Chapter 8 Inheritance and Polymorphism

Prerequisites for Part II

- Chapter 6 Objects and Classes
- Chapter 7 Strings
- Chapter 8 Inheritance and Polymorphism
- Chapter 5 Arrays
- Chapter 9 Abstract Classes and Interfaces
- Chapter 10 Object-Oriented Modeling
- Chapter 11 Getting Started with GUI Programming
- Chapter 12 Event-Driven Programming
- Chapter 15 Exceptions and Assertions
- Chapter 16 Simple Input and Output

You can cover Exceptions and I/O after Chapter 8
You can cover GUI after Chapter 8

Objectives

- To develop a subclass from a superclass through inheritance (§8.2).
- To invoke the superclass’s constructors and methods using the super keyword (§8.3).
- To override methods in the subclass (§8.4).
- To explore the useful methods (equals(Object), hashCode(), toString(), finalize(), clone(), and getClass()) in the Object class (§8.5, §8.11 Optional).
- To comprehend polymorphism, dynamic binding, and generic programming (§8.6).
- To describe casting and explain why explicit downcasting is necessary (§8.7).
- To understand the effect of hiding data fields and static methods (§8.8 Optional).
- To restrict access to data and methods using the protected visibility modifier (§8.9).
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- To declare constants, unmodifiable methods, and nonextendable class using the final modifier (§8.10).
- To initialize data using initialization blocks and distinguish between instance initialization and static initialization blocks (§8.12 Optional).

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Superclasses and Subclasses

- Superclass
  - Circle
  - Cylinder

- Subclass
  - Cylinder

UML Diagram

Cylinder cylinder = new Cylinder();
System.out.println("The length is " +
cylinder.getLength());
System.out.println("The radius is " +
cylinder.getRadius());
System.out.println("The volume of the cylinder is " +
cylinder.findVolume());
System.out.println("The area of the circle is " +
cylinder.findArea());

The output is
The length is 1.0
The radius is 1.0
The volume of the cylinder is 3.14159
The area of the circle is 3.14159
CAUTION

You must use the keyword `super` to call the superclass constructor. Invoking a superclass constructor's name in a subclass causes a syntax error. Java requires that the statement that uses the keyword `super` appear first in the constructor.

NOTE

A constructor is used to construct an instance of a class. Unlike properties and methods, a superclass's constructors are not inherited in the subclass. They can only be invoked from the subclasses' constructors, using the keyword `super`. If the keyword `super` is not explicitly used, the superclass's no-arg constructor is automatically invoked.

Superclass's Constructor Is Always Invoked

A constructor may invoke an overloaded constructor or its superclass's constructor. If none of them is invoked explicitly, the compiler puts `super()` as the first statement in the constructor. For example,

```java
public Cylinder() {
    // some statements
}
```

is equivalent to

```java
public Cylinder() {
    super();
    // some statements
}
```

Example on the Impact of a Superclass without no-arg Constructor

Find out the errors in the program:

```java
public class Apple extends Fruit {
    // ...
}
```

```java
class Fruit {
    public Fruit(String name) {
        System.out.println("Fruit's constructor is invoked");
    }
}
```

Declaring a Subclass

A subclass extends properties and methods from the superclass. You can also:

- Add new properties
- Add new methods
- Override the methods of the superclass
Overriding Methods in the Superclass

A subclass inherits methods from a superclass. Sometimes it is necessary for the subclass to modify the implementation of a method defined in the superclass. This is referred to as method overriding.

```java
// Cylinder.java: New cylinder class that overrides the findArea() method defined in the circle class.
public class Cylinder extends Circle {
    /** Return the surface area of this cylinder. The formula is 2 * circle area + cylinder body area */
    public double findArea() {
        return 2 * super.findArea() + 2 * getRadius() * Math.PI * length;
    }
    // Other methods are omitted
}
```

NOTE

An instance method can be overridden only if it is accessible. Thus a private method cannot be overridden, because it is not accessible outside its own class. If a method defined in a subclass is private in its superclass, the two methods are completely unrelated.

NOTE

Like an instance method, a static method can be inherited. However, a static method cannot be overridden. If a static method defined in the superclass is redefined in a subclass, the method defined in the superclass is hidden.

The `toString()` method in Object

The `toString()` method returns a string representation of the object. The default implementation returns a string consisting of a class name of which the object is an instance, the at sign (@), and a number representing this object.

```java
Cylinder myCylinder = new Cylinder(5.0, 2.0);
System.out.println(myCylinder.toString());
```

The code displays something like `Cylinder@15037e5`. This message is not very helpful or informative. Usually you should override the `toString` method so that it returns a digestible string representation of the object.

The `toString()` method is inherited from the `Object` class. Therefore, all objects in Java have a `toString` method that returns `null`, which is not very informative.

Polymorphism, Dynamic Binding and Generic Programming

Method `m` takes a parameter of the `Object` type. You can invoke it with any `Object`. An object of a subtype can be used wherever its supertype value is required. This feature is known as polymorphism.

When the method `m` is executed, the argument `x`'s `toString` method is invoked. `x` may be an instance of `GraduateStudent`, `Student`, `Person`, or `Object`. Classes `GraduateStudent`, `Student`, `Person`, and `Object` have their own implementation of the `toString` method. Which implementation is used will be determined dynamically by the Java Virtual Machine at runtime. This capability is known as dynamic binding.
Dynamic Binding

Dynamic binding works as follows: Suppose an object o is an instance of classes C1, C2, ..., Cn−1, and Cn, where C1 is a subclass of C2, C2 is a subclass of C3, ..., and Cn−1 is a subclass of Cn. That is, Cn is the most general class, and C1 is the most specific class. In Java, Cn is the Object class. If o invokes a method p, the JVM searches the implementation for the method p in C1, C2, ..., Cn−1, and Cn, in this order, until it is found. Once an implementation is found, the search stops and the first-found implementation is invoked.

Since o is an instance of Cn, o is also an instance of C1, C2, C3, ..., Cn−1, and Cn.

Method Matching vs. Binding

Matching a method signature and binding a method implementation are two issues. The compiler finds a matching method according to parameter type, number of parameters, and order of the parameters at compilation time. A method may be implemented in several subclasses. The Java Virtual Machine dynamically binds the implementation of the method at runtime. See Review Questions 8.7 and 8.8.

Casting Objects

You have already used the casting operator to convert variables of one primitive type to another. Casting can also be used to convert an object of one class type to another within an inheritance hierarchy. In the preceding section, the statement

\[ m(\text{new Student()}); \]

assigns the object new Student() to a parameter of the Object type. This statement is equivalent to:

\[ \text{Object o = new Student(); // Implicit casting} \]

\[ m(o); \]

The statement Object o = new Student(), known as implicit casting, is legal because an instance of Student is automatically an instance of Object.

Why Casting Is Necessary?

Suppose you want to assign the object reference o to a variable of the Student type using the following statement:

\[ \text{Student b = o; } \]

A compilation error would occur. Why does the statement Object o = new Student() work and the statement Student b = o doesn’t? This is because a Student object is always an instance of Object, but an Object is not necessarily an instance of Student. Even though you can see that o is really a Student object, the compiler is not so clever to know it. To tell the compiler that o is a Student object, use an explicit casting. The syntax is similar to the one used for casting among primitive data types. Enclose the target object type in parentheses and place it before the object to be cast, as follows:

\[ \text{Student b = (Student)o;} // \text{Explicit casting} \]

Casting from Superclass to Subclass

Explicit casting must be used when casting an object from a superclass to a subclass. This type of casting may not always succeed.

\[ \text{Cylinder myCylinder = (Cylinder)myCircle; } \]
\[ \text{Apple x = (Apple)fruit; } \]
\[ \text{Orange x = (Orange)fruit; } \]
The instanceof Operator

Use the instanceof operator to test whether an object is an instance of a class:

```java
circle myCircle = new Circle();
if (myCircle instanceof Cylinder) {
    Cylinder myCylinder = (Cylinder) myCircle;
    ...
}
```

Example 8.1

**Demonstrating Polymorphism and Casting**

This example creates two geometric objects: a circle, and a cylinder, invokes the displayGeometricObject method to display the objects. The displayGeometricObject displays the area and perimeter if the object is a circle, and displays area and volume if the object is a cylinder.

TestPolymorphismCasting Run

Hiding Fields and Static Methods (Optional)

You can override an instance method, but you cannot override a field (instance or static) or a static method. If you declare a field or a static method in a subclass with the same name as one in the superclass, the one in the superclass is hidden, but it still exists. The two fields or static methods are independent. You can reference the hidden field or static method using the super keyword in the subclass. The hidden field or method can also be accessed via a reference variable of the superclass’s type.

Hiding Fields and Static Methods, cont.

When invoking an instance method from a reference variable, the actual class of the object referenced by the variable decides which implementation of the method is used at runtime. When accessing a field or a static method, the declared type of the reference variable decides which method is used at compilation time.

See the example in the book.

The protected Modifier

- The protected modifier can be applied on data and methods in a class. A protected data or a protected method in a public class can be accessed by any class in the same package or its subclasses, even if the subclasses are in a different package.
- private, default, protected, public

Visibility increases:

private, none | if no modifier is used, protected, public
### Accessibility Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modifier on members in a class</th>
<th>Accessed from the same class</th>
<th>Accessed from the same package</th>
<th>Accessed from a subclass</th>
<th>Accessed from a different package</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>public</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protected</td>
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<tr>
<td>default</td>
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<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>private</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Visibility Modifiers

```java
public class C1 {
    public int x;
    protected int y;
    int z;
    private int u;
    protected void m() {
    }
}
```

```java
public class C2 {
    C1 o = new C1();
    // can access o.x;
    // can access o.y;
    // can access o.z;
    // cannot access o.u;
    // can invoke o.m();
}
```

```java
public class C3 extends C1 {
    // can access x;
    // can access y;
    // can access z;
    // cannot access u;
    // can invoke m();
}
```

```java
package p1;
public class C4 extends C1 {
    // can access x;
    // can access y;
    // cannot access z;
    // cannot access u;
    // can invoke m();
}
```

```java
package p2;
public class C5 {
    C1 o = new C1();
    // can access o.x;
    // cannot access o.y;
    // cannot access o.z;
    // cannot access o.u;
    // cannot invoke o.m();
}
```

### A Subclass Cannot Weaken the Accessibility

A subclass may override a protected method in its superclass and change its visibility to public. However, a subclass cannot weaken the accessibility of a method defined in the superclass. For example, if a method is defined as public in the superclass, it must be defined as public in the subclass.

### NOTE

The modifiers are used on classes and class members (data and methods), except that the `final` modifier can also be used on local variables in a method. A final local variable is a constant inside a method.

### The final Modifier

- The `final` class cannot be extended:
  ```java
  final class Math {
      ...
  }
  ```

- The `final` variable is a constant:
  ```java
  final static double PI = 3.14159;
  ```

- The `final` method cannot be overridden by its subclasses.

### The equals() and hashCode() Methods in the Object Class

- The `equals()` method compares the contents of two objects.
- The `hashCode()` method returns the hash code of the object. Hash code is an integer, which can be used to store the object in a hash set so that it can be located quickly.
The equals Method

The equals() method compares the contents of two objects. The default implementation of the equals method in the Object class is as follows:

```java
public boolean equals(Object obj) {
    return (this == obj);
}
```

For example, the equals method is overridden in the Circle class.

```java
public boolean equals(Object o) {
    if (o instanceof Circle) {
        return radius == ((Circle)o).radius;
    } else {
        return false;
    }
}
```

NOTE

The == comparison operator is used for comparing two primitive data type values or for determining whether two objects have the same references. The equals method is intended to test whether two objects have the same contents, provided that the method is modified in the defining class of the objects. The == operator is stronger than the equals method, in that the == operator checks whether the two reference variables refer to the same object.

The hashCode() method

Invoking hashCode() on an object returns the hash code of the object. Hash code is an integer, which can be used to store the object in a hash set so that it can be located quickly. Hash sets will be introduced in Chapter 18, “Java Collections Framework.” The hashCode implemented in the Object class returns the internal memory address of the object in hexadecimal. Your class should override the hashCode method whenever the equals method is overridden. By contract, if two objects are equal, their hash codes must be same.

The finalize, clone, and getClass Methods

- The finalize method is invoked by the garbage collector on an object when the object becomes garbage.
- The clone() method copies an object.
- The getClass() method returns an instance of the java.lang.Class class, which contains the information about the class for the object. Before an object is created, its defining class is loaded and the JVM automatically creates an instance of java.lang.Class for the class. From this instance, you can discover the information about the class at runtime.

Initialization Block

Initialization blocks can be used to initialize objects along with the constructors. An initialization block is a block of statements enclosed inside a pair of braces. An initialization block appears within the class declaration, but not inside methods or constructors. It is executed as if it were placed at the beginning of every constructor in the class.

```java
public class Book {
    private static int numOfObjects;
    private String title;
    private int id;

    public Book(String title) {
        this.title = title;
    }

    public Book(int id) {
        this.id = id;
    }
}
```

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            this.id = id;
        }
    }
}
```
Static Initialization Block

A static initialization block is much like a nonstatic initialization block except that it is declared static, can only refer to static members of the class, and is invoked when the class is loaded. The JVM loads a class when it is needed. A superclass is loaded before its subclasses.

class A extends B {
    static {
        System.out.println("A's static initialization block is invoked");
    }
}

class B {
    static {
        System.out.println("B's static initialization block is invoked");
    }
}