Some Quality-of-Life Improvements for VSCode

Sam McCauley
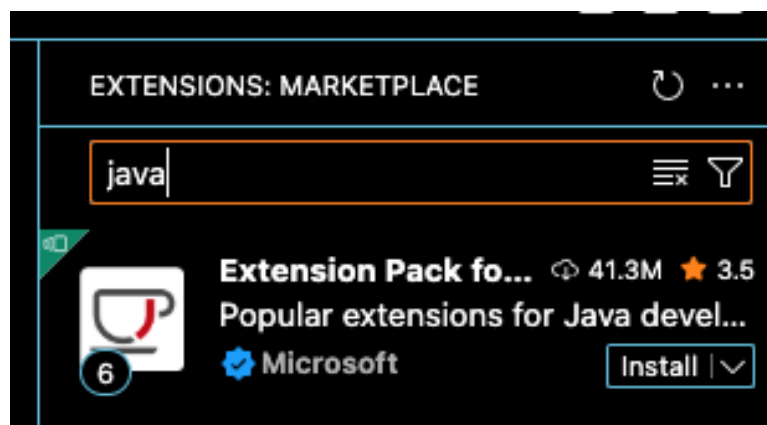
Data Structures, Spring 2026

This document describes how to use the Java extension to make VSCode slightly nicer to use, for either your personal computer or the lab computer.

This setup is *recommended* for personal computers—the extension comes installed, so you'll want to turn off the popups as explained below—but completely *optional* for lab computers.

Lab Computers: Setting up Helpful Java Extension

Let's download the Java extension for VSCode. You may be able to skip this for your personal computer if you installed VSCode using the Java/VSCode package (as in the instructions for this course).

Open the "Extensions" sidebar using Ctrl+Shift+X on Windows or command+Shift+X on mac. Type "Java" in the search bar at the top. It should look something like this:
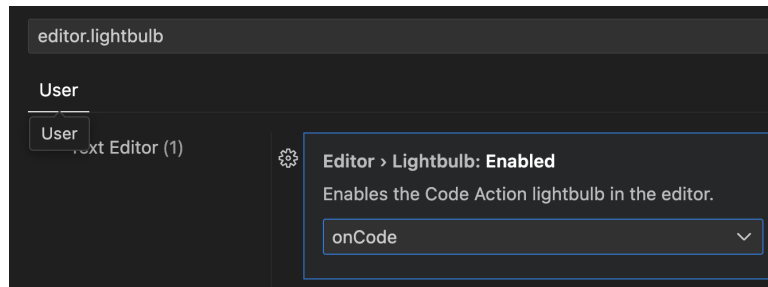

See where it says "Install"? Hit that button. You may need to accept some permission popups. You're done!

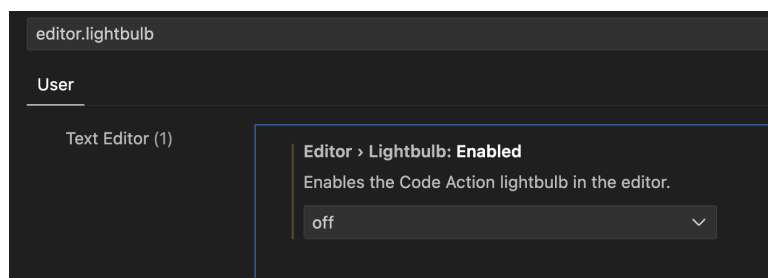Note that you'll have to do this on each lab computer you use.

Turning Off Some Annoying Java Extension Popups

There are a couple default options for VSCode we want to turn off. (There's nothing *wrong* with having these options on, but we're not going to use them and they clutter the screen considerably.)
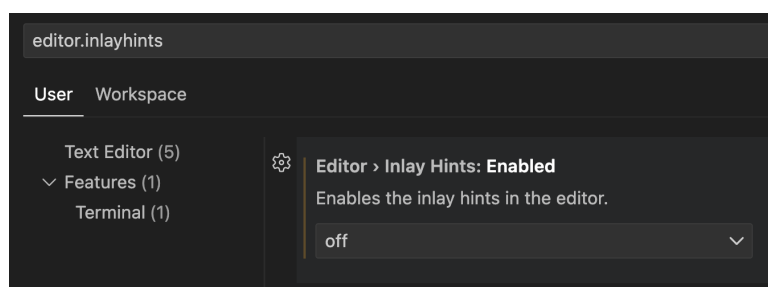
In VSCode, open the settings manu by pressing `Ctrl-,` on Windows or `Cmd-,` on Mac. (You should hold down either the "control" or "command" key, and while holding, press the "," key.) There should be a search bar at the top; type in `editor.lightbulb`. You will likely get something that looks like this:

Use the dropdown menu to select "off." It should look like this:

Now, let's turn off "inlay hints." Go back to the search bar at the top (reopen the settings menu using the instructions above if you already closed it), and type in `editor.inlayHints`. Again, use the dropdown menu to select "off." It should look like this:

You're done! Exit out of the Settings menu by hitting the X next to Settings. (This one:)