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Information and documentation — Digital object identifier system

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National foreword

This British Standard is the UK implementation of ISO 26324:2025. It supersedes BS ISO 26324:2022, which is withdrawn.

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A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

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Full document details: BS ISO 26324:2025

Contents

Page

Foreword ... **iv**
Introduction ... **v**
1 Scope ... **1**
2 Normative references ... **1**
3 Terms and definitions ... **1**
4 DOI name ... **4**
4.1 Syntax ... 4
4.1.1 General characteristics ... 4
4.1.2 DOI prefix ... 5
4.1.3 DOI suffix ... 6
4.2 Representation of DOI names ... 6
4.2.1 General ... 6
4.2.2 Visual media ... 6
4.2.3 URI form ... 6
4.2.4 URN form ... 6
4.2.5 HTTP proxy form ... 7
5 Assignment of DOI name ... **7**
5.1 Principles of assignment ... 7
5.2 Granularity ... 7
5.3 Description ... 8
5.4 Uniqueness ... 8
5.5 Persistence ... 8
6 Resolution of DOI name ... **8**
6.1 General ... 8
6.2 Functionality ... 8
7 System metadata ... **9**
7.1 General ... 9
7.2 Functionality ... 9
7.3 Registration of system metadata ... 9
8 Administration of the DOI system ... **9**
Annex A (normative) **Relationship between the DOI system and other identifier schemes** ... **11**
Annex B (normative) **System metadata** ... **13**
Annex C (normative) **Administration of the DOI system** ... **14**
Annex D (informative) **Summary of changes** ... **16**
Bibliography ... **17**

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Foreword

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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 ISO document should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 9, *Identification and description*.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 26324:2022), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

— case-sensitiveness of DOI names is clarified;

— the list of common representations of DOI names is updated;

— the specification of, and procedures associated with, the system metadata associated with each DOI Name (see Annex B) are revised to reflect current practice;

— Annex D is replaced with a summary of changes across editions of this document.

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.

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Introduction

The digital object identifier (DOI®[1]) system, which was first deployed in 1998, provides an infrastructure for persistent unique identification of objects of any type.

DOI is an initialism for “digital object identifier”, meaning a “digital identifier of an object” rather than an “identifier of a digital object”: DOI is not limited to digital objects and can be used to identify any abstract, physical or non-physical object. In this document, the term “digital object identifier” refers to the system defined in this document, unless otherwise stated.

Objects within the DOI system, i.e. referents, are identified by their DOI names. A DOI name is an opaque string, which does not have a discernible meaning on its own and is for use by humans and machines alike. Each DOI name is registered by a registrant.

To support diverse applications worldwide, a DOI name uses characters from the Unicode character set. More specifically, it can use any Unicode character intended to be written, printed, or otherwise displayed in a form that can be read by humans – formally referred to as a Graphic character.

With this flexibility comes ambiguities when representing or exchanging DOI names. For example:

— the character "Á" (Latin Capital Letter A with Acute) can be encoded either on its own or as the character "A" (Latin Capital Letter A) followed by the combining character ◌́ (Combining Acute Accent);

— multiple schemes (UTF-8, UTF-16 or UTF-32) can be used when serializing a DOI name to bytes for interchange between machines;

— the glyph " Å " can either correspond to the Angstrom Sign or the Latin Capital Letter A with Ring Above.

To avoid these pitfalls, this document specifies the syntax of a DOI name as a sequence of Unicode code points, where each code point is an integer between 0 and 0x10FFFF, and the fundamental unit of encoding in Unicode; and describes several representations appropriate for interchange and visual representation.

The assignment and administration of DOI names is handled by the DOI system, which offers a useful set of functionalities, including:

— persistence, if material is moved, rearranged, or bookmarked,

— interoperability with other data from other sources,

— extensibility by adding new features and services through management of groups of DOI names,

— single management of data for multiple output formats (platform independence),

— class management of applications and services, and

— dynamic updating of metadata, applications and services.

The DOI system is designed to work over the Internet. A DOI name is permanently assigned to an object to provide a resolvable persistent network link to current information about that object, including where the object, or information about it, can be found on the Internet. While information about an object can change over time, its DOI name will not change. A DOI name can be resolved within the DOI system to information related to the identified object such as the location of metadata or a location of the object.

The DOI system enables the construction of automated services and transactions. Applications of the DOI system include, but are not limited to, managing information and documentation location and access;

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managing metadata; facilitating electronic transactions; persistent unique identification of any form of any data; and commercial and non-commercial services.

An object associated with a DOI name is described unambiguously by system metadata, to support identification and description. The data model supports interoperability between applications.

The scope of the DOI system is not defined by reference to the type of content (format, etc.) of the referent, but by reference to the functionalities it provides and the context of use. The DOI system provides, within networks of DOI applications, for unique identification, persistence, resolution, metadata and interoperability with other identifier schemes.

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