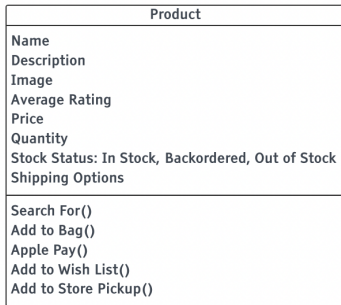


Object Modeling Quick Reference



— **Objects** are the nouns in a system.

— **Attributes** characterize instances of an object.

— **Actions** are the verbs.

Relationships tell the structural story of the system, illustrating which objects are closely related and which have little or no relationship with one another.

Strictly speaking, all relationships are an association (indicated by a plain line). Aggregation, component, and inheritance are specific types of associations.

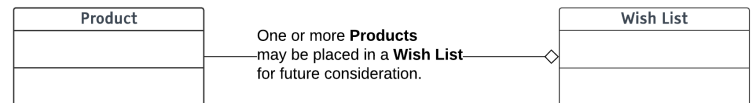
Association —————

Aggregation —————◇

Component —————◆

Inheritance —————▷

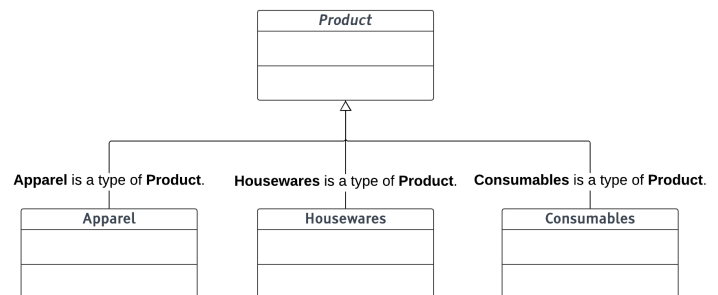
An **aggregation relationship** indicates an object that is a group or list of other objects. The line treatment for aggregation is an open diamond, with the diamond pointing at the aggregate object.



A **component relationship** is a type of dependency where one object is a component of another. The line treatment for a component is a filled-in diamond attached to the object that possesses the component or components.



Inheritance indicates a parent-child relationship between two objects where the child object inherits some or all of the parent's characteristics. The line treatment for inheritance relationships is an open triangle that points at the parent object.



Tips

Define What You Want to Achieve With the Model

Think about what you want to achieve with the model. Building a full model complete with all objects, attributes, actions, and relationships is not always necessary.

Go for Good Enough

Remember that the goal is not to create the perfect model; avoid the trap of analysis paralysis. It's OK not to have every corner of the model 100% worked out. Instead, focus on creating a model that serves your purpose—and not more.

Be Flexible in How You Build the Model

The first step in creating an object model is necessarily identifying the objects. You can build the other elements of the model (relationships, actions, attributes) in any order. Feel free to build the model in the way that makes the most sense to you or the given circumstances.

Have Fun!

Go into the modeling process with a sense of fun and adventure—to enjoy the discovery and clarity that object modeling can provide.