

Building More Rules with the Snap Toolbox

Your configurator's basic logic starts with field properties and option filters, and you extend it with Snap rules.

But the amount of Snap can start to grow as you add more logic. How can you manage your logic as requirements change and accumulate?

This course will give you techniques to manage your configurator Snap rules as they grow with workspaces.

Reorder your rule workspaces to control what happens when.

Tag snap code with comments to help you with both short-term tasks and long-term documentation.

Explore a configurator's design elements and relationships with the editor search bar.

Objectives

- Reorder Snap Within a Rule
- Tag Snap with Comments
- Explore the Design with Editor search

Reorder Snap within a Rule

In our example of a cube configurator, we've already created two value rules. Before starting this lesson, ensure your configurator has those rules in place, or at least has two snap rules in the same rule folder.

First, confirm your configurator has a value rule called set volume, with the Snap code as shown.

Second, you should have a value rule called set depth from height. As a reminder, here's the logic.

Snap logic can be written as separate pieces of Snap code within the same rule folder. We call these workspaces. They run in the order you specify in the rules folder, from top to bottom.

You can think of all the workspaces in any one rule like pages in a book.

The order of these workspaces within a rule folder is important. Did you notice the problem with our current logic? Our volume is not calculating correctly.

Run this configurator. First, adjust the Depth, Width, and Height to 10, 1, and 1. You'll see the volume is correct at 10.

But then change the height from 1 to 10. The depth drops to 8 correctly, but the volume shows 100... when it should be showing 80. What's wrong?

Our two value rule workspaces are out of order. In the first workspace, we are using the Depth field (among others) to calculate the volume. But after we've used the Depth field, then in the second workspace we're changing it. By the time all our code in the value rule folder is complete, the volume can be incorrect.

Fix the problem by re-ordering the workspaces within your value rule folder.

Simply drag one workspace above the other within a folder to change the order.

Now, we're using the depth field values after we are adjusting them. The bug in our code has been fixed.

Here's a tip. As you create your workspaces within a rule folder, keep in mind what data is being changed in each workspace. If other code is based on that data, that code should be below this rule, so it is not processed prematurely.

Tag Snap with Comments

As you write your Snap code, add comments to help with both short-term tasks and long-term documentation.

Snap has comment blocks that can fit into just about any code you write. When writing Snap, you can find the comment blocks by searching the toolbox for comments.

Add a comment block as you would any other Snap block.

Comment blocks are ignored by the parser. That means, they don't change the way your code works. Comments are for your information.

Even though the comment block is small, you can type or paste lots of text into it. Just drag the handle near the lower-right corner of any selected comment block to expand it and see the text inside.

Comment blocks can be used as a short-term reminder for tasks that need to be completed, or questions you need resolved.

Here, we enter a phrase that is easy to remember, with a symbol like a hash tag that makes it easy to find later.

This is a short-term use of a comment: you hope to delete the comment soon, when the question is resolved.

Another use for comments is for long-term documentation.

You can store a requirement number or some other link to your project documentation, along with a simple description of what this Snap rule is intended to do.

This comment is intended to stay in the code for as long as the code exists.

Comments aren't intended to replace your project specifications, but rather help you by referring to that internal documentation.

Comments are not shown on-screen to your customer. But a savvy web user could try to explore some of the logic of your configurator, like they can with any web page. So don't place sensitive information into any comment.

Explore the Design with Editor Search

Snap rules are factored into manageable workspaces, and can refer to many elements of your configurator's UI. After a while, your configurator's design explorer can have many entries. You can easily find any Snap rule or design element by using the editor search.

When editing any configurator, the upper-right corner of the design window shows a search icon. It searches through all the entries in the design explorer. Type the name of any element or portion of any code here to see a list of matching entries.

To search for a specific field, and any reference to that field in the Snap rules, enter the field name. For example, we can search for "f-material".

Press enter, and the search results appear. Icons to the left of each matching entry inform you if that match is a field, a snap rule, or some other UI component. The icon matches the same icon you see in the explorer.

Click any entry in the search results to open that entry.

To search for a comment, enter part of the text in the comment. For example, what do we have left to do in this configurator? Search for todo and see a list of matches.

We implemented requirement 54, but how? Search for req-54 to see how it was implemented.

This search includes everything built within this configurator, but it does not include other items used by the configurator. For example, it does not search through tables connected to this configurator through option filters. Only items shown in the design explorer of this configurator are searched. The design explorer is shown on the left as you edit any configurator.

Recap

In this course, we applied some techniques for writing good Snap code.

We reordered workspaces within a rule to ensure updates happened in the correct order.

We tagged Snap code with comments to help with both short-term tasks and long-term documentation.

And we searched throughout the entire configurator structure – from UI elements to logic rules -- with the editor search bar.

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