

Format - Indicator

Exported from METEOR (AIHW's Metadata Online Registry)

© Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2024

This product, excluding the AIHW logo, Commonwealth Coat of Arms and any material owned by a third party or protected by a trademark, has been released under a Creative Commons BY 4.0 (CC BY 4.0) licence. Excluded material owned by third parties may include, for example, design and layout, images obtained under licence from third parties and signatures. We have made all reasonable efforts to identify and label material owned by third parties.

You may distribute, remix and build on this website's material but must attribute the AIHW as the copyright holder, in line with our attribution policy. The full terms and conditions of this licence are available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

Enquiries relating to copyright should be addressed to info@aihw.gov.au.

Enquiries or comments on the METEOR metadata or download should be directed to the METEOR team at meteor@aihw.gov.au.

Format - Indicator

Definition

A template for the presentation of values, including specification and layout of permitted characters, the maximum and minimum size, and precision. It is not a template for electronic data transmission or storage.

Obligation:

Mandatory completion

Creator: Developer.

Visibility: All users.

Valid characters

The values that can be used in the format attribute are listed in Table 8. Formatting characters such as decimal points, full stops, commas and hyphens are specified using symbolic representation. For example, a number with a precision of one is to be represented by the format: N.N

Characters which are not enclosed in brackets signify a value which must be represented.

If a character is repeated more than 6 times in succession, round brackets and a number are to be used to indicate the number of repeats e.g. X(7) not XXXXXXX.

Table 8: Format values and their associated meaning

Value	Valid character range
A	Alphabetic character set: contains the letters a-z and A-Z and may contain special character ^(a) , but not numeric characters.
N	Numeric character set: contains whole and decimal numbers and may contain special characters, but not alphabetic characters.
X	Alphanumeric character set: contains alphabetic and numeric characters, and may contain blank characters.
D	A numeric character representing a number of days. ^(b)
M	A numeric character representing a number of months. ^(b)
Y	A numeric character representing a number of years. ^(b)
h	Any numeric character representing a number of hours. ^(b)
m	Any numeric character representing a number of minutes. ^(b)
s	Any numeric character representing number of seconds. ^(b)
{ }	The string within the curly brackets (braces) is optional in its entirety (e.g. X{XX} indicates 1 or 3 alphanumeric characters (i.e. X or XXX)).
[]	The string within the square brackets is optional in any ordered combination (e.g. [XXX] indicates 0, 1, 2 or 3 alphanumeric characters (i.e. blank, X, XX or XXX)).
()	The character preceding the round brackets (parentheses) is repeated the number of times specified (e.g. X(9) indicates 9 alphanumeric characters).

(a) Valid in value domains of representation class Date or Time only. These format values indicate the valid unit(s) of measure to be presented. For value domains of all other representation classes, only the characters A, N, X, { }, [], and () may be used to denote the presence of a value.

(b) A special character is a character which has a visual representation and is neither a letter, number, ideogram, or blank. For example, punctuation marks and mathematical symbols.

An ideogram is a character that represents an object or concept e.g. Chinese ideogram or Japanese Kanji.

A blank is a character that represents an empty position in an alphanumeric character field e.g. space. A blank is conceptually different from a null value, which is defined as the absence of a stored value.

Protocol

(a) Position characters using a protocol reading from inner brackets (if any) to outer brackets, and left to right. For example NNNNX[AA] represents four numeric characters followed by one alphanumeric character, and up to two alphabetic characters (i.e. NNNNX, NNNNXA or NNNNXAA).

(b) Express a sequence of characters of a given character type by ordering characters which must be represented to the left of characters that may/not be represented. For example, NN[N] not [N]NN.