A class may have many different constructors. The compiler cannot know which of the base class's constructors would be appropriate to be called, or what arguments should be passed to it. So the derived class must make the call explicitly. There is only one destructor for any class, and so there is no choice involved. Further, since destructors are not explicitly called by the user (they are invoked automatically by the system), there is no way for a derived class to even invoke it base class's destructor.