directory, from which the code samples below are excerpted.

4.3.1 First case: simple user data

This code will fail: even after `Button2` is destroyed, the Ada pointer continues to reference memory that has been deallocated. The second call to `Destroy` will fail with a Storage_Error.

```
package User_Callback is new Gtk.Handlers.User_Callback
  (Gtk_Widget_Record, Gtk_Widget);

procedure My_Destroy2
  (Button : access Gtk_Widget_Record'Class; Data : Gtk_Widget) is
begin
   Destroy (Data);
```

```
end My_Destroy2;

begin
   User_Callback.Connect
     (Button1, "clicked",
      User_Callback.To_Marshaller (My_Destroy2'Access),
      Gtk_Widget (Button2));
end;
```

4.3.2 Second case: using Object_Connect instead

One of the solutions to fix the above problem is to use `Object_Connect` instead of `Connect`. In that case, GtkAda automatically takes care of disconnecting the callback when either of the two widgets is destroyed.

```
procedure My_Destroy (Button : access Gtk_Widget_Record'Class) is
begin
   Destroy (Button);
end My_Destroy;

begin
   Widget_Callback.Object_Connect
     (Button1, "clicked",
      Widget_Callback.To_Marshaller (My_Destroy'Access),
      Button2);
end;
```

4.3.3 Third case: manually disconnecting the callback

Using `Object_Connect` is not always possible. In that case, one of the possibilities is to store the `Id` of the callback, and properly disconnect it when appropriate. This is the most complex method, and very often is not applicable, since you cannot know for sure when the callback is no longer needed.

```
type My_Data3 is record
   Button, Object : Gtk_Widget;
   Id             : Handler_Id;
end record;
type My_Data3_Access is access My_Data3;

package User_Callback3 is new Gtk.Handlers.User_Callback
  (Gtk_Widget_Record, My_Data3_Access);

procedure My_Destroy3
  (Button : access Gtk_Widget_Record'Class;
   Data   : My_Data3_Access) is
begin
   Destroy (Data.Button);
   Disconnect (Data.Object, Data.Id);
end My_Destroy3;

   Id : Handler_Id;
begin
   Data3 := new My_Data3' (Object => Gtk_Widget (Button1),
                           Button => Gtk_Widget (Button2),
                           Id     => (Null_Signal_Id, null));
   Id := User_Callback3.Connect
     (Button1, "clicked",
      User_Callback3.To_Marshaller (My_Destroy3'Access),
```

```
       Data3);
    Data3.Id := Id;
 end;
```

4.3.4 Fourth case: setting a watch on a specific widget

GtkAda provides a function `Add_Watch`, that will automatically disconnect a callback when a given widget is destroyed. This is the function used internally by `Object_Connect`. In the example below, the callback is automatically disconnected whenever `Button2` is destroyed.

```
procedure My_Destroy2
  (Button : access Gtk_Widget_Record'Class; Data : Gtk_Widget) is
begin
   Destroy (Data);
end My_Destroy2;

   Id : Handler_Id;
begin
   Id := User_Callback.Connect
     (Button1, "clicked",
      User_Callback.To_Marshaller (My_Destroy2'Access),
      Gtk_Widget (Button2));
   Add_Watch (Id, Button2);
end;
```

5 Starting an application with GtkAda

You need to perform some initializations to start a GtkAda application:

```
--  predefined units of the library
with Gtk.Rc;
with Gtk.Main;
with Gtk.Enums;
with Gtk.Window;
...
--  My units
with Callbacks;
...
procedure Application is
   procedure Create_Window is ...

begin
   --  Set the locale specific datas (e.g time and date format)
   Gtk.Main.Set_Locale;

   --  Initializes GtkAda
   Gtk.Main.Init;

   --  Load the resources. Note that this part is optional.
   Gtk.Rc.Parse ("application.rc");

   --  Create the main window
   Create_Window;

   --  Signal handling loop
   Gtk.Main.Main;
end Application;
```

the `Create_Window` procedure looks like

```
procedure Create_Window is
   Main_Window : Gtk.Window.Gtk_Window;
   ...
begin
   Gtk.Window.Gtk_New
     (Window   => Main_Window,
      The_Type => Gtk.Enums.Window_Toplevel);

   --  From Gtk.Widget:
   Gtk.Window.Set_Title (Window => Main_Window, Title  => "Editor");

   --  Construct the window and connect various callbacks

   ...
   Gtk.Window.Show_All (Main_Window);
end Create_Window;
```

6 Resource files

Resource files let you parametrize aspects of the widgets in a GtkAda application without having to recompile it.

A resource file needs to be loaded (`Gtk.Rc.Parse`) *before* setting the corresponding window.

In this file, it is possible to specify visual characteristics of widgets, such as their colors and fonts. Under X, the `xfontsel` command allows you to easily select a font. The FontSelection widget is also a simple way to select fonts.

Here is an example of a resource file:

```
# application.rc
#
# resource file for "Application"

# Buttons style
style "button"
{
# BackGround Colors
#                  Red  Green  Blue
  bg[PRELIGHT] = { 0.0,  0.75, 0.0 } # Green when the mouse is on
                                     # the button
  bg[ACTIVE]   = { 0.75, 0.0,  0.0 } # Red on click
# ForeGround Colors
#                  Red  Green  Blue
  fg[PRELIGHT] = { 1.0,  1.0,  1.0 } # White when the mouse is on
                                     # the button
  fg[ACTIVE]   = { 1.0,  1.0,  1.0 } # White on click
}

# All the buttons will have the style "button"
widget_class "*GtkButton*" style "button"

# Text style
style "text"
{
  font = "-adobe-courier-medium-r-normal-*-15-*-*-*-*-*-*-*"
  text[NORMAL] = { 0.0, 0.0, 0.0 } # black
  fg[NORMAL]   = { 0.0, 0.0, 0.0 } # black
  base[NORMAL] = { 1.0, 1.0, 1.0 } # white : background color
}

# All Gtk_Text will have the "text" style
widget_class "*GtkText" style "text"
```

7 Memory management

GtkAda takes care of almost all the memory management for you. Here is a brief overview of how this works, you'll have to check the sources if you want more detailed information. Gtk+ (the C library) does its own memory management through reference counting, i.e. any widget is destroyed when it is no longer referenced anywhere in the application.

In GtkAda itself, a "user_data" is associated with each object allocated by a `Gtk_New` procedure. A "destroy" callback is also associated, to be called when the object to which the user_data belongs is destroyed. Thus, every time a C object is destroyed, the equivalent Ada structure is also destroyed (see `Gtk.Free_User_Data`).

Concerning widgets containing children, every container holds a reference to its children, whose reference counting is thus different from 0 (and generally 1). When the container is destroyed, the reference of all its children and grand-children is decremented, and they are destroyed in turn if needed. So the deallocation of a widget hierarchy is also performed automatically.

8 Tasking with GtkAda

Note that Gtk+ under Windows does not interact properly with threads, so the only safe approach under this operating system is to perform all your Gtk+ calls in the same task.

On other platforms, the Glib library can be used in a task-safe mode by calling `Gdk.Threads.G_Init` and `Gdk.Threads.Init` before making any other Glib/Gdk calls. Gdk routines may then be called simultaneously by multiple tasks, thanks to task-safe construction of Gdk's internal data structures. However, Gdk objects such as hash tables are not automatically protected, so it is the application's responsibility to prevent simultaneous access to user-defined objects (e.g. by using protected objects).

When Gdk is initialized to be task-safe, GtkAda becomes task aware. There is a single global lock that you must acquire with `Gdk.Threads.Enter` before making any Gdk/Gtk call, and which you must release with `Gdk.Threads.Leave` afterwards.

`Gtk.Main.Main` should be called with the lock acquired (see example below), ensuring that all the functions executed in the task that started the main loop do not need to protect themselves again.

Beware that the GtkAda main loop (`Gtk.Main.Main`) can only be be run inside one specific task. In other words, you cannot call `Gtk.Main.Main` from any task other than the one that started the outer level main loop.

Note that `Gdk.Threads` assumes that you are using a tasking run time that maps Ada tasks to native threads.

A minimal main program for a tasking GtkAda application looks like:

```
with Gdk.Threads;
with Gtk.Main;
with Gtk.Enums; use Gtk.Enums;
with Gtk.Window; use Gtk.Window;

procedure GtkAda_With_Tasks is
   Window : Gtk_Window;
begin
   Gdk.Threads.G_Init;
   Gdk.Threads.Init;
   Gtk.Main.Init;

   Gtk_New (Window, Window_Toplevel);
   Show (Window);

   Gdk.Threads.Enter;
   Gtk.Main.Main;
   Gdk.Threads.Leave;
end GtkAda_With_Tasks;
```

Callbacks require a bit of attention. Callbacks from GtkAda (signals) are made within the GtkAda lock. However, callbacks from Glib (timeouts, IO callbacks, and idle functions) are made outside of the GtkAda lock. So, within a signal handler you do not need to call `Gdk.Threads.Enter`, but within the other types of callbacks, you do.

9 Processing external events

It often happens that your application, in addition to processing graphical events through the GtkAda main loop, also needs to monitor external events. This is the case if, for instance, you are running external processes and need to display their output, or if you are listening to incoming data on a socket. If you implement your own main loop to poll for these external events and then invoke the GUI, the GUI will enter its main loop and not return control back to you.

There are several ways to handle this situation:

- The cleanest solution, especially if you intend to make the GUI a major part of your application (as opposed to just popping up a few dialogs here and there), would be to use the gtk+ main loop as the infinite loop, instead of yours.

  You can then use gtk+ "idle callbacks" (which are called every time the gtk+ loop is not busy processing graphical events) or "timeout callbacks" (which are called every n milliseconds), and in those callbacks do the work you were doing before in your own main loop (that assumes the check is relatively fast, otherwise the GUI will be frozen during that time). Such callbacks are created through packages in glib-main.ads
- Another approach is to not start the gtk+ main loop, but to check periodically whether there are some events to be handled. See the subprogram `Gtk.Main.Main_Iteration`.

  This second approach is not necessarily recommended, since you would basically duplicate code that's already in gtk+ to manage the main loop, and you also get finer control using idle and timeout callbacks

10 Object-oriented features

GtkAda has been designed from the beginning to provide a full object oriented layer over gtk+. This means that features such as type extension and dynamic dispatching are made available through the standard Ada language.

This section will describe how things work, how you can extend existing widgets, and even how to create your own widgets.

10.1 General description of the tagged types

10.1.1 Why should I use object-oriented programming ?

Every widget in the `Gtk.*` packages in GtkAda is a tagged type with a number of primitive subprograms that are inherited by all of its children. Tagged types in Ada make it possible to perform safe, automatic type conversions without using explicit casts (such as is necessary when coding in C). It is also possible for the compiler to verify whether or not these type conversions are valid. Most errors are found at compile time, which leads to a safer and more robust application.

As a further example, imagine a table that has been populated by some widgets. It is possible to query for this table's children and operate on these widgets without knowing details about their type, their creator, and so on–the tagged objects that are returned contain all the information necessary. It becomes possible to use dynamic dispatching without ever having to cast to a known type.

Modifying a standard widget to draw itself differently or display different data is easy using tagged types. Simply create a new type that extends the current one (see the section Section 10.2 [Using tagged types to extend Gtk widgets], page 24 below.

Creating a new reusable widget from scratch is also possible. Create a new tagged type and specify properties of the widget–such as how it is to draw itself and how it should react to events. See the section Section 10.3 [Creating new widgets in Ada], page 24 below.

Object oriented programming through the use of Ada tagged types makes GtkAda a very powerful, flexible, and safe tool for designing graphical interfaces.

10.1.2 Type conversions from C to Ada widgets

There are three kinds of widgets that you can use with GtkAda:

- *Ada widgets*: These are widgets that are written directly in Ada, using the object oriented features of GtkAda
- *Standard widgets*: These are the widgets that are part of the standard gtk+ and GtkAda distributions. This include all the basic widgets you need to build advanced interfaces.
- *third party C widgets* These are widgets that were created in C, and for which you (or someone else) created an Ada binding. This is most probably the kind of widgets you will have if you want to use third party widgets.

GtkAda will always be able to find and/or create a valid tagged type in the first two cases, no matter if you explicitly created the widget or if it was created automatically by gtk+. For instance, if you created a widget in Ada, put it in a table, and later on extracted it from the table, then you will still have the same widget.

In the third case (third party C widgets), GtkAda is not, by default, able to create the corresponding Ada type.

The case of third party C widgets is a little bit trickier. Since GtkAda does not know anything about them when it is built, it can't magically convert the C widgets to Ada widgets. This is your job to teach GtkAda how to do the conversion.

We thus provide a 'hook' function which you need to modify. This function is defined in the package **Glib.Type_Conversion**. This function takes a string with the name of the C widget (ex/ "GtkButton"), and should return a newly allocated pointer. If you don't know this type either, simply return **null**.

10.2 Using tagged types to extend Gtk widgets

With this toolkit, it's possible to associate your own data with existing widgets simply by creating new types. This section will show you a simple example, but you should rather read the source code in the '`testgtk/`' directory where we used this feature instead of using `user_data` as is used in the C version.

```
type My_Button_Record is new Gtk_Button_Record with record
    --  whatever data you want to associate with your button
end record;
type My_Button is access all My_Button_Record'Class;
```

With the above statements, your new type is defined. Every function available for `Gtk_Button` is also available for `My_Button`. Of course, as with every tagged type in Ada, you can create your own primitive functions with the following prototype:

```
procedure My_Primitive_Func (Myb : access My_Button_Record);
```

To instanciate an object of type `My_Button` in your application, do the following:

```
declare
   Myb : My_Button;
begin
   Myb := new My_Button_Record;
   Initialize (Myb);   --  from Gtk.Button
end;
```

The first line creates the Ada type, whereas the `Initialize` call actually creates the C widget and associates it with the Ada type.

10.3 Creating new widgets in Ada

With GtkAda, you can create widgets directly in Ada. These new widgets can be used directly, as if they were part of gtk itself.

Creating new widgets is a way to create reuseable components. You can apply to them the same functions as you would for any other widget, such as `Show`, `Hide`, and so on.

This section will explain how to create two types of widgets: composite widgets and widgets created from scratch. Two examples are provided with GtkAda, in the directories '`examples/composite_widget`' and '`examples/base_widget`'. Please also refer to the gtk+ tutorial, which describes the basic mechanisms that you need to know to create a widget.

10.3.1 Creating composite widgets

A composite widget is a widget that does not do much by itself. Rather, this is a collection of subwidgets grouped into a more general entity. For instance, among the standard widgets, `Gtk_File_Selection` and `Gtk_Font_Selection` belong to this category.

The good news is that there is nothing special to know. Just create a new tagged type, extending one of the standard widgets (or even another of your own widgets), provide a `Gtk_New` function that allocates memory for this widget, and call the `Initialize` function that does the actual creation of the widget and the subwidgets. There is only one thing to do: `Initialize` should call the parent class's `Initialize` function, to create the underlying C widget.

The example directory '`examples/composite_widget`' reimplements the `Gtk_Dialog` widget as written in C by the creators of gtk+.

10.3.2 Creating widgets from scratch

Creating a working widget from scratch requires a certain level of familiary with the GtkAda signal mechanism and entails much work with low level signals. This is therefore not an activity recommended for novice GtkAda programmers.

Creating a widget from scratch is what you want to do if your widget should be drawn in a special way, should create and emit new signals, or otherwise perform differently than pre-existing widgets. The example we give in '`examples/base_widget`' is a small target on which the user can click, and that sends one of two signals: "bullseye" or "missed", depending on where the user has clicked.

See also the example in '`examples/tutorial/gtkdial`' for a more complex widget, that implements a gauge where the user can move the arrow to select a new value.

Once again, the only two functions that you must create are `Gtk_New` and `Initialize`. This time, `Initialize` has to do two things:

```
Parent_Package.Initialize (Widget);

--  The above line calls the Initialize function from the parent.
--  This creates the underlying C widget, which we are going to
--  modify with the following call:

Gtk.Object.Initialize_Class_Record
  (Widget, Signals, Class_Record);
--  This initializes the "class record" for the widget and
--  creates the signals.
```

In the above example, the new part is the second call. It takes three or four arguments:

- `Widget` This is the widget that you want to initialize
- `Signals` This is an array of string access containing the name of the signals you want to create. For instance, you could create Signals with

  ```
  Signals : Gtkada.Types.Chars_Ptr_Array := "bullseye" + "missed";
  ```

  This will create two signals, named "bullseye" and "missed", whose callbacks' arguments can be specified with the fourth parameter.
- `Class_Record` Every widget in C is associated with two records. The first one, which exists only once per widget type, is the "class record". It contains the list of signals that are known by this widget type, the list of default callbacks for the signals, ...;

the second record is an “instance record”, which contains data specific to a particular instance.

In GtkAda, the “instance record” is simply your tagged type and its fields. The call to `Initialize_Class_Record` is provided to initialize the “class record”. As we said, there should be only one such record per widget type. This parameter “Class_Record” will point to this records, once it is created, and will be reused for every instanciation of the widget.

- `Parameters` This fourth argument is in fact optional, and is used to specify which kind of parameters each new signal is expecting. By default (ie if you don’t give any value for this parameter), all the signals won’t expect any argument, except of course a possible user_data. However, you can decide for instance that the first signal (`"bullseye"`) should in fact take a second argument (say a Gint), and that `"missed"` will take two parameters (two Gints).

  `Parameters` should thus contain a value of

  ```
  (1 => (1 => Gtk_Type_Int, 2 => Gtk_Type_None),
   2 => (1 => Gtk_Type_Int, 2 => Gtk_Type_Int));
  ```

  Due to the way arrays are handled in Ada, each component must have the same number of signals. However, if you specify a type of `Gtk_Type_None`, this will in fact be considered as no argument. Thus, the first signal above has only one parameter.

  Note also that to be able to emit a signal such a the second one, ie with multiple arguments, you will have to extend the packages defined in Gtk.Handlers. By default, the provided packages can only emit up to one argument (and only for a few specific types). Creating your own `Emit_By_Name` subprograms should not be hard if you look at what is done in ‘`gtk-marshallers.adb`’. Basically, something like:

  ```
  procedure Emit_With_Two_Ints
    (Object : access Widget_Type'Class;
     Name   : String;
     Arg1   : Gint;
     Arg2   : Gint);
  pragma Import (C, Emit_With_Two_Ints,
      "gtk_signal_emit_by_name");

  Emit_With_Two_Ints (Gtk.Get_Object (Your_Widget),
      "missed" & ASCII.NUL, 1, 2);
  ```

  will emit the `"missed"` signal with the two parameters 1 and 2.

Then of course `Initialize` should set up some signal handlers for the functions you want to redefine. Three signals are especially useful:

- "size_request"

  This callback is passed one parameter, as in :

  ```
  procedure Size_Request
     (Widget      : access My_Widget_Record;
      Requisition : in out Gtk.Widget.Gtk_Requisition);
  ```

  This function should modify Requisition to specify the widget’s ideal size. This might not be the exact size that will be set, since some containers might decide to enlarge or to shrink it.

- "size_allocate"

  This callback is called every time the widget is moved in its parent window, or it is resized. It is passed one paramater, as in :

```
procedure Size_Allocate
   (Widget     : access My_Widget_Record;
    Allocation : in out Gtk.Widget.Gtk_Allocation)
```

This function should take the responsability to move the widget, using for instance `Gdk.Window.Move_Resize`.

- "expose_event"

  This callback is called every time the widget needs to be redrawn. It is passed one parameter, the area to be redrawn (to speed things up, you don't need to redraw the whole widget, just this area).

11 Support for Glade, the Gtk GUI builder

11.1 Introduction

GtkAda now comes with support for the GUI builder Glade-3. Glade-3 provides a graphical interface for designing windows and dialogs. The interface description is saved in an XML file which can be loaded at run-time by your GtkAda application. With this approach, there is no need to write or generate Ada code to describe the interface, all is needed is to write the callbacks for various actions.

11.2 Launching Glade

Under UNIX and Linux, Glade is invoked by the command-line script `glade-3` which is located in the `bin` directory of your GtkAda installation. Under Windows, Glade is invoked by clicking on the executable `glade-3.exe`, also located in the `bin` directory of your GtkAda installation.

11.3 Building your interface

In Glade-3 the interface is done by point-and-clicking. The first step is to create one or more toplevel window and then placing widgets in these windows.

Detailed tutorials can be found at: `http://live.gnome.org/Glade/Tutorials`

In the Preferences for your project (menu Edit->Preferences), make sure that the preference `"`Project file format`"` is set to `"`GtkBuilder`"`.

11.4 Using the interface in your application.

Once the interface is built and saved in an XML file, you can use it in your GtkAda application. You will need to use objects defined in the package `Gtkada.Builder` to load the interface file and to connect subprograms defined in your application to signals emitted by the interface. See the detailed explanations and examples in `gtkada-builder.ads`

12 Binding new widgets

GtkAda comes with a Perl script to help you create a binding to a C widget (this is the script we have used ourselves). This will not fully automate the process, although it should really speed things up. You will probably need less than 15 min to create a new binding once you will get used to the way GtkAda works. Note that your C file should have the same format as is used by Gtk+ itself.

To get started on a new binding, launch the script '`contrib/binding.pl`' as follows:

```
$ touch gtk-button.ads
$ binding.pl ../include/gtk/gtkbutton.h > temporary
```

This dumps several kind of information on the standard output:

- List of subprograms defined in the '`.h`' file. Their documentation is also added, since binding.pl will parse the '`.c`' file as appropriate.
- List of properties and signals for the widget
- Tentative bodies for the subprograms These will often need adjustements, but provide a good start

You can also use this script to update existing bindings:

```
$ binding.pl ../include/gtk/*.h
```

13 Debugging GtkAda applications

This chapter presents a number of technics that can be used when debugging GtkAda applications. First, the standard tools to debug Ada applications can be used:

Compile with -g
: You should almost always include debugging information when compiling and linking your code. This gives you the possibility to use the debugger. See below the variable GDK_DEBUG for how to disable grabs.

bind with -E
: Using this argument on the `gnatbind` or `gnatmake` command line will force the compiler to include backtraces when an exception is raised. These backtraces can be converted to symbolic backtraces by using the `addr2line` tool.

Link with -lgmem
: Using this switch gives access to the `gnatmem` tool, that helps you to detect memory leaks or doubly-deallocated memory. The latter often results in hard-to-fix Storage_Error exceptions. See the GNAT User's guide for more information.

There are also a number of technics specific to GtkAda or gtk+ applications. For most of them, you might need to recompile these libraries with the appropriate switches to get access to the extended debugging features.

Use the `--sync` switch
: Under unix systems, all applications compiled with gtk+ automatically support this switch, which forces events to be processed synchronously, thus making it easier to detect problems as soon as they happen. This switch is not relevant to Windows systems.

break on g_log
: In the debugger, it is often useful to put a breakpoint on the glib function `g_log`. When gtk+ is linked dynamically, you will need to first start your application with `begin`, then put the breakpoint and continue the application with `cont`. This helps understand internal errors or warnings reported by gtk+ and glib

compile glib with `--disable-mem-pools`
: Glib, the underlying layer that provides system-independent services to gtk+, has an extensive and optimized system for memory allocation. Bigger chunks of Memory are allocated initially, and then subdivided by glib itself. Although this is extremely performant, this also make the debugging of memory-related problems (storage_error) more difficult. Compiling with the above switch forces glib to use the standard malloc() and free() system calls. On GNU/Linux systems, it might be useful to set the variable `MALLOC_CHECK_` to 1 to use error-detecting algorithms (see the man page for malloc()).

compile glib and gtk+ with `--enable-debug=yes`
: It is recommended that you specify this switch on the `configure` command line when compiling these two libraries. In addition to compiling the libraries

with debugging information for the debugger, additional runtime debug options (controllable via environment variables) become available. Specifying `--enable-debug=no` is not recommended for production releases (see glib or gtk+ documentation for details).

For these three variables, the possible values are given below. These are lists of colon-separated keywords. You can choose to remove any of these value from the variable

'`GOBJECT_DEBUG=objects:signals`'
: This sets up the debugging output for glib. The value '`objects`' is probably the most useful, and displays, on exit of the application, the list of unfreed objects. This helps detect memory leaks. The second value '`signals`' will display all the signals emitted by the objects. Note that this results in a significant amount of output.

'`GDK_DEBUG=updates:nograbs:events:dnd:misc:xim:colormap:gdkrgb:gc:pixmap:image:input:cursor`'
: This sets up the debugging output for gdk. The most useful value is '`nograbs`', which prevents the application from ever grabbing the mouse or keyboards. If you don't set this, it might happen that the debugger becomes unusable, since you don't have access to the mouse when the debugger stops on a breakpoint. Another simpler solution is to debug remotely from another machine, in which case the grabs won't affect the terminal on which the debugger is running.

'`GTK_DEBUG=misc:plugsocket:text:tree:updates:keybindings`'
: This sets up the debugging output for gtk. Almost all of these values are mostly for internal use by gtk+ developpers, although '`keybindings`' might prove useful sometimes.

Import the C function ada_gtk_debug_get_ref_count
: This function has the following Ada profile:

```
function Ref_Count (Add : System.Address) return Guint;
pragma Import (C, Ref_Count, "ada_gtk_debug_get_ref_count");
```

and should be called in a manner similar to

```
declare
   Widget : Gtk_Widget;
   Count  : Guint;
begin
   Count := Ref_Count (Get_Object (Widget));
end;
```

and returns the internal reference counter for the widget. When this counter reaches 0, the memory allocated for the widget is automatically freed.

This is mostly a debugging aid for people writting their own containers, and shouldn't generally be needed. You shouldn't rely on the internal reference counter in your actual code, which is why it isn't exported by default in GtkAda.

14 How to report bugs

GtkAda is a mature, stable toolkit that is heavily and widely used on a variety of platforms. We test GtkAda using an Ada version of the 'testgtk.c' file found in the gtk+ distribution, as well as by generating a significant number of interfaces using the GUI builder and Gate. For code examples that demonstrate the use of this toolkit, look within the 'testgtk/' directory.

There are two kinds of problems you can encounter:

- If the gtk library itself was compiled with warnings turned on, you may get some warning messages, mainly because of types problems. These warnings should not appear, as we have tried to be as type safe as possible in this package. To know exactly where the problem is, compile your program with debug information, run gdb, and set a breakpoint on the function `g_log`. Then run your program as usual, using the `run` command. Then send us the result of the `where` command. Here is a summary:

```
$ gnatmake -f -g <your_program_name> `gtkada-config`
$ gdb <your_program_name>
(gdb) break main
(gdb) run
(gdb) break g_log
(gdb) continue
....
(gdb) where
```

- In some (hopefully) rare cases, you can even get a segmentation fault within gtk. That means there is definitly something wrong either in your program or in the toolkit. Please check your program carefully and, if you think this is a problem in GtkAda itself, send us an e-mail.

If you are a supported user of GNAT, send mail to `mailto:report@gnat.com` to report errors, otherwise send mail to the GtkAda list (`mailto:gtkada@lists.adacore.com`) explaining exactly what your are doing, what is the expected result and what you actually get. Please include the required sources to reproduce the problem, in a format usable by `gnatchop` (basically, insert all the required sources at the end of the mail). Please try to provide as small as possible a subset of your sources.

Of course, we will welcome any patch you can provide, so that this toolkit may be as useful as possible.

15 Bibliography

We recommand the following documents. Most of them were written with C in mind, but should be easily adapted after you've read the rest of this document.

- [1] "Gtk+/Gome Application Development" – Havoc Pennington This book, by one of the main authors of the the GNOME environment, describes in detail some of the inner mechanisms of gtk+, including signal handling, and a complete description of all the widgets and all the events found in `Gdk.Event`.

  It is worth noting that this book has been published under the Open Publication License. You can get an electronic copy of it at `http://www.opencontent.org/`.

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Version 1.1, March 2000

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