Type Casting

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1 Numerical Datatypes

For this part, it is recommended to have the datatypes cheatsheet[1] readily available. Note that it contains numerous references at its end. You are encouraged to open those links, if you have not already, to have a look at the official documentation, which should not scare you.

1.1 Literals and Variables

This part should be first carried out without using an IDE, but with pen and paper.

Assume we have the following statements:

```
int a = 21, b = 4;
float f = 2.5000000f;
double d = -1.3;
decimal m = 2.5m;
```

Answer the following:

- How many variables are declared?
- What are their datatypes?
- What are their values?
- What are their names?

[1] ../../datatypes_in_csharp.html

1.2 Operations

- Consider the following expressions. For each of them, tell if they are legal and if so, give the result and its corresponding datatype. The first two are given as examples:

Operation	Legal?	Result	Datatype
`a + d`	Yes	19.7	`double`
`m + f`	No	N/A	N/A
`a / b`			
`b * f`			
`d + f`			
`d + b`			
`a + m`			
`f / m`			
`d * m`			

You can check your answers using an IDE: create a new project, copy the variable declarations and assignments, and write your own statements to perform the calculations in the `Main` method. For instance, if you want to check that the result of `a + d` is of type `double`, write something like:

```
double tempVariable1 = a + d;
Console.WriteLine($"The value of d+f is {tempVariable1}");
int tempVariable2 = a + d; // This line should give you an error.
```

2 Casting

2.1 Cast Operator

Create a new project, and then do the following.

1. Add in your program the following:

   ```
   float floatVar = 4.3f;
   int intVar = floatVar; // This statement will give you an error
   ```

   You will get an error that reads

   ```
   Cannot implicitly convert type 'float' to 'int'. An explicit conversion exists (are
    ↪  you missing a cast?)
   ```

   Can you explain it?

2. Your IDE is suggesting that we use a "cast" to "force" C# to store the value of the variable `floatVar` into the variable `intVar`. To do so, replace the previous statement with the following:

   ```
   int intVar = (int)floatVar; // This statement will compile
   ```

3. Using a `Console.WriteLine` statement, observe the value stored in `intVar`. Can you tell if the value stored in `floatVar` was rounded or truncated before being stored in the variable `intVar`? Conduct further experiments if needed to answer this question.

2.2 Implicit and Explicit Casting

1. Look back at the warning given by the IDE. It uses the term "implicitly convert" before introducing the cast operator.
2. While you needed a cast to convert a `float` to an `int`, do you need one to convert an `int` to a `float`? Try the following:

   ```
   int intVar = 21;
   float floatVar = intVar; // Does this need a cast?
   ```

   Generally, you need an explicit cast if an implicit conversion would lead to data loss. Since all possible `int` values are also valid `float` values, no explicit cast is needed!
3. Do these cases need an explicit cast, or will an implicit conversion work? Try them in your IDE to check your answers!

- `double` to `int`
- `int` to `double`
- `float` to `double`
- `double` to `float`
- `int` to `decimal`
- `decimal` to `float`
- `float` to `decimal`

That last result may have been surprising. While `decimal` is higher precision than `float` and `double`, it requires an explicit cast from either of those types, as you want to "force" imprecise data into a datatype that is supposedly extremely precise. Think about measuring wood with an inaccurate tape measurer and then cutting it with laser precision: that is what storing a `float` into a `decimal` is!