INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

ISO/IEC 23270

Third edition
2018-12

Information technology — Programming languages — C#

Technologies de l'information — Langages de programmation — C#



Reference number
ISO/IEC 23270:2018(E)

© ISO/IEC 2018



COPYRIGHT PROTECTED DOCUMENT

© ISO/IEC 2018

All rights reserved. Unless otherwise specified, or required in the context of its implementation, no part of this publication may be reproduced or utilized otherwise in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, or posting on the internet or an intranet, without prior written permission. Permission can be requested from either ISO at the address below or ISO's member body in the country of the requester.

ISO copyright office
CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
Fax: +41 22 749 09 47
Email: copyright@iso.org
Website: www.iso.org

Published in Switzerland

Table of Contents

Foreword ..... **xix**

Introduction ..... **xxi**

1. Scope **1**

2. Normative references **3**

3. Terms and definitions **5**

4. Acronyms and abbreviations **7**

5. General description **9**

6. Conformance **11**

7. Lexical structure **13**

7.1 Programs 13
7.2 Grammars 13
7.2.1 General 13
7.2.2 Grammar notation 13
7.2.3 Lexical grammar 14
7.2.4 Syntactic grammar 15
7.2.5 Grammar ambiguities 15
7.3 Lexical analysis 16
7.3.1 General 16
7.3.2 Line terminators 16
7.3.3 Comments 17
7.3.4 White space 18
7.4 Tokens 19
7.4.1 General 19
7.4.2 Unicode character escape sequences 19
7.4.3 Identifiers 20
7.4.4 Keywords 21
7.4.5 Literals 22
7.4.5.1 General 22
7.4.5.2 Boolean literals 23
7.4.5.3 Integer literals 23
7.4.5.4 Real literals 24
7.4.5.5 Character literals 25
7.4.5.6 String literals 26
7.4.5.7 The null literal 28
7.4.6 Operators and punctuators 28
7.5 Pre-processing directives 28
7.5.1 General 28
7.5.2 Conditional compilation symbols 30
7.5.3 Pre-processing expressions 30
7.5.4 Definition directives 31
7.5.5 Conditional compilation directives 32

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

7.5.6 Diagnostic directives 34
7.5.7 Region directives 35
7.5.8 Line directives 35
7.5.9 Pragma directives 36

8. Basic concepts 37

8.1 Application startup 37
8.2 Application termination 38
8.3 Declarations 38
8.4 Members 41
8.4.1 General 41
8.4.2 Namespace members 41
8.4.3 Struct members 41
8.4.4 Enumeration members 42
8.4.5 Class members 42
8.4.6 Interface members 42
8.4.7 Array members 42
8.4.8 Delegate members 42
8.5 Member access 42
8.5.1 General 42
8.5.2 Declared accessibility 42
8.5.3 Accessibility domains 43
8.5.4 Protected access 46
8.5.5 Accessibility constraints 47
8.6 Signatures and overloading 48
8.7 Scopes 49
8.7.1 General 49
8.7.2 Name hiding 52
8.7.2.1 General 52
8.7.2.2 Hiding through nesting 52
8.7.2.3 Hiding through inheritance 53
8.8 Namespace and type names 54
8.8.1 General 54
8.8.2 Unqualified names 56
8.8.3 Fully qualified names 56
8.9 Automatic memory management 57
8.10 Execution order 59

9. Types 61

9.1 General 61
9.2 Reference types 61
9.2.1 General 61
9.2.2 Class types 62
9.2.3 The object type 62
9.2.4 The dynamic type 63
9.2.5 The string type 63
9.2.6 Interface types 63
9.2.7 Array types 63
9.2.8 Delegate types 63
9.3 Value types 63
9.3.1 General 63

 ©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

9.3.2 The System.ValueType type 64
9.3.3 Default constructors 64
9.3.4 Struct types 65
9.3.5 Simple types 65
9.3.6 Integral types 66
9.3.7 Floating-point types 67
9.3.8 The decimal type 68
9.3.9 The bool type 69
9.3.10 Enumeration types 69
9.3.11 Nullable value types 69
9.3.12 Boxing and unboxing 70
9.4 Constructed types 70
9.4.1 General 70
9.4.2 Type arguments 71
9.4.3 Open and closed types 71
9.4.4 Bound and unbound types 72
9.4.5 Satisfying constraints 72
9.5 Type parameters 73
9.6 Expression tree types 73
9.7 The dynamic type 74

10. Variables 77

10.1 General 77
10.2 Variable categories 77
10.2.1 General 77
10.2.2 Static variables 77
10.2.3 Instance variables 77
10.2.3.1 General 77
10.2.3.2 Instance variables in classes 78
10.2.3.3 Instance variables in structs 78
10.2.4 Array elements 78
10.2.5 Value parameters 78
10.2.6 Reference parameters 78
10.2.7 Output parameters 79
10.2.8 Local variables 79
10.3 Default values 80
10.4 Definite assignment 80
10.4.1 General 80
10.4.2 Initially assigned variables 81
10.4.3 Initially unassigned variables 81
10.4.4 Precise rules for determining definite assignment 81
10.4.4.1 General 81
10.4.4.2 General rules for statements 82
10.4.4.3 Block statements, checked, and unchecked statements 82
10.4.4.4 Expression statements 82
10.4.4.5 Declaration statements 83
10.4.4.6 If statements 83
10.4.4.7 Switch statements 83
10.4.4.8 While statements 83
10.4.4.9 Do statements 83

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

10.4.4.10 For statements 84
10.4.4.11 Break, continue, and goto statements 84
10.4.4.12 Throw statements 84
10.4.4.13 Return statements 84
10.4.4.14 Try-catch statements 85
10.4.4.15 Try-finally statements 85
10.4.4.16 Try-catch-finally statements 85
10.4.4.17 Foreach statements 86
10.4.4.18 Using statements 86
10.4.4.19 Lock statements 87
10.4.4.20 Yield statements 87
10.4.4.21 General rules for constant expressions 87
10.4.4.22 General rules for simple expressions 88
10.4.4.23 General rules for expressions with embedded expressions 88
10.4.4.24 Invocation expressions and object creation expressions 88
10.4.4.25 Simple assignment expressions 89
10.4.4.26 && expressions 89
10.4.4.27 || expressions 90
10.4.4.28 ! expressions 91
10.4.4.29 ?? expressions 91
10.4.4.30 ?: expressions 91
10.4.4.31 Anonymous functions 92
10.5 Variable references 92
10.6 Atomicity of variable references 92

11. Conversions 93

11.1 General 93
11.2 Implicit conversions 93
11.2.1 General 93
11.2.2 Identity conversion 94
11.2.3 Implicit numeric conversions 94
11.2.4 Implicit enumeration conversions 94
11.2.5 Implicit nullable conversions 94
11.2.6 Null literal conversions 94
11.2.7 Implicit reference conversions 95
11.2.8 Boxing conversions 95
11.2.9 Implicit dynamic conversions 97
11.2.10 Implicit constant expression conversions 97
11.2.11 Implicit conversions involving type parameters 97
11.2.12 User-defined implicit conversions 98
11.2.13 Anonymous function conversions and method group conversions 98
11.3 Explicit conversions 98
11.3.1 General 98
11.3.2 Explicit numeric conversions 99
11.3.3 Explicit enumeration conversions 101
11.3.4 Explicit nullable conversions 101
11.3.5 Explicit reference conversions 101
11.3.6 Unboxing conversions 102
11.3.7 Explicit dynamic conversions 103
11.3.8 Explicit conversions involving type parameters 103

 ©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

11.3.9 User-defined explicit conversions 105
11.4 Standard conversions 105
11.4.1 General 105
11.4.2 Standard implicit conversions 105
11.4.3 Standard explicit conversions 105
11.5 User-defined conversions 105
11.5.1 General 105
11.5.2 Permitted user-defined conversions 105
11.5.3 Evaluation of user-defined conversions 106
11.5.4 User-defined implicit conversions 107
11.5.5 User-defined explicit conversions 107
11.6 Conversions involving nullable types 109
11.6.1 Nullable Conversions 109
11.6.2 Lifted conversions 109
11.7 Anonymous function conversions 109
11.7.1 General 109
11.7.2 Evaluation of anonymous function conversions to delegate types 111
11.7.3 Evaluation of anonymous function conversions to expression tree types 112
11.8 Method group conversions 112

12. Expressions 115

12.1 General 115
12.2 Expression classifications 115
12.2.1 General 115
12.2.2 Values of expressions 116
12.3 Static and Dynamic Binding 116
12.3.1 General 116
12.3.2 Binding-time 117
12.3.3 Dynamic binding 117
12.3.4 Types of subexpressions 118
12.4 Operators 118
12.4.1 General 118
12.4.2 Operator precedence and associativity 118
12.4.3 Operator overloading 119
12.4.4 Unary operator overload resolution 121
12.4.5 Binary operator overload resolution 121
12.4.6 Candidate user-defined operators 121
12.4.7 Numeric promotions 122
12.4.7.1 General 122
12.4.7.2 Unary numeric promotions 122
12.4.7.3 Binary numeric promotions 122
12.4.8 Lifted operators 123
12.5 Member lookup 124
12.5.1 General 124
12.5.2 Base types 125
12.6 Function members 126
12.6.1 General 126
12.6.2 Argument lists 128
12.6.2.1 General 128
12.6.2.2 Corresponding parameters 129

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

12.6.2.3 Run-time evaluation of argument lists ... 130
12.6.3 Type inference ... 131
12.6.3.1 General ... 131
12.6.3.2 The first phase ... 132
12.6.3.3 The second phase ... 133
12.6.3.4 Input types ... 133
12.6.3.5 Output types ... 133
12.6.3.6 Dependence ... 133
12.6.3.7 Output type inferences ... 133
12.6.3.8 Explicit parameter type inferences ... 134
12.6.3.9 Exact inferences ... 134
12.6.3.10 Lower-bound inferences ... 134
12.6.3.11 Upper-bound inferences ... 134
12.6.3.12 Fixing ... 135
12.6.3.13 Inferred return type ... 135
12.6.3.14 Type inference for conversion of method groups ... 137
12.6.3.15 Finding the best common type of a set of expressions ... 137
12.6.4 Overload resolution ... 137
12.6.4.1 General ... 137
12.6.4.2 Applicable function member ... 138
12.6.4.3 Better function member ... 139
12.6.4.4 Better conversion from expression ... 140
12.6.4.5 Better conversion from type ... 140
12.6.4.6 Better conversion target ... 140
12.6.4.7 Overloading in generic classes ... 140
12.6.5 Compile-time checking of dynamic member invocation ... 141
12.6.6 Function member invocation ... 142
12.6.6.1 General ... 142
12.6.6.2 Invocations on boxed instances ... 143
12.7 Primary expressions ... 143
12.7.1 General ... 143
12.7.2 Literals ... 144
12.7.3 Simple names ... 144
12.7.3.1 General ... 144
12.7.3.2 Invariant meaning in blocks ... 146
12.7.4 Parenthesized expressions ... 146
12.7.5 Member access ... 147
12.7.5.1 General ... 147
12.7.5.2 Identical simple names and type names ... 149
12.7.6 Invocation expressions ... 149
12.7.6.1 General ... 149
12.7.6.2 Method invocations ... 150
12.7.6.3 Extension method invocations ... 151
12.7.6.4 Delegate invocations ... 153
12.7.7 Element access ... 154
12.7.7.1 General ... 154
12.7.7.2 Array access ... 154
12.7.7.3 Indexer access ... 155
12.7.8 This access ... 156
12.7.9 Base access ... 156

 ©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

12.7.10 Postfix increment and decrement operators 157
12.7.11 The new operator 158
12.7.11.1 General 158
12.7.11.2 Object creation expressions 158
12.7.11.3 Object initializers 160
12.7.11.4 Collection initializers 162
12.7.11.5 Array creation expressions 163
12.7.11.6 Delegate creation expressions 165
12.7.11.7 Anonymous object creation expressions 166
12.7.12 The typeof operator 168
12.7.13 The sizeof operator 169
12.7.14 The checked and unchecked operators 170
12.7.15 Default value expressions 172
12.7.16 Anonymous method expressions 173
12.8 Unary operators 173
12.8.1 General 173
12.8.2 Unary plus operator 173
12.8.3 Unary minus operator 173
12.8.4 Logical negation operator 174
12.8.5 Bitwise complement operator 174
12.8.6 Prefix increment and decrement operators 175
12.8.7 Cast expressions 176
12.8.8 Await expressions 176
12.8.8.1 General 176
12.8.8.2 Awaitable expressions 177
12.8.8.3 Classification of await expressions 177
12.8.8.4 Run-time evaluation of await expressions 177
12.9 Arithmetic operators 178
12.9.1 General 178
12.9.2 Multiplication operator 178
12.9.3 Division operator 179
12.9.4 Remainder operator 180
12.9.5 Addition operator 181
12.9.6 Subtraction operator 183
12.10 Shift operators 185
12.11 Relational and type-testing operators 186
12.11.1 General 186
12.11.2 Integer comparison operators 187
12.11.3 Floating-point comparison operators 188
12.11.4 Decimal comparison operators 188
12.11.5 Boolean equality operators 189
12.11.6 Enumeration comparison operators 189
12.11.7 Reference type equality operators 189
12.11.8 String equality operators 191
12.11.9 Delegate equality operators 191
12.11.10 Equality operators between nullable value types and the null literal 192
12.11.11 The is operator 192
12.11.12 The as operator 193
12.12 Logical operators 194
12.12.1 General 194

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

12.12.2 Integer logical operators 194
12.12.3 Enumeration logical operators 195
12.12.4 Boolean logical operators 195
12.12.5 Nullable Boolean & and | operators 195
12.13 Conditional logical operators 196
12.13.1 General 196
12.13.2 Boolean conditional logical operators 197
12.13.3 User-defined conditional logical operators 197
12.14 The null coalescing operator 198
12.15 Conditional operator 198
12.16 Anonymous function expressions 199
12.16.1 General 199
12.16.2 Anonymous function signatures 201
12.16.3 Anonymous function bodies 201
12.16.4 Overload resolution 202
12.16.5 Anonymous functions and dynamic binding 203
12.16.6 Outer variables 203
12.16.6.1 General 203
12.16.6.2 Captured outer variables 203
12.16.6.3 Instantiation of local variables 204
12.16.7 Evaluation of anonymous function expressions 206
12.16.8 Implementation Exmple 206
12.17 Query expressions 209
12.17.1 General 209
12.17.2 Ambiguities in query expressions 210
12.17.3 Query expression translation 210
12.17.3.1 General 210
12.17.3.2 select and group … by clauses with continuations 211
12.17.3.3 Explicit range variable types 211
12.17.3.4 Degenerate query expressions 212
12.17.3.5 From, let, where, join and orderby clauses 212
12.17.3.6 Select clauses 216
12.17.3.7 Group clauses 216
12.17.3.8 Transparent identifiers 216
12.17.4 The query-expression pattern 218
12.18 Assignment operators 219
12.18.1 General 219
12.18.2 Simple assignment 220
12.18.3 Compound assignment 222
12.18.4 Event assignment 223
12.19 Expression 223
12.20 Constant expressions 223
12.21 Boolean expressions 225

13. Statements 227

13.1 General 227
13.2 End points and reachability 227
13.3 Blocks 229
13.3.1 General 229
13.3.2 Statement lists 229

 ©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

13.4 The empty statement 230
13.5 Labeled statements 230
13.6 Declaration statements 231
13.6.1 General 231
13.6.2 Local variable declarations 231
13.6.3 Local constant declarations 233
13.7 Expression statements 233
13.8 Selection statements 234
13.8.1 General 234
13.8.2 The if statement 234
13.8.3 The switch statement 234
13.9 Iteration statements 238
13.9.1 General 238
13.9.2 The while statement 238
13.9.3 The do statement 239
13.9.4 The for statement 239
13.9.5 The foreach statement 240
13.10 Jump statements 243
13.10.1 General 243
13.10.2 The break statement 244
13.10.3 The continue statement 245
13.10.4 The goto statement 245
13.10.5 The return statement 246
13.10.6 The throw statement 247
13.11 The try statement 248
13.12 The checked and unchecked statements 251
13.13 The lock statement 251
13.14 The using statement 252
13.15 The yield statement 254

14. Namespaces 257

14.1 General 257
14.2 Compilation units 257
14.3 Namespace declarations 257
14.4 Extern alias directives 259
14.5 Using directives 259
14.5.1 General 259
14.5.2 Using alias directives 260
14.5.3 Using namespace directives 264
14.6 Namespace member declarations 265
14.7 Type declarations 266
14.8 Qualified alias member 266
14.8.1 General 266
14.8.2 Uniqueness of aliases 268

15. Classes 269

15.1 General 269
15.2 Class declarations 269
15.2.1 General 269
15.2.2 Class modifiers 269

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

15.2.2.1 General ... 269
15.2.2.2 Abstract classes ... 270
15.2.2.3 Sealed classes ... 270
15.2.2.4 Static classes ... 271
15.2.3 Type parameters ... 272
15.2.4 Class base specification ... 272
15.2.4.1 General ... 272
15.2.4.2 Base classes ... 272
15.2.4.3 Interface implementations ... 274
15.2.5 Type parameter constraints ... 275
15.2.6 Class body ... 280
15.2.7 Partial declarations ... 280
15.3 Class members ... 281
15.3.1 General ... 281
15.3.2 The instance type ... 283
15.3.3 Members of constructed types ... 283
15.3.4 Inheritance ... 284
15.3.5 The new modifier ... 285
15.3.6 Access modifiers ... 285
15.3.7 Constituent types ... 286
15.3.8 Static and instance members ... 286
15.3.9 Nested types ... 287
15.3.9.1 General ... 287
15.3.9.2 Fully qualified name ... 287
15.3.9.3 Declared accessibility ... 287
15.3.9.4 Hiding ... 288
15.3.9.5 this access ... 288
15.3.9.6 Access to private and protected members of the containing type ... 289
15.3.9.7 Nested types in generic classes ... 290
15.3.10 Reserved member names ... 291
15.3.10.1 General ... 291
15.3.10.2 Member names reserved for properties ... 291
15.3.10.3 Member names reserved for events ... 292
15.3.10.4 Member names reserved for indexers ... 292
15.3.10.5 Member names reserved for finalizers ... 292
15.4 Constants ... 292
15.5 Fields ... 294
15.5.1 General ... 294
15.5.2 Static and instance fields ... 295
15.5.3 Readonly fields ... 295
15.5.3.1 General ... 295
15.5.3.2 Using static readonly fields for constants ... 296
15.5.3.3 Versioning of constants and static readonly fields ... 296
15.5.4 Volatile fields ... 297
15.5.5 Field initialization ... 298
15.5.6 Variable initializers ... 298
15.5.6.1 General ... 298
15.5.6.2 Static field initialization ... 299
15.5.6.3 Instance field initialization ... 300
15.6 Methods ... 301

 ©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

15.6.1 General ... 301
15.6.2 Method parameters ... 303
15.6.2.1 General ... 303
15.6.2.2 Value parameters ... 304
15.6.2.3 Reference parameters ... 305
15.6.2.4 Output parameters ... 305
15.6.2.5 Parameter arrays ... 306
15.6.3 Static and instance methods ... 309
15.6.4 Virtual methods ... 309
15.6.5 Override methods ... 311
15.6.6 Sealed methods ... 313
15.6.7 Abstract methods ... 314
15.6.8 External methods ... 315
15.6.9 Partial methods ... 315
15.6.10 Extension methods ... 318
15.6.11 Method body ... 319
15.7 Properties ... 319
15.7.1 General ... 319
15.7.2 Static and instance properties ... 321
15.7.3 Accessors ... 321
15.7.4 Automatically implemented properties ... 326
15.7.5 Accessibility ... 326
15.7.6 Virtual, sealed, override, and abstract accessors ... 328
15.8 Events ... 329
15.8.1 General ... 329
15.8.2 Field-like events ... 331
15.8.3 Event accessors ... 332
15.8.4 Static and instance events ... 333
15.8.5 Virtual, sealed, override, and abstract accessors ... 334
15.9 Indexers ... 334
15.10 Operators ... 338
15.10.1 General ... 338
15.10.2 Unary operators ... 339
15.10.3 Binary operators ... 340
15.10.4 Conversion operators ... 340
15.11 Instance constructors ... 343
15.11.1 General ... 343
15.11.2 Constructor initializers ... 344
15.11.3 Instance variable initializers ... 344
15.11.4 Constructor execution ... 345
15.11.5 Default constructors ... 346
15.12 Static constructors ... 347
15.13 Finalizers ... 349
15.14 Iterators ... 351
15.14.1 General ... 351
15.14.2 Enumerator interfaces ... 351
15.14.3 Enumerable interfaces ... 351
15.14.4 Yield type ... 351
15.14.5 Enumerator objects ... 351
15.14.5.1 General ... 351

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

15.14.5.2 The MoveNext method 352
15.14.5.3 The Current property 353
15.14.5.4 The Dispose method 353
15.14.6 Enumerable objects 354
15.14.6.1 General 354
15.14.6.2 The GetEnumerator method 354
15.15 Async Functions 354
15.15.1 General 354
15.15.2 Evaluation of a task-returning async function 355
15.15.3 Evaluation of a void-returning async function 355

16. Structs 357

16.1 General 357
16.2 Struct declarations 357
16.2.1 General 357
16.2.2 Struct modifiers 357
16.2.3 Partial modifier 358
16.2.4 Struct interfaces 358
16.2.5 Struct body 358
16.3 Struct members 358
16.4 Class and struct differences 358
16.4.1 General 358
16.4.2 Value semantics 359
16.4.3 Inheritance 360
16.4.4 Assignment 360
16.4.5 Default values 360
16.4.6 Boxing and unboxing 361
16.4.7 Meaning of this 361
16.4.8 Field initializers 362
16.4.9 Constructors 363
16.4.10 Static constructors 364
16.4.11 Automatically implemented properties 364

17. Arrays 365

17.1 General 365
17.2 Array types 365
17.2.1 General 365
17.2.2 The System.Array type 365
17.2.3 Arrays and the generic collection interfaces 366
17.3 Array creation 367
17.4 Array element access 367
17.5 Array members 367
17.6 Array covariance 367
17.7 Array initializers 368

18. Interfaces 371

18.1 General 371
18.2 Interface declarations 371
18.2.1 General 371
18.2.2 Interface modifiers 371
18.2.3 Variant type parameter lists 372

 ©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

18.2.3.1 General 372
18.2.3.2 Variance safety 372
18.2.3.3 Variance conversion 373
18.2.4 Base interfaces 373
18.3 Interface body 374
18.4 Interface members 374
18.4.1 General 374
18.4.2 Interface methods 375
18.4.3 Interface properties 376
18.4.4 Interface events 376
18.4.5 Interface indexers 376
18.4.6 Interface member access 377
18.5 Qualified interface member names 378
18.6 Interface implementations 379
18.6.1 General 379
18.6.2 Explicit interface member implementations 380
18.6.3 Uniqueness of implemented interfaces 382
18.6.4 Implementation of generic methods 383
18.6.5 Interface mapping 384
18.6.6 Interface implementation inheritance 387
18.6.7 Interface re-implementation 388
18.6.8 Abstract classes and interfaces 389

19. Enums 391

19.1 General 391
19.2 Enum declarations 391
19.3 Enum modifiers 391
19.4 Enum members 392
19.5 The System.Enum type 394
19.6 Enum values and operations 394

20. Delegates 395

20.1 General 395
20.2 Delegate declarations 395
20.3 Delegate members 396
20.4 Delegate compatibility 396
20.5 Delegate instantiation 398
20.6 Delegate invocation 399

21. Exceptions 403

21.1 General 403
21.2 Causes of exceptions 403
21.3 The System.Exception class 403
21.4 How exceptions are handled 403
21.5 Common exception classes 404

22. Attributes 405

22.1 General 405
22.2 Attribute classes 405
22.2.1 General 405
22.2.2 Attribute usage 405

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

22.2.3 Positional and named parameters 407
22.2.4 Attribute parameter types 407
22.3 Attribute specification 408
22.4 Attribute instances 414
22.4.1 General 414
22.4.2 Compilation of an attribute 414
22.4.3 Run-time retrieval of an attribute instance 414
22.5 Reserved attributes 415
22.5.1 General 415
22.5.2 The AttributeUsage attribute 415
22.5.3 The Conditional attribute 416
22.5.3.1 General 416
22.5.3.2 Conditional methods 416
22.5.3.3 Conditional attribute classes 418
22.5.4 The Obsolete attribute 419
22.5.5 Caller-info attributes 420
22.5.5.1 General 420
22.5.5.2 The CallerLineNumber attribute 421
22.5.5.3 The CallerFilePath attribute 421
22.5.5.4 The CallerMemberName attribute 421
22.6 Attributes for interoperation 422

23. Unsafe code 423

23.1 General 423
23.2 Unsafe contexts 423
23.3 Pointer types 426
23.4 Fixed and moveable variables 428
23.5 Pointer conversions 429
23.5.1 General 429
23.5.2 Pointer arrays 430
23.6 Pointers in expressions 431
23.6.1 General 431
23.6.2 Pointer indirection 431
23.6.3 Pointer member access 432
23.6.4 Pointer element access 433
23.6.5 The address-of operator 433
23.6.6 Pointer increment and decrement 434
23.6.7 Pointer arithmetic 435
23.6.8 Pointer comparison 435
23.6.9 The sizeof operator 436
23.7 The fixed statement 436
23.8 Fixed-size buffers 439
23.8.1 General 439
23.8.2 Fixed-size buffer declarations 439
23.8.3 Fixed-size buffers in expressions 440
23.8.4 Definite assignment checking 441
23.9 Stack allocation 441

Annex A. Grammar 443

A.1 General 443
A.2 Lexical grammar 443

 ©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

A.2.1 Comments 444
A.2.2 Tokens 444
A.2.3 Keywords 446
A.2.4 Operators and punctuators 448
A.2.5 Pre-processing directives 448
A.3 Syntactic grammar 450
A.3.1 Basic concepts 450
A.3.2 Types 450
A.3.3 Variables 451
A.3.4 Expressions 452
A.3.5 Statements 458
A.3.6 Namespaces 461
A.3.7 Classes 462
A.3.8 Structs 469
A.3.9 Arrays 469
A.3.10 Interfaces 469
A.3.11 Enums 470
A.3.12 Delegates 471
A.3.13 Attributes 471
A.4 Grammar extensions for unsafe code 472

Annex B. Portability issues 477

B.1 General 477
B.2 Undefined behavior 477
B.3 Implementation-defined behavior 477
B.4 Unspecified behavior 478
B.5 Other Issues 478

Annex C. Standard library 479

C.1 General 479
C.2 Standard Library Types defined in ISO/IEC 23271 479
C.3 Standard Library Types not defined in ISO/IEC 23271:2012 488

Annex D. Documentation comments 491

D.1 General 491
D.2 Introduction 491
D.3 Recommended tags 492
D.3.1 General 492
D.3.2 <c> 493
D.3.3 <code> 493
D.3.4 <example> 494
D.3.5 <exception> 494
D.3.6 <include> 495
D.3.7 <list> 495
D.3.8 <para> 496
D.3.9 <param> 497
D.3.10 <paramref> 497
D.3.11 <permission> 497
D.3.12 <remarks> 498
D.3.13 <returns> 498
D.3.14 <see> 499

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

D.3.15 <seealso> 499
D.3.16 <summary> 499
D.3.17 <typeparam> 500
D.3.18 <typeparamref> 500
D.3.19 <value> 500
D.4 Processing the documentation file 501
D.4.1 General 501
D.4.2 ID string format 501
D.4.3 ID string examples 502
D.5 An example 506
D.5.1 C# source code 506
D.5.2 Resulting XML 508
Bibliography 511

 ©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of document should be noted (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents) or the IEC list of patent declarations received (see http://patents.iec.ch).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Ecma International (as ECMA-334) and drafted in accordance with its editorial rules. It was assigned to Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, and adopted under the “fast-track procedure”.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO/IEC 23270:2006), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared to the previous edition are as follows:

— addition of:

- default and hidden options on the #line preprocessing directive,
- fixed-size buffers in unsafe code,
- automatically implemented properties,
- implicitly typed local variables and arrays,
- object and collection initializers,

© ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

- anonymous types,
- lambda expressions,
- expression trees,
- improved type inference,
- extension methods,
- query expressions,
- optional parameters,
- named arguments,
- generic variance,
- dynamic binding,
- asynchronous functions
- caller-info attributes;

— removal of:

- concept of a null type;

— integration of:

- nullable value types,
- generic types and functions,
- iterators.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

© ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

Introduction

This specification is based on a submission from Hewlett-Packard, Intel, and Microsoft, that described a language called C#, which was developed within Microsoft. The principal inventors of this language were Anders Hejlsberg, Scott Wiltamuth, and Peter Golde. The first widely distributed implementation of C# was released by Microsoft in July 2000, as part of its .NET Framework initiative.

Ecma Technical Committee 39 (TC39) [later renamed to TC49] Task Group 2 (TG2) was formed in September 2000, to produce a standard for C#. Another Task Group, TG3, was also formed at that time to produce a standard for a library and execution environment called Common Language Infrastructure (CLI). (CLI is based on a subset of the .NET Framework.) Although Microsoft's implementation of C# relies on CLI for library and run-time support, other implementations of C# need not, provided they support an alternate way of getting at the minimum CLI features required by this C# standard (see Annex C).

As the definition of C# evolved, the goals used in its design were as follows:

- C# is intended to be a simple, modern, general-purpose, object-oriented programming language.
- The language, and implementations thereof, should provide support for software engineering principles such as strong type checking, array bounds checking, detection of attempts to use uninitialized variables, and automatic garbage collection. Software robustness, durability, and programmer productivity are important.
- The language is intended for use in developing software components suitable for deployment in distributed environments.
- Source code portability is very important, as is programmer portability, especially for those programmers already familiar with C and C++.
- Support for internationalization is very important.
- C# is intended to be suitable for writing applications for both hosted and embedded systems, ranging from the very large that use sophisticated operating systems, down to the very small having dedicated functions.
- Although C# applications are intended to be economical with regard to memory and processing power requirements, the language was not intended to compete directly on performance and size with C or assembly language.

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

Programming Languages — C#

1. Scope

This specification describes the form and establishes the interpretation of programs written in the C# programming language. It describes

- The representation of C# programs;
- The syntax and constraints of the C# language;
- The semantic rules for interpreting C# programs;
- The restrictions and limits imposed by a conforming implementation of C#.

This specification does not describe

- The mechanism by which C# programs are transformed for use by a data-processing system;
- The mechanism by which C# applications are invoked for use by a data-processing system;
- The mechanism by which input data are transformed for use by a C# application;
- The mechanism by which output data are transformed after being produced by a C# application;
- The size or complexity of a program and its data that will exceed the capacity of any specific data-processing system or the capacity of a particular processor;
- All minimal requirements of a data-processing system that is capable of supporting a conforming implementation.

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

2. Normative references

The following normative documents contain provisions, which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this specification. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. However, parties to agreements based on this specification are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the normative documents indicated below. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document referred to applies. Members of ISO and IEC maintain registers of currently valid specifications.

ISO/IEC 23271:2012, *Common Language Infrastructure (CLI), Partition IV: Base Class Library (BCL), Extended Numerics Library, and Extended Array Library.*

ISO 80000-2, *Quantities and units — Part 2: Mathematical signs and symbols to be used in the natural sciences and technology*.

ISO/IEC 2382, *Information technology — Vocabulary*.

ISO/IEC 10646 (all parts), *Information technology — Universal Multiple-Octet Coded Character Set (UCS)*.

ISO/IEC/IEEE 60559:2011, *Information technology -- Microprocessor Systems -- Floating-Point arithmetic*

The Unicode Consortium. The Unicode Standard, http://www.unicode.org/standard/standard.html

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

3. Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this specification, the following definitions apply. Other terms are defined where they appear in ***italic*** type or on the left side of a syntax rule. Terms explicitly defined in this specification are not to be presumed to refer implicitly to similar terms defined elsewhere. Terms not defined in this specification are to be interpreted according to ISO/IEC 2382.1. Mathematical symbols not defined in this specification are to be interpreted according to ISO 80000-2.

3.1
application
assembly with an entry point

3.2
application domain
entity that enables application isolation by acting as a container for application state

3.3
argument
expression in the comma-separated list bounded by the parentheses in a method or instance constructor call expression or bounded by the square brackets in an element access expression

3.4
assembly
one or more files output by the compiler as a result of program compilation

3.5
behavior
external appearance or action

3.6
behavior, implementation-defined
unspecified behavior where each implementation documents how the choice is made

3.7
behavior, undefined
behavior, upon use of a non-portable or erroneous construct or of erroneous data, for which this specification imposes no requirements

3.8
behavior, unspecified
behavior where this specification provides two or more possibilities and imposes no further requirements on which is chosen in any instance

3.9
character (when used without a qualifier)
a) In the context of a non-Unicode encoding – the meaning of character in that encoding; or

b) In the context of a character literal or a value of type `char` – a Unicode code point in the range U+0000 to U+FFFF (including surrogate code points), that is a UTF-16 code unit; or

c) Otherwise – a Unicode code point

©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved

3.10
class library
assembly that can be used by other assemblies

3.11
diagnostic message
message belonging to an implementation-defined subset of the implementation's output messages

3.12
error, compile-time
error reported during program translation

3.13
exception
exceptional condition reported during program execution

3.14
implementation
particular set of software (running in a particular translation environment under particular control options) that performs translation of programs for, and supports execution of methods in, a particular execution environment

3.15
namespace
logical organizational system grouping related program elements

3.16
parameter
variable declared as part of a method, instance constructor, operator, or indexer definition, which acquires a value on entry to that function member

3.17
program
one or more source files that are presented to the compiler and are run or executed by an execution environment

3.18
source file
ordered sequence of Unicode characters

3.19
unsafe code
code that is permitted to perform such lower-level operations as declaring and operating on pointers, performing conversions between pointers and integral types, and taking the address of variables

3.20
warning, compile-time
informational message reported during program translation, which is intended to identify a potentially questionable usage of a program element

 ©ISO/IEC 2018 – All rights reserved