

Creating and Opening Forms

GUI Designer equips the developers with the possibility to create GUI forms with the desired layout and bound class, and dialogs. A form can be created as only a form file, or together with a UI class. A dialog framework consists of a class defining basic components and methods, and a GUI form with components bound to the fields of the UI class.

As mentioned in the [GUI Designer concepts](#), GUI forms in IntelliJ IDEA are not Java classes. They are special XML files stored in your project with a `.form` extension.

Prior to creating GUI forms and dialogs, select a package where the forms will be stored. You might need to create a package first. It is recommended to store the forms and dialogs in the same package as the classes that implement their functionality.

Creating a new gui form or dialog

To create a new gui form

1. On the main menu, choose **Edit | New**, as described in the section [Creating Files](#).
2. On the pop-up menu, choose **GUI Form**.
3. Specify the name of the new form, and select the layout manager.
4. Check the option **Create bound class**, and specify the bound class name.
5. Click **OK**.

To create a new dialog

1. On the main menu, choose **Edit | New**, as described in the section [Creating Files](#).
2. On the pop-up menu, choose **Dialog**.
3. Specify the name of the new dialog.
4. Specify the following options:
 - Generate `main()` method that creates and shows dialog.
 - Generate **OK** handler.
 - Generate **Cancel** handler.
5. Click **OK**.

Creating a form from a file template

You can save any form as a File Template, and thus preserve commonly needed dialogs or panes of controls for later reuse. For detailed information about creating and using File Templates, refer to the sections:

- [Creating and Editing File Templates](#)
- [Creating Template-based Files](#)

To create a file template from a gui form

1. Create a GUI form or open it in the GUI Designer.
2. On the Main menu, choose **Tools | Save File as Template**. The [File Templates dialog](#) displays the source code of the form. The extension of the new template is `.form`
3. Specify the template name, and click **OK**.

To create a new gui form from a file template

1. In the Project tool window, right-click the package where you want to create the new form.
2. On the context menu choose **New**. The submenu contains items for all defined File Templates, including GUI forms.
3. Select the desired GUI form template on the context menu, and give it a name when prompted.

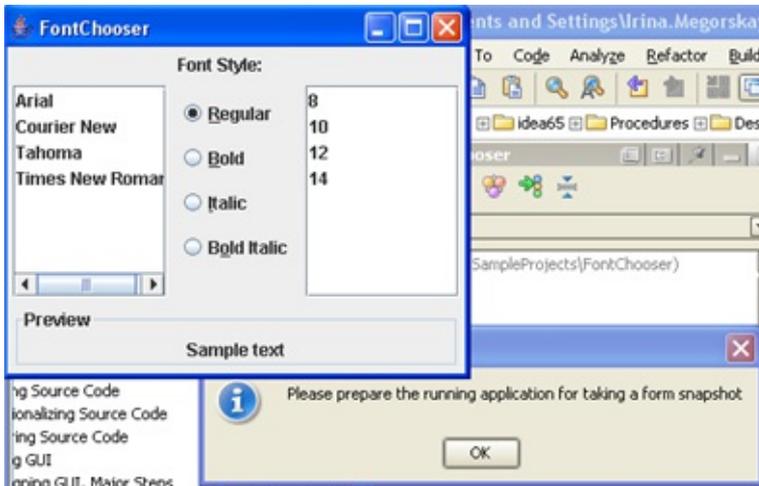
Creating snapshots

The **Snapshot** feature enables you to convert GUI forms created by some other means into IntelliJ IDEA GUI Designer Forms. All you need to do is run your application and save a part of the running application's component tree as a GUI Designer form. From then on, you can use the GUI Designer to extend or modify the form.

You can work with the layout and code in the GUI Designer just as you do with Forms originally created with the GUI Designer.

To take a snapshot of an existing dialog

1. Open the module that contains source code for the dialog you want to capture.
2. Select the [Application Run Configuration](#), make sure that the option **Enable capturing form snapshots** is checked, and [run the application](#).
3. In the running application, perform whatever interaction is necessary to open the dialog you want to capture.
4. In the Project tool window, right-click the target package and choose **New | Form Snapshot** on the context menu. If the application is not yet running, IntelliJ IDEA prompts you to run it, and then prepare the application for taking snapshot:



The Create Form Snapshot dialog box appears.

5. In the IntelliJ IDEA's Create Form Snapshot dialog, select the top-level component to be included in the snapshot, enter the form name, and click **Create Snapshot** button. The new form created this way is not bound to any class. You have to [bind](#) it to a class yourself.



If the selected node is not a valid container for a component, the **Create Snapshot** button is disabled.

Opening existing gui forms

Open form files the same way you open source code or text files for editing. Locate the file in the appropriate navigation view, select it, and do one of the following:

- Double-click.
- Choose **Jump to Source** on the context menu.
- Press F4.

Each form opens in a separate tab in the same space occupied by the Editor for source code files. You can have source code/text files and form files open simultaneously.

See Also

Reference:

- [Run/Debug Configuration: Application](#)
- [File and Code Templates](#)

Web Resources:

- [Developer Community](#) 