

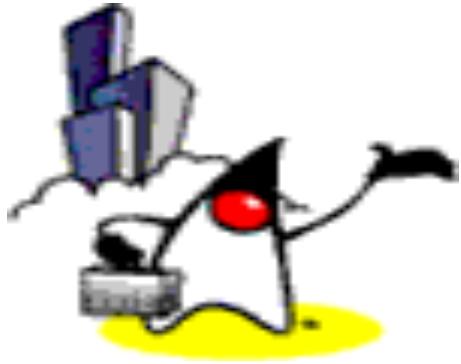
Java Inheritance

“Code with Passion!”



Topics

- What is and Why Inheritance?
- *Object* class
- How to derive a sub-class from a parent class?
- Constructor calling chain
- “*super*” keyword
- Overriding methods
- Type casting (for reference type)
- Final class and final methods



What is Inheritance?

What is Inheritance?

- Inheritance is the concept of a child class automatically inheriting the properties (fields) and methods defined in its parent class
 - > Parent class is also called as super class
 - > Child class is also called as sub class
- A primary feature of object-oriented programming
 - > Along with encapsulation and polymorphism

Why Inheritance? Reusability

- Once a set of **properties (fields)** are defined in a super class, the same set of properties are inherited by all subclasses
 - > A class and its children share common set of properties
- Once a set of **behavior (methods)** are defined in a super class, those behavior are automatically inherited by all subclasses
 - > Thus, you write a method only once in a super class and it can be used by all subclasses.
- A subclass only needs to **implement the differences (methods and properties)** between itself and its parent



“Object” Class

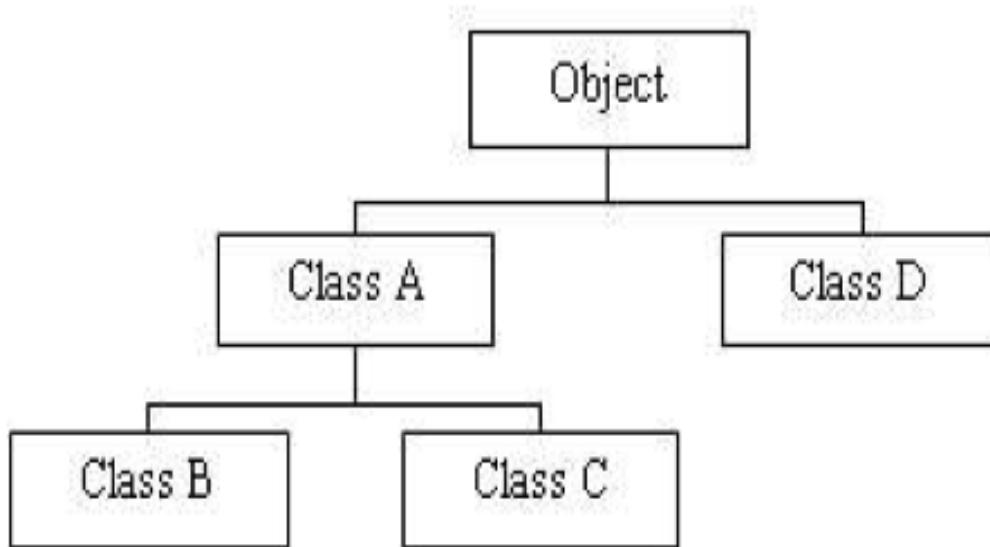
What is “*Object*” Class?

- *Object* class is mother of all classes
 - > In Java language, all classes are subclassed (extended) from the *Object* super class
 - > *Object* class is the only class that does not have a parent class
- Defines and implements behavior common to all classes
 - > *getClass()*
 - > *equals()*
 - > *toString()*
 - > ...

<http://docs.oracle.com/javase/8/docs/api/java/lang/Object.html>

Class Hierarchy

- *Object* class is the root parent class
- Classes A and D are child classes of *Object* class.
- Classes B and C are child classes of Class A





How to derive a sub-class?

Child class *extends* Parent class

- Child class uses the *extends* keyword to extend the parent class: Suppose we have a parent class called *Person*.

```
public class Person {  
    protected String name;  
    protected String address;  
  
    /**  
     * Default constructor  
     */  
    public Person(){  
        System.out.println("Inside Person:Constructor");  
        name = ""; address = "";  
    }  
    ....  
}
```

Child class *extends* Parent class

- Now, we want to create another class named *Student*
- Since a student is also a person, we decide to just extend the class *Person*, so that we can inherit all the properties and methods of the existing class *Person*.

```
public class Student extends Person {  
  
    // Constructor of Student class  
    public Student(){  
        System.out.println("Inside Student:Constructor");  
    }  
    ....  
}
```

Accessibility of Parent from Child Class

- A subclass **inherits all the “public” and “protected” members (fields or methods)** of its parent, no matter what package the subclass is in
- If the subclass is in the same package as its parent, it also inherits the **default (sometimes called package-private) members (fields or methods)** of the parent
 - > default (package-private) members are members with no modifier (hence these are called default modifier as well)

What You Can Do in a Subclass Regarding Fields (properties)

- The inherited fields from the parent class can be used directly as long as the access modifier of the inherited field is not “private”
 - Works in the same way as inherited methods
- You can declare new fields in the subclass that are not in the super class
- A subclass does not inherit the private members of its parent class and cannot access them directly
 - However, note that if the super class has public or protected methods that access the private fields, those methods can be used by the subclass

What You Can Do in a Sub-class Regarding Methods

- The inherited methods from the parent class can be used directly
- You can write a new instance method in the subclass that has the same signature as the one in the super class, thus overriding it, thus providing a new behavior other than the one from the super class
 - > This is called “**overriding a method**” (note that this is different from “overloading method” concept)
- You can declare new methods in the subclass that are not in the super class

Lab:

**Exercise 1: Build an App using Subclass
1023_javase_inheritance.zip**





Constructor Calling Chain

How Constructor method of a Super class gets called automatically

- A subclass constructor invokes the constructor of the super class implicitly (automatically)
- Example: When a **Student** object is instantiated, the default constructor of its super class (parent class), **Person** class, is invoked implicitly before sub-class's constructor method is invoked

Example: Constructor Calling Chain

- Person class

```
public class Person {  
    public Person() {  
        System.out.println("Person: constructor is called");  
    }  
    ...
```

- Student class

```
public class Student extends Person {  
    public Student() {  
        System.out.println("Student: constructor is called");  
    }  
    ...
```

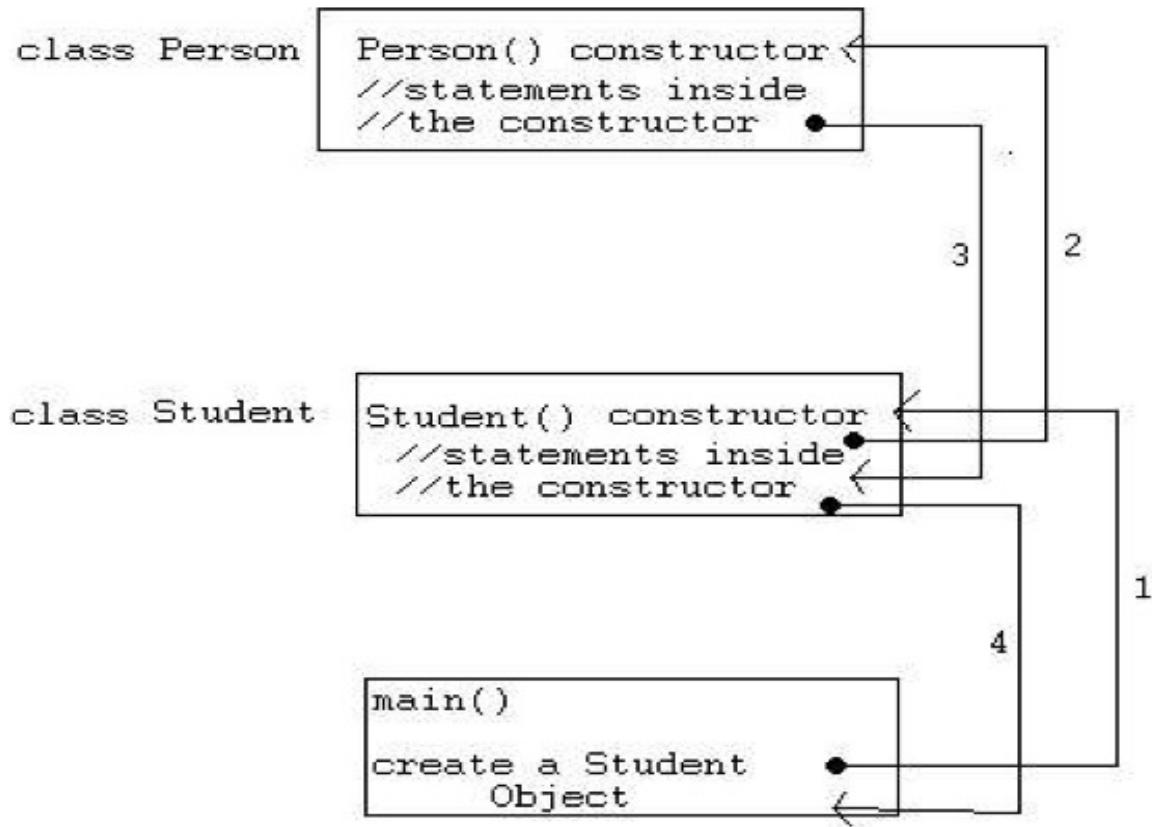
- Main class

```
public static void main( String[] args ){  
    Student anna = new Student(); // Instantiate Student object  
}
```

- Result

Person: constructor is called
Student: constructor is called

Example: Constructor Calling Chain





super(..) method

super(..) method

- A subclass can also **explicitly** call a constructor of its immediate super class by calling **super(..)** constructor call.
- Useful when the constructor of the subclass wants to call a constructor of a parent passing some arguments
 - > This is in replacement of the default behavior of the automatic constructor call chaining - if super(..) is not called, the default (no-arg) constructor of the parent will be called
- A **super(..)** constructor call in the constructor of a subclass will result in the execution of relevant constructor from the super class, based on the arguments passed

Inheritance of Constructor

- A subclass inherits fields and methods of a parent class
- A subclass does not inherit constructors of a parent class, however

Explicit calling super(..) method

```
public class Person {  
    public Person() {  
        System.out.println("Person: constructor is called");  
    }  
    public Person(String name) {  
        this.name = name;  
        System.out.println("Person: constructor 2 is called");  
    }  
}  
  
public class Student extends Person {  
    public Student() {  
        System.out.println("Student: constructor is called");  
    }  
}  
  
public Student(String name, String school, double grade) {  
    super(name);      // Call the constructor of the parent class  
    this.school = school;  
    this.grade = grade;  
    System.out.println("Student: constructor 2 is called");  
}  
..
```

Constraints of using super(..) method

- A couple of things to remember when using the super(..) constructor call:
 - > The super(..) call must occur as the first statement in a constructor
 - > The super(..) call can only be used in a constructor (not in ordinary methods)

Lab:

Exercise 2: Constructor Call Chaining &
“super” keyword
[1023_javase_inheritance.zip](#)





Overriding Methods

Child class Overriding methods of a Parent class

- If a child class needs to have a different implementation (meaning different behavior) of a certain instance method from that of the parent class, override that instance method in the child class
- The overriding method has the same method signature (same name, number and type of parameters) as the method it overrides
- The overriding method can also return a subtype of the type returned by the overridden method

Example: Overriding Methods

- Suppose we have the following implementation for the **getName** method in the **Person** parent class,

```
// This is a parent class, which has getName() instance method
public class Person {
    :
    :
    public String getName(){
        System.out.println("Parent: getName");
        return name;
    }
}
```

Example: Overriding Methods

- To override the `getName` method of the `Person` parent class in the subclass `Student`, override the method with the same method signature

```
// Child class overriding getName() method
public class Student extends Person{
    :
    public String getName(){
        System.out.println("Student: getName");
        return name;
    }
    :
}
```

- Now, when we invoke `getName()` method of `Student` object, `getName()` method of the `Student` class (not the `Person` class) would be called, and the output would be,

`Student: getName`

Lab:

Exercise 3: Overriding Methods
[1023_javase_inheritance.zip](#)





Type Casting

What is “Type”?

- When an object instance is created from a class, we say the object instance is a “type” of the class and its super classes – Let's say we have created a Student object

```
Student student1 = new Student();
```

- > student1 object instance is the type of *Student* or it is *Student* type
- > student1 object instance is also type of *Person* or it is *Person* type if *Student* is a child class of *Person*
- > student1 object instance is also type of *Object* because every class is subclass of *Object* class

What is the Significance?

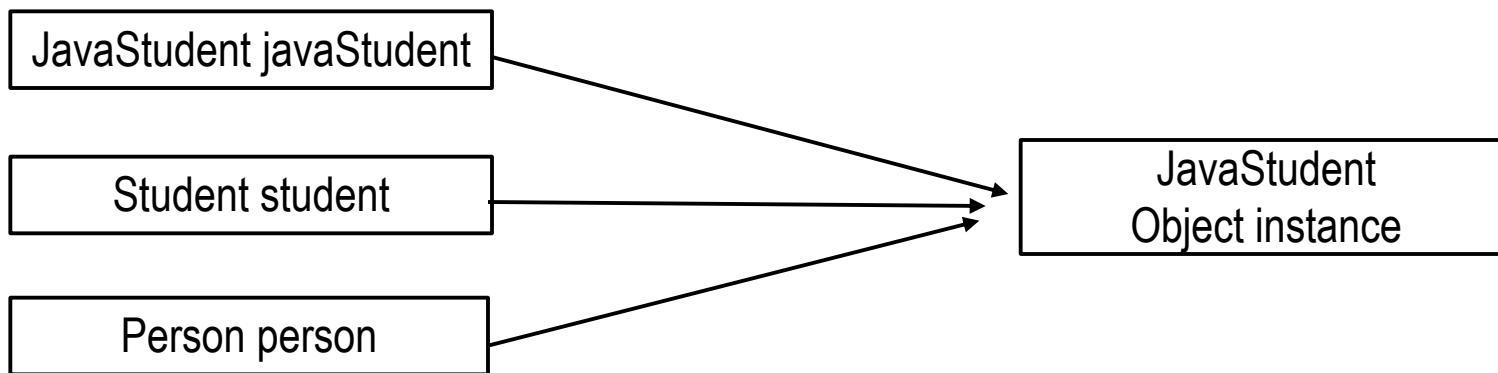
- An object instance of a particular type can be used in any place **where an instance of the type and its super type is called for**
- Example:
 - > Let's say *student1* object instance is a “type” of *JavaStudent*, *Student*, and *Person*
 - > Then the *student1* object can be used in any place where object instance of the type of *JavaStudent*, *Student*, or *Person* is called for
- This enables polymorphism (We will cover polymorphism later in detail in another presentation)

Implicit Type Casting (Very Important)

- An object instance of a subclass can be assigned to a variable (reference) of a parent class through implicit type casting – this is safe since an object instance of a subclass “is” also the type of the super class
- Example
 - > Let's assume **Student** class is a child class of **Person** class
 - > Let's assume **JavaStudent** class is a child class of **Student** class

```
JavaStudent javaStudent = new JavaStudent();
Student student = javaStudent; // Implicit type casting
Person person = javaStudent; // Implicit type casting
Object object = javaStudent; // Implicit type casting
```

Type Casting between Objects



Explicit Type Casting

- An object instance of a super class must be assigned to a variable (reference) of a child class through explicit type casting
 - > Not doing it will result in a compile error since the type assignment is not safe
 - > Compiler wants to make sure you know what you are doing
- Let's assume **Student** class is a child class of **Person** class

```
// This is safe because every Student is a type of Person  
Person person1 = new Student();  
// Explicit type casting required – because not every Person  
// object is a Student type  
Student student1 = (Student) person1;
```

Runtime Type Mismatch Exception

- Even with explicit casting, you could still end up having a runtime error
- Example
 - > Let's say **Student** class is a child class of **Person** class
 - > Let's say **Teacher** class is also a child class of **Person** class

```
Person person1 = new Student();
```

```
Person person2 = new Teacher();
```

```
Student student1 = (Student) person1; // Explicit type casting
```

// No compile error, but runtime type mismatch exception

// because person2 refers to Teacher object

```
Student student2 = (Student) person2;
```

Use instanceof Operator to Prevent Runtime Type Mismatch Error

- You can check the type of the object instance using `instanceof` before the type casting

```
Person person1 = new Student();
Person person2 = new Teacher();
```

```
// Do the casting only when the type is verified
if (person2 instanceof Student) {
    Student student2 = (Student) person2;
}
```

Better Use Generics to detect Type Mismatch problem during Compile time

- Generics is introduced from Java SE 5
- Generics is designed to detect Type mismatch problem during compile time not during runtime

Lab:

Exercise 4: Typecasting
[1023_javase_inheritance.zip](#)





Final Class & Final Method

Final Classes

- Classes that cannot be extended
- To declare a final class, we write,

```
public final class ClassName{  
    ...  
}
```

- Other examples of final classes are your wrapper classes and String class
 - > You cannot create a subclass from String class
 - > You cannot create a subclass from Integer class

Final Methods

- Methods that cannot be overridden
- To declare final methods, we write,

```
public final [returnType] [methodName] ([parameters]) {  
    . . .  
}
```

- Static methods are automatically final

Lab:

Exercise 5: Final Class & Final Method
1023_javase_inheritance.zip



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