

Advanced Programming

Generics in Java – Type Safety & Reusability

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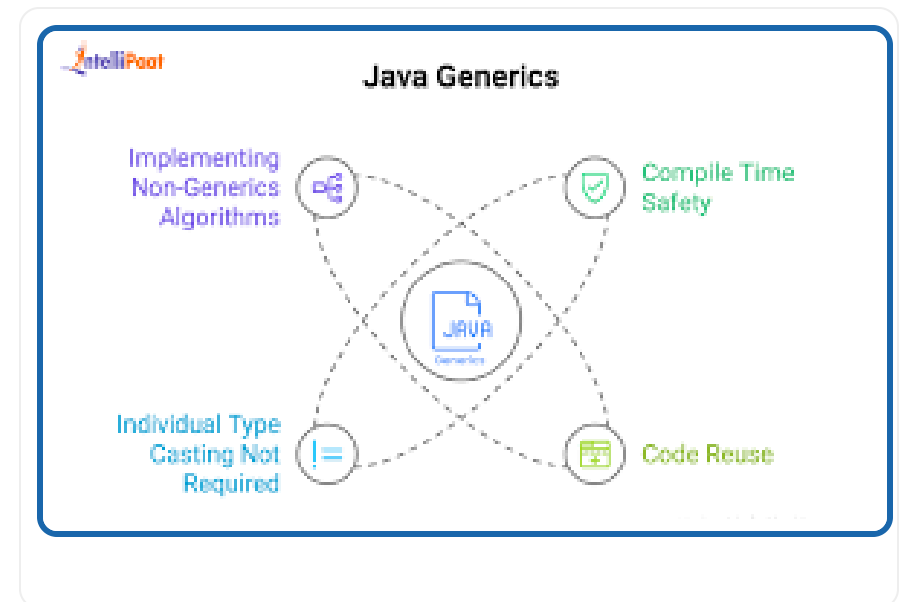
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Generics — Concept

- Generics provide **type safety** and **reuse** in class and method definitions.
- They allow defining classes, interfaces, and methods **without specifying exact data types**.
- Prevents runtime errors like `ClassCastException`.

Generics enable **compile-time type checking**.





Generic Class Example

```
class Box<T> {  
    private T value;  
  
    public void set(T value) { this.value = value; }  
    public T get() { return value; }  
}
```

```
Box<Integer> intBox = new Box<>();  
intBox.set(42);
```

```
Box<String> strBox = new Box<>();  
strBox.set("Sharif");
```

T is a type placeholder. Replaced when object is created.



Generic Method Example

```
class Utils {  
    public static <T> void print(T item) {  
        System.out.println(item);  
    }  
}
```

```
Utils.print(100);  
Utils.print("Sharif");  
Utils.print(3.14);
```

Generic methods define their own type parameter.



Creating Generic Objects

Without Generics (Old Java):

```
List list = new ArrayList();  
list.add("Hello");  
list.add(10); // no type safety
```

With Generics:

```
List<String> list = new ArrayList<>();  
list.add("Hello");  
// list.add(10); // compile-time error
```

Generics **prevent invalid types** from being inserted.



Generics in Inheritance

- **Generics are not covariant** by default.

```
List<Object> a;  
List<String> b;  
  
// a = b; // Not allowed
```

But:

```
List<? extends Number> nums;  
nums = new ArrayList<Integer>(); // OK  
nums = new ArrayList<Double>();  // OK
```

Use wildcards (`? extends` , `? super`) to allow controlled flexibility.



Bounded Type Parameters

```
class Calculator<T extends Number> {  
    double square(T n) {  
        return n.doubleValue() * n.doubleValue();  
    }  
}
```

```
Calculator<Integer> c1 = new Calculator<>();  
Calculator<Double> c2 = new Calculator<>();
```

Restricts generic types to specific inheritance hierarchies.



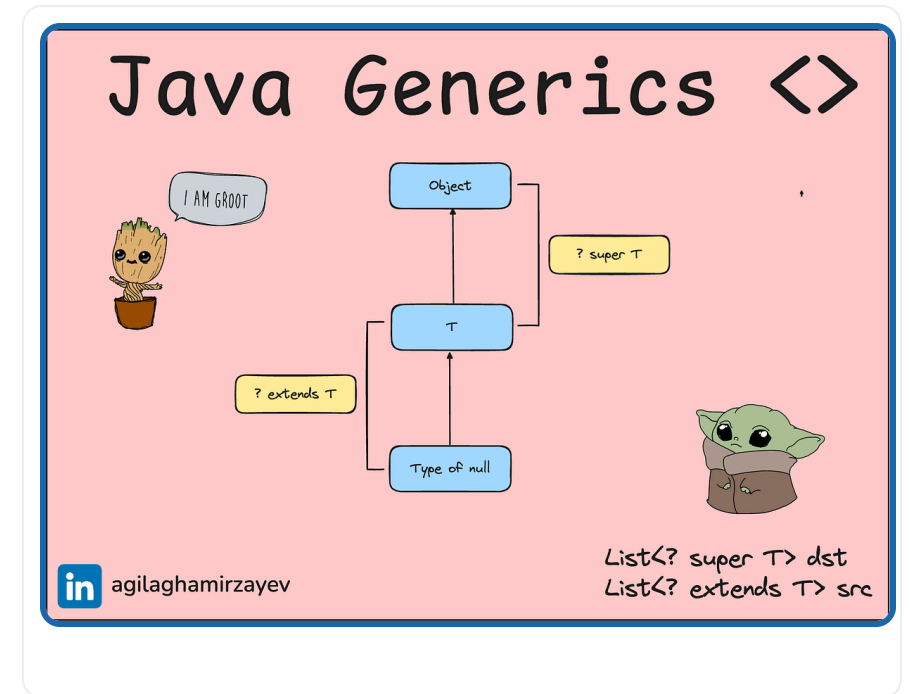
Summary

Concept	Description
Generics	Enable type-safe reusable classes and methods
Generic Class	Uses type placeholders (e.g., <code>class Box<T></code>)
Generic Method	Defines <code><T></code> before return type
Wildcards	Allow controlled flexibility in inheritance
Benefit	Eliminates runtime casting errors

Generics make code **safer, cleaner, and more reusable**.

Thank You!

Generics in Java — Safe and Flexible Abstraction



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