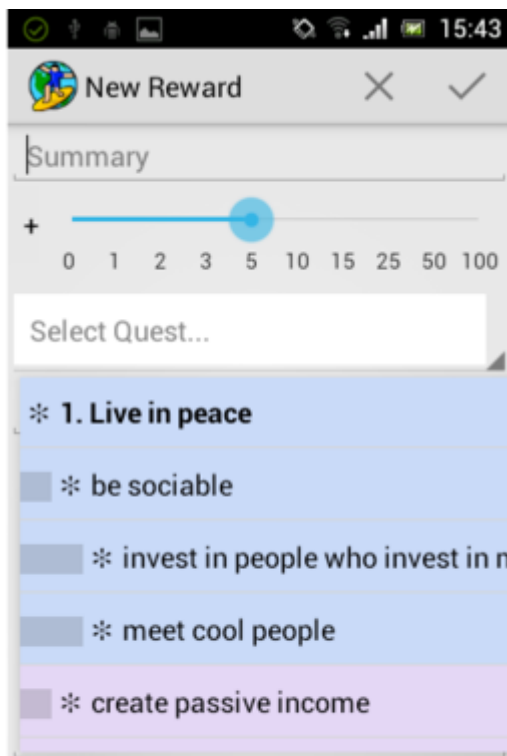# How To Make Android Spinner Options Popup in a Dialog
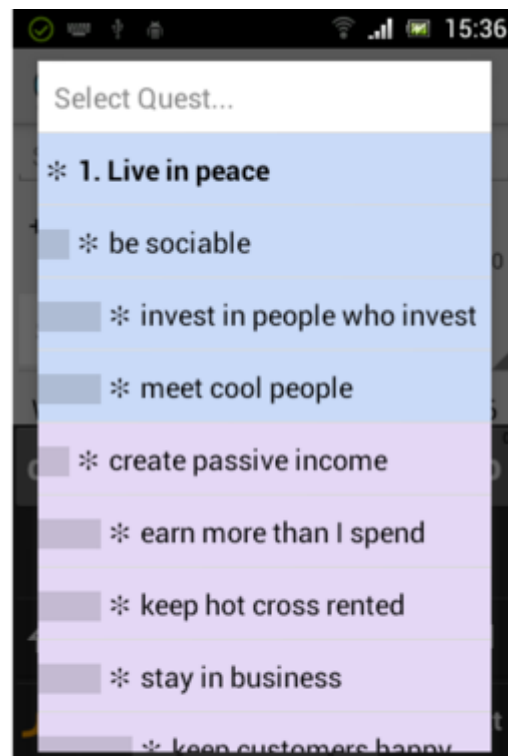
By Roger Keays, 28 May 2014

The earlier versions of Android always showed spinner options in a dialog. Then I think devices got bigger and the powers that be decided to use a dropdown list for spinner options instead of a dialog. It's a sensible choice because the dropdowns look and operate better than the dialog - sometimes.

It's the sometimes that is the problem. For lists with a lot of data it makes better sense to use a full screen dialog than a small dropdown. The screenshots below show how much better the usability of a dialog selection is for our app, The Game Of Your Life.

Spinner as dropdown   Spinner as a dialog

Unfortunately the Android API doesn't give us an option to select between the two behaviours, but there is a way to force the spinner to use a dialog by extending the default Spinner class. Here is the code.

```java
public class DialogSpinner extends Spinner {
    public DialogSpinner(Context context) {
        super(context);
    }

    @Override
    public boolean performClick() {
```

```
        new AlertDialog.Builder(getContext()).setAdapter((ListAdapter) getA
            new DialogInterface.OnClickListener() {
                @Override public void onClick(DialogInterface dialog, int v
                    setSelection(which);
                    dialog.dismiss();
                }
            }).create().show();
        return true;
    }
}
```

If you like, you could further enhance this class to conditionally use a dialog or dropdown based on whatever logic you need.Note, you'll have to be sure to use a ListAdapter with this class or you'll get a ClassCastException.

It took a while and a fair bit of digging through the source code to figure this problem out so I hope you find it useful.If you're interesting in downloading the [motivation app](#) in the screenshot, it's available for free from [Google Play.](#)

Happy coding.

About Roger Keays

Roger Keays is an artist, an engineer, and a student of life. He has no fixed addressand has leftfootprints on 40-something different countries around the world. Roger is addicted to surfing. His other interests are music, psychology, languages, the proper use of semicolons, and finding good food.