
**Industrial automation systems and
integration — Product data
representation and exchange —**

**Part 11:
Description methods: The EXPRESS
language reference manual**

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*Systèmes d'automatisation industrielle et intégration — Représentation
et échange de données de produits —*

*Partie 11: Méthodes de description: Manuel de référence du langage
EXPRESS*
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Published in Switzerland

Contents

Page

0	Introduction	xii
0.1	General	xii
0.2	Language overview	xii
1	Scope	1
2	Normative references	2
3	Terms and definitions	2
3.1	Terms defined in ISO 10303-1	2
3.2	Terms defined in ISO/IEC 10646	2
3.3	Other terms and definitions	2
4	Conformance requirements	5
4.1	Formal specifications written in EXPRESS	5
4.1.1	Lexical language	5
4.1.2	Graphical form	6
4.2	Implementations of EXPRESS	6
4.2.1	EXPRESS language parser	6
4.2.2	Graphical editing tool	6
5	Fundamental principles	7
6	Language specification syntax	8
6.1	The syntax of the specification	8
6.2	Special character notation	9
7	Basic language elements	9
7.1	Character set	10
7.1.1	Digits	10
7.1.2	Letters	10
7.1.3	Special characters	11
7.1.4	Underscore	11
7.1.5	Whitespace	11
7.1.6	Remarks	11
7.2	Reserved words	14
7.2.1	Keywords	14
7.2.2	Reserved words which are operators	14
7.2.3	Built-in constants	15
7.2.4	Built-in functions	15
7.2.5	Built-in procedures	15
7.3	Symbols	15
7.4	Identifiers	15
7.5	Literals	16
7.5.1	Binary literal	16
7.5.2	Integer literal	17
7.5.3	Real literal	17
7.5.4	String literal	18
7.5.5	Logical literal	19
8	Data types	19
8.1	Simple data types	20

8.1.1	Number data type	20
8.1.2	Real data type	20
8.1.3	Integer data type	21
8.1.4	Logical data type	21
8.1.5	Boolean data type	21
8.1.6	String data type	21
8.1.7	Binary data type	22
8.2	Aggregation data types	23
8.2.1	Array data type	24
8.2.2	List data type	25
8.2.3	Bag data type	26
8.2.4	Set data type	26
8.2.5	Value uniqueness on aggregates	27
8.3	Named data types	28
8.3.1	Entity data type	28
8.3.2	Defined data type	29
8.4	Constructed data types	29
8.4.1	Enumeration data type	30
8.4.2	Select data type	33
8.5	Generalized data types	35
8.6	Data type usage classification	35
8.6.1	Instantiable data types	37
8.6.2	Parameter data types	37
8.6.3	Underlying data types	37
9	Declarations	38
9.1	Type declaration	38
9.2	Entity declaration	40
9.2.1	Attributes	41
9.2.2	Local rules	45
9.2.3	Subtypes and supertypes	48
9.2.4	Abstract entity data type	54
9.2.5	Subtype/supertype constraints	55
9.2.6	Implicit declarations	60
9.2.7	Specialization	61
9.3	Schema	62
9.4	Constant	63
9.5	Algorithms	64
9.5.1	Function	64
9.5.2	Procedure	65
9.5.3	Parameters	65
9.5.4	Local variables	71
9.6	Rule	72
9.7	Subtype constraints	74
9.7.1	Abstract supertype constraint	75
9.7.2	Total coverage subtypes	75
9.7.3	Overlapping subtypes and their specification	76
10	Scope and visibility	78
10.1	Scope rules	78
10.2	Visibility rules	79
10.3	Explicit item rules	81
10.3.1	Alias statement	81

10.3.2	Attribute	81
10.3.3	Constant	81
10.3.4	Enumeration item	81
10.3.5	Entity	81
10.3.6	Function	82
10.3.7	Parameter	83
10.3.8	Procedure	83
10.3.9	Query expression	83
10.3.10	Repeat statement	84
10.3.11	Rule	84
10.3.12	Rule label	85
10.3.13	Schema	85
10.3.14	Subtype constraint	86
10.3.15	Type	86
10.3.16	Type label	86
10.3.17	Variable	86
11	Interface specification	86
11.1	Use interface specification	87
11.2	Reference interface specification	87
11.3	The interaction of use and reference	88
11.4	Implicit interfaces	89
11.4.1	Constant interfaces	89
11.4.2	Defined data type interfaces	90
11.4.3	Entity data type interfaces	90
11.4.4	Function interfaces	91
11.4.5	Procedure interfaces	91
11.4.6	Rule interfaces	91
11.4.7	Subtype constraint interfaces	91
12	Expression	92
12.1	Arithmetic operators	93
12.2	Relational operators	94
12.2.1	Value comparison operators	95
12.2.2	Instance comparison operators	99
12.2.3	Membership operator	101
12.2.4	Interval expressions	102
12.2.5	Like operator	102
12.3	Binary operators	103
12.3.1	Binary indexing	103
12.3.2	Binary concatenation operator	104
12.4	Logical operators	104
12.4.1	NOT operator	105
12.4.2	AND operator	105
12.4.3	OR operator	105
12.4.4	XOR operator	105
12.5	String operators	106
12.5.1	String indexing	106
12.5.2	String concatenation operator	107
12.6	Aggregate operators	107
12.6.1	Aggregate indexing	107
12.6.2	Intersection operator	108
12.6.3	Union operator	109

12.6.4	Difference operator	109
12.6.5	Subset operator	110
12.6.6	Superset operator	111
12.6.7	Query expression	111
12.7	References	112
12.7.1	Simple references	113
12.7.2	Prefixed references	113
12.7.3	Attribute references	114
12.7.4	Group references	115
12.8	Function call	116
12.9	Aggregate initializer	117
12.10	Complex entity instance construction operator	118
12.11	Type compatibility	119
12.12	Select data types in expressions	120
12.12.1	Select data types in unary expressions	120
12.12.2	Select data types in binary expressions	120
12.12.3	Select data types in ternary expressions	121
13	Executable statements	121
13.1	Null (statement)	121
13.2	Alias statement	122
13.3	Assignment	122
13.3.1	Assignment statement	122
13.3.2	Assignment compatibility	123
13.4	Case statement	126
13.5	Compound statement	127
13.6	Escape statement	127
13.7	If ... Then ... Else statement	127
13.8	Procedure call statement	128
13.9	Repeat statement	128
13.9.1	Increment control	129
13.9.2	While control	130
13.9.3	Until control	130
13.10	Return statement	131
13.11	Skip statement	131
14	Built-in constants	132
14.1	Constant e	132
14.2	Indeterminate	132
14.3	False	132
14.4	Pi	132
14.5	Self	132
14.6	True	133
14.7	Unknown	133
15	Built-in functions	133
15.1	Abs - arithmetic function	133
15.2	ACos - arithmetic function	133
15.3	ASin - arithmetic function	133
15.4	ATan - arithmetic function	134
15.5	BLength - binary function	134
15.6	Cos - arithmetic function	134
15.7	Exists - general function	135

15.8	Exp - arithmetic function	135
15.9	Format - general function	135
15.9.1	Symbolic representation	136
15.9.2	Picture representation	137
15.9.3	Standard representation	138
15.10	HiBound - arithmetic function	138
15.11	HiIndex - arithmetic function	138
15.12	Length - string function	139
15.13	LoBound - arithmetic function	139
15.14	Log - arithmetic function	140
15.15	Log2 - arithmetic function	140
15.16	Log10 - arithmetic function	140
15.17	LoIndex - arithmetic function	140
15.18	NVL - null value function	141
15.19	Odd - arithmetic function	141
15.20	RolesOf - general function	142
15.21	Sin - arithmetic function	143
15.22	SizeOf - aggregate function	143
15.23	Sqrt - arithmetic function	143
15.24	Tan - arithmetic function	144
15.25	TypeOf - general function	144
15.26	UsedIn - general function	147
15.27	Value - arithmetic function	148
15.28	Value_in - membership function	148
15.29	Value_unique - uniqueness function	149
16	Built-in procedures	149
16.1	Insert	149
16.2	Remove	150
Annex A (normative)	EXPRESS language syntax	151
A.1	Tokens	151
A.1.1	Keywords	151
A.1.2	Character classes	153
A.1.3	Lexical elements	154
A.1.4	Remarks	154
A.1.5	Interpreted identifiers	154
A.2	Grammar rules	155
A.3	Cross reference listing	159
Annex B (normative)	Determination of the allowed entity instantiations	166
B.1	Formal approach	166
B.2	Supertype and subtype constraint operators	167
B.2.1	OneOf	168
B.2.2	And	168
B.2.3	AndOr	168
B.2.4	Precedence of operators	168
B.3	Interpreting the possible complex entity data types	168
Annex C (normative)	Instance limits imposed by the interface specification	181
Annex D (normative)	EXPRESS-G: A graphical subset of EXPRESS	185
D.1	Introduction and overview	185

D.2	Definition symbols	185
D.2.1	Symbol for simple data types	186
D.2.2	Symbols for constructed data types	187
D.2.3	Symbols for defined data types	188
D.2.4	Symbols for entity data types	188
D.2.5	Symbols for subtype_constraints	188
D.2.6	Symbols for functions and procedures	188
D.2.7	Symbols for rules	189
D.2.8	Symbols for schemas	189
D.3	Relationship symbols	189
D.4	Composition symbols	190
D.4.1	Page references	190
D.4.2	Inter-schema references	191
D.5	Entity level diagrams	191
D.5.1	Role names	191
D.5.2	Cardinalities	192
D.5.3	Constraints	192
D.5.4	Constructed and defined data types	193
D.5.5	Entity data types	193
D.5.6	Inter-schema references	197
D.6	Schema level diagrams	198
D.7	Complete EXPRESS-G diagrams	198
D.7.1	Complete entity level diagram	199
D.7.2	Complete schema level diagram	200
Annex E (normative)	Protocol implementation conformance statement (PICS)	201
E.1	EXPRESS language parser	201
E.2	EXPRESS-G editing tool	201
Annex F (normative)	Information object registration	203
F.1	Document identification	203
F.2	Syntax identification	203
Annex G (normative)	Generating a single schema from multiple schemas	204
G.1	Introduction	204
G.2	Fundamental concepts	204
G.3	Name munging	206
G.3.1	Name clashes	206
G.3.2	Identifiers as strings	206
G.4	Stage 1: multi-schema to intermediate schema conversion	207
G.4.1	Introduction	207
G.4.2	Primary population	207
G.4.3	Secondary population	209
G.4.4	Prune	216
G.4.5	Schema names and versions	222
G.5	Stage 2: convert intermediate schema to ISO 10303-11:1994	223
G.5.1	Introduction	223
G.5.2	Initialisation	223
G.5.3	Conversion of extensible constructed data types	223
G.5.4	Conversion of subtype constraints	228
G.5.5	Conversion of abstract entity and generalized types	231
G.5.6	Conversion of attributes renamed in a redeclaration	233

Annex H (informative) Relationships	235
H.1 Relationships via attributes	235
H.1.1 Simple relationship	236
H.1.2 Collective relationship	238
H.1.3 Distributive relationship	239
H.1.4 Inverse attribute	240
H.2 Subtype/supertype relationships	241
Annex J (informative) EXPRESS models for EXPRESS-G illustrative examples	242
J.1 Example single schema model	242
J.2 Relationship sampler	243
J.3 Simple subtype/supertype tree	244
J.4 Attribute redeclaration	244
J.5 Multi-schema models	245
Annex K (informative) Deprecated features of EXPRESS	248
Annex L (informative) Examples of the new EXPRESS constructs	249
L.1 Product management example	249
Bibliography	251
Index	252

Figures

Figure B.1 — EXPRESS-G diagram of schema for example 1 on page 171	172
Figure B.2 — EXPRESS-G diagram of schema for example 2 on page 174	174
Figure B.3 — EXPRESS-G diagram of schema for example 3 on page 176	177
Figure D.1 — Complete entity level diagram of the example in J.1 on page 242 (Page 1 of 2)	186
Figure D.2 — Complete entity level diagram of the example in J.1 on page 242 (Page 2 of 2)	186
Figure D.3 — Symbols for EXPRESS simple data types	186
Figure D.4 — Symbol for EXPRESS generic_entity data type	187
Figure D.5 — Symbols for EXPRESS constructed data types	187
Figure D.6 — Abbreviated symbols for the EXPRESS constructed data types when used as the representation of defined data types	187
Figure D.7 — Example of alternative methods for representing an enumeration data type	187
Figure D.8 — Symbols for EXPRESS extensible constructed data types	188
Figure D.9 — Symbol for EXPRESS defined data type	188
Figure D.10 — Symbol for an EXPRESS entity data type	188
Figure D.11 — Symbol for an EXPRESS subtype_constraint	188
Figure D.12 — Symbol for a schema	189
Figure D.13 — Relationship line styles	189
Figure D.14 — Partial entity level diagram illustrating relationship directions from the example in J.2 on page 243 (Page 1 of 1)	190
Figure D.15 — Composition symbols: page references	190
Figure D.16 — Composition symbols: inter-schema references	191
Figure D.17 — Complete entity level diagram of the example in J.2 on page 243 (Page 1 of 1)	192
Figure D.18 — Extensible select data type diagram	193
Figure D.19 — Symbol for denoting an ABSTRACT SUPERTYPE if the abstract con- straint is defined within a SUBTYPE_CONSTRAINT	195
Figure D.20 — Symbol denoting an ABSTRACT ENTITY	195

ISO 10303-11:2004(E)

Figure D.21 — Example of the TOTAL_OVER coverage constraint	196
Figure D.22 — Complete entity level diagram of the inheritance graph from the example in J.3 on page 244 (Page 1 of 1)	196
Figure D.23 — Complete entity level diagram of the example in J.4 on page 245 showing attribute redeclarations in subtypes (Page 1 of 1)	197
Figure D.24 — Complete entity level diagram of the top schema of example 1 on page 245 illustrating inter-schema references (Page 1 of 1)	197
Figure D.25 — Complete schema level diagram of example 1 on page 245 (Page 1 of 1) .	198
Figure D.26 — Complete schema level diagram of example 2 on page 246 (Page 1 of 1) .	199

Tables

Table 1 — EXPRESS keywords	14
Table 2 — EXPRESS reserved words which are operators	14
Table 3 — EXPRESS reserved words which are constants	15
Table 4 — EXPRESS reserved words which are function names	15
Table 5 — EXPRESS reserved words which are procedure names	15
Table 6 — EXPRESS symbols	16
Table 7 — The use of data types	36
Table 8 — Supertype expression operator precedence	59
Table 9 — Scope and identifier defining items	79
Table 10 — Operator precedence	93
Table 11 — Pattern matching characters	103
Table 12 — NOT operator	105
Table 13 — AND operator	105
Table 14 — OR operator	105
Table 15 — XOR operator	106
Table 16 — Intersection operator – operand and result types	108
Table 17 — Union operator – operand and result types	110
Table 18 — Difference operator – operand and result types	110
Table 19 — Subset and superset operators - operand types	111
Table 20 — Example symbolic formatting effects	137
Table 21 — Picture formatting characters	137
Table 22 — Example picture formatting effects	137

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75% of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 10303-11 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 184, *Industrial automation systems and integration*, Subcommittee SC 4, *Industrial data*.

This second edition of ISO 10303-11 constitutes a minor revision of the first edition (ISO 10303-11:1994), which is provisionally retained in order to support continued use and maintenance of implementations based on the first edition and to satisfy the normative references of other parts of ISO 10303. This second edition also incorporates the Technical Corrigendum ISO 10303-11:1994/Cor.1:1999(E).

ISO 10303 is organized as a series of parts, each published separately. The structure of ISO 10303 is described in ISO 10303-1.

Each part of ISO 10303 is a member of one of the following series: description methods, implementation methods, conformance testing methodology and framework, integrated generic resources, integrated application resources, application protocols, abstract test suites, application interpreted constructs, and application modules. This part is a member of the description methods series.

A complete list of parts of ISO 10303 is available from the Internet:

<<http://www.tc184-sc4.org/titles/>>

0 Introduction

0.1 General

ISO 10303 is an International Standard for the computer-interpretable representation of product information and for the exchange of product data. The objective is to provide a neutral mechanism capable of describing products throughout their life cycle. This mechanism is suitable not only for neutral file exchange, but also as a basis for implementing and sharing product databases, and as a basis for archiving.

This part of ISO 10303 specifies the elements of the EXPRESS language. Each element of the language is presented in its own context with examples. Simple elements are introduced first, then more complex ideas are presented in an incremental manner.

The changes that lead to this edition were driven by requirements from multi-schema specifications. The new concepts constitute an architecture for extensible data models. The following keywords have been added to this edition:

— BASED_ON;

— END_SUBTYPE_CONSTRAINT;

— EXTENSIBLE;

— GENERIC_ENTITY;

— RENAMED;

— SUBTYPE_CONSTRAINT;

— TOTAL_OVER;

— WITH.

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Schemas that contain these words as EXPRESS identifiers become invalid under this edition. Else, the modifications that are incorporated in this edition are upwardly compatible with the previous edition.

0.2 Language overview

EXPRESS is the name of a formal information requirements specification language. It is used to specify the information requirements of other parts of ISO 10303. It is based on a number of design goals among which are:

- the size and complexity of ISO 10303 demands that the language be parsable by both computers and humans. Expressing the information elements of ISO 10303 in a less formal manner would eliminate the possibility of employing computer automation in checking for inconsistencies in presentation or for creating any number of secondary views, including implementation views;
- the language is designed to enable partitioning of the diverse material addressed by ISO 10303. The schema is the basis for partitioning and intercommunication;

- the language focuses on the definition of entities, which represent objects of interest. The definition of an entity is in terms of its properties, which are characterized by specification of a domain and the constraints on that domain;
- the language seeks to avoid, as far as possible, specific implementation views. However, it is possible to manufacture implementation views (such as static file exchange) in an automatic and straightforward manner.

In EXPRESS, entities are defined in terms of attributes: the traits or characteristics considered important for use and understanding. These attributes have a representation which might be a simple data type (such as integer) or another entity type. A geometric point might be defined in terms of three real numbers. Names are given to the attributes which contribute to the definition of an entity. Thus, for a geometric point the three real numbers might be named x, y and z. A relationship is established between the entity being defined and the attributes that define it, and, in a similar manner, between the attribute and its representation.

NOTE 1 A number of languages have contributed to EXPRESS, in particular, Ada, Algol, C, C++, Euler, Modula-2, Pascal, PL/I and SQL. Some facilities have been invented to make EXPRESS more suitable for the job of expressing an information model.

NOTE 2 The examples of EXPRESS usage in this manual do not conform to any particular style rules. Indeed, the examples sometimes use poor style to conserve space or to show flexibility. The examples are not intended to reflect the content of the information models defined in other parts of ISO 10303. They are crafted to show particular features of EXPRESS. Any similarity between the examples and the normative information models specified in other parts of ISO 10303 should be ignored.

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Industrial automation systems and integration — Product data representation and exchange — Part 11: Description methods: The EXPRESS language reference manual

1 Scope

This part of ISO 10303 specifies a language by which aspects of product data can be defined. The language is called EXPRESS.

This part of ISO 10303 also specifies a graphical representation for a subset of the constructs in the EXPRESS language. This graphical representation is called EXPRESS-G.

EXPRESS is a data specification language as defined in ISO 10303-1. It consists of language elements that allow an unambiguous data definition and specification of constraints on the data defined.

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The following are within the scope of this part of ISO 10303:

- data types;
- constraints on instances of the data types.

The following are outside the scope of this part of ISO 10303:

- definition of database formats;
- definition of file formats;
- definition of transfer formats;
- process control;
- information processing;
- exception handling.

EXPRESS is not a programming language.