Using Enums in EL

By [Roger Keays](#), 21 January 2009

Unfortunately EL has no special support for enums. That makes it especially hard when you need to input enum values (for example from a dropdown box). One simple solution is to add a getter and setter to your bean to marshall the String value to and from an enum:

```
enum Status { A, B, C, D}

/* EL convenience getters and setters */
public String getStatus_() {
    return (status == null) ? null : status.name();
}
public void setStatus_(String status) {
    this.status = Status.valueOf(status);
}
```

Now you can build your dropdowns easily like this:

```
<h:outputText value="Status:"/>
<h:selectOneMenu value="${bean.status_}">
  <f:selectItem itemValue="A" itemLabel="Asleep"/>
  <f:selectItem itemValue="B" itemLabel="Bored"/>
  <f:selectItem itemValue="C" itemLabel="Creative"/>
  <f:selectItem itemValue="D" itemLabel="Dead"/>
</h:selectOneMenu>
```

In this example I use the underscore on the method name to distinguish it from the regular getter and setter which are not shown.

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.