java.io.Serializable Library

Serializability of a class is enabled by the class implementing the java.io.Serializable interface. Classes that do not implement this interface will not have any of their state serialized or deserialized. All subtypes of a serializable class are themselves serializable. The serialization interface has no methods or fields and serves only to identify the semantics of being serializable.

To allow subtypes of non-serializable classes to be serialized, the subtype may assume responsibility for saving and restoring the state of the supertype's public, protected, and (if accessible) package fields. The subtype may assume this responsibility only if the class it extends has an accessible no-arg constructor to initialize the class's state. It is an error to declare a class Serializable if this is not the case. The error will be detected at runtime.

During deserialization, the fields of non-serializable classes will be initialized using the public or protected no-arg constructor of the class. A no-arg constructor must be accessible to the subclass that is serializable. The fields of serializable subclasses will be restored from the stream.

When traversing a graph, an object may be encountered that does not support the Serializable interface. In this case the NotSerializableException will be thrown and will identify the class of the non-serializable object.

If a serializable class does not explicitly declare a serialVersionUID, then the serialization runtime will calculate a default serialVersionUID value for that class based on various aspects of the class, as described in the Java(TM) Object Serialization Specification. However, it is strongly recommended that all serializable classes explicitly declare serialVersionUID values, since the default serialVersionUID computation is highly sensitive to class details that may vary depending on compiler implementations, and can thus result in unexpectedInvalidClassExceptions during deserialization. Therefore, to guarantee a consistent serialVersionUID value across different java compiler implementations, a serializable class must declare an explicit serialVersionUID value. It is also strongly advised that explicit serialVersionUID declarations use the private modifier where possible, since such declarations apply only to the immediately declaring class--serialVersionUID fields are not useful as inherited members. Array classes cannot declare an explicit serialVersionUID, so they always have the default computed value, but the requirement for matching serialVersionUID values is waived for array classes.