**Design Patterns**

**Introduction:**

Design patterns are generalized solutions to repeated occurring problems in Software Design. We should think of design patterns not as a finished solution but a template to solve a more general problem. There are three main category of design patterns, Creational, Structural and Behavioral design patterns. Each of these categories has a set of specific design patterns that we will examine.

**Creational Design Patterns:**

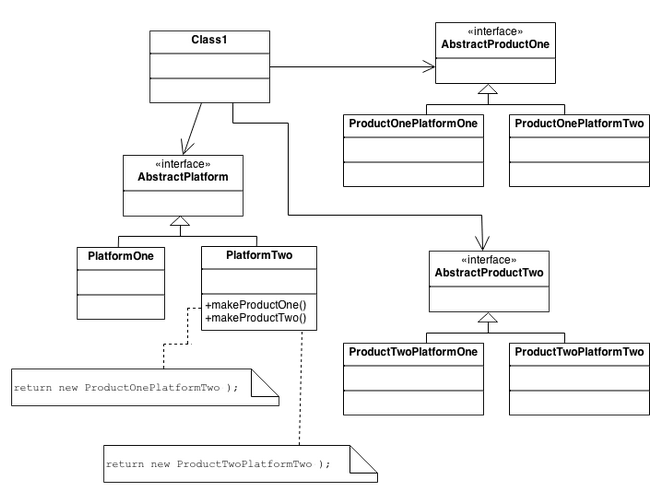
Creational patterns refer to designs that are specific to class instantiation and object creation. In this section we will take a look at the following creational design patterns:

* Abstract Factory
* Builder
* Factory Method
* Object Pool
* Prototype
* Singleton

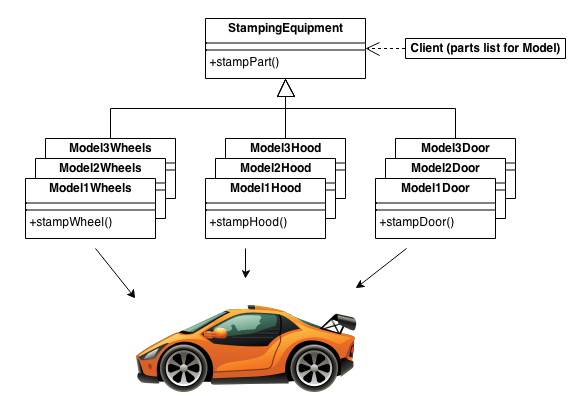
**Abstract Factory:**

The abstract factory design pattern is a pattern intended to provide an interface for creating related objects, without defining their concrete classes. It is typically good to use this design pattern when we are concerned about *portability*, e.g. across *different platform dependencies*, and encapsulating abstracted families of objects.

The abstract factory has factory methods used to create a concrete object part of the family of objects. Figure 1, shows an example of the general structure of an abstract factory design. A more specific example would be of a manufacture that is sheet metal stamping different parts of an automobile. For example, the wheels, the hood, the doors, etc. for different models of cars, which have different layouts of these general parts. We can see the design pattern visually in figure 2.



**Figure 1: An Example of a General Abstract Factory**



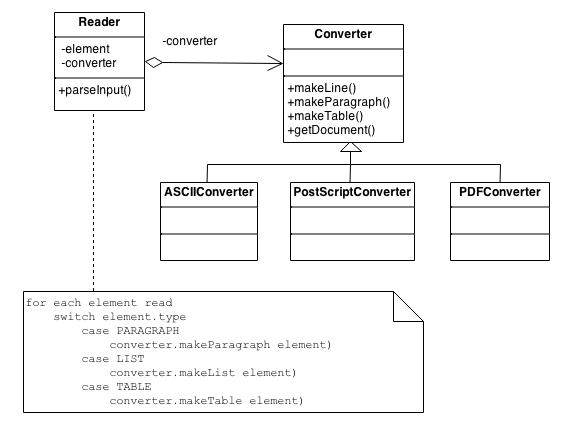
**Figure 2: A Specific Use-Case of an Abstract Factory Design Pattern**

**Builder:**

The builder design pattern is a creational pattern intended to separate the representation of an object from the construction of the object. This is so the pattern can use the same construction process for different representations of the object.

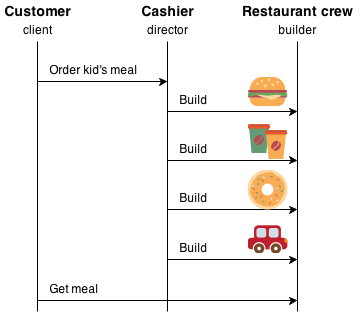
The “Director” calls the services of the “builder” to create parts of the complex object piece by piece. When the “director” is finished the client can retrieve the results of the complete object from the “builder”. This pattern allows for finer control over the construction process, which is unlike other creational patterns that construct the end product in on shot.

The structure of the builder design pattern can be seen below in figure 3, where the Reader object encapsulates the parsing of the common input. The Builder allows for many different possible polymorphic creations of many peculiar representations of targets.



**Figure 3: Structure of Builder Design Pattern**

An example that can highlight the usefulness of this pattern is, a fast-food restaurant that constructs different children’s meals. The children’s meals typically have a main item, side item, a drink, and a toy. Where we have a number of different main items, side items, drinks and toys. This example highlights the point that the creation process of the children’s meal is the same, however the contents in each children’s meal can vary significantly. Figure 4 displays a visual representation of this design pattern.

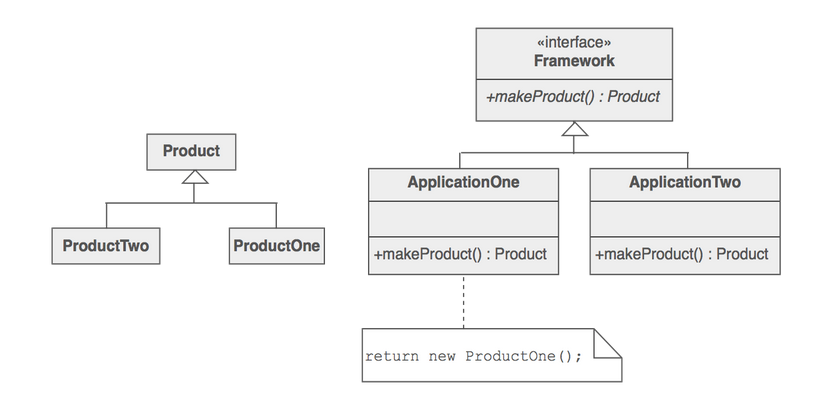


**Figure 4: Example of the Builder Design Pattern**

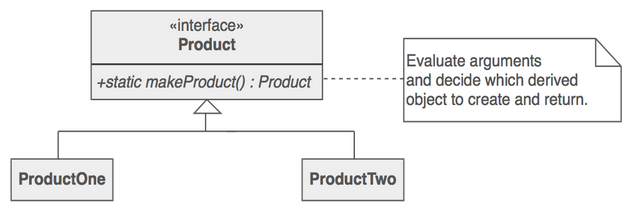
**Factory Method:**

The factory method design pattern is an interface used to create an object, however leaves the responsibility to the subclasses to decide which class to instantiate. A superclass (interface) will specify the standard and generic behavior of the different types of objects and then allow the subclasses to define the details that are supplied by the client. The factory method is very similar to the Abstract Factory except that there is not as much of an emphasis on a family of objects.

The structure of the Factory Method design pattern can be seen below in figure 5. A more popular approach of the factory method is to use a static method of the class that returns an object of that class’ type, figure 6.



**Figure 5: Structure of the Factory Method Design Pattern**



**Figure 6: Example of a Static Factory Method**

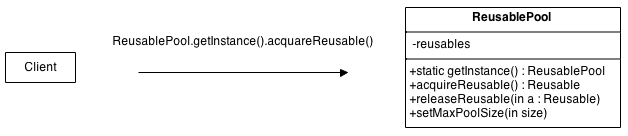
**Object Pool:**

The Object Pool design pattern is designed to help manage objects. This will help the performance in situations here the cost of initializing a class is high and the rate of instantiation of a class is high. When a client has access to an object pool (or resource/reusable pool) they can avoid creating a new object by simply accessing the pool for one of the already instantiated objects in the pool. The pool is typically build as a singleton, in order to manage all of the objects.

The object pool allows clients to “Check out” an object and once it is no longer need by the client it is returned to the pool. It is important to note that we don’t want a process to wait for an object to be returned to the pool, so the object pool will create new objects as they are needed if that object is “Checked out” or has not been created.

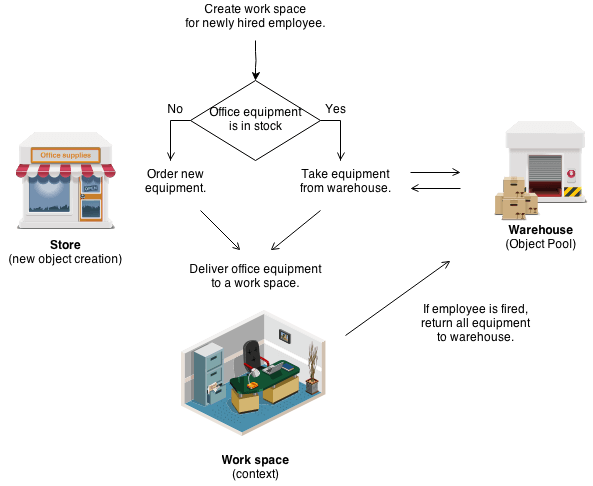
The Structure of the Object Pool (or resource/reusable pool) can be seen in figure 7. The design pattern is made up of a resource pool and a client or clients that have access to the pool. Since it is desirable for the resource pool to manage all of the unused objects, we create the resource pool as a singleton, which has the constructor as a private function. This forces other classes to call getInstance to get an instance of the resource pool. When a client wants access to an object in the pool it will make a call to the acquireReusable method. The pool will return the object and remove it from the pool, if the pool is empty then the acquireReusable method creates a Reusable object.

If the client wants to return a resource to the pool it passes it through the releaseReusable method. By returning the reusable object back to the pool it allows another client or the same client to access it again at a later time.



**Figure 7: Object Pool Structure**

An example of the Object Pool design pattern is an office warehouse, figure 8 will be used as a visual tool for this example. In this example the warehouse will be the resource pool, where office supplies are held. When a new employee is hired, the warehouse (resource pool) is checked for specific office equipment (reusable objects). If the warehouse (resource pool) does not have any the office equipment (reusable objects), the equipment is bought (object creation). If an employee is fire or moved to a different area the office equipment (reusable objects) is returned to the warehouse (resource pool).

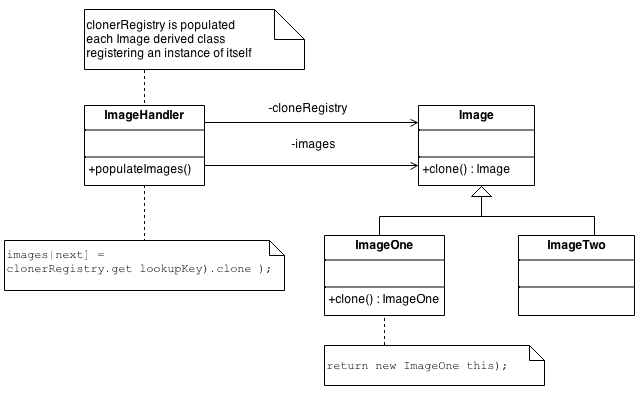


**Figure 8: An abstract Example of the Object Pool Design Pattern**

**Prototype:**

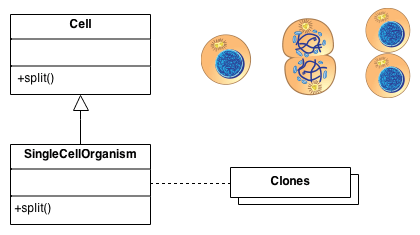
The Prototype design pattern is intended to hide the complexity of the creating new instances of different related objects from the client. We do not want the client to be calling the *new* operator. Instead of creating new instances of objects from scratch we look to clone (or copy) existing objects. This design should be used if there are potentially a number of classes that we only want to use at runtime. This design patter should also be considered if the creation of an object is expensive and the copy of that same object is more efficient than creating that object from scratch.

The Prototype design has an abstract base class with a pure virtual of a clone method and a dictionary of all the “cloneable” concrete derived classes. Any class that needs a “polymorphic instance” capability: derives itself from the abstract base class, registers its prototypical instance and implements the clone operation. The client will no longer need to call the *new* operator. Instead the client will just call the *clone* operation on the abstract base class, supplying an enum or string to the *clone* operation, which is used to return a copy of the concrete derive class. The structure of the prototype design pattern can be seen below in figure 9.



**Figure 9: Structure of Prototype Design Pattern**

A natural example of the Prototype design pattern is the mitotic division of a cell, resulting in two identical cells, where the cell copies an identical version of itself. When the cell splits it creates an identical cell with the same genotype. Figure 10 highlights this example visually.



**Figure 10: A Real World Example of the Prototype Design Pattern**

**Singleton:**

**Structural Design Patterns:**

Structural patterns focus on object composition and interface design. In this section we will take a look at the following structural design patterns:

* Adapter
* Bridge
* Composite
* Decorator
* Façade
* Flyweight
* Private Class Data
* Proxy

**Behavioral Design Patterns:**

Behavior patterns focus mainly on the intercommunication between different objects. In this section we will take a look at the following behavioral design patterns:

* Chain of Responsibility
* Command
* Interpreter
* Iterator
* Mediator
* Memento
* Null Object
* Observer
* State
* Strategy
* Template Method
* Visitor

**References:**

1. <https://sourcemaking.com/design_patterns>
2. Design Patterns (Gang of four: Gamma, Helm, Johnson, Vlissides)
3. Data Structures and Problem Solving Using C++, 2nd-ed, Mark Weiss
4. <https://www.tutorialspoint.com/design_pattern/index.htm>