

The flatMap operation

The flatMap intermediate operation performs one-to-many transformations, on elements in a stream pipeline.

It's called flatMap, because it flattens results from a hierarchical collection, into one stream of uniformly typed elements.

The difference is in the return type of the function.

For map, you return a different instance of an object.

In this case, you're exchanging one type, for another, for each element on the stream.

For flatMap, you return a Stream, which means you're exchanging one element, for a stream of elements back.

Stream<R>	map(Function< T, R> mapper)	flatMap(Function<T, Stream> mapper)