Interface in Java

An **interface in Java** is a blueprint of a class. It has static constants and abstract methods.

The interface in Java is *a mechanism to achieve abstraction*. There can be only abstract methods in the Java interface, not method body. It is used to achieve abstraction and multiple inheritance in Java.

In other words, you can say that interfaces can have abstract methods and variables. It cannot have a method body.

Java Interface also **represents the IS-A relationship**.

It cannot be instantiated just like the abstract class.

Since Java 8, we can have **default and static methods** in an interface.

Since Java 9, we can have **private methods** in an interface.

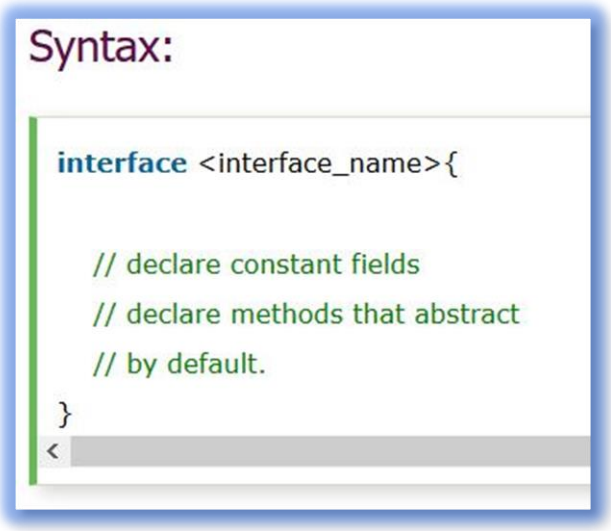
Why use Java interface?

There are mainly three reasons to use interface. They are given below.

- It is used to achieve abstraction.
- By interface, we can support the functionality of multiple inheritance.
- It can be used to achieve loose coupling.

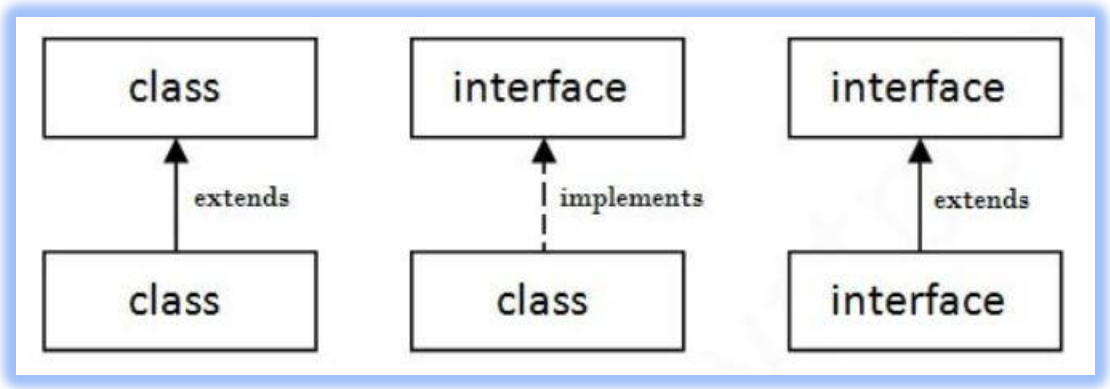
How to declare an interface?

An interface is declared by using the interface keyword. It provides total abstraction; means all the methods in an interface are declared with the empty body, and all the fields are public, static and final by default. A class that implements an interface must implement all the methods declared in the interface.



The relationship between classes and interfaces

As shown in the figure given below, a class extends another class, an interface extends another interface, but a **class implements an interface**.



Java Interface Example: Drawable

In this example, the Drawable interface has only one method. Its implementation is provided by Rectangle and Circle classes. In a real scenario, an interface is defined by someone else, but its implementation is provided by different implementation providers.

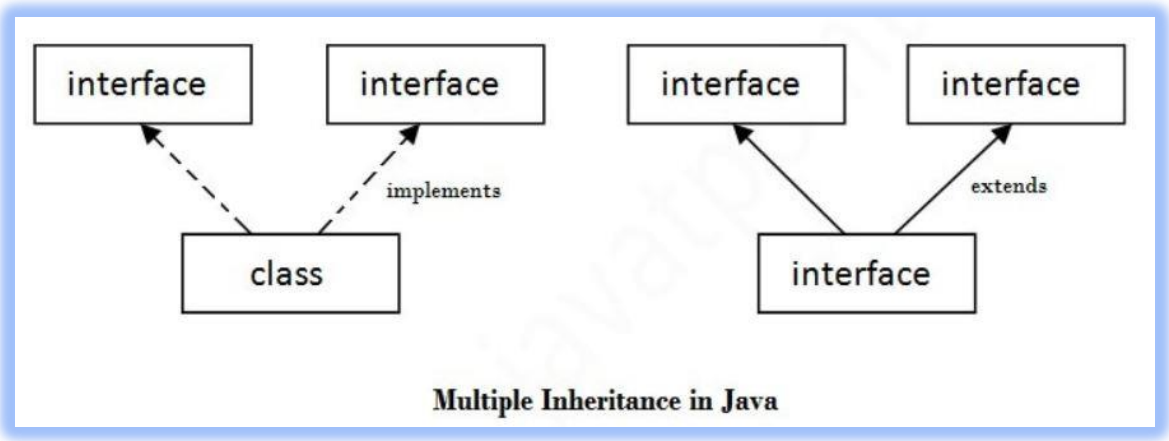
```
//Interface declaration: by first user
interface Drawable{
void draw();
}
//Implementation: by second user
class Rectangle implements Drawable{
public void draw(){System.out.println("drawing rectangle");}
}
class Circle implements Drawable{
public void draw(){System.out.println("drawing circle");}
}
//Using interface: by third user
class TestInterface1{
public static void main(String args[]){
Drawable d=new Circle();//In real scenario, object is provided by method e.g. getDrawable()
d.draw();
}}
```

Output:

```
drawing circle
```

Multiple inheritance in Java by interface

If a class implements multiple interfaces, or an interface extends multiple interfaces, it is known as multiple inheritance.



Multiple Inheritance in Java

Difference between abstract class and interface

Abstract class and interface both are used to achieve abstraction where we can declare the abstract methods. But there are many differences between abstract class and interface that are given below.

Abstract class	Interface
1) Abstract class can **have abstract and non-abstract** methods.	Interface can have **only abstract** methods. Since Java 8, it can have **default and static methods** also.
2) Abstract class **doesn't support multiple inheritance**.	Interface **supports multiple inheritance**.
3) Abstract class **can have final, non-final, static and non-static variables**.	Interface has **only static and final variables**.
4) Abstract class **can provide the implementation of interface**.	Interface **can't provide the implementation of abstract class**.
5) The **abstract keyword** is used to declare abstract class.	The **interface keyword** is used to declare interface.
6) An **abstract class** can extend another Java class and implement multiple Java interfaces.	An **interface** can extend another Java interface only.
7) An **abstract class** can be extended using keyword "extends".	An **interface** can be implemented using keyword "implements".
8) A Java **abstract class** can have class members like private, protected, etc.	Members of a Java interface are public by default.

9)**Example:**
public abstract class Shape{
public abstract void draw();
}
	Example:
	public interface Drawable{
	void draw();
	}

References:

1. https://www.javatpoint.com/interface-in-java ,
2. https://www.javatpoint.com/difference-between-abstract-class-and-interface