



9

Threads

CERTIFICATION OBJECTIVES

- Start New Threads
 - Recognize Thread States and Transitions
 - Use Object Locking to Avoid Concurrent Access
 - Write Code That Uses `wait()`, `notify()`, or `notifyAll()`
- ✓ Two-Minute Drill
- Q&A Self Test

CERTIFICATION OBJECTIVE

Defining, Instantiating, and Starting Threads (Objective 4.1)

4.1 Write code to define, instantiate, and start new threads using both `java.lang.Thread` and `java.lang.Runnable`.

Imagine a stockbroker application with a lot of complex capabilities. One of its functions is "download last stock option prices," another is "check prices for warnings," and a third time-consuming operation is "analyze historical data for company XYZ."

In a single-threaded runtime environment, these actions execute one after another. The next action can happen *only* when the previous one is finished. If a historical analysis takes half an hour, and the user selects to perform a download and check afterward, the warning may come too late to, say, buy or sell stock as a result.

We just imagined the sort of application that cries out for multithreading. Ideally, the download should happen in the background (that is, in another thread). That way, other processes could happen at the same time so that, for example, a warning could be communicated instantly. All the while, the user is interacting with other parts of the application. The analysis, too, could happen in a separate thread, so the user can work in the rest of the application while the results are being calculated.

So what exactly is a thread? In Java, "thread" means two different things:

- An instance of class `java.lang.Thread`
- A thread of execution

An instance of `Thread` is just...an object. Like any other object in Java, it has variables and methods, and lives and dies on the heap. But a *thread of execution* is an individual process (a "lightweight" process) that has its own call stack. In Java, there is *one thread per call stack*—or, to think of it in reverse, *one call stack per thread*. Even if you don't create any new threads in your program, threads are back there running.

The `main()` method, that starts the whole ball rolling, runs in one thread, called (surprisingly) the *main* thread. If you looked at the main call stack (and you can, any time you get a stack trace from something that happens after `main` begins, but not within another thread), you'd see that `main()` is the first method on the stack—

the method at the bottom. But as soon as you create a *new* thread, a new stack materializes and methods called from *that* thread run in a call stack that's separate from the `main()` call stack. That second new call stack is said to run concurrently with the main thread, but we'll refine that notion as we go through this chapter.

You might find it confusing that we're talking about code running *concurrently*—as if in *parallel*—given that there's only one CPU on most of the machines running Java. What gives? The JVM, which gets its turn at the CPU by whatever scheduling mechanism the underlying OS uses, operates like a mini-OS and schedules *its* own threads regardless of the underlying operating system. In some JVMs, the Java threads are actually mapped to native OS threads, but we won't discuss that here; native threads are not on the exam. Nor is it required to understand how threads behave in different JVM environments. In fact, the most important concept to understand from this entire chapter is this:

When it comes to threads, very little is guaranteed.

So be very cautious about interpreting the behavior you see on *one* machine as "the way threads work." The exam expects you to know what is and is not guaranteed behavior, so that you can design your program in such a way that it will work regardless of the underlying JVM. *That's part of the whole point of Java.*



Don't make the mistake of designing your program to be dependent on a particular implementation of the JVM. As you'll learn a little later, different JVMs can run threads in profoundly different ways. For example, one JVM might be sure that all threads get their turn, with a fairly even amount of time allocated for each thread in a nice, happy, round-robin fashion. But in other JVMs, a thread might start running and then just hog the whole show, never stepping out so others can have a turn. If you test your application on the "nice turn-taking" JVM, and you don't know what is and is not guaranteed in Java, then you might be in for a big shock when you run it under a JVM with a different thread scheduling mechanism.

The thread questions are among the most difficult questions on the exam. In fact, for most people they *are* the toughest questions on the exam, and with four objectives for threads you'll be answering a *lot* of thread questions. If you're not already familiar with threads, you'll probably need to spend some time experimenting. Also, one final disclaimer: *This chapter makes almost no attempt to teach you how to design a good, safe, multithreaded application. We only scratch*

the surface of that huge topic in this chapter! You're here to learn the basics of threading, and what you need to get through the thread questions on the exam. Before you can write decent multithreaded code, however, you really need to study more on the complexities and subtleties of multithreaded code.

(Note: The topic of daemon threads is NOT on the exam. All of the threads discussed in this chapter are "user" threads. You and the operating system can create a second kind of thread called a daemon thread. The difference between these two types of threads (user and daemon) is that the JVM exits an application only when all user threads are complete—the JVM doesn't care about letting daemon threads complete, so once all user threads are complete, the JVM will shut down, regardless of the state of any daemon threads. Once again, this topic is NOT on the exam.)

Making a Thread

A thread in Java begins as an instance of `java.lang.Thread`. You'll find methods in the `Thread` class for managing threads including creating, starting, and pausing them. For the exam, you'll need to know, at a minimum, the following methods:

```
start()
yield()
sleep()
run()
```

The action happens in the `run()` method. Think of the code you want to execute in a separate thread as *the job to do*. In other words, you have some work that needs to be done, say, downloading stock prices in the background while other things are happening in the program, so what you really want is that *job* to be executed in its own thread. So if the *work* you want done is the *job*, the one *doing* the work (actually executing the job code) is the *thread*. And the *job always starts from a run() method* as follows:

```
public void run() {
    // your job code goes here
}
```

You always write the code that needs to be run in a separate thread in a `run()` method. The `run()` method will call other methods, of course, but the thread of execution—the new call stack—always begins by invoking `run()`. So where does the `run()` method go? In one of the two classes you can use to define your thread job.

You can define and instantiate a thread in one of two ways:

- Extend the `java.lang.Thread` class.
- Implement the `Runnable` interface.

You need to know about both for the exam, although in the real world you're much more likely to implement `Runnable` than extend `Thread`. Extending the `Thread` class is the easiest, but it's usually not a good OO practice. Why? Because subclassing should be reserved for specialized versions of more general superclasses. So the only time it really makes sense (from an OO perspective) to extend `Thread` is when you have a more specialized version of a `Thread` class. In other words, because *you have more specialized thread-specific behavior*. Chances are, though, that the thread work you want is really just a job to be done by a thread. In that case, you should design a class that implements the `Runnable` interface, which also leaves your class free to extend from some *other* class.

Defining a Thread

To define a thread, you need a place to put your `run()` method, and as we just discussed, you can do that by extending the `Thread` class or by implementing the `Runnable` interface. We'll look at both in this section.

Extending `java.lang.Thread`

The simplest way to define code to run in a separate thread is to

- Extend the `java.lang.Thread` class.
- Override the `run()` method.

It looks like this:

```
class MyThread extends Thread {
    public void run() {
        System.out.println("Important job running in MyThread");
    }
}
```

The limitation with this approach (besides being a poor design choice in most cases) is that if you extend `Thread`, *you can't extend anything else*. And it's not as if you really need that inherited `Thread` class behavior, because in order to use a thread you'll need to instantiate one anyway.

Keep in mind that you're free to overload the `run()` method in your `Thread` subclass:

```
class MyThread extends Thread {
    public void run() {
        System.out.println("Important job running in MyThread");
    }
    public void run(String s) {
        System.out.println("String in run is " + s);
    }
}
```

But know this: *The overloaded `run(String s)` method will be ignored by the `Thread` class unless you call it yourself. The `Thread` class expects a `run()` method with no arguments, and it will execute this method for you in a separate call stack after the thread has been started.* With a `run(String s)` method, the `Thread` class won't call the method for you, and even if you call the method directly yourself, execution won't happen in a new thread of execution with a separate call stack. It will just happen in the same call stack as the code that you made the call from, just like any other normal method call.

Implementing `java.lang.Runnable`

Implementing the `Runnable` interface gives you a way to extend from any class you like, but still define behavior that will be run by a separate thread. It looks like this:

```
class MyRunnable implements Runnable {
    public void run() {
        System.out.println("Important job running in MyRunnable");
    }
}
```

Regardless of which mechanism you choose, you've now got yourself some code that can be run by a thread of execution. So now let's take a look at *instantiating* your thread-capable class, and then we'll figure out how to actually get the thing *running*.

Instantiating a Thread

Remember, every thread of execution begins as an instance of class `Thread`. Regardless of whether your `run()` method is in a `Thread` subclass or a `Runnable` implementation class, you still need a `Thread` object to do the work.

If you extended the `Thread` class, instantiation is dead simple (we'll look at some additional overloaded constructors in a moment):

```
MyThread t = new MyThread()
```

If you implement `Runnable`, instantiation is only slightly less simple. To have code run by a separate thread, *you still need a `Thread` instance*. But rather than combining both the *thread* and the *job* (the code in the `run()` method) into one class, you've split it into two classes—the `Thread` class for the *thread-specific* code and your `Runnable` implementation class for your *job-that-should-be-run-by-a-thread* code. (Another common way to think about this is that the `Thread` is the "worker," and the `Runnable` is the "job" to be done.)

First, you instantiate your `Runnable` class:

```
MyRunnable r = new MyRunnable();
```

Next, you get yourself an instance of `java.lang.Thread` (*somebody* has to run your job...), and you *give it your job*!

```
Thread t = new Thread(r); // Pass your Runnable to the Thread
```

If you create a thread using the no-arg constructor, the thread will call its own `run()` method when it's time to start working. That's exactly what you want when you extend `Thread`, but when you use `Runnable`, you need to tell the new thread to use *your* `run()` method rather than its own. The `Runnable` you pass to the `Thread` constructor is called the *target* or the *target `Runnable`*.

You can pass a single `Runnable` instance to multiple `Thread` objects, so that the same `Runnable` becomes the target of multiple threads, as follows:

```
public class TestThreads {
    public static void main (String [] args) {
        MyRunnable r = new MyRunnable();
        Thread foo = new Thread(r);
        Thread bar = new Thread(r);
        Thread bat = new Thread(r);
    }
}
```

Giving the same target to multiple threads means that several threads of execution will be running the very same job (and that the same job will be done multiple times).

exam

Watch

The `Thread` class itself implements `Runnable`. (After all, it has a `run()` method that we were overriding.) This means that you could pass a `Thread` to another `Thread`'s constructor:

```
Thread t = new Thread(new MyThread());
```

This is a bit silly, but it's legal. In this case, you really just need a `Runnable`, and creating a whole other `Thread` is overkill.

Besides the no-arg constructor and the constructor that takes a `Runnable` (the target, i.e., the instance with the job to do), there are other overloaded constructors in class `Thread`. The constructors we care about are

- `Thread()`
- `Thread(Runnable target)`
- `Thread(Runnable target, String name)`
- `Thread(String name)`

You need to recognize all of them for the exam! A little later, we'll discuss some of the other constructors in the preceding list.

So now you've made yourself a `Thread` instance, and it knows which `run()` method to call. *But nothing is happening yet.* At this point, all we've got is a plain old Java object of type `Thread`. *It is not yet a thread of execution.* To get an actual thread—a new call stack—we still have to *start* the thread.

When a thread has been instantiated but not started (in other words, the `start()` method has not been invoked on the `Thread` instance), the thread is said to be in the *new* state. At this stage, the thread is not yet considered to be *alive*. Once the `start()` method is called, the thread is considered to be *alive* (even though the `run()` method may not have actually started executing yet). A thread is considered *dead* (no longer *alive*) after the `run()` method completes. The `isAlive()` method is the best way to determine if a thread has been started but has not yet completed its `run()` method. (Note: The `getState()` method is very useful for debugging, but you won't have to know it for the exam.)

Starting a Thread

You've created a Thread object and it knows its target (either the passed-in Runnable or itself if you extended class Thread). Now it's time to get the whole thread thing happening—to launch a new call stack. It's so simple it hardly deserves its own subheading:

```
t.start();
```

Prior to calling `start()` on a Thread instance, the thread (when we use lowercase `t`, we're referring to the *thread of execution* rather than the Thread class) is said to be in the *new* state as we said. The new state means you have a Thread *object* but you don't yet have a *true thread*. So what happens after you call `start()`? The good stuff:

- A new thread of execution starts (with a new call stack).
- The thread moves from the *new* state to the *runnable* state.
- When the thread gets a chance to execute, its target `run()` method will run.

Be *sure* you remember the following: You start a *Thread*, not a *Runnable*. You call `start()` on a Thread instance, not on a Runnable instance. The following example demonstrates what we've covered so far—defining, instantiating, and starting a thread:

```
class FooRunnable implements Runnable {
    public void run() {
        for(int x =1; x < 6; x++) {
            System.out.println("Runnable running");
        }
    }
}

public class TestThreads {
    public static void main (String [] args) {
        FooRunnable r = new FooRunnable();
        Thread t = new Thread(r);
        t.start();
    }
}
```

Running the preceding code prints out exactly what you'd expect:

```
% java TestThreads
Runnable running
Runnable running
Runnable running
Runnable running
Runnable running
```

(If this isn't what you expected, go back and re-read everything in this objective.)

exam

Watch

There's nothing special about the `run()` method as far as Java is concerned. Like `main()`, it just happens to be the name (and signature) of the method that the new thread knows to invoke. So if you see code that calls the `run()` method on a `Runnable` (or even on a `Thread` instance), that's perfectly legal. But it doesn't mean the `run()` method will run in a separate thread! Calling a `run()` method directly just means you're invoking a method from whatever thread is currently executing, and the `run()` method goes onto the current call stack rather than at the beginning of a new call stack. The following code does not start a new thread of execution:

```
Runnable r = new Runnable();
r.run(); // Legal, but does not start a separate thread
```

So what happens if we start multiple threads? We'll run a simple example in a moment, but first we need to know how to print out which thread is executing. We can use the `getName()` method of class `Thread`, and have each `Runnable` print out the name of the thread executing that `Runnable` object's `run()` method. The following example instantiates a thread and gives it a name, and then the name is printed out from the `run()` method:

```
class NameRunnable implements Runnable {
    public void run() {
        System.out.println("NameRunnable running");
        System.out.println("Run by "
            + Thread.currentThread().getName());
    }
}
```

```

    }
}
public class NameThread {
    public static void main (String [] args) {
        NameRunnable nr = new NameRunnable();
        Thread t = new Thread(nr);
        t.setName("Fred");
        t.start();
    }
}

```

Running this code produces the following, extra special, output:

```

% java NameThread
NameRunnable running
Run by Fred

```

To get the name of a thread you call—who would have guessed—`getName()` on the `Thread` instance. But the target `Runnable` instance doesn't even *have* a reference to the `Thread` instance, so we first invoked the static `Thread.currentThread()` method, which returns a reference to the currently executing thread, and then we invoked `getName()` on that returned reference.

Even if you don't explicitly name a thread, it still has a name. Let's look at the previous code, commenting out the statement that sets the thread's name:

```

public class NameThread {
    public static void main (String [] args) {
        NameRunnable nr = new NameRunnable();
        Thread t = new Thread(nr);
        // t.setName("Fred");
        t.start();
    }
}

```

Running the preceding code now gives us

```

% java NameThread
NameRunnable running
Run by Thread-0

```

And since we're getting the name of the current thread by using the static `Thread.currentThread()` method, we can even get the name of the thread running our main code,

```

public class NameThreadTwo {
    public static void main (String [] args) {
        System.out.println("thread is "
            + Thread.currentThread().getName());
    }
}

```

which prints out

```

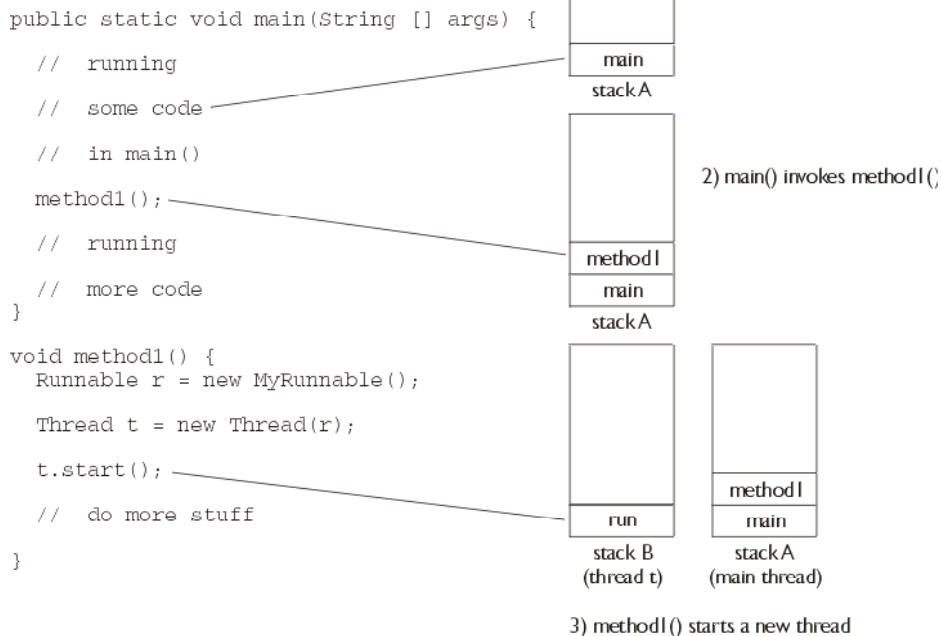
% java NameThreadTwo
thread is main

```

That's right, the main thread already has a name—*main*. (Once again, what are the odds?) Figure 9-1 shows the process of starting a thread.

FIGURE 9-1

Starting a thread



Starting and Running Multiple Threads

Enough playing around here; let's actually get multiple threads going (more than two, that is). We already had two threads, because the `main()` method starts in a thread of its own, and then `t.start()` started a *second* thread. Now we'll do more. The following code creates a single `Runnable` instance and three `Thread` instances. All three `Thread` instances get the same `Runnable` instance, and each thread is given a unique name. Finally, all three threads are started by invoking `start()` on the `Thread` instances.

```
class NameRunnable implements Runnable {
    public void run() {
        for (int x = 1; x <= 3; x++) {
            System.out.println("Run by "
                               + Thread.currentThread().getName()
                               + ", x is " + x);
        }
    }
}

public class ManyNames {
    public static void main(String [] args) {
        // Make one Runnable
        NameRunnable nr = new NameRunnable();
        Thread one = new Thread(nr);
        Thread two = new Thread(nr);
        Thread three = new Thread(nr);

        one.setName("Fred");
        two.setName("Lucy");
        three.setName("Ricky");
        one.start();
        two.start();
        three.start();
    }
}
```

Running this code might produce the following:

```
% java ManyNames
Run by Fred, x is 1
Run by Fred, x is 2
Run by Fred, x is 3
```

```

Run by Lucy, x is 1
Run by Lucy, x is 2
Run by Lucy, x is 3
Run by Ricky, x is 1
Run by Ricky, x is 2
Run by Ricky, x is 3

```

Well, at least that's what it printed when we ran it—this time, on our machine. But the behavior you see above is not guaranteed. This is so crucial that you need to stop right now, take a deep breath, and repeat after me, "The behavior is not guaranteed." You need to know, for your future as a Java programmer as well as for the exam, that there is nothing in the Java specification that says threads will start running in the order in which they were started (in other words, the order in which `start()` was invoked on each thread). And there is no guarantee that once a thread starts executing, it will keep executing until it's done. Or that a loop will complete before another thread begins. No siree Bob. Nothing is guaranteed in the preceding code except this:

Each thread will start, and each thread will run to completion.

Within each thread, things will happen in a predictable order. But the actions of different threads can mix together in unpredictable ways. If you run the program multiple times, or on multiple machines, you may see different output. Even if you don't see different output, you need to realize that the behavior you see is not guaranteed. Sometimes a little change in the way the program is run will cause a difference to emerge. Just for fun we bumped up the loop code so that each `run()` method ran the `for` loop 400 times rather than 3, and eventually we did start to see some wobbling:

```

public void run() {
    for (int x = 1; x <= 400; x++) {
        System.out.println("Run by "
            + Thread.currentThread().getName()
            + ", x is " + x);
    }
}

```

Running the preceding code, with each thread executing its run loop 400 times, started out fine but then became nonlinear. Here's just a snip from the command-

line output of running that code. To make it easier to distinguish each thread, we put Fred's output in italics and Lucy's in bold, and left Ricky's alone:

```

Run by Fred, x is 345
Run by Lucy, x is 337
Run by Ricky, x is 310
Run by Lucy, x is 338
Run by Ricky, x is 311
Run by Lucy, x is 339
Run by Ricky, x is 312
Run by Lucy, x is 340
Run by Ricky, x is 313
Run by Lucy, x is 341
Run by Ricky, x is 314
Run by Lucy, x is 342
Run by Ricky, x is 315
Run by Fred, x is 346
Run by Lucy, x is 343
Run by Fred, x is 347
Run by Lucy, x is 344

```

... it continues on ...

Notice that there's not really any clear pattern here. If we look at only the output from Fred, we see the numbers increasing one at a time, as expected:

```

Run by Fred, x is 345
Run by Fred, x is 346
Run by Fred, x is 347

```

And similarly if we look only at the output from Lucy, or Ricky. Each one individually is behaving in a nice orderly manner. But together—chaos! In the fragment above we see Fred, then Lucy, then Ricky (in the same order we originally started the threads), but then Lucy butts in when it was Fred's turn. What nerve! And then Ricky and Lucy trade back and forth for a while until finally Fred gets another chance. They jump around like this for a while after this. Eventually (after the part shown above) Fred finishes, then Ricky, and finally Lucy finishes with a long sequence of output. So even though Ricky was started third, he actually

completed second. And if we run it again, we'll get a different result. Why? Because it's up to the scheduler, and we don't control the scheduler! Which brings up another key point to remember: Just because a series of threads are started in a particular order doesn't mean they'll run in that order. For any group of started threads, order is not guaranteed by the scheduler. And duration is not guaranteed. You don't know, for example, if one thread will run to completion before the others have a chance to get in or whether they'll all take turns nicely, or whether they'll do a combination of both. There is a way, however, to start a thread but tell it not to run until some other thread has finished. You can do this with the `join()` method, which we'll look at a little later.

A thread is done being a thread when its `run()` method completes.

When a thread completes its `run()` method, the thread ceases to be a thread of execution. The stack for that thread dissolves, and the thread is considered dead. Not dead and gone, however, just dead. It's still a *Thread object*, just not a *thread of execution*. So if you've got a reference to a *Thread* instance, then even when that *Thread* instance is no longer a thread of execution, you can still call methods on the *Thread* instance, just like any other Java object. What you can't do, though, is call `start()` again.

Once a thread has been started, it can never be started again.

If you have a reference to a *Thread*, and you call `start()`, it's started. If you call `start()` a second time, it will cause an exception (an *IllegalThreadStateException*, which is a kind of *RuntimeException*, but you don't need to worry about the exact type). This happens whether or not the `run()` method has completed from the first `start()` call. Only a new thread can be started, and then only once. A runnable thread or a dead thread cannot be restarted.

So far, we've seen three thread states: *new*, *runnable*, and *dead*. We'll look at more thread states before we're done with this chapter.

The Thread Scheduler

The thread scheduler is the part of the JVM (although most JVMs map Java threads directly to native threads on the underlying OS) that decides which thread should run at any given moment, and also takes threads *out* of the run state. Assuming a single processor machine, only one thread can actually *run* at a time. Only one stack

can ever be executing at one time. And it's the thread scheduler that decides *which* thread—of all that are eligible—will actually *run*. When we say *eligible*, we really mean *in the runnable state*.

Any thread in the *runnable* state can be chosen by the scheduler to be the one and only running thread. If a thread is not in a runnable state, then it cannot be chosen to be the *currently running* thread. And just so we're clear about how little is guaranteed here:

The order in which runnable threads are chosen to run is not guaranteed.

Although *queue* behavior is typical, it isn't guaranteed. Queue behavior means that when a thread has finished with its "turn," it moves to the end of the line of the runnable pool and waits until it eventually gets to the front of the line, where it can be chosen again. In fact, we call it a runnable *pool*, rather than a runnable *queue*, to help reinforce the fact that threads aren't all lined up in some guaranteed order.

Although we don't *control* the thread scheduler (we can't, for example, tell a specific thread to run), we can sometimes influence it. The following methods give us some tools for *influencing* the scheduler. Just don't ever mistake influence for control.

exam

Watch

Expect to see exam questions that look for your understanding of what is and is not guaranteed! You must be able to look at thread code and determine whether the output is guaranteed to run in a particular way or is indeterminate.

Methods from the `java.lang.Thread` Class Some of the methods that can help us influence thread scheduling are as follows:

```
public static void sleep(long millis) throws InterruptedException
public static void yield()
public final void join() throws InterruptedException
public final void setPriority(int newPriority)
```

Note that both `sleep()` and `join()` have overloaded versions not shown here.

Methods from the `java.lang.Object` Class Every class in Java inherits the following three thread-related methods:

```
public final void wait() throws InterruptedException
public final void notify()
public final void notifyAll()
```

The `wait()` method has three overloaded versions (including the one listed here).

We'll look at the behavior of each of these methods in this chapter. First, though, we're going to look at the different states a thread can be in.

CERTIFICATION OBJECTIVE

Thread States and Transitions (Objective 4.2)

4.2 Recognize the states in which a thread can exist, and identify ways in which a thread can transition from one state to another.

We've already seen three thread states—*new*, *runnable*, and *dead*—but wait! There's more! The thread scheduler's job is to move threads in and out of the *running* state. While the thread scheduler can move a thread from the running state back to *runnable*, other factors can cause a thread to move out of running, but *not* back to *runnable*. One of these is when the thread's `run()` method completes, in which case the thread moves from the running state directly to the dead state. Next we'll look at some of the other ways in which a thread can leave the running state, and where the thread goes.

Thread States

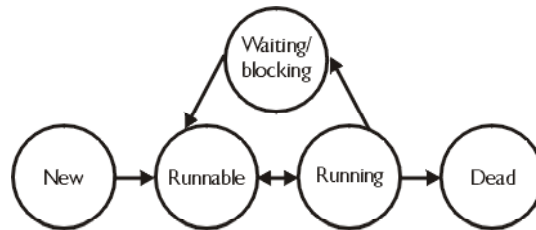
A thread can be only in one of five states (see Figure 9-2):

- **New** This is the state the thread is in after the `Thread` instance has been created, but the `start()` method has not been invoked on the thread. It is a live `Thread` object, but not yet a thread of execution. At this point, the thread is considered *not alive*.

- **Runnable** This is the state a thread is in when it's eligible to run, but the scheduler has not selected it to be the running thread. A thread first enters the runnable state when the `start()` method is invoked, but a thread can also return to the runnable state after either running or coming back from a blocked, waiting, or sleeping state. When the thread is in the runnable state, it is considered *alive*.
- **Running** This is it. The "big time." Where the action is. This is the state a thread is in when the thread scheduler selects it (from the runnable pool) to be the currently executing process. A thread can transition out of a running state for several reasons, including because "the thread scheduler felt like it." We'll look at those other reasons shortly. Note that in Figure 9-2, there are several ways to get to the runnable state, but only *one* way to get to the running state: the scheduler chooses a thread from the runnable pool.

FIGURE 9-2

Transitioning
between
thread states



- **Waiting/blocked/sleeping** This is the state a thread is in when it's eligible to run. Okay, so this is really three states combined into one, but they all have one thing in common: the thread is still alive, but is currently not eligible to run. In other words, it is not *runnable*, but it might *return* to a runnable state later if a particular event occurs. A thread may be *blocked* waiting for a resource (like I/O or an object's lock), in which case the event that sends it back to runnable is the availability of the resource—for example, if data comes in through the input stream the thread code is reading from, or if the object's lock suddenly becomes available. A thread may be *sleeping* because the thread's run code *tells* it to sleep for some period of time, in which case the event that sends it back to runnable is that it wakes up because its sleep time has expired. Or the thread may be *waiting*, because the thread's run code *causes* it to wait, in which case the event that sends it back to runnable is that another thread sends a notification that it may no longer be necessary for the thread to wait. The important point is that one thread

does not *tell* another thread to block. Some methods may *look* like they tell another thread to block, but they don't. If you have a reference `t` to another thread, you can write something like this:

```
t.sleep();    or    t.yield()
```

But those are actually static methods of the `Thread` class—they *don't affect the instance* `t`; instead they are defined to always affect the thread that's currently executing. (This is a good example of why it's a bad idea to use an instance variable to access a static method—it's misleading. There is a method, `suspend()`, in the `Thread` class, that lets one thread tell another to suspend, but the `suspend()` method has been deprecated and won't be on the exam (nor will its counterpart `resume()`). There is also a `stop()` method, but it too has been deprecated and we won't even go there. Both `suspend()` and `stop()` turned out to be very dangerous, so you shouldn't use them and again, because they're deprecated, they won't appear on the exam. Don't study 'em, don't use 'em. Note also that a thread in a blocked state is still considered to be *alive*.

- **Dead** A thread is considered dead when its `run()` method completes. It may still be a viable `Thread` object, but it is no longer a separate thread of execution. Once a thread is dead, it can never be brought back to life! (The whole "I see dead threads" thing.) If you invoke `start()` on a dead `Thread` instance, you'll get a runtime (not compiler) exception. And it probably doesn't take a rocket scientist to tell you that if a thread is dead, it is no longer considered to be *alive*.

Preventing Thread Execution

A thread that's been stopped usually means a thread that's moved to the dead state. But Objective 4.2 is also looking for your ability to recognize when a thread will get kicked out of running but *not* be sent back to either `runnable` or `dead`.

For the purpose of the exam, we aren't concerned with a thread blocking on I/O (say, waiting for something to arrive from an input stream from the server). We *are* concerned with the following:

- Sleeping
- Waiting
- Blocked because it needs an object's lock

Sleeping

The `sleep()` method is a static method of class `Thread`. You use it in your code to "slow a thread down" by forcing it to go into a sleep mode before coming back to `runnable` (where it still has to beg to be the currently running thread). When a thread sleeps, it drifts off somewhere and doesn't return to `runnable` until it wakes up.

So why would you want a thread to sleep? Well, you might think the thread is moving too quickly through its code. Or you might need to force your threads to take turns, since reasonable turn-taking isn't guaranteed in the Java specification. Or imagine a thread that runs in a loop, downloading the latest stock prices and analyzing them. Downloading prices one after another would be a waste of time, as most would be quite similar—and even more important, it would be an incredible waste of precious bandwidth. The simplest way to solve this is to cause a thread to pause (`sleep`) for five minutes after each download.

You do this by invoking the static `Thread.sleep()` method, giving it a time in milliseconds as follows:

```
try {
    Thread.sleep(5*60*1000); // Sleep for 5 minutes
} catch (InterruptedException ex) { }
```

Notice that the `sleep()` method can throw a checked `InterruptedException` (you'll usually know if that is a possibility, since another thread has to explicitly do the interrupting), so you must acknowledge the exception with a handle or declare. Typically, you wrap calls to `sleep()` in a `try/catch`, as in the preceding code.

Let's modify our Fred, Lucy, Ricky code by using `sleep()` to try to force the threads to alternate rather than letting one thread dominate for any period of time. Where do you think the `sleep()` method should go?

```
class NameRunnable implements Runnable {
    public void run() {
        for (int x = 1; x < 4; x++) {
            System.out.println("Run by "
                + Thread.currentThread().getName());
```

```

        try {
            Thread.sleep(1000);
        } catch (InterruptedException ex) { }
    }
}

public class ManyNames {
    public static void main (String [] args) {

        // Make one Runnable
        NameRunnable nr = new NameRunnable();

        Thread one = new Thread(nr);
        one.setName("Fred");
        Thread two = new Thread(nr);
        two.setName("Lucy");
        Thread three = new Thread(nr);
        three.setName("Ricky");

        one.start();
        two.start();
        three.start();
    }
}

```

Running this code shows Fred, Lucy, and Ricky alternating nicely:

```

% java ManyNames
Run by Fred
Run by Lucy
Run by Ricky
Run by Fred
Run by Lucy
Run by Ricky
Run by Fred
Run by Lucy
Run by Ricky

```

Just keep in mind that the behavior in the preceding output is still not guaranteed. You can't be certain how long a thread will actually run *before* it gets put to sleep, so you can't know with certainty that only one of the three threads will be in the runnable state when the running thread goes to sleep. In other words, if there are

two threads awake and in the runnable pool, you can't know with certainty that the least recently used thread will be the one selected to run. *Still, using `sleep()` is the best way to help all threads get a chance to run!* Or at least to guarantee that one thread doesn't get in and stay until it's done. When a thread encounters a sleep call, it *must* go to sleep for *at least* the specified number of milliseconds (unless it is interrupted before its wake-up time, in which case it immediately throws the `InterruptedException`).

exam

watch

Just because a thread's `sleep()` expires, and it wakes up, does not mean it will return to running! Remember, when a thread wakes up, it simply goes back to the runnable state. So the time specified in `sleep()` is the minimum duration in which the thread won't run, but it is not the exact duration in which the thread won't run. So you can't, for example, rely on the `sleep()` method to give you a perfectly accurate timer. Although in many applications using `sleep()` as a timer is certainly good enough, you must know that a `sleep()` time is not a guarantee that the thread will start running again as soon as the time expires and the thread wakes.

Remember that `sleep()` is a static method, so don't be fooled into thinking that one thread can put another thread to sleep. You can put `sleep()` code anywhere, since *all* code is being run by *some* thread. When the executing code (meaning the currently running thread's code) hits a `sleep()` call, it puts the currently running thread to sleep.

EXERCISE 9-1

Creating a Thread and Putting It to Sleep

In this exercise we will create a simple counting thread. It will count to 100, pausing one second between each number. Also, in keeping with the counting theme, it will output a string every ten numbers.

1. Create a class and extend the Thread class. As an option, you can implement the Runnable interface.
2. Override the run() method of Thread. This is where the code will go that will output the numbers.
3. Create a for loop that will loop 100 times. Use the modulo operation to check whether there are any remainder numbers when divided by 10.
4. Use the static method Thread.sleep() to pause. The long number represents milliseconds.

Thread Priorities and yield()

To understand `yield()`, you must understand the concept of thread priorities. Threads always run with some priority, usually represented as a number between 1 and 10 (although in some cases the range is less than 10). The scheduler in most JVMs uses preemptive, priority-based scheduling (which implies some sort of time slicing). *This does not mean that all JVMs use time slicing.* The JVM specification does not require a VM to implement a time-slicing scheduler, where each thread is allocated a fair amount of time and then sent back to runnable to give another thread a chance. Although many JVMs do use time slicing, some may use a scheduler that lets one thread stay running until the thread completes its run() method.

In most JVMs, however, the scheduler does use thread priorities in one important way: If a thread enters the runnable state, and it has a higher priority than any of the threads in the pool and a higher priority than the currently running thread, *the lower-priority running thread usually will be bumped back to runnable and the highest-priority thread will be chosen to run.* In other words, at any given time the currently running thread usually will not have a priority that is lower than any of the threads in the pool. *In most cases, the running thread will be of equal or greater priority than the highest priority threads in the pool.* This is as close to a guarantee about scheduling as you'll get from the JVM specification, so you must never rely on thread priorities to guarantee the correct behavior of your program.



Don't rely on thread priorities when designing your multithreaded application. Because thread-scheduling priority behavior is not guaranteed, use thread priorities as a way to improve the efficiency of your program, but just be sure your program doesn't depend on that behavior for correctness.

What is also *not* guaranteed is the behavior when threads in the pool are of equal priority, or when the currently running thread has the same priority as threads in the pool. All priorities being equal, a JVM implementation of the scheduler is free to do just about anything it likes. That means a scheduler might do one of the following (among other things):

- Pick a thread to run, and run it there until it blocks or completes.
- Time slice the threads in the pool to give everyone an equal opportunity to run.

Setting a Thread's Priority A thread gets a default priority that is *the priority of the thread of execution that creates it*. For example, in the code

```
public class TestThreads {
    public static void main (String [] args) {
        MyThread t = new MyThread();
    }
}
```

the thread referenced by `t` will have the same priority as the *main* thread, since the main thread is executing the code that creates the `MyThread` instance.

You can also set a thread's priority directly by calling the `setPriority()` method on a `Thread` instance as follows:

```
FooRunnable r = new FooRunnable();
Thread t = new Thread(r);
t.setPriority(8);
t.start();
```

Priorities are set using a positive integer, usually between 1 and 10, and the JVM will never change a thread's priority. However, the values 1 through 10 are not guaranteed. Some JVM's might not recognize ten distinct values. Such a JVM might merge values from 1 to 10 down to maybe values from 1 to 5, so if you have, say, ten threads each with a different priority, and the current application is running in a JVM that allocates a range of only five priorities, then two or more threads might be mapped to one priority.

Although *the default priority is 5*, the `Thread` class has the three following constants (`static final` variables) that define the range of thread priorities:

```
Thread.MIN_PRIORITY    (1)
Thread.NORM_PRIORITY   (5)
Thread.MAX_PRIORITY    (10)
```

The `yield()` Method So what does the static `Thread.yield()` have to do with all this? Not that much, in practice. What `yield()` is supposed to do is make the currently running thread head back to runnable to allow other threads of the same priority to get their turn. So the intention is to use `yield()` to promote graceful turn-taking among equal-priority threads. In reality, though, the `yield()` method isn't guaranteed to do what it claims, and even if `yield()` does cause a thread to step out of running and back to runnable, *there's no guarantee the yielding thread won't just be chosen again over all the others!* So while `yield()` might—and often does—make a running thread give up its slot to another runnable thread of the same priority, there's no guarantee.

A `yield()` won't ever cause a thread to go to the waiting/sleeping/ blocking state. At most, a `yield()` will cause a thread to go from running to runnable, but again, it might have no effect at all.

The `join()` Method

The non-static `join()` method of class `Thread` lets one thread "join onto the end" of another thread. If you have a thread B that can't do its work until another thread A has completed *its* work, then you want thread B to "join" thread A. This means that thread B will not become runnable until A has finished (and entered the dead state).

```
Thread t = new Thread();
t.start();
t.join();
```

The preceding code takes the currently running thread (if this were in the `main()` method, then that would be the main thread) and *joins* it to the end of the thread referenced by `t`. This blocks the current thread from becoming runnable until after the thread referenced by `t` is no longer alive. In other words, the code `t.join()` means "Join me (the current thread) to the end of `t`, so that `t` must finish before I (the current thread) can run again." You can also call one of the overloaded versions of `join()` that takes a timeout duration, so that you're saying, "wait until thread `t` is done, but if it takes longer than 5,000 milliseconds, then stop waiting and become runnable anyway." Figure 9-3 shows the effect of the `join()` method.

completes, or if the thread it's trying to join with is not alive, however, the current thread won't need to back out.

Besides those three, we also have the following scenarios in which a thread might leave the running state:

- The thread's `run()` method completes. Duh.
- A call to `wait()` on an object (we don't call `wait()` on a *thread*, as we'll see in a moment).
- A thread can't acquire the *lock* on the object whose method code it's attempting to run.
- The thread scheduler can decide to move the current thread from running to runnable in order to give another thread a chance to run. No reason is needed—the thread scheduler can trade threads in and out whenever it likes.

CERTIFICATION OBJECTIVE

Synchronizing Code (Objective 4.3)

4.3 Given a scenario, write code that makes appropriate use of object locking to protect static or instance variables from concurrent access problems.

Can you imagine the havoc that can occur when two different threads have access to a single instance of a class, and both threads invoke methods on that object...and those methods modify the state of the object? In other words, what might happen if *two* different threads call, say, a setter method on a *single* object? A scenario like that might corrupt an object's state (by changing its instance variable values in an inconsistent way), and if that object's state is data shared by other parts of the program, well, it's too scary to even visualize.

But just because we enjoy horror, let's look at an example of what might happen. The following code demonstrates what happens when two different threads are accessing the same account data. Imagine that two people each have a checkbook for a single checking account (or two people each have ATM cards, but both cards are linked to only one account).

In this example, we have a class called `Account` that represents a bank account. To keep the code short, this account starts with a balance of 50, and can be used only for withdrawals. The withdrawal will be accepted even if there isn't enough money in the account to cover it. The account simply reduces the balance by the amount you want to withdraw:

```
class Account {
    private int balance = 50;
    public int getBalance() {
        return balance;
    }
    public void withdraw(int amount) {
        balance = balance - amount;
    }
}
```

Now here's where it starts to get fun. Imagine a couple, Fred and Lucy, who both have access to the account and want to make withdrawals. But they don't want the account to ever be overdrawn, so just before one of them makes a withdrawal, he or she will first check the balance to be certain there's enough to cover the withdrawal. Also, withdrawals are always limited to an amount of 10, so there must be at least 10 in the account balance in order to make a withdrawal. Sounds reasonable. But that's a two-step process:

1. Check the balance.
2. If there's enough in the account (in this example, at least 10), make the withdrawal.

What happens if something separates step 1 from step 2? For example, imagine what would happen if Lucy checks the balance and sees that there's just exactly enough in the account, 10. *But before she makes the withdrawal, Fred checks the balance and also sees that there's enough for his withdrawal.* Since Lucy has verified the balance, but not yet made her withdrawal, Fred is seeing "bad data." He is seeing the account balance *before* Lucy actually debits the account, but at this point that debit is certain to occur. Now both Lucy and Fred believe there's enough to make their withdrawals. So now imagine that Lucy makes *her* withdrawal, and now there isn't enough in the account for Fred's withdrawal, but he thinks there is since when he checked, there was enough! Yikes. In a minute we'll see the actual banking code, with Fred and Lucy, represented by two threads, each acting on the same `Runnable`, and that `Runnable` holds a reference to the one and only account instance—so, two threads, one account.

The logic in our code example is as follows:

1. The Runnable object holds a reference to a single account.
2. Two threads are started, representing Lucy and Fred, and each thread is given a reference to the same Runnable (which holds a reference to the actual account)
3. The initial balance on the account is 50, and each withdrawal is exactly 10.
4. In the `run()` method, we loop 5 times, and in each loop we
 - Make a withdrawal (if there's enough in the account).
 - Print a statement *if the account is overdrawn* (which it should never be, since we check the balance *before* making a withdrawal).
5. The `makeWithdrawal()` method in the test class (representing the behavior of Fred or Lucy) will do the following:
 - Check the balance to see if there's enough for the withdrawal.
 - If there is enough, print out the name of the one making the withdrawal.
 - Go to sleep for 500 milliseconds—just long enough to give the other partner a chance to get in before you actually *make* the withdrawal.
 - Upon waking up, complete the withdrawal and print that fact.
 - If there wasn't enough in the first place, print a statement showing who you are and the fact that there wasn't enough.

So what we're really trying to discover is if the following is possible: for one partner to check the account and see that there's enough, but before making the actual withdrawal, the other partner checks the account and *also* sees that there's enough. When the account balance gets to 10, if both partners check it before making the withdrawal, both will think it's OK to withdraw, and the account will overdraw by 10!

Here's the code:

```
public class AccountDanger implements Runnable {
    private Account acct = new Account();
    public static void main (String [] args) {
        AccountDanger r = new AccountDanger();
        Thread one = new Thread(r);
        Thread two = new Thread(r);
        one.setName("Fred");
        two.setName("Lucy");
```

```

        one.start();
        two.start();
    }
    public void run() {
        for (int x = 0; x < 5; x++) {
            makeWithdrawal(10);
            if (acct.getBalance() < 0) {
                System.out.println("account is overdrawn!");
            }
        }
    }
    private void makeWithdrawal(int amt) {
        if (acct.getBalance() >= amt) {
            System.out.println(Thread.currentThread().getName()
                               + " is going to withdraw");
            try {
                Thread.sleep(500);
            } catch (InterruptedException ex) { }
            acct.withdraw(amt);
            System.out.println(Thread.currentThread().getName()
                               + " completes the withdrawal");
        } else {
            System.out.println("Not enough in account for "
                               + Thread.currentThread().getName()
                               + " to withdraw " + acct.getBalance());
        }
    }
}

```

So what happened? Is it possible that, say, Lucy checked the balance, fell asleep, Fred checked the balance, Lucy woke up and completed *her* withdrawal, then Fred completes *his* withdrawal, and in the end they overdraw the account? Look at the (numbered) output:

```

% java AccountDanger
1. Fred is going to withdraw
2. Lucy is going to withdraw
3. Fred completes the withdrawal
4. Fred is going to withdraw
5. Lucy completes the withdrawal
6. Lucy is going to withdraw
7. Fred completes the withdrawal
8. Fred is going to withdraw
9. Lucy completes the withdrawal

```

```

10. Lucy is going to withdraw
11. Fred completes the withdrawal
12. Not enough in account for Fred to withdraw 0
13. Not enough in account for Fred to withdraw 0
14. Lucy completes the withdrawal
15. account is overdrawn!
16. Not enough in account for Lucy to withdraw -10
17. account is overdrawn!
18. Not enough in account for Lucy to withdraw -10
19. account is overdrawn!

```

Although each time you run this code the output might be a little different, let's walk through this particular example using the numbered lines of output. For the first four attempts, everything is fine. Fred checks the balance on line 1, and finds it's OK. At line 2, Lucy checks the balance and finds it OK. At line 3, Fred makes his withdrawal. At this point, the balance Lucy checked for (and believes is still accurate) has actually changed since she last checked. And now Fred checks the balance *again*, before Lucy even completes her first withdrawal. By this point, even Fred is seeing a potentially inaccurate balance, because we know Lucy is going to complete her withdrawal. It is possible, of course, that Fred will complete his before Lucy does, but that's not what happens here.

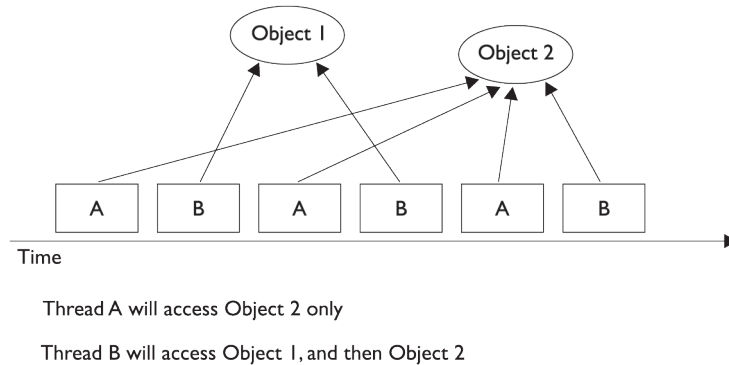
On line 5, Lucy completes her withdrawal and then before Fred completes his, Lucy does another check on the account on line 6. And so it continues until we get to line 8, where Fred checks the balance and sees that it's 20. On line 9, Lucy completes a withdrawal (that she had checked for earlier), and this takes the balance to 10. On line 10, Lucy checks again, sees that the balance is 10, so she knows she can do a withdrawal. *But she didn't know that Fred, too, has already checked the balance on line 8 so he thinks it's safe to do the withdrawal!* On line 11, Fred completes the withdrawal he approved on line 8. This takes the balance to zero. But Lucy still has a pending withdrawal that she got approval for on line 10! You know what's coming.

On lines 12 and 13, Fred checks the balance and finds that there's not enough in the account. But on line 14, Lucy completes her withdrawal and BOOM! The account is now overdrawn by 10—*something we thought we were preventing by doing a balance check prior to a withdrawal.*

Figure 9-4 shows the timeline of what can happen when two threads concurrently access the same object.

FIGURE 9-4

Problems with
concurrent access



This problem is known as a "race condition," where multiple threads can access the same resource (typically an object's instance variables), and can produce corrupted data if one thread "races in" too quickly before an operation that should be "atomic" has completed.

Preventing the Account Overdraw So what can be done? The solution is actually quite simple. We must guarantee that the two steps of the withdrawal—*checking the balance* and *making the withdrawal*—are never split apart. We need them to always be performed as one operation, even when the thread falls asleep in between step 1 and step 2! We call this an "atomic operation" (although the physics is a little outdated, in this case "atomic" means "indivisible") because the operation, regardless of the number of actual statements (or underlying byte code instructions), is completed *before* any other thread code that acts on the same data.

You can't guarantee that a single thread will stay running throughout the entire atomic operation. But you can guarantee that even if the thread running the atomic operation moves in and out of the running state, no other running thread will be able to act on the same data. In other words, If Lucy falls asleep after checking the balance, we can stop Fred from checking the balance until *after* Lucy wakes up and completes her withdrawal.

So how do you protect the data? You must do two things:

- Mark the variables `private`.
- Synchronize the code that modifies the variables.

Remember, you protect the variables in the normal way—using an access control modifier. It's the method code that you must protect, so that only one thread at a time can be executing that code. You do this with the `synchronized` keyword.

We can solve all of Fred and Lucy's problems by adding one word to the code. We mark the `makeWithdrawal()` method synchronized as follows:

```
private synchronized void makeWithdrawal(int amt) {
    if (acct.getBalance() >= amt) {
        System.out.println(Thread.currentThread().getName() +
                           " is going to withdraw");

        try {
            Thread.sleep(500);
        } catch (InterruptedException ex) { }
        acct.withdraw(amt);
        System.out.println(Thread.currentThread().getName() +
                           " completes the withdrawal");
    } else {
        System.out.println("Not enough in account for "
                           + Thread.currentThread().getName()
                           + " to withdraw " + acct.getBalance());
    }
}
```

Now we've guaranteed that once a thread (Lucy or Fred) starts the withdrawal process (by invoking `makeWithdrawal()`), the other thread cannot enter that method until the first one completes the process by exiting the method. The new output shows the benefit of synchronizing the `makeWithdrawal()` method:

```
% java AccountDanger
Fred is going to withdraw
Fred completes the withdrawal
Lucy is going to withdraw
Lucy completes the withdrawal
Fred is going to withdraw
Fred completes the withdrawal
Lucy is going to withdraw
Lucy completes the withdrawal
Fred is going to withdraw
Fred completes the withdrawal
Not enough in account for Lucy to withdraw 0
Not enough in account for Fred to withdraw 0
Not enough in account for Lucy to withdraw 0
Not enough in account for Fred to withdraw 0
Not enough in account for Lucy to withdraw 0
```

Notice that now both threads, Lucy and Fred, always check the account balance *and* complete the withdrawal before the other thread can check the balance.

Synchronization and Locks

How does synchronization work? With locks. Every object in Java has a built-in lock that only comes into play when the object has synchronized method code. When we enter a synchronized non-static method, we automatically acquire the lock associated with the current instance of the class whose code we're executing (the `this` instance). Acquiring a lock for an object is also known as getting the lock, or locking the object, locking *on* the object, or synchronizing on the object. We may also use the term *monitor* to refer to the object whose lock we're acquiring. Technically the lock and the monitor are two different things, but most people talk about the two interchangeably, and we will too.

Since there is only one lock per object, if one thread has picked up the lock, no other thread can pick up the lock until the first thread releases (or returns) the lock. This means no other thread can enter the synchronized code (which means it can't enter any synchronized method of that object) until the lock has been released. Typically, releasing a lock means the thread holding the lock (in other words, the thread currently in the synchronized method) exits the synchronized method. At that point, the lock is free until some other thread enters a synchronized method on that object. Remember the following key points about locking and synchronization:

- Only methods (or blocks) can be synchronized, not variables or classes.
- Each object has just one lock.
- Not all methods in a class need to be synchronized. A class can have both synchronized and non-synchronized methods.
- If two threads are about to execute a synchronized method in a class, and both threads are using the same instance of the class to invoke the method, only one thread at a time will be able to execute the method. The other thread will need to wait until the first one finishes its method call. In other words, once a thread acquires the lock on an object, no other thread can enter any of the synchronized methods in that class (for that object).

- If a class has both `synchronized` and `non-synchronized` methods, multiple threads can still access the class's `non-synchronized` methods! If you have methods that don't access the data you're trying to protect, then you don't need to synchronize them. Synchronization can cause a hit in some cases (or even deadlock if used incorrectly), so you should be careful not to overuse it.
- If a thread goes to sleep, it holds any locks it has—it doesn't release them.
- A thread can acquire more than one lock. For example, a thread can enter a `synchronized` method, thus acquiring a lock, and then immediately invoke a `synchronized` method on a different object, thus acquiring that lock as well. As the stack unwinds, locks are released again. Also, if a thread acquires a lock and then attempts to call a `synchronized` method on that same object, no problem. The JVM knows that this thread already has the lock for this object, so the thread is free to call other `synchronized` methods on the same object, using the lock the thread already has.
- You can synchronize a block of code rather than a method.

Because synchronization does hurt concurrency, you don't want to synchronize any more code than is necessary to protect your data. So if the scope of a method is more than needed, you can reduce the scope of the `synchronized` part to something less than a full method—to just a block. We call this, strangely, a *synchronized block*, and it looks like this:

```
class SyncTest {
    public void doStuff() {
        System.out.println("not synchronized");
        synchronized(this) {
            System.out.println("synchronized");
        }
    }
}
```

When a thread is executing code from within a `synchronized` block, including any method code invoked from that `synchronized` block, the code is said to be executing in a `synchronized` context. The real question is, `synchronized` on what? Or, `synchronized` on which object's lock?

When you `synchronize` a method, the object used to invoke the method is the object whose lock must be acquired. But when you `synchronize` a block of code, you

specify which object's lock you want to use as the lock, so you could, for example, use some third-party object as the lock for this piece of code. That gives you the ability to have more than one lock for code synchronization within a single object.

Or you can synchronize on the current instance (`this`) as in the code above. Since that's the same instance that synchronized methods lock on, it means that you could always replace a synchronized method with a non-synchronized method containing a synchronized block. In other words, this:

```
public synchronized void doStuff() {
    System.out.println("synchronized");
}
```

is equivalent to this:

```
public void doStuff() {
    synchronized(this) {
        System.out.println("synchronized");
    }
}
```

These methods both have the exact same effect, in practical terms. The compiled bytecodes may not be exactly the same for the two methods, but they *could* be—and any differences are not really important. The first form is shorter and more familiar to most people, but the second can be more flexible.

So What About Static Methods? Can They Be Synchronized?

static methods can be synchronized. There is only one copy of the static data you're trying to protect, so you only need one lock per class to synchronize static methods—a lock for the whole class. There is such a lock; every class loaded in Java has a corresponding instance of `java.lang.Class` representing that class. It's that `java.lang.Class` instance whose lock is used to protect the static methods of the class (if they're synchronized). There's nothing special you have to do to synchronize a static method:

```
public static synchronized int getCount() {
    return count;
}
```

Again, this could be replaced with code that uses a synchronized block. If the method is defined in a class called `MyClass`, the equivalent code is as follows:

```
public static int getCount() {
    synchronized(MyClass.class) {
        return count;
    }
}
```

Wait—what's that `MyClass.class` thing? That's called a *class literal*. It's a special feature in the Java language that tells the compiler (who tells the JVM): go and find me the instance of `Class` that represents the class called `MyClass`. You can also do this with the following code:

```
public static void classMethod() {
    Class cl = Class.forName("MyClass");
    synchronized (cl) {
        // do stuff
    }
}
```

However that's longer, ickier, and most important, *not on the SCJP exam*. But it's quick and easy to use a class literal—just write the name of the class, and add `.class` at the end. No quotation marks needed. Now you've got an expression for the `Class` object you need to synchronize on.

EXERCISE 9-2

Synchronizing a Block of Code

In this exercise we will attempt to synchronize a block of code. Within that block of code we will get the lock on an object, so that other threads cannot modify it while the block of code is executing. We will be creating three threads that will all attempt to manipulate the same object. Each thread will output a single letter 100 times, and then increment that letter by one. The object we will be using is `StringBuffer`.

We could synchronize on a `String` object, but strings cannot be modified once they are created, so we would not be able to increment the letter without generating a new `String` object. The final output should have 100 As, 100 Bs, and 100 Cs all in unbroken lines.

1. Create a class and extend the Thread class.
2. Override the run() method of Thread. This is where the synchronized block of code will go.
3. For our three thread objects to share the same object, we will need to create a constructor that accepts a StringBuffer object in the argument.
4. The synchronized block of code will obtain a lock on the StringBuffer object from step 3.
5. Within the block, output the StringBuffer 100 times and then increment the letter in the StringBuffer. You can check Chapter 5 for StringBuffer methods that will help with this.
6. Finally, in the main() method, create a single StringBuffer object using the letter A, then create three instances of our class and start all three of them.

What Happens If a thread Can't Get the Lock?

If a thread tries to enter a synchronized method and the lock is already taken, the thread is said to be blocked on the object's lock. Essentially, the thread goes into a kind of pool for that particular object and has to sit there until the lock is released and the thread can again become runnable/running. Just because a lock is released doesn't mean any particular thread will get it. There might be three threads waiting for a single lock, for example, and there's no guarantee that the thread that has waited the longest will get the lock first.

When thinking about blocking, it's important to pay attention to which objects are being used for locking.

- Threads calling non-static synchronized methods in the same class will only block each other if they're invoked using the same instance. That's because they each lock on this instance, and if they're called using two different instances, they get two locks, which do not interfere with each other.
- Threads calling static synchronized methods in the same class will always block each other—they all lock on the same Class instance.
- A static synchronized method and a non-static synchronized method will not block each other, ever. The static method locks on a Class instance while the non-static method locks on the this instance—these actions do not interfere with each other at all.

- For synchronized blocks, you have to look at exactly what object has been used for locking. (What's inside the parentheses after the word `synchronized`?) Threads that synchronize on the same object will block each other. Threads that synchronize on different objects will not.

Table 9-1 lists the thread-related methods and whether the thread gives up its lock as a result of the call.

TABLE 9-1 Methods and Lock Status

| Give Up Locks | Keep Locks | Class Defining the Method |
|----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| <code>wait ()</code> | <code>notify()</code> (Although the thread will probably exit the synchronized code shortly after this call, and thus give up its locks.) | <code>java.lang.Object</code> |
| | <code>join()</code> | <code>java.lang.Thread</code> |
| | <code>sleep()</code> | <code>java.lang.Thread</code> |
| | <code>yield()</code> | <code>java.lang.Thread</code> |

So When Do I Need To Synchronize?

Synchronization can get pretty complicated, and you may be wondering why you would want to do this at all if you can help it. But remember the earlier "race conditions" example with Lucy and Fred making withdrawals from their account. When we use threads, we usually need to use some synchronization somewhere to make sure our methods don't interrupt each other at the wrong time and mess up our data. Generally, any time more than one thread is accessing mutable (changeable) data, you synchronize to protect that data, to make sure two threads aren't changing it at the same time (or that one isn't changing it at the same time the other is reading it, which is also confusing). You don't need to worry about local variables—each thread gets its own copy of a local variable. Two threads executing the same method at the same time will use different copies of the local variables, and they won't bother each other. However, you do need to worry about `static` and `non-static` fields, if they contain data that can be changed.

For changeable data in a `non-static` field, you usually use a `non-static` method to access it. By synchronizing that method, you will ensure that any threads trying

to run that method *using the same instance* will be prevented from simultaneous access. But a thread working with a *different* instance will not be affected, because it's acquiring a lock on the other instance. That's what we want—threads working with the same data need to go one at a time, but threads working with different data can just ignore each other and run whenever they want to; it doesn't matter.

For changeable data in a `static` field, you usually use a static method to access it. And again, by synchronizing the method you ensure that any two threads trying to access the data will be prevented from simultaneous access, because both threads will have to acquire locks on the Class object for the class the static method's defined in. Again, that's what we want.

However—what if you have a non-static method that accesses a static field? Or a static method that accesses a non-static field (using an instance)? In these cases things start to get messy quickly, and there's a very good chance that things will not work the way you want. If you've got a static method accessing a non-static field, and you synchronize the method, you acquire a lock on the Class object. But what if there's another method that also accesses the non-static field, this time using a non-static method? It probably synchronizes on the current instance (`this`) instead. Remember that a static synchronized method and a non-static synchronized method will not block each other—they can run at the same time. Similarly, if you access a static field using a non-static method, two threads might invoke that method using two different `this` instances. Which means they won't block each other, because they use different locks. Which means two threads are simultaneously accessing the same static field—exactly the sort of thing we're trying to prevent.

It gets very confusing trying to imagine all the weird things that can happen here. To keep things simple: in order to make a class thread-safe, methods that access changeable fields need to be synchronized.

Access to static fields should be done from static synchronized methods. Access to non-static fields should be done from non-static synchronized methods. For example:

```
public class Thing {
    private static int staticField;
    private int nonstaticField;
    public static synchronized int getStaticField() {
        return staticField;
    }
    public static synchronized void setStaticField(
        int staticField) {
```

```

        Thing.staticField = staticField;
    }
    public synchronized int getNonstaticField() {
        return nonstaticField;
    }
    public synchronized void setNonstaticField(
        int nonstaticField) {
        this.nonstaticField = nonstaticField;
    }
}

```

What if you need to access both `static` and `non-static` fields in a method? Well, there are ways to do that, but it's beyond what you need for the exam. You will live a longer, happier life if you JUST DON'T DO IT. Really. Would we lie?

Thread-Safe Classes

When a class has been carefully synchronized to protect its data (using the rules just given, or using more complicated alternatives), we say the class is "thread-safe." Many classes in the Java APIs already use synchronization internally in order to make the class "thread-safe." For example, `StringBuffer` and `StringBuilder` are nearly identical classes, except that all the methods in `StringBuffer` are synchronized when necessary, while those in `StringBuilder` are not. Generally, this makes `StringBuffer` safe to use in a multithreaded environment, while `StringBuilder` is not. (In return, `StringBuilder` is a little bit faster because it doesn't bother synchronizing.) However, even when a class is "thread-safe," it is often dangerous to rely on these classes to provide the thread protection you need. (C'mon, the repeated quotes used around "thread-safe" had to be a clue, right?) You still need to think carefully about how you use these classes. As an example, consider the following class.

```

import java.util.*;
public class NameList {
    private List names = Collections.synchronizedList(
        new LinkedList());
    public void add(String name) {
        names.add(name);
    }
    public String removeFirst() {
        if (names.size() > 0)
            return (String) names.remove(0);
        else
            return null;
    }
}

```

```
    }
}
```

The method `Collections.synchronizedList()` returns a `List` whose methods are all `synchronized` and "thread-safe" according to the documentation (like a `Vector`—but since this is the 21st century, we're not going to use a `Vector` here). The question is, can the `NameList` class be used safely from multiple threads? It's tempting to think that yes, since the data in `names` is in a `synchronized` collection, the `NameList` class is "safe" too. However that's not the case—the `removeFirst()` may sometimes throw a `NoSuchElementException`. What's the problem? Doesn't it correctly check the `size()` of `names` before removing anything, to make sure there's something there? How could this code fail? Let's try to use `NameList` like this:

```
public static void main(String[] args) {
    final NameList nl = new NameList();
    nl.add("Ozymandias");
    class NameDropper extends Thread {
        public void run() {
            String name = nl.removeFirst();
            System.out.println(name);
        }
    }
    Thread t1 = new NameDropper();
    Thread t2 = new NameDropper();
    t1.start();
    t2.start();
}
```

What might happen here is that one of the threads will remove the one name and print it, then the other will try to remove a name and get `null`. If we think just about the calls to `names.size()` and `names.get(0)`, they occur in this order:

```
Thread t1 executes names.size(), which returns 1.
Thread t1 executes names.remove(0), which returns Ozymandias.
Thread t2 executes names.size(), which returns 0.
Thread t2 does not call remove(0).
```

The output here is

```
Ozymandias
null
```

However, if we run the program again something different might happen:

Thread `t1` executes `names.size()`, which returns 1.

Thread `t2` executes `names.size()`, which returns 1.

Thread `t1` executes `names.remove(0)`, which returns `Ozymandias`.

Thread `t2` executes `names.remove(0)`, which throws an exception because the list is now empty.

The thing to realize here is that in a "thread-safe" class like the one returned by `synchronizedList()`, each *individual* method is synchronized. So `names.size()` is synchronized, and `names.remove(0)` is synchronized. But nothing prevents another thread from doing something else to the list *in between* those two calls. And that's where problems can happen.

There's a solution here: don't rely on `Collections.synchronizedList()`. Instead, synchronize the code yourself:

```
import java.util.*;
public class NameList {
    private List names = new LinkedList();
    public synchronized void add(String name) {
        names.add(name);
    }
    public synchronized String removeFirst() {
        if (names.size() > 0)
            return (String) names.remove(0);
        else
            return null;
    }
}
```

Now the entire `removeFirst()` method is synchronized, and once one thread starts it and calls `names.size()`, there's no way the other thread can cut in and steal the last name. The other thread will just have to wait until the first thread completes the `removeFirst()` method.

The moral here is that just because a class is described as "thread-safe" doesn't mean it is *always* thread-safe. If individual methods are synchronized, that may not be enough—you may be better off putting in synchronization at a higher level (i.e., put it in the block or method that *calls* the other methods). Once you do that, the original synchronization (in this case, the synchronization inside the object returned by `Collections.synchronizedList()`) may well become redundant.

Thread Deadlock

Perhaps the scariest thing that can happen to a Java program is deadlock. Deadlock occurs when two threads are blocked, with each waiting for the other's lock. Neither can run until the other gives up its lock, so they'll sit there forever.

This can happen, for example, when thread A hits `synchronized` code, acquires a lock B, and then enters another method (still within the `synchronized` code it has the lock on) that's also `synchronized`. But thread A can't get the lock to enter this `synchronized` code—block C—because another thread D has the lock already. So thread A goes off to the waiting-for-the-C-lock pool, hoping that thread D will hurry up and release the lock (by completing the `synchronized` method). But thread A will wait a very long time indeed, because while thread D picked up lock C, it then entered a method `synchronized` on lock B. Obviously, thread D can't get the lock B because thread A has it. And thread A won't release it until thread D releases lock C. But thread D won't release lock C until after it can get lock B and continue. And there they sit. **The following example demonstrates deadlock:**

```

1. public class DeadlockRisk {
2.     private static class Resource {
3.         public int value;
4.     }
5.     private Resource resourceA = new Resource();
6.     private Resource resourceB = new Resource();
7.     public int read() {
8.         synchronized(resourceA) { // May deadlock here
9.             synchronized(resourceB) {
10.                 return resourceB.value + resourceA.value;
11.             }
12.         }
13.     }
14.
15.     public void write(int a, int b) {
16.         synchronized(resourceB) { // May deadlock here
17.             synchronized(resourceA) {
18.                 resourceA.value = a;
19.                 resourceB.value = b;
20.             }
21.         }
22.     }
23. }
```

Assume that `read()` is started by one thread and `write()` is started by another. If there are two different threads that may read and write independently, there is a risk of deadlock at line 8 or 16. The reader thread will have `resourceA`, the writer thread will have `resourceB`, and both will get stuck waiting for the other.

Code like this almost never results in deadlock because the CPU has to switch from the reader thread to the writer thread at a particular point in the code, and the chances of deadlock occurring are very small. The application may work fine 99.9 percent of the time.

The preceding simple example is easy to fix; just swap the order of locking for either the reader or the writer at lines 16 and 17 (or lines 8 and 9). More complex deadlock situations can take a long time to figure out.

Regardless of how little chance there is for your code to deadlock, the bottom line is, if you deadlock, you're dead. There are design approaches that can help avoid deadlock, including strategies for always acquiring locks in a predetermined order.

But that's for you to study and is beyond the scope of this book. We're just trying to get you through the exam. If you learn everything in this chapter, though, you'll still know more about threads than most experienced Java programmers.

CERTIFICATION OBJECTIVE

Thread Interaction (Objective 4.4)

4.4 Given a scenario, write code that makes appropriate use of `wait`, `notify`, or `notifyAll`.

The last thing we need to look at is how threads can interact with one another to communicate about—among other things—their locking status. The `Object` class has three methods, `wait()`, `notify()`, and `notifyAll()` that help threads communicate about the status of an event that the threads care about. For example, if one thread is a mail-delivery thread and one thread is a mail-processor thread, the mail-processor thread has to keep checking to see if there's any mail to process. Using the `wait` and `notify` mechanism, the mail-processor thread could check for mail, and if it doesn't find any it can say, "Hey, I'm not going to waste my time checking for mail every two seconds. I'm going to go hang out, and when the mail deliverer puts something in the mailbox, have him notify me so I can go back to runnable and do some work." In other words, using `wait()` and `notify()` lets one

thread put itself into a "waiting room" until some *other* thread notifies it that there's a reason to come back out.

One key point to remember (and keep in mind for the exam) about wait/notify is this:

wait(), notify(), and notifyAll() must be called from within a synchronized context! A thread can't invoke a wait or notify method on an object unless it owns that object's lock.

Here we'll present an example of two threads that depend on each other to proceed with their execution, and we'll show how to use wait() and notify() to make them interact safely and at the proper moment.

Think of a computer-controlled machine that cuts pieces of fabric into different shapes and an application that allows users to specify the shape to cut. The current version of the application has one thread, which loops, first asking the user for instructions, and then directs the hardware to cut the requested shape:

```
public void run() {
    while(true) {
        // Get shape from user
        // Calculate machine steps from shape
        // Send steps to hardware
    }
}
```

This design is not optimal because the user can't do anything while the machine is busy and while there are other shapes to define. We need to improve the situation.

A simple solution is to separate the processes into two different threads, one of them interacting with the user and another managing the hardware. The user thread sends the instructions to the hardware thread and then goes back to interacting with the user immediately. The hardware thread receives the instructions from the user thread and starts directing the machine immediately. Both threads use a common object to communicate, which holds the current design being processed.

The following pseudocode shows this design:

```
public void userLoop() {
    while(true) {
        // Get shape from user
        // Calculate machine steps from shape
        // Modify common object with new machine steps
    }
}
```

```

    }
}

public void hardwareLoop(){
    while(true){
        // Get steps from common object
        // Send steps to hardware
    }
}

```

The problem now is to get the hardware thread to process the machine steps as soon as they are available. Also, the user thread should not modify them until they have all been sent to the hardware. The solution is to use `wait()` and `notify()`, and also to synchronize some of the code.

The methods `wait()` and `notify()`, remember, are instance methods of `Object`. In the same way that every object has a lock, every object can have a list of threads that are waiting for a signal (a notification) from the object. A thread gets on this waiting list by executing the `wait()` method of the target object. From that moment, it doesn't execute any further instructions until the `notify()` method of the target object is called. If many threads are waiting on the same object, only one will be chosen (in no guaranteed order) to proceed with its execution. If there are no threads waiting, then no particular action is taken. Let's take a look at some real code that shows one object waiting for another object to notify it (take note, it is somewhat complex):

```

1.  class ThreadA {
2.      public static void main(String [] args) {
3.          ThreadB b = new ThreadB();
4.          b.start();
5.
6.          synchronized(b) {
7.              try {
8.                  System.out.println("Waiting for b to complete...");
9.                  b.wait();
10.             } catch (InterruptedException e) {}
11.             System.out.println("Total is: " + b.total);
12.         }
13.     }
14. }
15.
16. class ThreadB extends Thread {
17.     int total;

```



```

18.
19.     public void run() {
20.         synchronized(this) {
21.             for(int i=0;i<100;i++) {
22.                 total += i;
23.             }
24.             notify();
25.         }
26.     }
27. }

```

This program contains two objects with threads: ThreadA contains the main thread and ThreadB has a thread that calculates the sum of all numbers from 0 through 99. As soon as line 4 calls the `start()` method, ThreadA will continue with the next line of code in its own class, which means it could get to line 11 before ThreadB has finished the calculation. To prevent this, we use the `wait()` method in line 9.

Notice in line 6 the code synchronizes itself with the object `b`—this is because in order to call `wait()` on the object, ThreadA must own a lock on `b`. For a thread to call `wait()` or `notify()`, the thread has to be the owner of the lock for that object. When the thread waits, it temporarily releases the lock for other threads to use, but it will need it again to continue execution. It's common to find code like this:

```

synchronized(anotherObject) { // this has the lock on anotherObject
    try {
        anotherObject.wait();
        // the thread releases the lock and waits
        // To continue, the thread needs the lock,
        // so it may be blocked until it gets it.
    } catch(InterruptedException e){}
}

```

The preceding code waits until `notify()` is called on `anotherObject`.

```

synchronized(this) { notify(); }

```

This code notifies a single thread currently waiting on the `this` object. The lock can be acquired much earlier in the code, such as in the calling method. Note that if the thread calling `wait()` does not own the lock, it will throw an `IllegalMonitorStateException`. This exception is not a checked exception.

so you don't have to *catch* it explicitly. You should always be clear whether a thread has the lock of an object in any given block of code.

Notice in lines 7–10 there is a `try/catch` block around the `wait()` method. A waiting thread can be interrupted in the same way as a sleeping thread, so you have to take care of the exception:

```
try {
    wait();
} catch (InterruptedException e) {
    // Do something about it
}
```

In the fabric example, the way to use these methods is to have the hardware thread wait on the shape to be available and the user thread to notify after it has written the steps. The machine steps may comprise global steps, such as moving the required fabric to the cutting area, and a number of substeps, such as the direction and length of a cut. As an example they could be

```
int fabricRoll;
int cuttingSpeed;
Point startingPoint;
float[] directions;
float[] lengths;
etc..
```

It is important that the user thread does not modify the machine steps while the hardware thread is using them, so this reading and writing should be synchronized.

The resulting code would look like this:

```
class Operator extends Thread {
    public void run(){
        while(true){
            // Get shape from user
            synchronized(this){
                // Calculate new machine steps from shape
                notify();
            }
        }
    }
}

class Machine extends Thread {
    Operator operator; // assume this gets initialized
```

```

public void run(){
    while(true){
        synchronized(operator){
            try {
                operator.wait();
            } catch (InterruptedException ie) {}
            // Send machine steps to hardware
        }
    }
}

```

The machine thread, once started, will immediately go into the waiting state and will wait patiently until the operator sends the first notification. At that point it is the operator thread that owns the lock for the object, so the hardware thread gets stuck for a while. It's only after the operator thread abandons the synchronized block that the hardware thread can really start processing the machine steps.

While one shape is being processed by the hardware, the user may interact with the system and specify another shape to be cut. When the user is finished with the shape and it is time to cut it, the operator thread attempts to enter the synchronized block, maybe blocking until the machine thread has finished with the previous machine steps. When the machine thread has finished, it repeats the loop, going again to the waiting state (and therefore releasing the lock). Only then can the operator thread enter the synchronized block and overwrite the machine steps with the new ones.

Having two threads is definitely an improvement over having one, although in this implementation there is still a possibility of making the user wait. A further improvement would be to have many shapes in a queue, thereby reducing the possibility of requiring the user to wait for the hardware.

There is also a second form of `wait()` that accepts a number of milliseconds as a maximum time to wait. If the thread is not interrupted, it will continue normally whenever it is notified or the specified timeout has elapsed. This normal continuation consists of getting out of the waiting state, but to continue execution it will have to get the lock for the object:

```

synchronized(a){ // The thread gets the lock on 'a'
    a.wait(2000); // Thread releases the lock and waits for notify
                // only for a maximum of two seconds, then goes back to Runnable
    // The thread reacquires the lock
    // More instructions here
}

```

exam

Watch

When the `wait()` method is invoked on an object, the thread executing that code gives up its lock on the object immediately. However, when `notify()` is called, that doesn't mean the thread gives up its lock at that moment. If the thread is still completing synchronized code, the lock is not released until the thread moves out of synchronized code. So just because `notify()` is called doesn't mean the lock becomes available at that moment.

Using `notifyAll()` When Many Threads May Be Waiting

In most scenarios, it's preferable to notify *all* of the threads that are waiting on a particular object. If so, you can use `notifyAll()` on the object to let all the threads rush out of the waiting area and back to runnable. This is especially important if you have several threads waiting on one object, but for different reasons, and you want to be sure that the *right* thread (along with all of the others) gets notified.

```
notifyAll(); // Will notify all waiting threads
```

All of the threads will be notified and start competing to get the lock. As the lock is used and released by each thread, all of them will get into action without a need for further notification.

As we said earlier, an object can have many threads waiting on it, and using `notify()` will affect only one of them. Which one, exactly, is not specified and depends on the JVM implementation, so you should never rely on a particular thread being notified in preference to another.

In cases in which there might be a lot more waiting, the best way to do this is by using `notifyAll()`. Let's take a look at this in some code. In this example, there is one class that performs a calculation and many readers that are waiting to receive the completed calculation. At any given moment many readers may be waiting.

```
1. class Reader extends Thread {
2.     Calculator c;
3.
4.     public Reader(Calculator calc) {
5.         c = calc;
```

```

6.     }
7.
8.     public void run() {
9.         synchronized(c) {
10.             try {
11.                 System.out.println("Waiting for calculation...");
12.                 c.wait();
13.             } catch (InterruptedException e) {}
14.             System.out.println("Total is: " + c.total);
15.         }
16.     }
17.
18.     public static void main(String [] args) {
19.         Calculator calculator = new Calculator();
20.         new Reader(calculator).start();
21.         new Reader(calculator).start();
22.         new Reader(calculator).start();
23.         calculator.start();
24.     }
25. }
26.
27. class Calculator extends Thread {
28.     int total;
29.
30.     public void run() {
31.         synchronized(this) {
32.             for(int i=0;i<100;i++) {
33.                 total += i;
34.             }
35.             notifyAll();
36.         }
37.     }
38. }

```

The program starts three threads that are all waiting to receive the finished calculation (lines 18–24), and then starts the calculator with its calculation. **Note** that if the `run()` method at line 30 used `notify()` instead of `notifyAll()`, only one reader would be notified instead of all the readers.

Using wait() in a Loop

Actually both of the previous examples (Machine/Operator and Reader/Calculator) had a common problem. In each one, there was at least one thread calling `wait()`, and another thread calling `notify()` or `notifyAll()`. This works well enough

as long as the waiting threads have actually started waiting before the other thread executes the `notify()` or `notifyAll()`. But what happens if, for example, the Calculator runs first and calls `notify()` before the Readers have started waiting? This could happen, since we can't guarantee what order the different parts of the thread will execute in. Unfortunately, when the Readers run, they just start waiting right away. They don't do anything to see if the event they're waiting for has already happened. So if the Calculator has already called `notifyAll()`, it's not going to call `notifyAll()` again—and the waiting Readers will keep waiting forever. This is probably *not* what the programmer wanted to happen. Almost always, when you want to wait for something, you also need to be able to check if it has already happened. Generally the best way to solve this is to put in some sort of loop that checks on some sort of conditional expressions, and only waits if the thing you're waiting for has not yet happened. Here's a modified, safer version of the earlier fabric-cutting machine example:

```
class Operator extends Thread {
    Machine machine; // assume this gets initialized
    public void run() {
        while (true) {
            Shape shape = getShapeFromUser();
            MachineInstructions job =
                calculateNewInstructionsFor(shape);
            machine.addJob(job);
        }
    }
}
```

The operator will still keep on looping forever, getting more shapes from users, calculating new instructions for those shapes, and sending them to the machine. But now the logic for `notify()` has been moved into the `addJob()` method in the Machine class:

```
class Machine extends Thread {
    List<MachineInstructions> jobs =
        new ArrayList<MachineInstructions>();

    public void addJob(MachineInstructions job) {
        synchronized (jobs) {
            jobs.add(job);
            jobs.notify();
        }
    }
}
```

```

    }
}
public void run() {
    while (true) {
        synchronized (jobs) {
            // wait until at least one job is available
            while (jobs.isEmpty()) {
                try {
                    jobs.wait();
                } catch (InterruptedException ie) { }
            }
            // If we get here, we know that jobs is not empty
            MachineInstructions instructions = jobs.remove(0);
            // Send machine steps to hardware
        }
    }
}
}

```

A machine keeps a list of the jobs it's scheduled to do. Whenever an operator adds a new job to the list, it calls the `addJob()` method and adds the new job to the list. Meanwhile the `run()` method just keeps looping, looking for any jobs on the list. If there are no jobs, it will start waiting. If it's notified, it will stop waiting and then recheck the loop condition: is the list still empty? In practice this double-check is probably not necessary, as the only time a `notify()` is ever sent is when a new job has been added to the list. However, it's a good idea to require the thread to recheck the `isEmpty()` condition whenever it's been woken up, because it's possible that a thread has accidentally sent an extra `notify()` that was not intended.

There's also a possible situation called *spontaneous wakeup* that may exist in some situations—a thread may wake up even though no code has called `notify()` or `notifyAll()`. (At least, no code you know about has called these methods. Sometimes the JVM may call `notify()` for reasons of its own, or code in some other class calls it for reasons you just don't know.) What this means is, when your thread wakes up from a `wait()`, you don't know for sure why it was awakened. By putting the `wait()` method in a `while` loop and re-checking the condition that represents what we were waiting for, we ensure that *whatever* the reason we woke up, we will re-enter the `wait()` if (and only if) the thing we were waiting for has not happened yet. In the Machine class, the thing we were waiting for is for the jobs list to not be empty. If it's empty, we wait, and if it's not, we don't.

Note also that both the `run()` method and the `addJob()` method synchronize on the same object—the jobs list. This is for two reasons. One is because we're calling `wait()` and `notify()` on this instance, so we need to synchronize in order to avoid an `IllegalThreadState` exception. The other reason is, the data in the jobs list is changeable data stored in a field that is accessed by two different threads. We need to synchronize in order to access that changeable data safely. Fortunately, the same `synchronized` blocks that allow us to `wait()` and `notify()` also provide the required thread safety for our other access to changeable data. In fact this is a main reason why synchronization is required to use `wait()` and `notify()` in the first place—you almost always need to share some mutable data between threads at the same time, and that means you need synchronization. Notice that the `synchronized` block in `addJob()` is big enough to also include the call to `jobs.add(job)`—which modifies shared data. And the `synchronized` block in `run()` is large enough to include the whole `while` loop—which includes the call to `jobs.isEmpty()`, which accesses shared data.

The moral here is that when you use `wait()` and `notify()` or `notifyAll()`, you should almost always also have a `while` loop around the `wait()` that checks a condition and forces continued waiting until the condition is met. And you should also make use of the required synchronization for the `wait()` and `notify()` calls, to also protect whatever other data you're sharing between threads. If you see code which fails to do this, there's usually something wrong with the code—even if you have a hard time seeing what exactly the problem is.

exam

watch

The methods `wait()`, `notify()`, and `notifyAll()` are methods of only `java.lang.Object`, not of `java.lang.Thread` or `java.lang.Runnable`. Be sure you know which methods are defined in `Thread`, which in `Object`, and which in `Runnable` (just `run()`, so that's an easy one). Of the key methods in `Thread`, be sure you know which are `static`—`sleep()` and `yield()`, and which are not `static`—`join()` and `start()`. Table 9-2 lists the key methods you'll need to know for the exam, with the `static` methods shown in *italics*.

TABLE 9-2 Key Thread Methods

| Class Object | Class Thread | Interface Runnable |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| wait () | start() | run() |
| notify() | yield() | |
| notifyAll() | sleep() | |
| | join() | |

CERTIFICATION SUMMARY

This chapter covered the required thread knowledge you'll need to apply on the certification exam. Threads can be created by either extending the `Thread` class or implementing the `Runnable` interface. The only method that must be overridden in the `Runnable` interface is the `run()` method, but the thread doesn't become a *thread of execution* until somebody calls the `Thread` object's `start()` method. We also looked at how the `sleep()` method can be used to pause a thread, and we saw that when an object goes to sleep, it holds onto any locks it acquired prior to sleeping.

We looked at five thread states: new, runnable, running, blocked/waiting/sleeping, and dead. You learned that when a thread is dead, it can never be restarted even if it's still a valid object on the heap. We saw that there is only one way a thread can transition to running, and that's from runnable. However, once running, a thread can become dead, go to sleep, wait for another thread to finish, block on an object's lock, wait for a notification, or return to runnable.

You saw how two threads acting on the same data can cause serious problems (remember Lucy and Fred's bank account?). We saw that, to let one thread execute a method, but prevent other threads from running the same object's method, we use the `synchronized` keyword. To coordinate activity between different threads, use the `wait()`, `notify()`, and `notifyAll()` methods.



TWO-MINUTE DRILL

Here are some of the key points from each certification objective in this chapter. Photocopy it and sleep with it under your pillow for complete absorption.

Defining, Instantiating, and Starting Threads (Objective 4.1)

- ❑ Threads can be created by extending `Thread` and overriding the `public void run()` method.
- ❑ Thread objects can also be created by calling the `Thread` constructor that takes a `Runnable` argument. The `Runnable` object is said to be the *target* of the thread.
- ❑ You can call `start()` on a `Thread` object only once. If `start()` is called more than once on a `Thread` object, it will throw a `RuntimeException`.
- ❑ It is legal to create many `Thread` objects using the same `Runnable` object as the target.
- ❑ When a `Thread` object is created, it does not become a *thread of execution* until its `start()` method is invoked. When a `Thread` object exists but hasn't been started, it is in the *new* state and is not considered *alive*.

Transitioning Between Thread States (Objective 4.2)

- ❑ Once a new thread is started, it will always enter the runnable state.
- ❑ The thread scheduler can move a thread back and forth between the runnable state and the running state.
- ❑ For a typical single-processor machine, only one thread can be running at a time, although many threads may be in the runnable state.
- ❑ There is no guarantee that the order in which threads were started determines the order in which they'll run.
- ❑ There's no guarantee that threads will take turns in any fair way. It's up to the thread scheduler, as determined by the particular virtual machine implementation. If you want a guarantee that your threads will take turns regardless of the underlying JVM, you can use the `sleep()` method. This prevents one thread from hogging the running process while another thread starves. (In most cases, though, `yield()` works well enough to encourage your threads to play together nicely.)
- ❑ A running thread may enter a blocked/waiting state by a `wait()`, `sleep()`, or `join()` call.

- ❑ A running thread may enter a blocked/waiting state because it can't acquire the lock for a synchronized block of code.
- ❑ When the sleep or wait is over, or an object's lock becomes available, the thread can only reenter the runnable state. It will go directly from waiting to running (well, for all practical purposes anyway).
- ❑ A dead thread cannot be started again.

Sleep, Yield, and Join (Objective 4.2)

- ❑ Sleeping is used to delay execution for a period of time, and no locks are released when a thread goes to sleep.
- ❑ A sleeping thread is guaranteed to sleep for at least the time specified in the argument to the `sleep()` method (unless it's interrupted), but there is no guarantee as to when the newly awakened thread will actually return to running.
- ❑ The `sleep()` method is a `static` method that sleeps the currently executing thread's state. One thread *cannot* tell another thread to sleep.
- ❑ The `setPriority()` method is used on Thread objects to give threads a priority of between 1 (low) and 10 (high), although priorities are not guaranteed, and not all JVMs recognize 10 distinct priority levels—some levels may be treated as effectively equal.
- ❑ If not explicitly set, a thread's priority will have the same priority as the priority of the thread that created it.
- ❑ The `yield()` method *may* cause a running thread to back out if there are runnable threads of the same priority. There is no guarantee that this will happen, and there is no guarantee that when the thread backs out there will be a *different* thread selected to run. A thread might yield and then immediately reenter the running state.
- ❑ The closest thing to a guarantee is that at any given time, when a thread is running it will usually not have a lower priority than any thread in the runnable state. If a low-priority thread is running when a high-priority thread enters runnable, the JVM will usually preempt the running low-priority thread and put the high-priority thread in.
- ❑ When one thread calls the `join()` method of another thread, the currently running thread will wait until the thread it joins with has completed. Think of the `join()` method as saying, "Hey thread, I want to join on to the end of you. Let me know when you're done, so I can enter the runnable state."

Concurrent Access Problems and Synchronized Threads (Obj. 4.3)

- ❑ `synchronized` methods prevent more than one thread from accessing an object's critical method code simultaneously.
- ❑ You can use the `synchronized` keyword as a method modifier, or to start a `synchronized` block of code.
- ❑ To synchronize a block of code (in other words, a scope smaller than the whole method), you must specify an argument that is the object whose lock you want to synchronize on.
- ❑ While only one thread can be accessing `synchronized` code of a particular instance, multiple threads can still access the same object's *unsynchronized* code.
- ❑ When a thread goes to sleep, its locks will be unavailable to other threads.
- ❑ `static` methods can be `synchronized`, using the lock from the `java.lang.Class` instance representing that class.

Communicating with Objects by Waiting and Notifying (Obj. 4.4)

- ❑ The `wait()` method lets a thread say, "there's nothing for me to do now, so put me in your waiting pool and notify me when something happens that I care about." Basically, a `wait()` call means "wait me in your pool," or "add me to your waiting list."
- ❑ The `notify()` method is used to send a signal to one and only one of the threads that are waiting in that same object's waiting pool.
- ❑ The `notify()` method can NOT specify which waiting thread to notify.
- ❑ The method `notifyAll()` works in the same way as `notify()`, only it sends the signal to *all* of the threads waiting on the object.
- ❑ All three methods—`wait()`, `notify()`, and `notifyAll()`—must be called from within a `synchronized` context! A thread invokes `wait()` or `notify()` on a particular object, and the thread must currently hold the lock on that object.

Deadlocked Threads (Objective 4.4)

- ❑ Deadlocking is when thread execution grinds to a halt because the code is waiting for locks to be removed from objects.
- ❑ Deadlocking can occur when a locked object attempts to access another locked object that is trying to access the first locked object. In other words, both threads are waiting for each other's locks to be released; therefore, the locks will *never* be released!
- ❑ Deadlocking is bad. Don't do it.

SELF TEST

The following questions will help you measure your understanding of the material presented in this chapter. If you have a rough time with some of these at first, don't beat yourself up. Some of these questions are long and intricate, expect long and intricate questions on the real exam too!

1. Given:

```
public class Messenger implements Runnable {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        new Thread(new Messenger("Wallace")).start();
        new Thread(new Messenger("Gromit")).start();
    }
    private String name;
    public Messenger(String name) { this.name = name; }
    public void run() {
        message(1);
        message(2);
    }
    private synchronized void message(int n) {
        System.out.print(name + "-" + n + " ");
    }
}
```

Which of the following is a possible result? (Choose all that apply.)

- A. Wallace-1 Wallace-2 Gromit-1
- B. Wallace-1 Gromit-2 Wallace-2 Gromit-1
- C. Wallace-1 Gromit-1 Gromit-2 Wallace-2
- D. Gromit-1 Gromit-2
- E. Gromit-2 Wallace-1 Gromit-1 Wallace-2
- F. The code does not compile.
- G. An error occurs at run time.

2. Given:

```
public class Letters extends Thread {
    private String name;
    public Letters(String name) {
        this.name = name;
    }
}
```

```

        public void write() {
            System.out.print(name);
            System.out.print(name);
        }
        public static void main(String[] args) {
            new Letters("X").start();
            new Letters("Y").start();
        }
    }
}

```

We want to guarantee that the output can be either XXYY or YYXX, but never XYYX or any other combination. Which of the following method definitions could be added to the Letters class to make this guarantee? (Choose all that apply.)

- A. `public void run() { write(); }`
- B. `public synchronized void run() { write(); }`
- C. `public static synchronized void run() { write(); }`
- D. `public void run() { synchronized(this) { write(); } }`
- E. `public void run() { synchronized(Letters.class) { write(); } }`
- F. `public void run() { synchronized(System.out) { write(); } }`
- G. `public void run() { synchronized(System.out.class) { write(); } }`

3. The following block of code creates a Thread using a Runnable target:

```

Runnable target = new MyRunnable();
Thread myThread = new Thread(target);

```

Which of the following classes can be used to create the target, so that the preceding code compiles correctly?

- A. `public class MyRunnable extends Runnable{public void run(){} }`
- B. `public class MyRunnable extends Object{public void run(){} }`
- C. `public class MyRunnable implements Runnable{public void run(){} }`
- D. `public class MyRunnable implements Runnable{void run(){} }`
- E. `public class MyRunnable implements Runnable{public void start(){} }`

4. Given:

```

2.  class MyThread extends Thread {
3.      public static void main(String [] args) {
4.          MyThread t = new MyThread();
5.          t.start();
6.          System.out.print("one. ");
7.          t.start();
8.          System.out.print("two. ");
9.      }
10.     public void run() {
11.         System.out.print("Thread ");
12.     }
13. }
```

What is the result of this code?

- A. Compilation fails.
- B. An exception occurs at runtime.
- C. Thread one. Thread two.
- D. The output cannot be determined.

5. Given:

```

3.  class MyThread extends Thread {
4.      public static void main(String [] args) {
5.          MyThread t = new MyThread();
6.          Thread x = new Thread(t);
7.          x.start();
8.      }
9.      public void run() {
10.         for(int i=0;i<3;++i) {
11.             System.out.print(i + "..");
12.         }
13.     }
14. }
```

What is the result of this code?

- A. Compilation fails.
- B. 1..2..3..
- C. 0..1..2..3..
- D. 0..1..2..
- E. An exception occurs at runtime.

6. Given the following

```

3.  class Test {
4.      public static void main(String [] args) {
5.          printAll(args);
6.      }
7.      public static void printAll(String[] lines) {
8.          for(int i=0;i<lines.length;i++){
9.              System.out.println(lines[i]);
10.             Thread.currentThread().sleep(1000);
11.         }
12.     }
13. }

```

The static method `Thread.currentThread()` returns a reference to the currently executing Thread object. What is the result of this code?

- A. Each String in the array `lines` will output, with a 1-second pause between lines.
 - B. Each String in the array `lines` will output, with no pause in between because this method is not executed in a Thread.
 - C. Each String in the array `lines` will output, and there is no guarantee there will be a pause because `currentThread()` may not retrieve this thread.
 - D. This code will not compile.
 - E. Each String in the `lines` array will print, with at least a one-second pause between lines.
7. Assume you have a class that holds two private variables: `a` and `b`. Which of the following pairs can prevent concurrent access problems in that class? (Choose all that apply.)
- A. `public int read(){return a+b;}`
`public void set(int a, int b){this.a=a;this.b=b;}`
 - B. `public synchronized int read(){return a+b;}`
`public synchronized void set(int a, int b){this.a=a;this.b=b;}`
 - C. `public int read(){synchronized(a){return a+b;}}`
`public void set(int a, int b){synchronized(a){this.a=a;this.b=b;}}`
 - D. `public int read(){synchronized(a){return a+b;}}`
`public void set(int a, int b){synchronized(b){this.a=a;this.b=b;}}`
 - E. `public synchronized(this) int read(){return a+b;}`
`public synchronized(this) void set(int a, int b){this.a=a;this.b=b;}`
 - F. `public int read(){synchronized(this){return a+b;}}`
`public void set(int a, int b){synchronized(this){this.a=a;this.b=b;}}`

8. Which are methods of the Object class? (Choose all that apply.)

- A. `notify()`;
- B. `notifyAll()`;
- C. `isInterrupted()`;
- D. `synchronized()`;
- E. `interrupt()`;
- F. `wait(long msecs)`;
- G. `sleep(long msecs)`;
- H. `yield()`;

9. Given the following

```
1. public class WaitTest {  
2.     public static void main(String [] args) {  
3.         System.out.print("1 ");  
4.         synchronized(args) {  
5.             System.out.print("2 ");  
6.             try {  
7.                 args.wait();  
8.             }  
9.             catch (InterruptedException e) {}  
10.        }  
11.        System.out.print("3 ");  
12.    }  
13. }
```

What is the result of trying to compile and run this program?

- A. It fails to compile because the `IllegalMonitorStateException` of `wait()` is not dealt with in line 7.
- B. 1 2 3
- C. 1 3
- D. 1 2
- E. At runtime, it throws an `IllegalMonitorStateException` when trying to wait.
- F. It will fail to compile because it has to be synchronized on the `this` object.

10. Assume the following method is properly synchronized and called from a thread A on an object B:

```
wait(2000);
```

After calling this method, when will the thread A become a candidate to get another turn at the CPU?

- A. After object B is notified, or after two seconds.
 - B. After the lock on B is released, or after two seconds.
 - C. Two seconds after object B is notified.
 - D. Two seconds after lock B is released.
11. Which are true? (Choose all that apply.)
- A. The `notifyAll()` method must be called from a synchronized context.
 - B. To call `wait()`, an object must own the lock on the thread.
 - C. The `notify()` method is defined in class `java.lang.Thread`.
 - D. When a thread is waiting as a result of `wait()`, it release its lock.
 - E. The `notify()` method causes a thread to immediately release its lock.
 - F. The difference between `notify()` and `notifyAll()` is that `notifyAll()` notifies all waiting threads, regardless of the object they're waiting on.
12. Given the scenario: This class is intended to allow users to write a series of messages, so that each message is identified with a timestamp and the name of the thread that wrote the message:

```
public class Logger {
    private StringBuilder contents = new StringBuilder();
    public void log(String message) {
        contents.append(System.currentTimeMillis());
        contents.append(": ");
        contents.append(Thread.currentThread().getName());
        contents.append(message);
        contents.append("\n");
    }
    public String getContents() { return contents.toString(); }
}
```

How can we ensure that instances of this class can be safely used by multiple threads?

- A. This class is already thread-safe.
- B. Replacing `StringBuilder` with `StringBuffer` will make this class thread-safe.
- C. Synchronize the `log()` method only.
- D. Synchronize the `getContents()` method only.
- E. Synchronize both `log()` and `getContents()`.
- F. This class cannot be made thread-safe.

13. Given:

```
public static synchronized void main(String[] args) throws
    InterruptedException {
    Thread t = new Thread();
    t.start();
    System.out.print("X");
    t.wait(10000);
    System.out.print("Y");
}
```

What is the result of this code?

- A. It prints x and exits.
- B. It prints x and never exits.
- C. It prints xy and exits almost immediately.
- D. It prints xy with a 10-second delay between x and y.
- E. It prints xy with a 10000-second delay between x and y.
- F. The code does not compile.
- G. An exception is thrown at runtime.

14. Given the following,

```
class MyThread extends Thread {
    MyThread() {
        System.out.print(" MyThread");
    }
    public void run() {
```

```

        System.out.print(" bar");
    }
    public void run(String s) {
        System.out.print(" baz");
    }
}
public class TestThreads {
    public static void main (String [] args) {
        Thread t = new MyThread() {
            public void run() {
                System.out.print(" foo");
            }
        };
        t.start();
    } }

```

What is the result?

- A. foo
- B. MyThread foo
- C. MyThread bar
- D. foo bar
- E. foo bar baz
- F. bar foo
- G. Compilation fails.
- H. An exception is thrown at runtime.

15. Given

```

public class ThreadDemo {
    synchronized void a() { actBusy(); }
    static synchronized void b() { actBusy(); }
    static void actBusy() {
        try {
            Thread.sleep(1000);
        } catch (InterruptedException e) {}
    }
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        final ThreadDemo x = new ThreadDemo();
    }
}

```

```

final ThreadDemo y = new ThreadDemo();
Runnable runnable = new Runnable() {
    public void run() {
        int option = (int) (Math.random() * 4);
        switch (option) {
            case 0: x.a(); break;
            case 1: x.b(); break;
            case 2: y.a(); break;
            case 3: y.b(); break;
        }
    }
};
Thread thread1 = new Thread(runnable);
Thread thread2 = new Thread(runnable);
thread1.start();
thread2.start();
}

```

Which of the following pairs of method invocations could NEVER be executing at the same time? (Choose all that apply.)

- A. x.a() in thread1, and x.a() in thread2
- B. x.a() in thread1, and x.b() in thread2
- C. x.a() in thread1, and y.a() in thread2
- D. x.a() in thread1, and y.b() in thread2
- E. x.b() in thread1, and x.a() in thread2
- F. x.b() in thread1, and x.b() in thread2
- G. x.b() in thread1, and y.a() in thread2
- H. x.b() in thread1, and y.b() in thread2

16. Given the following,

```

1. public class Test {
2.     public static void main (String [] args) {
3.         final Foo f = new Foo();
4.         Thread t = new Thread(new Runnable() {
5.             public void run() {
6.                 f.doStuff();

```

```

7.         }
8.     });
9.     Thread g = new Thread() {
10.         public void run() {
11.             f.doStuff();
12.         }
13.     };
14.     t.start();
15.     g.start();
16. }
17. }
1. class Foo {
2.     int x = 5;
3.     public void doStuff() {
4.         if (x < 10) {
5.             // nothing to do
6.             try {
7.                 wait();
8.             } catch (InterruptedException ex) { }
9.         } else {
10.             System.out.println("x is " + x++);
11.             if (x >= 10) {
12.                 notify();
13.             }
14.         }
15.     }
16. }

```

What is the result?

- A. The code will not compile because of an error on line 12 of class Foo.
- B. The code will not compile because of an error on line 7 of class Foo.
- C. The code will not compile because of an error on line 4 of class Test.
- D. The code will not compile because of some other error in class Test.
- E. An exception occurs at runtime.
- F. x is 5
x is 6

17. Given:

```
public class TwoThreads {
    static Thread laurel, hardy;
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        laurel = new Thread() {
            public void run() {
                System.out.println("A");
                try {
                    hardy.sleep(1000);
                } catch (Exception e) {
                    System.out.println("B");
                }
                System.out.println("C");
            }
        };
        hardy = new Thread() {
            public void run() {
                System.out.println("D");
                try {
                    laurel.wait();
                } catch (Exception e) {
                    System.out.println("E");
                }
                System.out.println("F");
            }
        };
        laurel.start();
        hardy.start();
    }
}
```

Which letters will eventually appear somewhere in the output? (Choose all that apply.)

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E
- F. F
- G. The answer cannot be reliably determined.
- H. The code does not compile.

SELF TEST ANSWERS

Note: Some code has been re-formatted to fit your screen.

1. Given:

```
public class Messenger implements Runnable {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        new Thread(new Messenger("Wallace")).start();
        new Thread(new Messenger("Gromit")).start();
    }
    private String name;
    public Messenger(String name) { this.name = name; }
    public void run() {
        message(1); message(2);
    }
    private synchronized void message(int n) {
        System.out.print(name + "-" + n + " ");
    }
}
```

Which of the following is a possible result? (Choose all that apply.)

- A. Wallace-1 Wallace-2 Gromit-1
- B. Wallace-1 Gromit-2 Wallace-2 Gromit-1
- C. Wallace-1 Gromit-1 Gromit-2 Wallace-2
- D. Gromit-1 Gromit-2
- E. Gromit-2 Wallace-1 Gromit-1 Wallace-2
- F. The code does not compile.
- G. An error occurs at run time.

Answer:

- ☒ C is correct. Both threads will print two messages each. wallace-1 must be before wallace-2, and Gromit-1 must be before Gromit-2. Other than that, the Wallace and Gromit messages can be intermingled in any order.
- ☒ A, B, D, E, F, and G are incorrect based on the above. (Objective 4.1)

2. Given:

```
public class Letters extends Thread {
    private String name;
    public Letters(String name) { this.name = name; }
    public void write() {
        System.out.print(name);
        System.out.print(name);
    }
}
```



```

    }
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        new Letters("X").start();
        new Letters("Y").start();
    }
}

```

We want to guarantee that the output can be either XXYY or YYXX, but never XYYX or any other combination. Which of the following method definitions could be added to the Letters class to make this guarantee? (Choose all that apply.)

- A. `public void run() { write(); }`
- B. `public synchronized void run() { write(); }`
- C. `public static synchronized void run() { write(); }`
- D. `public void run() { synchronized(this) { write(); } }`
- E. `public void run() { synchronized(Letters.class) { write(); } }`
- F. `public void run() { synchronized(System.out) { write(); } }`
- G. `public void run() { synchronized(System.out.class) { write(); } }`

Answer:

- ☒ **E** and **F** are correct. **E** and **F** both cause both threads to lock on the same object, which will prevent the threads from running simultaneously, and guarantee XXYY or YYXX. It's a bit unusual to lock on an object like `System.out`, but it's perfectly legal, and both threads are locking on the same object.
- ☒ **A** can't guarantee anything since it has no synchronization. **B** and **D** both synchronize on an instance of the Letters class—but since there are two different instances in the `main()` method, the two threads do not block each other and may run simultaneously, resulting in output like XYYX. **C** won't compile because it tries to override `run()` with a static method, and also calls a non-static method from a static method. **G** won't compile because `System.out.class` is nonsense. A class literal must start with a class name. `System.out` is a field not a class, so `System.out.class` is not a valid class literal. (Objective 4.3)

3. The following block of code creates a Thread using a Runnable target:

```

Runnable target = new MyRunnable();
Thread myThread = new Thread(target);

```

Which of the following classes can be used to create the target, so that the preceding code compiles correctly?

- A. `public class MyRunnable extends Runnable{public void run() {}}`
- B. `public class MyRunnable extends Object{public void run() {}}`
- C. `public class MyRunnable implements Runnable{public void run() {}}`
- D. `public class MyRunnable implements Runnable{void run() {}}`
- E. `public class MyRunnable implements Runnable{public void start() {}}`

Answer:

- ☒ C is correct. The class implements the `Runnable` interface with a legal `run()` method.
- ☒ A is incorrect because interfaces are implemented, not extended. B is incorrect because even though the class has a valid `public void run()` method, it does not implement the `Runnable` interface. D is incorrect because the `run()` method must be `public`. E is incorrect because the method to implement is `run()`, not `start()`. (Objective 4.1)

4. Given the following,

```

2.  class MyThread extends Thread {
3.      public static void main(String [] args) {
4.          MyThread t = new MyThread();
5.          t.start();
6.          System.out.print("one. ");
7.          t.start();
8.          System.out.print("two. ");
9.      }
10.     public void run() {
11.         System.out.print("Thread ");
12.     } }

```

What is the result of this code?

- A. Compilation fails.
- B. An exception occurs at runtime.
- C. Thread one. Thread two.
- D. The output cannot be determined.

Answer:

- ☒ B is correct. When the `start()` method is attempted a second time on a single `Thread` object, the method will throw an `IllegalThreadStateException`. (Although this behavior is specified in the API, some JVMs don't consistently throw an exception in this case). Even if the thread has finished running, it is still illegal to call `start()` again.
- ☒ A is incorrect because compilation will succeed. For the most part, the Java compiler only checks for illegal syntax, rather than class-specific logic. C and D are incorrect because of the logic explained above. (Objective 4.1)

5. Given the following

```

3.  class MyThread extends Thread {
4.      public static void main(String [] args) {
5.          MyThread t = new MyThread();
6.          Thread x = new Thread(t);
7.          x.start();
8.      }
9.      public void run() {
10.         for(int i=0;i<3;++i) {
11.             System.out.print(i + "..");
12.         } } }

```

What is the result of this code?

- A. Compilation fails.
- B. 1..2..3..
- C. 0..1..2..3..
- D. 0..1..2..
- E. An exception occurs at runtime.

Answer:

- ☒ **D** is correct. The thread `MyThread` will start and loop three times (from 0 to 2).
- ☒ **A** is incorrect because the `Thread` class implements the `Runnable` interface; therefore, in line 5, `Thread` can take an object of type `Thread` as an argument in the constructor (this is NOT recommended). **B** and **C** are incorrect because the variable `i` in the `for` loop starts with a value of 0 and ends with a value of 2. **E** is incorrect based on the above. (Obj. 4.1)

6. Given the following

```

3.  class Test {
4.      public static void main(String [] args) {
5.          printAll(args);
6.      }
7.      public static void printAll(String[] lines) {
8.          for(int i=0;i<lines.length;i++){
9.              System.out.println(lines[i]);
10.             Thread.currentThread().sleep(1000);
11.         } } }

```

The static method `Thread.currentThread()` returns a reference to the currently executing `Thread` object. What is the result of this code?

- A. Each `String` in the array `lines` will print, with exactly a 1-second pause between lines.

- B. Each String in the array `lines` will print, with no pause in between because this method is not executed in a Thread.
- C. Each String in the array `lines` will print, and there is no guarantee there will be a pause because `currentThread()` may not retrieve this thread.
- D. This code will not compile.
- E. Each String in the `lines` array will print, with at least a one-second pause between lines.

Answer:

- ☒ D is correct. The `sleep()` method must be enclosed in a try/catch block, or the method `printAll()` must declare it throws the `InterruptedException`.
- ☒ E is incorrect, but it would be correct if the `InterruptedException` was dealt with (A is too precise). B is incorrect (even if the `InterruptedException` was dealt with) because all Java code, including the `main()` method, runs in threads. C is incorrect. The `sleep()` method is static, it always affects the currently executing thread. (Objective 4.2)

7. Assume you have a class that holds two private variables: `a` and `b`. Which of the following pairs can prevent concurrent access problems in that class? (Choose all that apply.)

- A.

```
public int read(){return a+b;}
public void set(int a, int b){this.a=a;this.b=b;}
```
- B.

```
public synchronized int read(){return a+b;}
public synchronized void set(int a, int b){this.a=a;this.b=b;}
```
- C.

```
public int read(){synchronized(a){return a+b;}}
public void set(int a, int b){synchronized(a){this.a=a;this.b=b;}}
```
- D.

```
public int read(){synchronized(a){return a+b;}}
public void set(int a, int b){synchronized(b){this.a=a;this.b=b;}}
```
- E.

```
public synchronized(this) int read(){return a+b;}
public synchronized(this) void set(int a, int b){this.a=a;this.b=b;}
```
- F.

```
public int read(){synchronized(this){return a+b;}}
public void set(int a, int b){synchronized(this){this.a=a;this.b=b;}}
```

Answer:

- ☒ B and F are correct. By marking the methods as `synchronized`, the threads will get the lock of the `this` object before proceeding. Only one thread will be setting or reading at any given moment, thereby assuring that `read()` always returns the addition of a valid pair.
- ☒ A is incorrect because it is not `synchronized`; therefore, there is no guarantee that the values added by the `read()` method belong to the same pair. C and D are incorrect; only objects can be used to synchronize on. E fails—it is not possible to select other objects (even `this`) to synchronize on when declaring a method as `synchronized`. (Obj. 4.3)

8. Which are methods of the Object class? (Choose all that apply.)

- A. `notify()`;
- B. `notifyAll()`;
- C. `isInterrupted()`;
- D. `synchronized()`;
- E. `interrupt()`;
- F. `wait(long msecs)`;
- G. `sleep(long msecs)`;
- H. `yield()`;

Answer:

- ☒ A, B, and F are correct. They are all related to the list of threads waiting on the specified object.
- ☒ C, E, G, and H are incorrect answers. The methods `isInterrupted()` and `interrupt()` are instance methods of `Thread`. The methods `sleep()` and `yield()` are static methods of `Thread`. D is incorrect because `synchronized` is a keyword and the `synchronized()` construct is part of the Java language. (Objective 4.2)

9. Given the following

```

1. public class WaitTest {
2.     public static void main(String [] args) {
3.         System.out.print("1 ");
4.         synchronized(args){
5.             System.out.print("2 ");
6.             try {
7.                 args.wait();
8.             }
9.             catch(InterruptedException e){}
10.        }
11.        System.out.print("3 ");
12.    } }

```

What is the result of trying to compile and run this program?

- A. It fails to compile because the `IllegalMonitorStateException` of `wait()` is not dealt with in line 7.
- B. 1 2 3
- C. 1 3
- D. 1 2
- E. At runtime, it throws an `IllegalMonitorStateException` when trying to wait.
- F. It will fail to compile because it has to be synchronized on the `this` object.

Answer:

- ☒ **D** is correct. 1 and 2 will be printed, but there will be no return from the `wait` call because no other thread will notify the main thread, so 3 will never be printed. It's frozen at line 7.
- ☒ **A** is incorrect; `IllegalMonitorStateException` is an unchecked exception. **B** and **C** are incorrect; 3 will never be printed, since this program will wait forever. **E** is incorrect because `IllegalMonitorStateException` will never be thrown because the `wait()` is done on `args` within a block of code synchronized on `args`. **F** is incorrect because any object can be used to synchronize on and `this` and `static` don't mix. (Objective 4.4)

10. Assume the following method is properly synchronized and called from a thread A on an object B:

```
wait(2000);
```

After calling this method, when will the thread A become a candidate to get another turn at the CPU?

- A.** After object B is notified, or after two seconds.
- B.** After the lock on B is released, or after two seconds.
- C.** Two seconds after object B is notified.
- D.** Two seconds after lock B is released.

Answer:

- ☒ **A** is correct. Either of the two events will make the thread a candidate for running again.
- ☒ **B** is incorrect because a waiting thread will not return to runnable when the lock is released, unless a notification occurs. **C** is incorrect because the thread will become a candidate immediately after notification. **D** is also incorrect because a thread will not come out of a waiting pool just because a lock has been released. (Objective 4.4)

11. Which are true? (Choose all that apply.)

- A.** The `notifyAll()` method must be called from a synchronized context.
- B.** To call `wait()`, an object must own the lock on the thread.
- C.** The `notify()` method is defined in class `java.lang.Thread`.
- D.** When a thread is waiting as a result of `wait()`, it release its lock.
- E.** The `notify()` method causes a thread to immediately release its lock.
- F.** The difference between `notify()` and `notifyAll()` is that `notifyAll()` notifies all waiting threads, regardless of the object they're waiting on.

Answer:

- ☒ **A** is correct because `notifyAll()` (and `wait()` and `notify()`) must be called from within a synchronized context. **D** is a correct statement.
- ☒ **B** is incorrect because to call `wait()`, the thread must own the lock on the object that `wait()` is being invoked on, not the other way around. **C** is wrong because `notify()` is defined in `java.lang.Object`. **E** is wrong because `notify()` will not cause a thread to release its locks. The thread can only release its locks by exiting the synchronized code. **F** is wrong because `notifyAll()` notifies all the threads waiting on a particular locked object, not all threads waiting on *any* object. (Objective 4.4)

- 12.** Given the scenario: This class is intended to allow users to write a series of messages, so that each message is identified with a timestamp and the name of the thread that wrote the message:

```
public class Logger {
    private StringBuilder contents = new StringBuilder();
    public void log(String message) {
        contents.append(System.currentTimeMillis());
        contents.append(": ");
        contents.append(Thread.currentThread().getName());
        contents.append(message);
        contents.append("\n");
    }
    public String getContents() { return contents.toString(); }
}
```

How can we ensure that instances of this class can be safely used by multiple threads?

- A.** This class is already thread-safe.
- B.** Replacing `StringBuilder` with `StringBuffer` will make this class thread-safe.
- C.** Synchronize the `log()` method only.
- D.** Synchronize the `getContents()` method only.
- E.** Synchronize both `log()` and `getContents()`.
- F.** This class cannot be made thread-safe.

Answer:

- ☒ **E** is correct. Synchronizing the public methods is sufficient to make this safe, so **F** is false. This class is not thread-safe unless some sort of synchronization protects the changing data.
- ☒ **B** is not correct because although a `StringBuffer` is synchronized internally, we call `append()` multiple times, and nothing would prevent two simultaneous `log()` calls from mixing up their messages. **C** and **D** are not correct because if one method remains unsynchronized, it can run while the other is executing, which could result in reading the contents while one of the messages is incomplete, or worse. (You don't want to call `getString()` on the `StringBuffer` as it's resizing its internal character array.) (Objective 4.3)

13. Given:

```
public static synchronized void main(String[] args) throws
    InterruptedException {
    Thread t = new Thread();
    t.start();
    System.out.print("X");
    t.wait(10000);
    System.out.print("Y");
}
```

What is the result of this code?

- A. It prints x and exits.
- B. It prints x and never exits.
- C. It prints xY and exits almost immediately.
- D. It prints xY with a 10-second delay between x and y.
- E. It prints xY with a 10000-second delay between x and y.
- F. The code does not compile.
- G. An exception is thrown at runtime.

Answer:

- ☒ **G** is correct. The code does not acquire a lock on `t` before calling `t.wait()`, so it throws an `IllegalThreadStateException`. The method is `synchronized`, but it's not `synchronized` on `t` so the exception will be thrown. If the wait were placed inside a `synchronized(t)` block, then the answer would have been **D**.
- ☒ **A, B, C, D, E, and F** are incorrect based the logic described above. (Objective 4.2)

14. Given the following:

```
class MyThread extends Thread {
    MyThread() {
        System.out.print(" MyThread");
    }
    public void run() { System.out.print(" bar"); }
    public void run(String s) { System.out.print(" baz"); }
}
public class TestThreads {
    public static void main (String [] args) {
        Thread t = new MyThread() {
            public void run() { System.out.print(" foo"); }
        };
        t.start();
    } }
```

What is the result?

- A. foo
- B. MyThread foo
- C. MyThread bar
- D. foo bar
- E. foo bar baz
- F. bar foo
- G. Compilation fails.
- H. An exception is thrown at runtime.

Answer:

- ☒ **B** is correct. The first line of main we're constructing an instance of an anonymous inner class extending from MyThread. So the MyThread constructor runs and prints MyThread. Next, main() invokes start() on the new thread instance, which causes the overridden run() method (the run() method in the anonymous inner class) to be invoked.
- ☒ **A, C, D, E, F, G and H** are incorrect based on the logic described above. (Objective 4.1)

15. Given

```
public class ThreadDemo {
    synchronized void a() { actBusy(); }
    static synchronized void b() { actBusy(); }
    static void actBusy() {
        try { Thread.sleep(1000); }
        catch (InterruptedException e) {}
    }
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        final ThreadDemo x = new ThreadDemo();
        final ThreadDemo y = new ThreadDemo();
        Runnable runnable = new Runnable() {
            public void run() {
                int option = (int) (Math.random() * 4);
                switch (option) {
                    case 0: x.a(); break;
                    case 1: x.b(); break;
                    case 2: y.a(); break;
                    case 3: y.b(); break;
                }
            }
        };
        Thread thread1 = new Thread(runnable);
        Thread thread2 = new Thread(runnable);
        thread1.start();
        thread2.start();
    }
}
```

Which of the following pairs of method invocations could NEVER be executing at the same time? (Choose all that apply.)

- A. `x.a()` in `thread1`, and `x.a()` in `thread2`
- B. `x.a()` in `thread1`, and `x.b()` in `thread2`
- C. `x.a()` in `thread1`, and `y.a()` in `thread2`
- D. `x.a()` in `thread1`, and `y.b()` in `thread2`
- E. `x.b()` in `thread1`, and `x.a()` in `thread2`
- F. `x.b()` in `thread1`, and `x.b()` in `thread2`
- G. `x.b()` in `thread1`, and `y.a()` in `thread2`
- H. `x.b()` in `thread1`, and `y.b()` in `thread2`

Answer:

- ☒ **A, F and H.** A is incorrect because synchronized instance methods called on the same instance, block each other. F and H could not happen because synchronized static methods in the same class block each other, regardless of which instance was used to call the methods. (An instance is not required to call static methods; only the class.)
- ☒ **C** could happen because synchronized instance methods called on different instances do not block each other. B, D, E, and G could all happen because instance methods and static methods lock on different objects, and do not block each other. (Objective 4.3)

16. Given the following,

```

1. public class Test {
2.     public static void main (String [] args) {
3.         final Foo f = new Foo();
4.         Thread t = new Thread(new Runnable() {
5.             public void run() {
6.                 f.doStuff();
7.             }
8.         });
9.         Thread g = new Thread() {
10.            public void run() {
11.                f.doStuff();
12.            }
13.        };
14.        t.start();
15.        g.start();
16.    }

```

```

17. }
1. class Foo {
2.     int x = 5;
3.     public void doStuff() {
4.         if (x < 10) {
5.             // nothing to do
6.             try {
7.                 wait();
8.             } catch (InterruptedException ex) { }
9.         } else {
10.            System.out.println("x is " + x++);
11.            if (x >= 10) {
12.                notify();
13.            }
14.        }
15.    }
16. }

```

What is the result?

- A. The code will not compile because of an error on line 12 of class Foo.
- B. The code will not compile because of an error on line 7 of class Foo.
- C. The code will not compile because of an error on line 4 of class Test.
- D. The code will not compile because of some other error in class Test.
- E. An exception occurs at runtime.
- F. x is 5
x is 6

Answer:

- ☒ E is correct because the thread does not own the lock of the object it invokes `wait()` on. If the method were synchronized, the code would run without exception.
- ☒ A, B, C, and D are incorrect because the code compiles without errors. F is incorrect because the exception is thrown before there is any output. (Objective 4.4)

17. Given:

```
public class TwoThreads {
    static Thread laurel, hardy;
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        laurel = new Thread() {
            public void run() {
                System.out.println("A");
                try {
                    hardy.sleep(1000);
                } catch (Exception e) {
                    System.out.println("B");
                }
                System.out.println("C");
            }
        };
        hardy = new Thread() {
            public void run() {
                System.out.println("D");
                try {
                    laurel.wait();
                } catch (Exception e) {
                    System.out.println("E");
                }
                System.out.println("F");
            }
        };
        laurel.start();
        hardy.start();
    }
}
```

Which letters will eventually appear somewhere in the output? (Choose all that apply.)

- A. A
- B. B
- C. C
- D. D
- E. E
- F. F
- G. The answer cannot be reliably determined.
- H. The code does not compile.

Answer:

- ☑ **A, C, D, E and F** are correct. This may look like `laurel` and `hardy` are battling to cause the other to `sleep()` or `wait()`—but that's not the case. Since `sleep()` is a `static` method, it affects the current thread, which is `laurel` (even though the method is invoked using a reference to `hardy`). That's misleading but perfectly legal, and the Thread `laurel` is able to `sleep` with no exception, printing **A** and **C** (after a 1-second delay). Meanwhile `hardy` tries to call `laurel.wait()`—but `hardy` has not synchronized on `laurel`, so calling `laurel.wait()` immediately causes an `IllegalThreadStateException`, and so `hardy` prints **D**, **E**, and **F**. Although the *order* of the output is somewhat indeterminate (we have no way of knowing whether **A** is printed before **D**, for example) it is guaranteed that **A**, **C**, **D**, **E**, and **F** will all be printed in some order, eventually—so **G** is incorrect.
- ☒ **B, G and H** are incorrect based on the above. (Objective 4.4)

EXERCISE ANSWERS

Exercise 9-1: Creating a Thread and Putting It to Sleep

The final code should look something like this:

```
class TheCount extends Thread {
    public void run() {
        for(int i = 1;i<=100;++i) {
            System.out.print(i + " ");
            if(i % 10 == 0) System.out.println("Hahaha");
            try { Thread.sleep(1000); }
            catch(InterruptedException e) {}
        }
    }
    public static void main(String [] args) {
        new TheCount().start();
    }
}
```

Exercise 9-2: Synchronizing a Block of Code

Your code might look something like this when completed:

```
class InSync extends Thread {
    StringBuffer letter;
    public InSync(StringBuffer letter) { this.letter = letter; }
    public void run() {
        synchronized(letter) {           // #1
            for(int i = 1;i<=100;++i) System.out.print(letter);
            System.out.println();
            char temp = letter.charAt(0);
            ++temp;           // Increment the letter in StringBuffer:
            letter.setCharAt(0, temp);
        }           // #2
    }
    public static void main(String [] args) {
        StringBuffer sb = new StringBuffer("A");
        new InSync(sb).start();  new InSync(sb).start();
        new InSync(sb).start();
    }
}
```

Just for fun, try removing lines 1 and 2 then run the program again. It will be unsynchronized—watch what happens.