## **Inheritance**

### ▼ Introduction to Inheritance in Java

#### What is Inheritance?

Inheritance is one of the **core principles of Object-Oriented Programming (OOP)** that allows a new class (called a **subclass** or **child class**) to **inherit** properties and methods from an existing class (called a **superclass** or **parent class**). This enables the child class to **reuse** code from the parent class, thus promoting code reusability, scalability, and organization.

#### Why is Inheritance Used?

- 1. **Code Reusability**: Inheritance allows subclasses to **reuse** code from parent classes. This avoids code duplication and ensures that modifications in the parent class reflect in all subclasses.
- 2. **Extensibility**: You can extend a class by creating new classes that inherit its properties and behaviors, and then add or modify features as needed. This makes the system more adaptable to future changes.
- 3. **Hierarchical Class Organization**: Inheritance provides a **natural hierarchy**. The relationship between a superclass and subclass allows for more logical and manageable code organization, resembling real-world relationships.
- 4. **Polymorphism**: Inheritance enables **polymorphism**, where a subclass can be treated as an instance of its superclass. This makes the code more flexible and reusable.

#### When to Use Inheritance?

1. **Is-A Relationship**: Use inheritance when there is an **"is-a"** relationship between the parent and child classes. For example, a **Dog** is an **Animal**, so **Dog** can inherit from **Animal**.

• Example: Dog extends Animal

- When you want to extend the behavior of an existing class: If you have a
  class and you want to create a new class that shares some common
  behaviors but also has additional or specialized behaviors, inheritance is
  ideal.
  - Example: A Vehicle class could have subclasses like Car, Truck, etc., each extending the base properties of Vehicle but adding their own specific features.
- 3. **Code Refactoring**: When you have duplicate code, inheritance helps in creating a **generalized superclass** that all subclasses can inherit from, ensuring that the common code is written once.

#### How is Inheritance Used in Java?

In Java, inheritance is implemented using the extends keyword. The subclass inherits all non-private fields and methods of the superclass.

1. Basic Syntax:

```
class Superclass {
    // Superclass fields and methods
}

class Subclass extends Superclass {
    // Subclass-specific fields and methods
}
```

- Accessing Parent Class Members: The subclass automatically inherits all the non-private members (fields and methods) of the superclass, but it cannot access private members directly. It can access them through public/protected getters and setters or constructors.
- Method Overriding: A subclass can provide its own implementation of a method that is already defined in the superclass. This is known as method overriding and helps to modify or extend the behavior of inherited methods.

- 4. **Constructors**: A subclass can call the superclass constructor using the super() keyword. If not explicitly called, the default constructor of the superclass is automatically invoked.
- 5. **Polymorphism:** A reference variable of the superclass type can point to an object of the subclass. This allows the program to invoke overridden methods and treat different objects in a uniform way.

#### **Example: Simple Inheritance**

```
class Animal {
  String name;
  void eat() {
     System.out.println("This animal eats food.");
  }
}
class Dog extends Animal {
  void bark() {
     System.out.println("The dog barks.");
  }
}
public class Main {
  public static void main(String[] args) {
     Dog dog = new Dog();
     dog.eat(); // Inherited method
    dog.bark(); // Subclass method
  }
}
```

#### **Output:**

```
This animal eats food.
The dog barks.
```

#### In this example:

- Dog inherits the eat() method from the Animal class.
- Dog also adds its own method bark(), which is not available in the Animal class.

#### **Key Benefits of Inheritance in Java**

- 1. **Maintainability**: Changes made to the superclass automatically propagate to subclasses, reducing redundancy and effort when making updates.
- 2. **Flexibility**: You can add new functionality to existing classes without modifying the original class.
- 3. **Modularity**: The system can be modularized into smaller, logically related units (superclasses and subclasses), improving overall design and structure.
- 4. **Improved Code Readability**: Hierarchical class relationships help make code easier to understand and maintain, especially in large systems.

## **▼ Some Key Concepts**

## **▼** Concept 1: Initialize superclass variables in superclass, and subclass variables in subclass

In Java, each class is responsible for initializing its own variables. The subclass should use <a href="super(...">super(...)</a> to call the superclass constructor and handle its own fields separately.

#### Example:

```
public class Box {
  double I, h, w;

Box(double I, double h, double w) {
    this.I = I;
    this.h = h;
    this.w = w;
}
```

```
public class BoxWeight extends Box {
  double weight;

public BoxWeight(double I, double h, double w, double weight) {
    super(I, h, w); // superclass (Box) variables initialized here
    this.weight = weight; // subclass variable initialized here
  }
}
```

Conclusion: Always initialize superclass variables using super() and then handle subclass variables within the subclass constructor.

# ▼ Concept 2: What happens if a superclass property is declared private? Can it be accessed from a subclass?

In Java, private members of a superclass are not accessible directly in the subclass — not even through super.variableName. This is because private members are strictly confined to the class in which they are declared.

So, if a variable like I in Box is private:

```
public class Box {
  private double I, h, w;

Box(double I, double h, double w) {
    this.I = I;
    this.h = h;
    this.w = w;
  }
}
```

You cannot do this in a subclass:

```
public class BoxWeight extends Box {
  double weight;

public BoxWeight(double I, double h, double w, double weight) {
    super(I, h, w);

// this.I = I; X Not allowed because `I` is private in Box
    this.weight = weight;
  }
}
```

## Whow to work with private superclass variables in subclasses?

Use **getters** and **setters** or pass values via constructor using super(...).

#### Example using constructor and getter:

```
public class Box {
  private double I, h, w;

Box(double I, double h, double w) {
    this.I = I;
    this.h = h;
    this.w = w;
  }

public double getL() {
    return I;
  }
}

public class BoxWeight extends Box {
    double weight;

public BoxWeight(double I, double h, double w, double weight) {
```

Conclusion: If a superclass member is private, access it using public/protected getters or pass data through constructors. You cannot access it directly in the subclass.

## **▼** Concept 3: Understanding object creation with superclass/subclass references

You're creating four objects:

```
Box box = new Box();
Box box = new BoxWeight();
BoxWeight box = new BoxWeight();
BoxWeight box = new Box(); // X
```

Let's analyze each:

```
\checkmark 1. Box box = new Box();
```

This is a **normal object creation** — a **Box** reference pointing to a **Box** object.

```
Box box = new Box(); // calls Box() constructor
```

No issues — full access to all public and protected members of Box.

```
✓ 2. Box box = new BoxWeight();
```

This is **upcasting**. A superclass (Box) reference points to a subclass (BoxWeight) object.

Box box = new BoxWeight(2, 3, 4, 5); // calls BoxWeight constructor, wh ich calls super()

```
System.out.println(box.w); // 🗸 allowed
System.out.println(box.weight); // 🗙 compile error
```

It is important to understand that it is the type of the reference variable—not the type of the object that it refers to—that determines what members can be accessed.

When a reference to a subclass object is assigned to a superclass reference variable, you will have access only to those parts of the object defined by the superclass.

So you can **only access members defined in Box**, not the ones in BoxWeight (e.g., weight), even though the object is actually a BoxWeight.

## ✓ 3. BoxWeight box = new BoxWeight();

This is a **direct subclass object creation** with a **BoxWeight** reference pointing to a **BoxWeight** object.

BoxWeight box = new BoxWeight(); // calls BoxWeight(), which may call super()

▼ You have full access to both Box and BoxWeight members.

### **4.** BoxWeight box = new Box();

This is invalid — a downcast attempt without actual subclass object.

BoxWeight box = new Box(2, 3, 4);  $// \times$  compile-time error

- This line is trying to assign a Box object to a BoxWeight reference.
- Even though BoxWeight is a subclass of Box, this doesn't mean the reverse assignment is allowed. Because you cannot assign a superclass object to a subclass reference without an explicit cast and even with a cast, it will throw ClassCastException at runtime.
- This is called **downcasting**, and in this case:
  - The object is of type Box.
  - The reference is of type BoxWeight.
- Result: X Compile-time error or if you use a cast:

```
BoxWeight box = (BoxWeight) new Box(2, 3, 4); // \times Compiles but t hrows ClassCastException at runtime
```

Why? Because the object in memory is not actually a BoxWeight. It doesn't have the extra weight field or any BoxWeight methods.

### Solution: Upcast First, Then Downcast (Safely)

Step 1: Create a BoxWeight object (subclass object)

```
Box box = new BoxWeight(2, 3, 4, 5); // ✓ Upcasting — allowed
```

- Here, a Boxweight object is created, but stored in a Box reference.
- This is allowed because a BoxWeight is-a Box.
- Step 2: Downcast back to BoxWeight (if needed)

```
if (box instanceof BoxWeight) {
   BoxWeight boxWeight = (BoxWeight) box; // ✓ Safe Downcastin
g
   boxWeight.display(); // ✓ You can now access subcla
```

```
ss features
}
```

## V Full Example:

```
class Box {
  double length, breadth, height;
  Box(double I, double b, double h) {
    length = I;
    breadth = b;
    height = h;
  }
}
class BoxWeight extends Box {
  double weight;
  BoxWeight(double I, double b, double h, double w) {
    super(I, b, h);
    weight = w;
  }
  void display() {
    System.out.println("Volume: " + (length * breadth * height));
    System.out.println("Weight: " + weight);
  }
}
public class Main {
  public static void main(String[] args) {
    // V Upcasting — subclass object stored in superclass reference
    Box box = new BoxWeight(2, 3, 4, 5);
    // V Safe Downcasting
```

```
if (box instanceof BoxWeight) {
    BoxWeight bw = (BoxWeight) box;
    bw.display();
    }
}
```

#### Summary Table:

Statement	Valid?	Explanation
Box box = new Box();	<b>✓</b>	Normal instantiation
Box box = new BoxWeight();	V	Upcasting (access only Box members)
BoxWeight box = new BoxWeight();	V	Normal subclass instantiation
BoxWeight box = new Box();	×	Invalid downcast – superclass can't become subclass

## 

When a subclass **declares a variable or method with the same name** as one in its superclass, the subclass version **hides** the superclass version. In such cases:

- this.variable refers to the subclass's version.
- super.variable refers to the superclass's version.
  - ✓ Even if the variable names are the same, you can still access the superclass one using super.

#### **Example:**

Let's modify Box and BoxWeight to both have a variable named weight (just for demonstration):

```
public class Box {
   double weight = 10;

   void displayWeight() {
       System.out.println("Box weight: " + weight);
   }
}

public class BoxWeight extends Box {
   double weight = 50;

   void displayWeight() {
       System.out.println("Subclass (BoxWeight) weight: " + this.weight);
       System.out.println("Superclass (Box) weight: " + super.weight);
   }
}
```

```
Subclass (BoxWeight) weight: 50.0
Superclass (Box) weight: 10.0
```

This clearly shows how this.weight and super.weight differ.

! Note: If the superclass's variable is declared private, even super.variable cannot access it.

#### When to Use?

- Use this.variable when you want to refer to the current class's version (especially when local variable names shadow class variables).
- Use super.variable to access hidden members from the superclass commonly seen in overridden methods or constructors.

## **▼** Concept 5: Superclass is always initialized before subclass using super()

In Java, when you create an object of a subclass, the **constructor of the superclass is called first** — either **explicitly using super(...)** or **implicitly by default**. Only **after the superclass constructor finishes**, the subclass constructor runs.

This ensures that all members from the superclass are fully initialized before the subclass adds its own fields.

#### Example:

```
public class Box {
  double I, h, w;
  Box(double I, double h, double w) {
     System.out.println("Box constructor called");
    this.I = I;
    this.h = h;
     this.w = w;
  }
}
public class BoxWeight extends Box {
  double weight;
  BoxWeight(double I, double h, double w, double weight) {
      // this.weight = weight; // if this put first before super() then it will
give an error
     super(I, h, w); // Superclass constructor is called first
     System.out.println("BoxWeight constructor called");
     this.weight = weight;
```

```
}
}
```

#### Output when creating object:

```
BoxWeight box = new BoxWeight(2, 3, 4, 5);

Box constructor called
BoxWeight constructor called
```

#### Why this order matters:

- The subclass depends on the fields and logic already set in the superclass.
- Initialization builds from top of the hierarchy down.
- You can think of it as a pyramid: the base (super) is set first, then the top (subclass).

## ▼ Concept 6: What happens if super() is not used in a subclass constructor?

In Java, if you **don't explicitly call** a superclass constructor using super(...) in a subclass constructor, the Java compiler will **automatically insert a call to the default (no-arg) constructor** of the superclass — i.e., super();

#### **Example:**

```
public class Box {
  double I, h, w;

// Default constructor
  Box() {
    System.out.println("Box default constructor called");
```

```
this.l = -1;
this.h = -1;
this.w = -1;
}

public class BoxWeight extends Box {
  double weight;

// No explicit super() here
  BoxWeight() {
    System.out.println("BoxWeight default constructor called");
    this.weight = -1;
}
```

```
BoxWeight box = new BoxWeight();
```

Box default constructor called BoxWeight default constructor called

#### Important Notes:

- 1. If the superclass has no default constructor, and you don't explicitly call super(...), it will result in a compile-time error.
- 2. That's why, when your superclass only has parameterized constructors, you **must** call super(...) manually from the subclass.

#### **Conclusion:**

• super() is **implicitly inserted** only if you **don't write any** super(...), and the superclass has a **no-arg constructor**.

 X If superclass only has parameterized constructors, Java won't guess which one to call — you must write it.

## **▼** Concept 7: Passing a subclass object to a superclass constructor

In Java, you can **pass a subclass object** as an argument to a **superclass constructor** if that constructor accepts a parameter of the superclass type.

Even though the object is of the subclass, **Java uses polymorphism**, and since a subclass *is-a* superclass (via inheritance), it's perfectly valid.

#### Example from your code:

```
public class Box {
  double I, h, w;
  // Copy constructor
  Box(Box other) {
     System.out.println("Box copy constructor");
    this.l = other.l;
    this.h = other.h;
    this.w = other.w;
  }
}
public class BoxWeight extends Box {
  double weight;
  // Constructor that accepts a BoxWeight object
  BoxWeight(BoxWeight other) {
     super(other); // Passes BoxWeight object to Box(Box other)
    this.weight = other.weight;
  }
}
```

```
BoxWeight b1 = new BoxWeight(2, 3, 4, 5);
BoxWeight b2 = new BoxWeight(b1);
```

```
Box class constructor // from first object creation
Box copy constructor // from super(other)
```

Even though other is a BoxWeight, the constructor Box(Box other) only copies Box-related fields (I, h, w). It **doesn't care** that the actual object is a subclass — it only accesses what it *knows* (its own fields).

#### Key Insight:

A superclass reference can accept a subclass object, but it can only access the members defined in the superclass.

This behavior is a classic example of **polymorphism** and **type compatibility** in Java.

#### **Summary of All 7 Concepts:**

Concept	What You Learned
1	How to inherit using extends, and subclass includes superclass members except private
2	private members in superclass are <b>not accessible</b> in subclass directly
3	Difference between Box box = new BoxWeight() vs BoxWeight box = new Box()
4	this.variable refers to current class; super.variable accesses superclass
5	Superclass constructor is always called <b>before</b> subclass

6	If super() is not written, default superclass constructor is called automatically
7	You can pass subclass object to superclass constructor if it's expecting superclass type

## **▼ Different Types of Inheritance in Java**

## ▼ 1. Single Inheritance

#### What is Single Inheritance?

Single Inheritance means a **subclass inherits from only one superclass**. It forms a **linear parent-child relationship**.

## Example Using Box and BoxWeight

```
// Superclass
public class Box {
  double I, h, w;
  Box(double I, double h, double w) {
    this.I = I;
    this.h = h;
    this.w = w;
  }
  void showDimensions() {
     System.out.println("Length: " + I + ", Height: " + h + ", Width: " +
w);
}
// Subclass
public class BoxWeight extends Box {
  double weight;
  BoxWeight(double I, double h, double w, double weight) {
```

```
super(I, h, w);
this.weight = weight;
}

void showWeight() {
    System.out.println("Weight: " + weight);
}

// Test class
public class Main {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        BoxWeight box = new BoxWeight(2, 3, 4, 5);
        box.showDimensions(); // from Box
        box.showWeight(); // from BoxWeight
}
```

```
Length: 2.0, Height: 3.0, Width: 4.0
Weight: 5.0
```

## Key Point:

- BoxWeight inherits all non-private members of Box.
- This is the most basic form of inheritance, and Java supports it completely.

## 🔻 🔽 2. Multilevel Inheritance

#### What is Multilevel Inheritance?

Multilevel inheritance means a class is **derived from a class which is already derived from another class** — forming a **chain of inheritance**.

- Grandparent → Parent → Child
- In our case: Box → BoxWeight → BoxPrice

## Example Using Box → BoxWeight → BoxPrice

```
// Superclass
public class Box {
  double I, h, w;
  Box(double I, double h, double w) {
     this.I = I;
     this.h = h;
     this.w = w;
  }
  void showDimensions() {
     System.out.println("Length: " + I + ", Height: " + h + ", Width: " +
w);
  }
}
// Intermediate subclass
public class BoxWeight extends Box {
  double weight;
  BoxWeight(double I, double h, double w, double weight) {
     super(I, h, w);
    this.weight = weight;
  }
  void showWeight() {
     System.out.println("Weight: " + weight);
  }
}
```

```
// Subclass of BoxWeight
public class BoxPrice extends BoxWeight {
  double price;
  BoxPrice(double I, double h, double w, double weight, double price) {
     super(I, h, w, weight);
    this.price = price;
  }
  void showPrice() {
    System.out.println("Price: $" + price);
  }
}
// Test class
public class Main {
  public static void main(String[] args) {
     BoxPrice box = new BoxPrice(2, 3, 4, 5, 100);
     box.showDimensions(); // From Box
    box.showWeight(); // From BoxWeight
    box.showPrice(); // From BoxPrice
  }
}
```

```
Length: 2.0, Height: 3.0, Width: 4.0
Weight: 5.0
Price: $100.0
```

## Key Points:

• BoxPrice inherits from BoxWeight, which itself inherits from Box.

- This shows that constructors in the inheritance chain are called in order from top to bottom using super().
- Multilevel inheritance is fully supported in Java and is useful for building on top of progressively specialized classes.

## **▼ 3. Hierarchical Inheritance**

#### What is Hierarchical Inheritance?

In hierarchical inheritance, multiple subclasses inherit from a single superclass.

Think of it like one parent and many children.

```
    Box → BoxWeight
    Box → BoxColor
    Box → BoxPrice (directly)
```

## Example Using Box → BoxWeight, BoxColor

```
// Superclass
public class Box {
    double I, h, w;

Box(double I, double h, double w) {
        this.I = I;
        this.h = h;
        this.w = w;
    }

    void showDimensions() {
        System.out.println("Length: " + I + ", Height: " + h + ", Width: " + w);
     }
}
```

```
// Subclass 1
public class BoxWeight extends Box {
  double weight;
  BoxWeight(double I, double h, double w, double weight) {
    super(I, h, w);
    this.weight = weight;
  }
  void showWeight() {
    System.out.println("Weight: " + weight);
  }
}
// Subclass 2
public class BoxColor extends Box {
  String color;
  BoxColor(double I, double h, double w, String color) {
    super(I, h, w);
    this.color = color;
  }
  void showColor() {
    System.out.println("Color: " + color);
  }
}
// Test class
public class Main {
  public static void main(String[] args) {
     BoxWeight bw = new BoxWeight(2, 3, 4, 5);
     bw.showDimensions();
    bw.showWeight();
    System.out.println("----");
```

```
BoxColor bc = new BoxColor(1, 2, 3, "Red");
bc.showDimensions();
bc.showColor();
}
```

```
Length: 2.0, Height: 3.0, Width: 4.0
Weight: 5.0
----
Length: 1.0, Height: 2.0, Width: 3.0
Color: Red
```

### Key Points:

- All subclasses BoxWeight and BoxColor share the common properties from Box.
- Each subclass extends functionality independently.
- Hierarchical inheritance is **fully supported in Java**.
- It's great for when you want to reuse a common base across multiple types.

## **▼ ♦** 4. Multiple Inheritance in Java

#### What is Multiple Inheritance?

Multiple inheritance means a class inherits from more than one superclass.

▼ Example from other languages (like C++):

```
class A {
// members of A
```

```
class B {
  // members of B
};

class C : public A, public B {
  // inherits both A and B
};
```

But in Java, this is NOT ALLOWED for classes.

## Why Multiple Inheritance is Not Supported in Java (via Classes)?

Because it leads to **ambiguity**, especially in case of method overriding — known as the **Diamond Problem**.

#### The Diamond Problem Explained

```
class A {
    void message() {
        System.out.println("Message from A");
    }
}

class B {
    void message() {
        System.out.println("Message from B");
    }
}

// This is NOT allowed:
// class C extends A, B { // X ERROR: Class cannot extend multiple cla
```

```
sses
//}
```

### Ambiguity:

If class c inherits both A and B, and both override message(), then:

Which version of message() should A inherit? A's or B's? This ambiguity is why Java **disallows** multiple inheritance through classes.

## ▼ Then How Does Java Support Multiple Inheritance?

#### **Through interfaces!**

In Java, a class can implement multiple interfaces.

```
interface A {
    void show();
}

interface B {
    void show();
}

class C implements A, B {
    public void show() {
        System.out.println("Hello from C");
    }
}
```

No ambiguity here because interfaces don't provide method bodies (unless they're default/static) — the class provides its own implementation.

## **✓** Summary:

Concept	Allowed in Java?	Reason
Multiple class inheritance	×	Causes ambiguity
Multiple interface inheritance	<b>▽</b>	No ambiguity, handled by implementation

## ▼ Key Concepts on Different types of Inheritance

## Key Concepts for Single Inheritance

- Only one superclass is extended.
- Subclass inherits non-private members of the superclass.
- Can override superclass methods or add new ones.
- Allows method/variable reuse and specialization.

#### Constructor Chaining:

- super() is used to call the superclass constructor from the subclass.
- Always the first statement in subclass constructor.

```
BoxWeight(double I, double h, double w, double weight) {
   super(I, h, w); // calls Box constructor
   this.weight = weight;
}
```

## 🔽 🔑 Key Concepts for Multilevel Inheritance

- A subclass inherits from another subclass (a chain).
- All constructors in the hierarchy are executed top to bottom.

• super() propagates the initialization up the chain.

#### Example Chain:

```
\rightarrow BoxWeight \rightarrow BoxPrice
```

#### Execution Order:

When new BoxPrice(...) is created:

- 1. Box constructor is called
- 2. then BoxWeight constructor
- 3. then **BoxPrice** constructor

#### Key Point:

Each class in the hierarchy should only initialize its own variables.

Use super() to let parent class handle its part.

## **W P** Key Concepts for Hierarchical Inheritance

- One superclass, multiple subclasses.
- Each subclass inherits the **same base properties**, but implements different features.
- Each child class works independently.

#### Benefit:

Great for code reuse and when modeling "is-a" relationships from a common base.

#### Practical Use Case:

```
Box → BoxWeight , BoxColor , BoxMaterial
```

Each subclass adds a unique feature to a shared structure.

## Ney Concepts for Multiple Inheritance

- Not supported via classes in Java.
- Prevents **Diamond Problem** (method ambiguity).
- Supported via interfaces instead.

#### Why Not Allowed via Classes:

If two superclasses have the same method signature, the subclass won't know which one to inherit.

#### Workaround:

#### Use interfaces:

```
interface Printable { void show(); }
interface Scannable { void show(); }

class Machine implements Printable, Scannable {
   public void show() {
      System.out.println("Machine feature");
   }
}
```