

Specification for

Representation of numerical values in character strings for information interchange

[ISO title: Information processing — Representation of numerical
values in character strings for information interchange]

UDC 681.327.041:003.35

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Committees responsible for this British Standard

The preparation of this British Standard was entrusted by the Information Systems Technology Standards Committee (IST/-) to Technical Committee IST/11 upon which the following bodies were represented:

- Association for Payment Clearing Services
- British Computer Society Ltd.
- British Telecommunications plc
- Business Equipment and Information Technology Association
- Local Authorities Organization

This British Standard, having been prepared under the direction of the Information Systems Technology Standards Committee, was published under the authority of the Board of BSI and comes into effect on 30 April 1987

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The following BSI references relate to the work on this standard:
Committee reference IST/11
Draft for comment 84/61094 DC

ISBN 0 580 15303 7

Amendments issued since publication

Amd. No.	Date of issue	Comments

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National foreword

This British Standard has been prepared under the direction of the Information Systems Technology Standards Committee and is identical with ISO 6093:1985 “*Information processing — Representation of numerical values in character strings for information interchange*”, published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Terminology and conventions. The text of the International Standard has been approved as suitable for publication as a British Standard without deviation. Some terminology and certain conventions are not identical with those used in British Standards; attention is drawn especially to the following. The comma has been used as a decimal marker. In British Standards it is current practice to use a full point on the baseline as the decimal marker. Wherever the words “International Standard” appear, referring to this standard, they should be read as “British Standard”.

Cross-references

International Standard	Corresponding British Standard
ISO 4873:1986	BS 6006:1987 <i>Specification for structure and rules for implementation for United Kingdom 8-bit coded character set</i> (Identical) ^a
ISO 646:1983	BS 4730:1985 <i>Specification for UK 7-bit coded character set</i> (Identical exercising national options)

^a In preparation as a revision of BS 6006:1980.

ISO 2022 is listed in clause 3 for information only. ISO 2022:1986 is being implemented in the UK as an identical British Standard.

NOTE In C.3.5, line 1, “there has not be” should be read as “there has to be”. In 4.3, line 2, “an” should be read as “a”. In Annex B, paragraph 3, line 4, “programing” should be read as “programming”.

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Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 12, an inside back cover and a back cover.

This standard has been updated (see copyright date) and may have had amendments incorporated. This will be indicated in the amendment table on the inside front cover.

1 Scope and field of application

This International Standard specifies three presentations of numerical values, which are represented in character strings in a form readable by machine, for use in interchange between data processing systems. This International Standard also provides guidance for developers of programming language standards and implementors of programming products. These representations are recognizable by humans, and thus may be useful in communication between humans.

The base of representation is 10.

This International Standard applies only to numerical values consisting of a finite number of digits with or without the decimal mark. It does not specify the mechanism to communicate the accuracy of the number being represented or the method of delimiting the numerical representations or the organization of the numerical representations into larger aggregates.

2 Conformance

A representation of a numerical value is in conformance with this International Standard if it is one of the three representations specified herein.

A conformance statement shall identify the representation and, where applicable, specify whether COMMA or FULL STOP is used as the decimal mark. In the absence of such a statement, the FULL STOP is deemed to be the decimal mark.

3 References

ISO 646, *Information processing — ISO 7-bit coded character set for information interchange*.

ISO 2022, *Information processing — ISO 7-bit and 8-bit coded character sets — Code extension techniques*.

ISO 4873, *Information processing — 8-bit code for information interchange — Structure and rules for implementation*.

4 Definitions

For the purpose of this International Standard the following definitions apply.

4.1

decimal mark

the character that separates the digits forming the integral part of a number from those forming the fractional part

4.2

field

a continuous string of character positions on a data carrier

4.3

field description

the set of characteristics possessed by the field to ensure that its contents have an unique numerical interpretation to the interchange parties. For each field within a set of interchanged data the field description is specified in documentation associated with the interchange agreement between the parties. The field description includes the specification of the length of the field

4.4

length of a field

the number of character positions of a field

4.5

positional notation

a numeration system in which a real number is represented by a string of characters in such a way that the value contributed by a character depends on its position as well as on its value

5 Character set

5.1 Description

The character set for the representation of numerical values shall be a sub-set of the ISO 646 coded character set.

5.2 Syntax

The following syntactic objects are defined using the method of syntax specification described in Annex A.

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| a) digit | = 0/1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8/9 |
| b) sign | = +/- |
| c) decimal-mark | = ,/. |
| d) space | = SPACE |
| e) exponent-mark | = E/e |

5.3 Semantics

The digits shall be the characters coded in positions 3/0 to 3/9 of ISO 646.

The remaining characters shall correspond to positions 2/0 (SPACE), 2/11 (PLUS SIGN), 2/12 (COMMA), 2/13 (MINUS SIGN), 2/14 (FULL STOP), 4/5 (CAPITAL LETTER E) and 6/5 (SMALL LETTER e).

5.4 Coding

The coding of the characters is specified in ISO 646. Table 4 is reproduced from the code table for the IRV of the 7-bit coded character set in ISO 646. Additional markings in Table 4 identify the sub-set of characters specified above.

6 First numerical representation (NR1)

The first numerical representation shall be a positional notation in which each number shall be represented by a string of digits, the decimal mark is implicit and its position fixed.

NOTE This representation is also called: implicit-point representation.

6.1 Description

Each instance of an NR1 shall be composed of optional leading SPACES followed by a sign (in the signed representation) and a string of digits. There shall be at least one digit. No embedded or trailing SPACES shall be contained in the field.

6.2 Syntax

NR1 = unsigned-NR1/signed-NR1
unsigned-NR1 = space* digit digit*
signed-NR1 = space* (sign/space) digit digit*

6.3 Semantics

Each representation shall be contained in a field the length of which shall be equal to the sum of the number of SPACES and the number of digits, plus 1 if a sign is present. At least one digit shall be present.

In an unsigned NR1 the value represented shall be greater than, or equal to, zero.

In a signed NR1 the PLUS SIGN can be replaced by a SPACE.

The implied decimal mark shall follow the right-most digit in the NR1, unless a scaling factor to be applied to the field is specified in accompanying documentation.

The signed representation of the numerical value zero shall contain a PLUS SIGN or a SPACE, but not a MINUS SIGN.

6.4 Examples

In the following examples the field length is assumed to be seven. The character SPACE is represented by Δ.

Table 1 — Examples of NR1

Common notation	Unsigned NR1	Signed NR1
4902	0004902 ΔΔ04902 ΔΔΔ4902	+004902 Δ+04902 ΔΔ+4902 ΔΔΔ4902
+1234	0001234 ΔΔΔ1234	+001234 ΔΔ+1234 ΔΔΔ1234
−56780	no representation	−56780 Δ−56780
0	0000000 ΔΔΔΔΔΔ0	+000000 ΔΔΔΔΔ+0 ΔΔΔΔΔΔ0
1234567	1234567	no representation

7 Second numerical representation (NR2)

The second numerical representation shall be a positional notation in which each number shall be represented by a string of characters, the decimal mark is explicitly indicated by a specific character.

NOTE This representation is also called: explicit-point unscaled representation.

7.1 Description

Each instance of an NR2 shall be composed of optional leading SPACES followed by a sign (in the signed representation) and a string of digits. There shall be at least one digit. No embedded or trailing SPACES shall be contained in the field.

It is recommended that there is at least one digit to the left of the decimal mark even when there is at least one to the right.

7.2 Syntax

NR2 = unsigned-NR2/signed-NR2
unsigned-NR2 = (space* digit digit* decimal-mark digit*)/(space* digit* decimal-mark digit digit*)
signed-NR2 = (space* (sign/space) digit digit* decimal-mark digit*)/(space* (sign/space) digit* decimal-mark digit digit*)

7.3 Semantics

Each representation shall be contained in a field the length of which shall be equal to the sum of the number of SPACES and of the number of digits, plus 1; or plus 2 in the signed NR2, if the sign is present. At least one digit and the decimal mark shall be present.