

You can also include a constructor method that will automatically be called when the object is placed in memory. When the code line that creates the object (`$lab = new Dog;`) is executed, it looks for a constructor method in the object. If it exists, the method is executed. You can pass all the initial values for the properties into this constructor method via same line that creates the object.

```
$lab = new Dog('Fred', 'Lab', 'Yellow', 50);
```

This becomes a much more efficient way of providing the initial values from within the `lab.php` program.

The constructor method is a generic format with a function name `__construct` (note there are two underscores before the word `construct`).

```
<?php
class Dog
{
    function __construct($value1, $value2, $value3, $value4)
    {
        // code to update properties
    }
    // other methods
}
?>
```

You can use the existing `set` methods in the constructor to update the properties. You will need to collect any messages (TRUE/FALSE) and return them to the calling program (`lab.php`). You can use a similar procedure as you initially coded with the handling of the `get_properties` method.

Example 3-12. Dog class with constructor—`dog.php`

```
<?php
class Dog
{
    // ----- Properties -----
    private $dog_weight = 0;
    private $dog_breed = "no breed";
    private $dog_color = "no color";
    private $dog_name = "no name";
    private $error_message = "??";
    // ----- Constructor -----
    function __construct($value1, $value2, $value3, $value4)
    {
        $name_error = $this->set_dog_name($value1) == TRUE ? 'TRUE,' : 'FALSE,';
        $breed_error = $this->set_dog_breed($value2) == TRUE ? 'TRUE,' : 'FALSE,';
        $color_error = $this->set_dog_color($value3) == TRUE ? 'TRUE,' : 'FALSE,';
        $weight_error= $this->set_dog_weight($value4) == TRUE ? 'TRUE' : 'FALSE';

        $this->error_message = $name_error . $breed_error . $color_error . $weight_error;
    }
    //-----toString-----
    public function __toString()
    {
        return $this->error_message;
    }
    //... There are no other code changes to dog.php below this line.
```