tableName method explicitly declares the table name to be used for the model. For the Car model alone, this does not make sense, but for child models, it will return the same car table, which is just what we want —a single table for the entire class tree. The instantiate method is used by AR internally to create a model instance from the raw data when we call methods such as Car: : :find()->all(). We use a switch statement to create different classes based on the type attribute and use the same class if the attribute value is either not specified or points to the non-existing class.

The Sportcar and FamilyCar models simply set the default AR scope, so when we search for models with the SportCar: : model()-> methods, we will get the SportCar model only.

See also

Use the following references to learn more about the single table inheritance pattern and Yii Active Record implementation:

* <http://martinfowler.com/eaaCatalog/singleTableInheritance.html>
* <https://blog.liip.ch/archive/2012/03/27/table-inheritance-with-doctrine.html>
* <http://www.yiiframework.com/doc/api/CActiveRecord/>