

CSE201: Advanced Programming

# Lecture 06: Inheritance and Polymorphism

Vivek Kumar

Computer Science and Engineering

IIT Delhi

[vivekk@iiitd.ac.in](mailto:vivekk@iiitd.ac.in)

# Last Lecture

- Polymorphism in Java

- A way of coding **generically**

- way of referencing many related objects as one generic type

```
public class Racer {  
    public Racer() {}  
}
```

```
public void useTransportation(Transporter transport){  
    transport.move();  
}
```

```
public class Race {  
    private Racer _dan, _sophia;  
  
    public Race(){  
        _dan = new Racer();  
        _sophia = new Racer();  
    }  
  
    public void startRace() {  
        _dan.useTransportation(new Car());  
        _sophia.useTransportation(new Bike());  
    }  
}
```

```
public interface Transporter {  
    public void move();  
}
```

```
public class Car implements Transporter {  
    public void move() { this.drive(); }  
    .....  
}
```

```
public class Bike implements Transporter {  
    public void move() { this.pedal(); }  
    .....  
}
```

# This Lecture

- Inheritance and Polymorphism

Slide acknowledgements: CS15, Brown University

# Spot the Similarities



- What are the similarities between a convertible and a sedan?
- What are the differences?

# Convertibles vs. Sedans

## Convertible

- Top Down Roof (Retractable Roof)

## Sedan

- Fixed Roof

- Drive
- Brake
- Play radio
- Lock/unlock doors
- Turn off/on turn engine

# Can we model this in code?

- In some cases, objects can be very closely related to each other
  - Convertibles and sedans drive the same way
  - Flip phones and smartphones call the same way
- Imagine we have an `Convertible` and a `Sedan` class
  - Can we enumerate their similarities in one place?
  - How do we portray their relationship through code?

## Convertible

- `putTopDown()`
- `turnOnEngine()`
- `turnOffEngine()`
- `drive()`

## Sedan

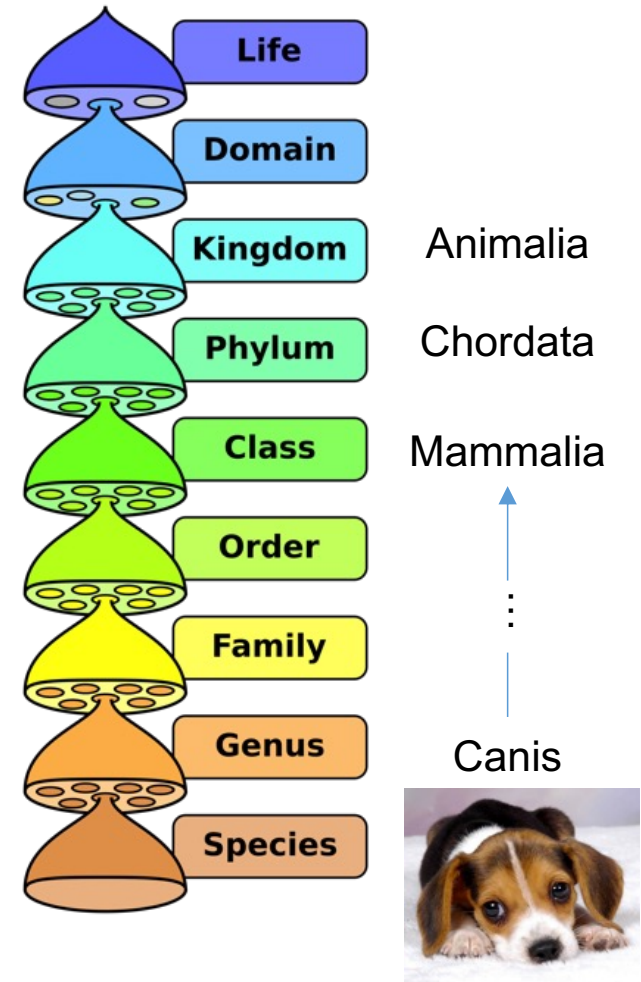
- `parkInCompactSpace()`
- `turnOnEngine()`
- `turnOffEngine()`
- `drive()`

# Can we use Interfaces?

- We could build an interface to model their similarities
  - Build a Car interface with the following methods:
    - `turnOnEngine()`
    - `turnOffEngine()`
    - `drive()`
    - etc.
- **Remember: interfaces only declare methods**
  - Each class will need to implement the method in its own way
  - Thinking ahead: a lot of these method implementations would be the same across classes
    - `Convertible` and `Sedan` would have the same definition for `drive()`
      - `startEngine`, `shiftToDrive`, etc
- **Is there a better way where we can reuse the code?**

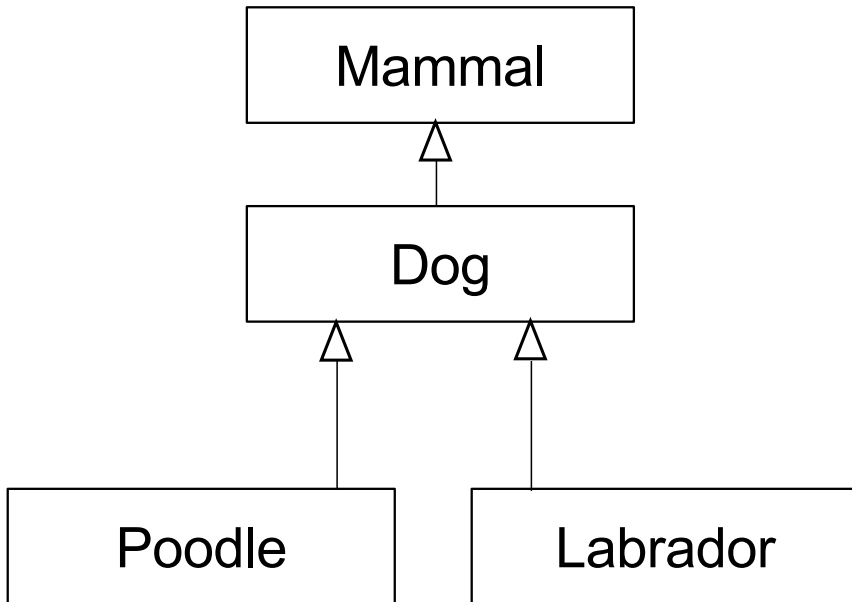
# Inheritance

- In OOP, inheritance is a way of modeling very similar classes
- **Inheritance** models an “is-a” relationship
  - A **sedan** “is a” **car**
  - A **dog** “is a” **mammal**
- Remember: **Interfaces** model an “acts-as” relationship
- You’ve probably seen inheritance before!
  - Taxonomy from biology class



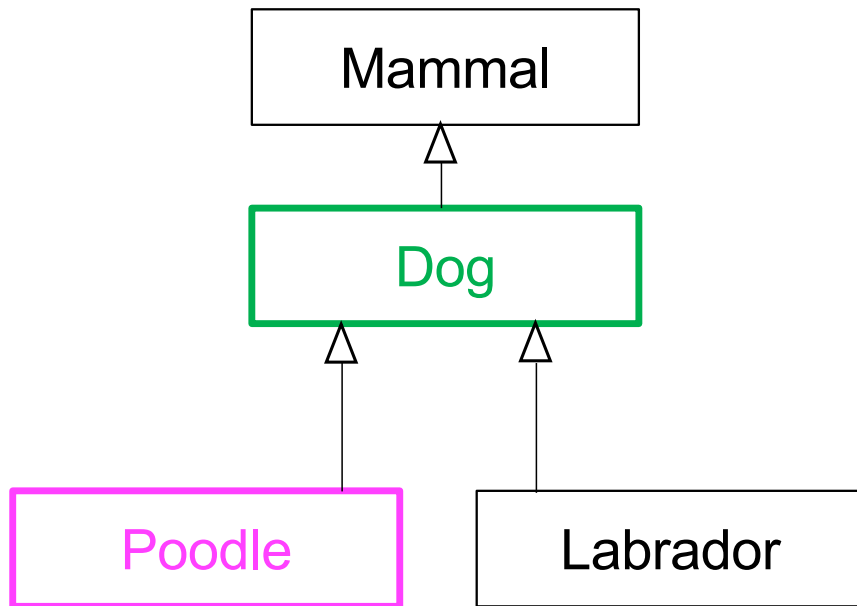


# Modeling Inheritance (1/2)



- This is an inheritance diagram
  - Each box represents a class
- A Poodle “is-a” Dog, a Dog “is-a” Mammal
  - Transitively, a Poodle is a Mammal
- “Inherits from” = “is-a”
  - Poodle inherits from Dog
  - Dog inherits from Mammal
- This relationship is not bidirectional
  - A Poodle is a Dog, but not every Dog is a Poodle (could be a Labrador, a German Shepard, etc)

# Modeling Inheritance (2/2)



- **Superclass/parent/base**: A class that is inherited from
- **Subclass/child/derived**: A class that inherits from another
- “A **Poodle** is a **Dog**”
  - **Poodle** is the **subclass**
  - **Dog** is the **superclass**
- A class can be both a **superclass** and a **subclass**
  - Ex. Dog
- In Java you can only inherit from one superclass (no multiple inheritance)
  - Other languages, like C++, allow for multiple inheritance, but too easy to mess up

# Motivations for Inheritance

- A **subclass** inherits all of its parent's **public** and **protected** capabilities
  - If **Car** defines `drive()`, **Convertible** inherits `drive()` from **Car** and drives the same way. This holds true for all of **Convertible**'s subclasses as well
- Inheritance and Interfaces both legislate class's behavior, although in very different ways
  - Interfaces allow the compiler to enforce method implementation
    - An implementing class will have all capabilities outlined in an interface
  - Inheritance assures the compiler that all **subclasses** of a **superclass** will have the **superclass**'s public capabilities without having to respecify code – methods are inherited
    - A **Convertible** knows how to drive and drives the same way as **Car** because of inherited code
- Benefit of inheritance
  - Code reuse
    - If `drive()` is defined in **Car**, **Convertible** doesn't need to redefine it! Code is inherited
    - Only need to implement what is different, i.e. what makes **Convertible** special

# Superclasses vs Subclasses

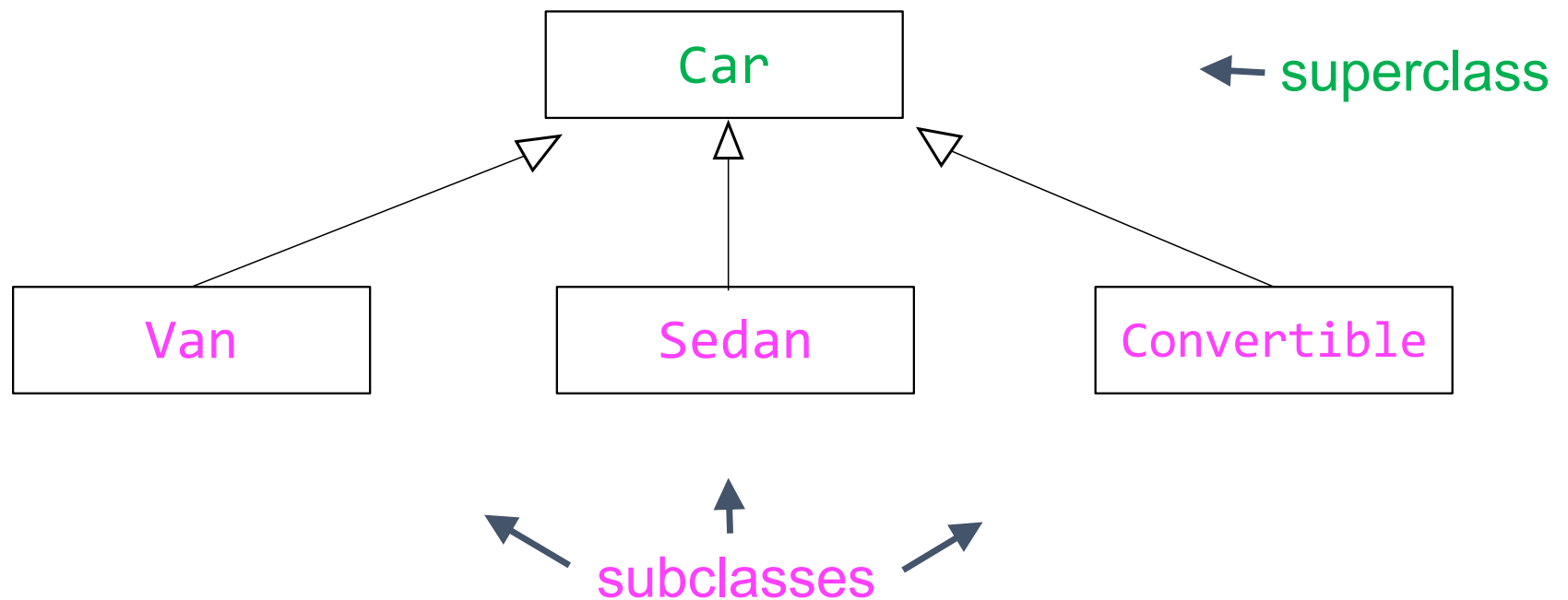
- A **superclass** factors out commonalities among its **subclasses**
  - describes everything that all subclasses have in common
  - **Dog** defines things common to all **Dogs**
- A **subclass** differentiates/specializes its **superclass** by:
  - **adding new methods:**
    - the subclass should define specialized methods. All **Animals** cannot swim, but **Fish** can
  - **overriding inherited methods:** (more on this after few slides!)
    - a Bear class might override its inherited sleep method so that it hibernates rather than sleeping as most other **Animals** do
  - **defining “abstract” methods:** (next lecture!)
    - the superclass declares but does not define

# Let's examine inheritance further

1. Model inheritance relationship
2. Adding new methods
3. Overriding methods

# Modeling Inheritance

- Let's model a **Van**, a **Sedan**, and a **Convertible** class with inheritance!



# Step 1: Define the superclass

- Defining `Car` is just like defining any other class

```
public class Car {
    private Engine _engine;
    //other variables elided
    public Car(){
        _engine = new Engine();
    }
    public void turnOnEngine() {
        _engine.start();
    }
    public void turnOffEngine() {
        _engine.shutOff();
    }
    public void cleanEngine() {
        _engine.steamClean();
    }
    public void drive() {
        //code elided
    }
    //more methods elided
}
```

# Step 2: Define a subclass

- Notice the **extends** keyword
  - **extends** means “is a subclass of” or “inheriting from”
  - **extends** lets the compiler know that `Convertible` is inheriting from `Car`
  - Whenever you create a class that inherits from a superclass, must include “**extends** `<superclass name>`” in class declaration

```
public class Convertible extends Car {  
    //code elided for now  
}
```



# Model Inheritance

- You can create any number of subclasses
  - `Sedan`, `Van`, `Convertible`, `SUV`...could all extend from `Car`
  - These classes will inherit public capabilities from `Car`
- Each subclass can only inherit from one superclass
  - `Convertible` cannot extend `Car`, `FourWheeledTransportation`, and `GasFueledTransportation`
  - Contrast with interfaces: you can implement as many interfaces as you want

# Let's examine inheritance further

1. Model inheritance relationship
2. Adding new methods
3. Overriding methods

# Adding new methods (1/2)

- Let's make a **Sedan** class that inherits from **Car**
- Let's make **Convertible** class that inherits from **Car**
- Can **Sedan** use `putTopDown()`?
  - Nope. That method is defined in **Convertible**, so only **Convertible** and **Convertible**'s subclasses can use it

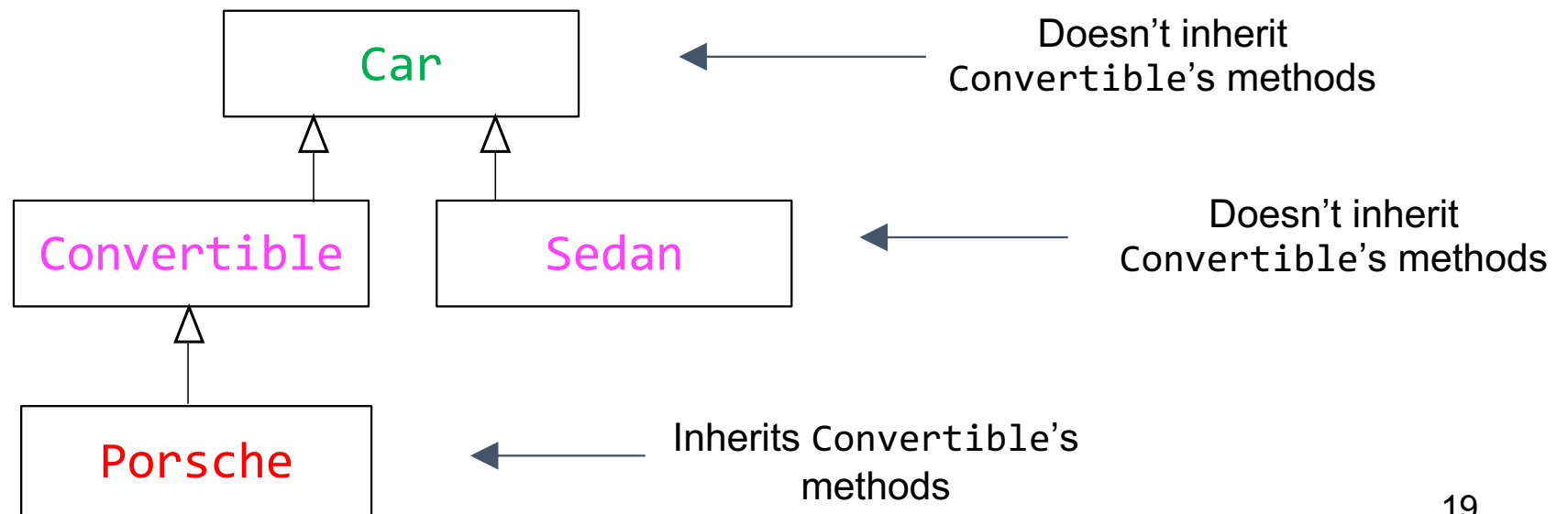
```
public class Sedan extends Car {  
    public Sedan () {  
  
    }  
    //other methods elided  
  
}
```

---

```
public class Convertible extends Car {  
  
    public Convertible() {  
  
    }  
  
    public void putTopDown() {  
        //code elided  
    }  
  
}
```

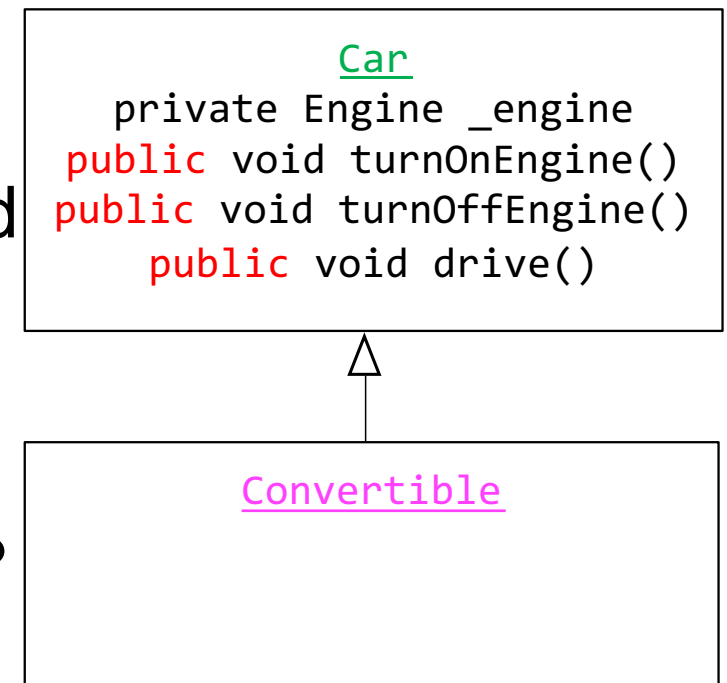
# Adding new methods (2/2)

- You can add specialized functionality to a subclass by defining methods
- These methods can only be inherited if a class extends this subclass



# What can subclasses access? (1/2)

- Remember: a subclass inherits any **public or protected** methods and variables from its superclass. Subclass cannot access any **private** field/method from superclass
- Before adding any code to **Convertible** class, what does **Convertible** already know how to do?
  - It can do anything a **Car** can do!
    - `turnOnEngine()`
    - `turnOffEngine()`
    - `drive()`




Note that we don't list the parent's **public** methods again here – they are implicitly inherited!


# What can subclasses access? (2/2)

```
public class Car {
    private Engine _engine;
    //other variables elided
    public Car(){
        _engine = new Engine();
    }
    public void turnOnEngine() {
        _engine.start();
    }
    public void turnOffEngine() {
        _engine.shutOff();
    }
    public void drive() {
        //code elided
    }
    protected void cleanEngine() { ... }
}
```

```
public class Convertible extends Car {
    //constructor elided
    public void cleanCar() {
        _engine.steamClean();
    }
}
```



```
public class Convertible extends Car
{
    //constructor elided
    public void cleanCar() {
        this.cleanEngine();
    }
}
```



This makes use of *the parent's* inherited cleanEngine method, hence our use of **this**

- Will **Convertible** have access to `_engine`?
- Subclasses **cannot directly inherit private** variables / methods from parent
  - But you can use methods defined in your parent, which have access to the variable

# Question

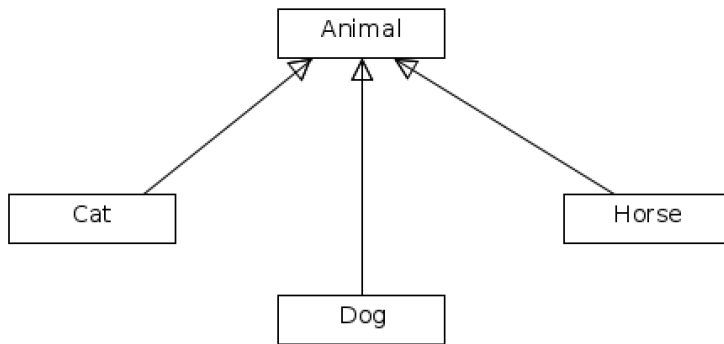
Which of the following is a superclass/parent of the rest?

- A. Lions
- B. Tigers
- C. Cats
- D. Leopards

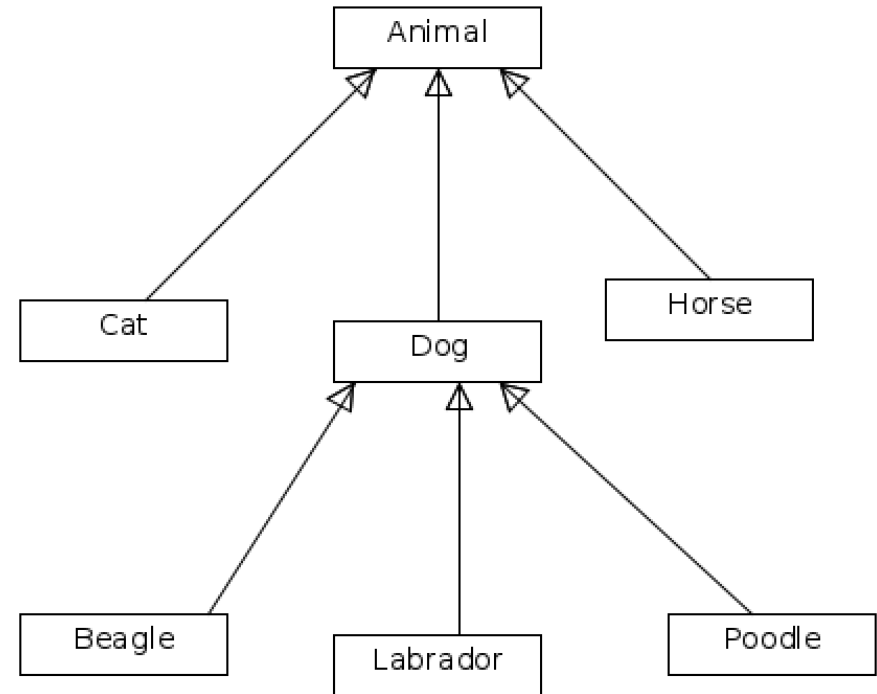
# Question

All of the following are appropriate ways to model superclasses and subclasses EXCEPT:

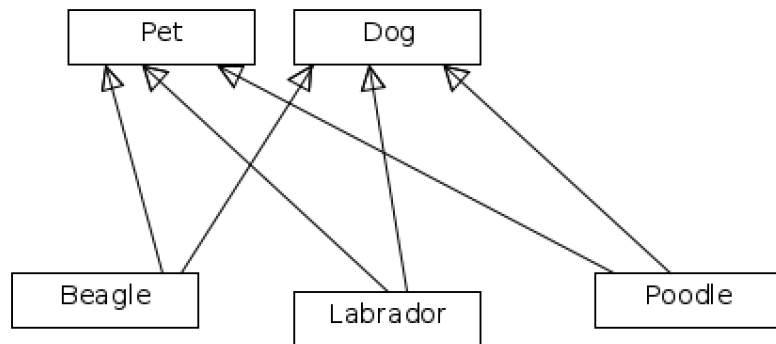
A.



C.



B.





# Let's examine inheritance further

1. Model inheritance relationship
2. Adding new methods
3. Overriding methods

# Overriding methods (1/3)

- A **Convertible** may decide **Car's drive()** method just doesn't cut it
  - A **Convertible** drives much faster than a regular car
- Can **override** a parent class's method and redefine it

```
public class Car {  
  
    private Engine _engine;  
    //other variables elided  
  
    public Car() {  
        _engine = new Engine();  
    }  
    public void drive() {  
        this.goFortyMPH();  
    }  
    public void goFortyMPH() {  
        //code elided  
    }  
    //more methods elided  
}
```

# Overriding methods (2/3)

- `@Override` is an annotation-- signals to compiler (and to anyone reading your code) that you're overriding a method of the superclass
  - We include `@Override` right before we declare method we mean to override

```
public class Convertible extends Car {  
  
    public Convertible() {  
  
    }  
  
    @Override  
    public void drive(){  
        this.goSixtyMPH();  
    }  
  
    public void goSixtyMPH(){  
        //code elided  
    }  
}
```

# Overriding methods (3/3)

- Here's where we re-declare method we want to override
  - Be careful – method signature must match that of the superclass's method exactly else Java will create a new additional method instead of overriding!
- `drive()` is the **method signature**, indicating that name of method is `drive` and it takes in no parameters
  - When a `Convertible` is told to drive, it will execute this code instead of the code in its superclass's `drive` method

```
public class Convertible extends Car {  
  
    public Convertible() {  
  
    }  
  
    @Override  
    public void drive(){  
        this.goSixtyMPH();  
    }  
  
    public void goSixtyMPH(){  
        //code elided  
    }  
}
```

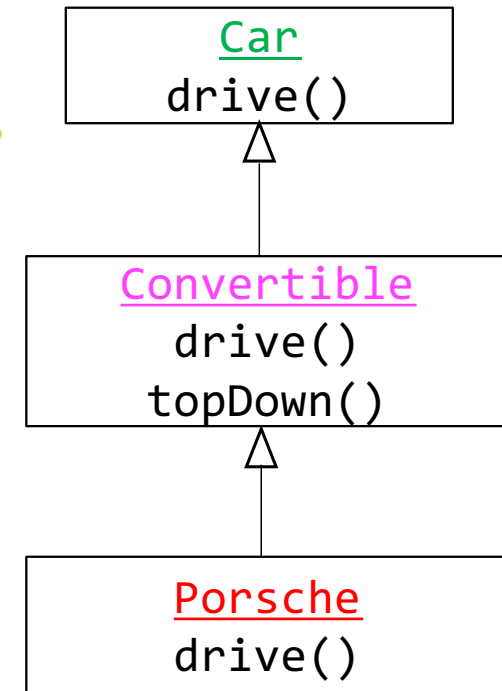
# Partially overriding methods

- Keyword `super` used to invoke original inherited method from parent: in this case, `drive` as implemented in parent `Car`
- While you can use `super` to call other methods in the parent class, it's strongly discouraged
  - Use the `this` keyword instead
  - *Except* when you are calling the parent's method within the child's method of the same name
    - This is **partial overriding**
    - What would happen if we said `this.drive()` instead of `super.drive()`?

```
public class Sedan extends Car {  
  
    public Sedan () {  
        //code elided  
    }  
  
    @Override  
    public void drive(){  
        this.turnOnEngine();  
        super.drive(); // super == parent  
                        class  
  
        this.addPinToMap();  
        super.drive();  
        super.drive();  
        this.addPinToMap();  
    }  
}
```

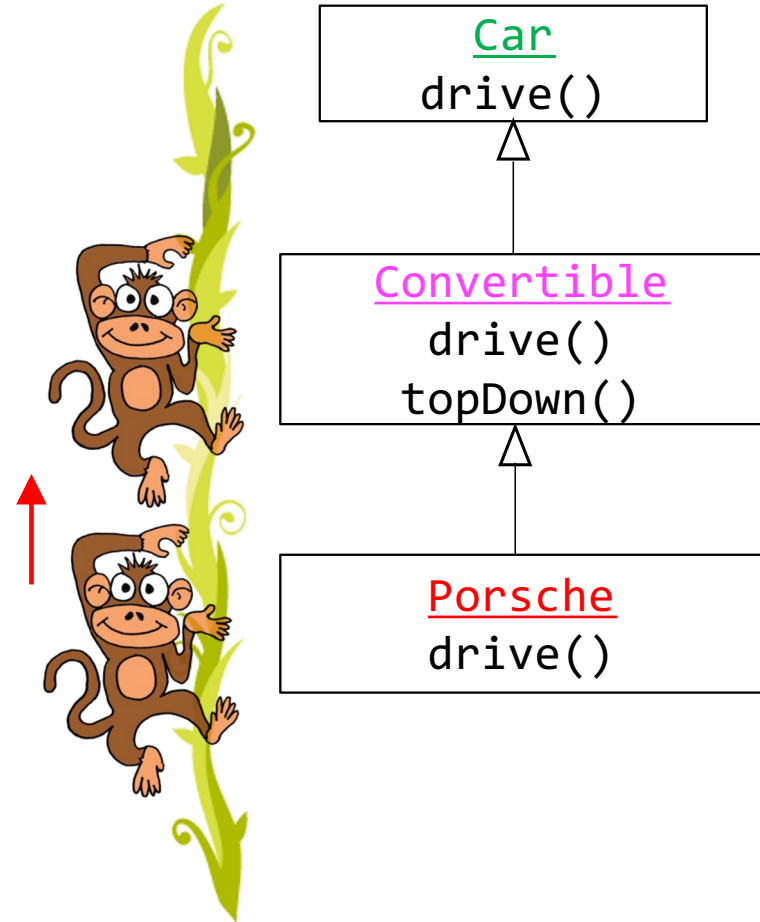
# Method Resolution (1/2)

- When we call `drive()` on some instance of **Porsche**, how does Java know which version of the method to call?
- Essentially, Java “walks up the class inheritance tree” from subclass to superclass until it either:
  - finds the method, and calls it
  - doesn't find the method, and generates a compile-time error. You can't send a message for which there is no method!



# Method Resolution (2/2)

- When we call `drive()` on a **Porsche**, Java executes the `drive()` method defined in **Porsche**
- When we call `topDown()` on a **Porsche**, Java executes the `topDown()` method defined in **Convertible**



# Inheritance and Polymorphism (1/3)

- Let's borrow the Racer class from the example we discussed in lecture on interfaces
- However, we change the parameter type in method `useTransportation()` from `Transporter` to `Car`
- What would happen?
  - **We can only pass in `Car` and subclasses of `Car`**

```
public class Racer {  
    //previous code elided  
  
    public void useTransportation(Car myCar) {  
        //code elided  
    }  
}
```



# Inheritance and Polymorphism (2/3)

- Let's define `useTransportation()`
- What method should we call on `myCar`?
  - Every `Car` knows how to drive, which means we can guarantee that every subclass of `Car` also knows how to drive

```
public class Racer {  
    //previous code elided  
  
    public void useTransportation(Car myCar) {  
        myCar.drive();  
    }  
}
```

# Is this legal?

```
Car convertible = new Convertible();  
_sophia.useTransportation(convertible);
```



```
Car sedan = new Sedan();  
_sophia.useTransportation(sedan);
```



```
Car bike = new Bike();  
_sophia.useTransportation(bike);
```



**Bike** is not a subclass of **Car**, so you cannot treat an instance of **Bike** as a **Car**.

# Inheritance and Polymorphism (3/3)

- That's all we needed to do!
- Our inheritance structure looks really similar to our interfaces structure
  - Therefore, we only need to change 2 lines in Racer in order to use any of our new cars!
  - But remember: what's happening behind the curtain is very different: method resolution “climbs up the hierarchy” for inheritance
- Polymorphism is an incredibly powerful tool
  - Allows for generic programming
  - Treat multiple classes as their generic type while still allowing specific method implementations to be executed
- Polymorphism+Inheritance is strong generic coding

# Question

In the following code, the `Elephant` subclass extends the `Animal` superclass, both of which contain and define an `eat()` method:

```
Animal horton = new Elephant();  
horton.eat();
```

Whose `eat` method is being called?

- A. `Animal`
- B. `Elephant`
- C. `Sedan`
- D. None of the above

# Brief Discussion

- **Assignments**

- Please use common sense and feel free to have variations in your design as long as:
  - It adheres to the OOP concepts taught in lecture slides
  - It adheres to the instructor's expectations provided in the assignment description
  - Not possible to describe every possible permutation/combination of scenarios

- **Rubrics**

- As you might have noticed we are not marking how exactly you have implemented any particular method
- We are providing marks just for concepts/topics discussed in lecture
  - E.g., for assignment-1, identifying actors and methods, encapsulation, immutable variables, class relationships, etc.
- Final type variables: not using them is a faulty design, irrespective of whether you are setting it via constructor only, or if you did not provide setter, etc.

- **Recent disruptions (lectures, tutorials)**

- We apologize for recent disruptions in time table schedule due to extra lectures, moving tutorial groups, merging tutorial groups, etc.
- This will be streamlined from next week and time table will be updated
- Two extra lectures were required as no lectures next week

# Next Lecture

- Inheritance and polymorphism (continued)
- Immutable classes
- Abstract classes