
Java Networking Overview

The Java Networking API (`java.net`) provides the interfaces/classes for the following functions:

- [Addressing](#)
- [Making TCP connections](#)
- [Sending/Receiving Datagram Packets via UDP](#)
- [Locating/Identifying Network Resources](#)
- [Security](#)
 - [Authentication](#)
 - [Permissions](#)

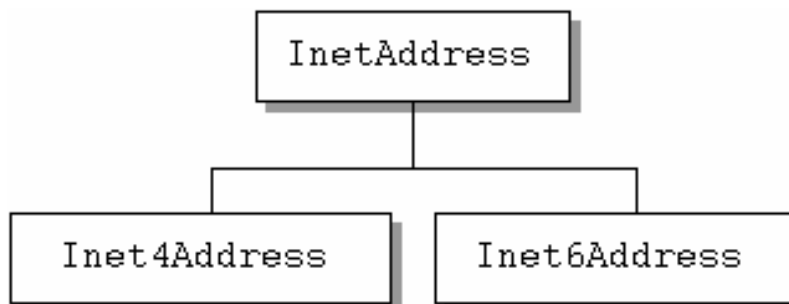
The goal of this document is to provide a high-level overview of the facilities the `java.net` package provides. For details about interfaces, classes, or factories, see the [networking API](#). For basic networking concepts, see [Trail: Custom Networking](#) in the *Java Tutorial*.

Addressing

`java.net` provides the following addressing-related classes:

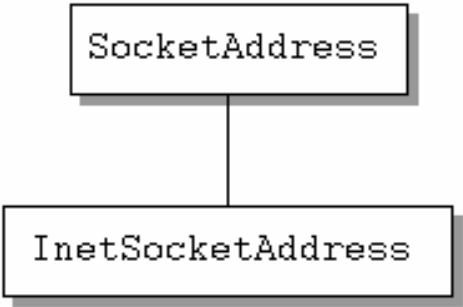
- `InetAddress`
- `Inet4Address`
- `Inet6Address`
- `SocketAddress`
- `InetSocketAddress`

For IP addressing, three classes are provided: `InetAddress`, `Inet4Address`, and `Inet6Address`. `InetAddress` represents an IP address, which is either a 32- or 128-bit unsigned number used by IP, the lower-level protocol on which protocols like TCP and UDP are built. To represent 32-bit IPv4 address, `Inet4Address` is provided. (An IPv4 address has the familiar form `nnn.nnn.nnn.nnn`, where `n` is an integer; e.g., `129.250.35.250`). It is a subclass of `InetAddress`. To represent 128-bit IPv6 addresses, `Inet6Address` is provided. It is also a subclass of `InetAddress`.



For socket addressing, two classes are provided: `SocketAddress` and `InetSocketAddress`. `SocketAddress` is an abstract socket address, independent of a specific protocol. It is intended for

subclassing for a specific protocol. `InetSocketAddress` below is an example. `InetSocketAddress` is a subclass of `SocketAddress`; it represents an IP socket address. It can include an IP address (e.g., 129.250.35.250) and port (e.g., 80); a hostname (e.g., coastnews.com) and port (e.g., 1000); or port only (e.g., 1010). In the latter case, a wildcard IP address is assumed.



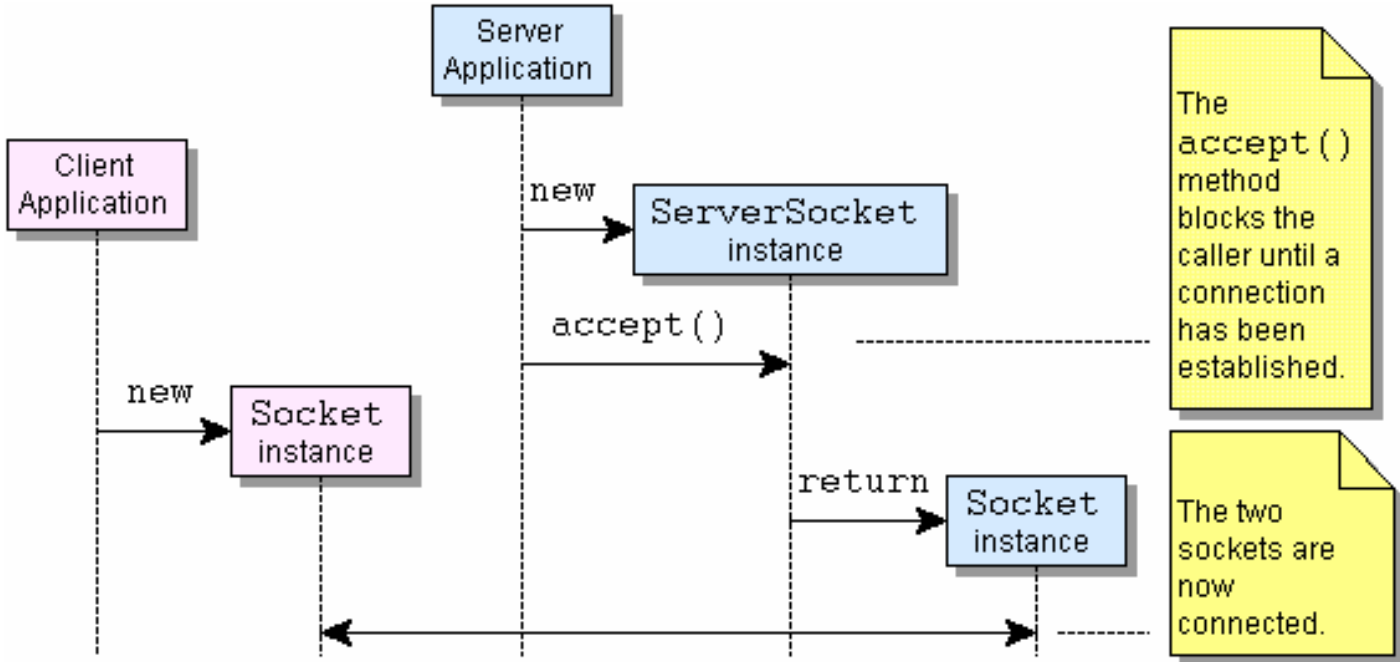
Making TCP Connections

These classes are related to making normal TCP connections:

- `ServerSocket`
- `Socket`

For simple connections between a client and a server, `ServerSocket` and `Socket` are all that you will probably need.

`ServerSocket` represents the socket on a server that waits and listens for requests for service from a client. `Socket` represents the endpoints for communication between a server and a client. When a server gets a request for service, it creates a `Socket` for communication with the client and continues to listen for other requests on the `ServerSocket`. The client also creates a `Socket` for communication with the server. The sequence is shown below:



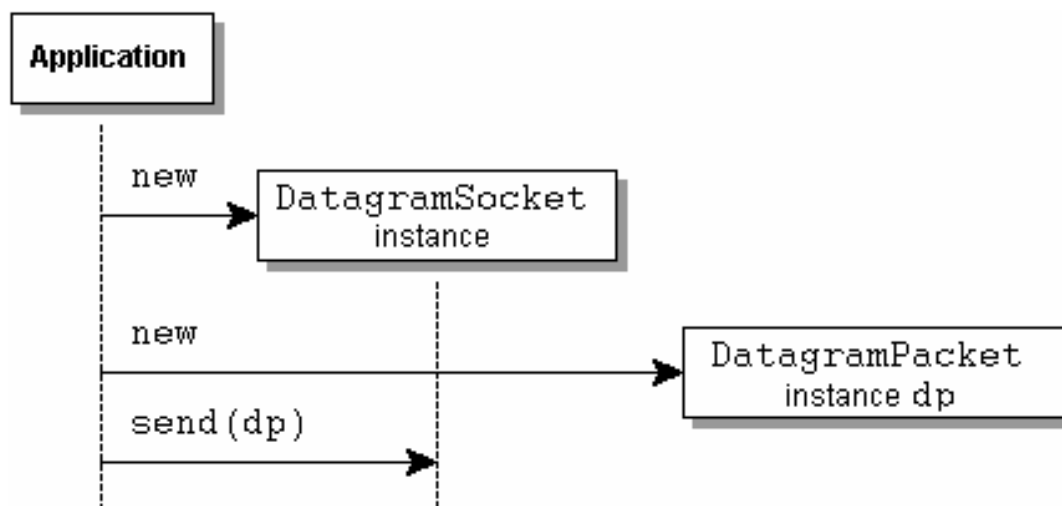
Once the connection is established, `getInputStream()` and `getOutputStream()` may be used in communication between the sockets

Sending/Receiving Datagram Packets via UDP

The following are related to sending and receiving datagram packets via UDP.

- DatagramPacket
- DatagramSocket

DatagramPacket represents a datagram packet. Datagram packets are used for connectionless delivery and normally include destination address and port information. DatagramSocket is a socket used for sending and receiving datagram packets over a network via UDP. A DatagramPacket is sent from a DatagramSocket by calling the `send(...)` method of DatagramSocket with DatagramPacket as the argument: `send(DatagramPacket dp)`. `receive(DatagramPacket dp)` is used for receiving a DatagramPacket. (The MulticastSocket class may be used for sending/receiving a DatagramPacket to a multicast group. It is a subclass of DatagramSocket that adds functionality for multicasting.)



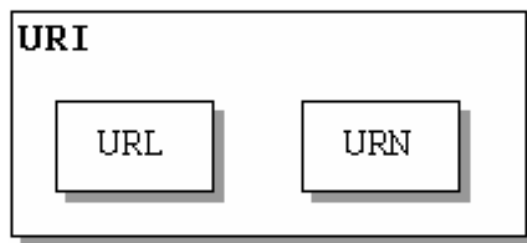
Locating/Identifying Network Resources

These classes are related to locating or identifying network resources:

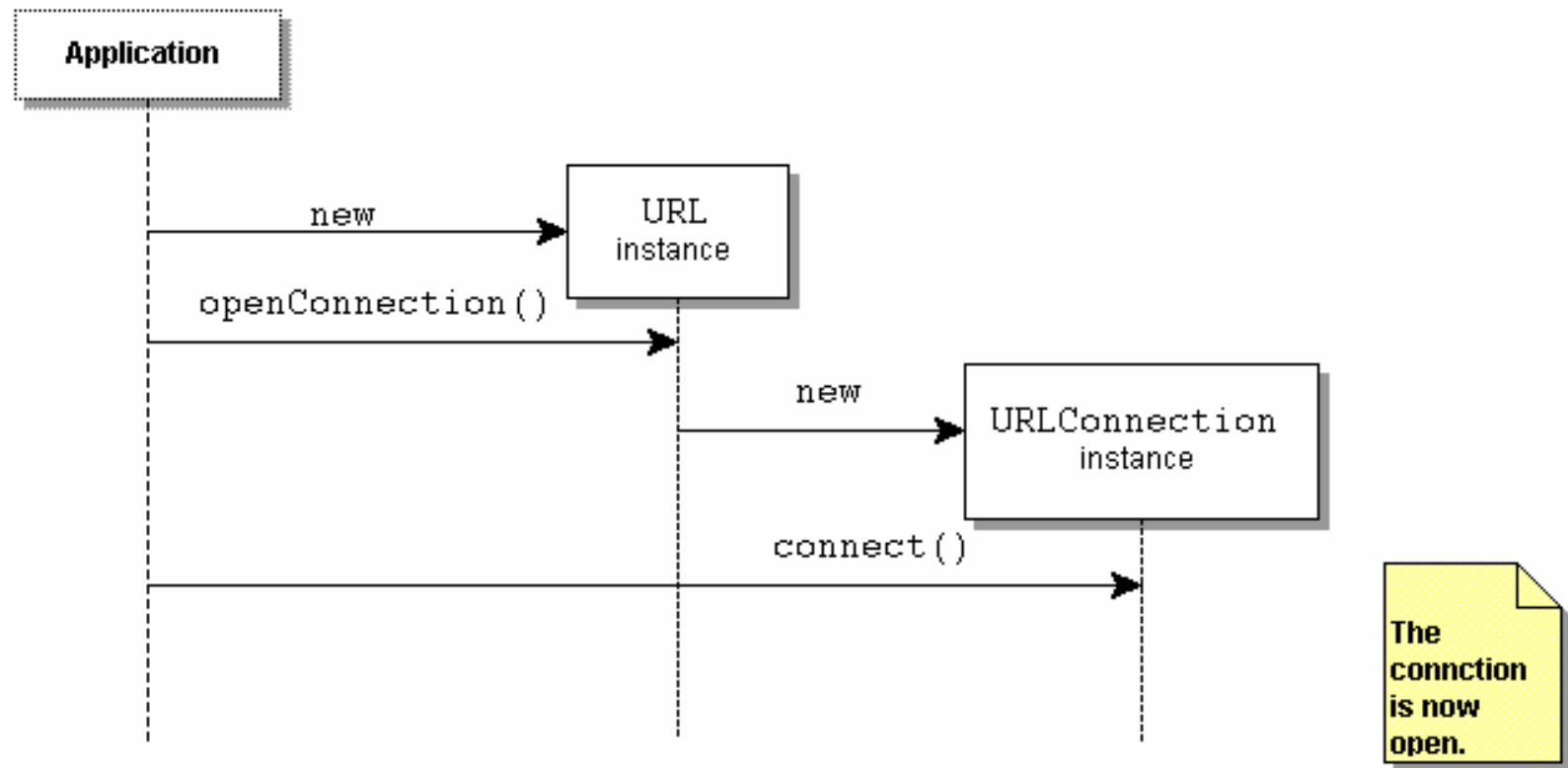
- URI
- URL
- URLClassLoader
- URLConnection
- URLStreamHandler
- HttpURLConnection
- JarURLConnection

The most commonly used classes are URI, URL, URLConnection, and HttpURLConnection.

URI represents a Uniform Resource Identifier for a resource; it is an identifier for a resource but not necessarily a locator for that resource. URL represents a Uniform Resource Locator for a resource. URLs are a subset of URIs, though the class URL is not a subclass of the URI class. In short, a URL tells how to access the resource, while a URI may or may not. The Uniform Resource Name (URN) is another subset of URI. No Java class exists for it.



`URLConnection` is the abstract superclass of all classes that represent a connection between an application and a network resource identified by a URL. Given a URL and hence a protocol, `URL.openConnection()` returns an instance of the appropriate implementation of `URLConnection` for the protocol. (The protocol is known from the URL.) The instance provides the means—`URLConnection.connect()`—to actually open the connection and access the URL.



`HttpURLConnection` is the most commonly used implementation of `URLConnection`. It is for `http` protocol, the protocol used for accessing content on web servers. In the above diagram, if the access protocol for the URL were `http`, then an instance of `HttpURLConnection` would be returned by the `openConnection()` method.

Security

Security includes authentication- and permissions-related classes. Authentication relates to user authentication and involves username and password checking. Authentication of a user may be required in a number of situations, such as when a user tries to access a URL. Permissions relate to what actions may be performed; e.g., unless the `NetPermission` object "setDefaultAuthenticator" exists, then invoking the method `Authenticator.setDefault(Authenticator a)` will cause a security exception.

Authentication

- `Authenticator`
- `PasswordAuthentication`

The abstract class `Authenticator` has methods for authenticating a network connection. It is typically subclassed and an instance of the subclass is registered with the system by calling `setDefault(Authenticator a)`. (Note that if there is a security manager, it checks to see that the security policy permits the `NetPermission "setDefaultAuthenticator"`.) Then, when the system requires authentication, it will call a method such as `getPasswordAuthentication()`.

`PasswordAuthentication` is simply a data holder for a user name and a password.

Permissions

- `SocketPermission`
- `NetPermission`

A `SocketPermission` consists of a host, with optional port range, and a set of actions that may be performed on that host—`connect`, `accept`, `listen` and/or `resolve`. It includes methods to determine if one `SocketPermission` is equal to another or implies another `Permission`. A `SocketPermission` may be included in a `PermissionCollection` for easy checking if a permission exists.

`NetPermission` is a class for various named network permissions. Currently there are three: `setDefaultAuthenticator`, as mentioned above; `requestPasswordAuthentication`; and `specifyStreamHandler`. A `NetPermission` may be included in a `PermissionCollection` for easy checking if a permission exists.

For more information about permissions, see <http://java.sun.com/j2se/1.4/docs/guide/security/permissions.html>.