

The relational representation of compound objects is similar to the representation of entities. In fact, compound objects and entities are in many ways quite similar. An object, OBJECT1, can contain one or many instances of a second object OBJECT2, and OBJECT2 can contain one or many instances of the first object OBJECT1. This leads to the object type shown in the following **figure**.

Types of Compound objects

	Object 1 can contain		
Object 2		one	many
can	one	1:1	1:N
contain	many	M:1	M:N

All of these relationships involve some variation of one-to-one , one-to-many, or many-to-many relationships. Specifically, the relationship from OBJECT1 to OBJECT2 can be 1:1, 1:M, or N:M, whereas the relationship from OBJECT2 to OBJECT1 can be 1:1, 1:M or M:N. To represent any of these, we need only address these three types of relationships.