Inner Class in Java

Introduction to Inner Classes

- **Definition**: An inner class is a class defined inside another class. The class that contains the inner class is known as the outer or enclosing class.
- **Scope**: The scope of the inner class is tied to the outer class. An inner class cannot exist independently without its outer class.

Inner Class vs Nested Class

- Nested Classes: A class declared inside another class is called a nested class.
- Inner Classes: A non-static nested class in Java is called an inner class. It has access to the outer class's members (variables and methods).

Syntax of Inner Class

```
access_modifier class OuterClassName {
    access_modifier class InnerClassName {
        // Members of the inner class
    }
    // Other members of the outer class
}
```

Example:

```
public class Outer {
    public class Inner {
        // Inner class code
    }
}
```

Features of Inner Class

- 1. Naming Restrictions: An inner class cannot have the same name as the outer class, though members of both classes can have the same name.
- 2. Access to Outer Class Members: An inner class can access all members of the outer class, including private ones.
- 3. **Object Creation**: Inner class objects are created with an existing outer class object.
- 4. Object Scope: The inner class exists only as long as the outer class exists.
- 5. **Encapsulation**: Inner classes provide better encapsulation by hiding their implementation details within the outer class.

Instantiation of Inner Class

To instantiate an inner class:

```
OuterClass.InnerClass innerObject = outerObject.new InnerClass();
```

Example:

```
Outer outer = new Outer();
Outer.Inner inner = outer.new Inner();
```

Types of Inner Classes in Java

- 1. Regular Inner Class: Defined inside a class but outside any methods.
- 2. Method Local Inner Class: Defined inside a method of the outer class.
- 3. **Anonymous Inner Class**: A nameless inner class used when only one instance is needed.
- 4. **Static Nested Class**: A nested class defined with the static modifier, which can access only static members of the outer class.

Advantages of Inner Class

- 1. **Logical Grouping**: Inner classes help group classes and interfaces that logically belong together.
- 2. Access to Outer Class Members: They can directly access all members of the outer class, including private members.
- 3. **Better Readability**: Reduces the need for extra code and increases maintainability.
- 4. **Encapsulation**: Inner classes help achieve tighter encapsulation, reducing code complexity.

How to Instantiate a Member Inner Class

- 1. Create an instance of the outer class.
- 2. Use that instance to create an instance of the inner class. Example:

```
Outer outer = new Outer();
Outer.Inner inner = outer.new Inner();
Alternatively:
Outer.Inner inner = new Outer().new Inner();
```

Anonymous Inner Class

- **Definition**: An anonymous inner class is a class that is declared without a name. It's often used when you need only one instance of a class.
- Syntax:

```
SomeClass obj = new SomeClass() {
    // Implementation of methods
};
```

Static Nested Class

• **Definition**: A static nested class is a class that is declared static within an outer class. Unlike inner classes, it can exist independently of the outer class instance.

• Example:

```
public class Outer {
    public static class StaticNested {
        // Body of the StaticNested class
    }
}
```

- Main Method: A static nested class can contain a main method and can be run independently.
- **Object Creation**: Static nested classes can be instantiated without an instance of the outer class.

```
Outer.StaticNested nestedObj = new Outer.StaticNested();
```

FAQs

- 1. Can you declare a class inside a class?
 - Yes, classes can be declared inside other classes.
- 2. Can you declare a class inside an interface?
 - Yes, it's valid to declare classes inside interfaces.
- 3. Can you declare an interface inside a class?
 - Yes, this is valid in Java.
- 4. Can you declare an interface inside another interface?
 - Yes, interfaces can be declared inside other interfaces.

Important Points

- Class & Interface Combinations: Java allows flexible nesting of classes and interfaces.
- Instance of Static Nested Class: Can be created independently of the outer class instance.

These notes provide a thorough overview of inner classes in Java, including their types, advantages, syntax, and examples. Let me know if you need further details or clarifications!