

**Author:** David Abrahams  
**Contact:** [dave@boost-consulting.com](mailto:dave@boost-consulting.com)  
**Organization:** [Boost Consulting](#)  
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**abstract:** Header `<boost/iterator/iterator_traits.hpp>` provides the ability to access an iterator's associated types using MPL-compatible [metafunctions](#).

## Overview

`std::iterator_traits` provides access to five associated types of any iterator: its `value_type`, `reference`, `pointer`, `iterator_category`, and `difference_type`. Unfortunately, such a “multi-valued” traits template can be difficult to use in a metaprogramming context. `<boost/iterator/iterator_traits.hpp>` provides access to these types using a standard [metafunctions](#).

## Summary

Header `<boost/iterator/iterator_traits.hpp>`:

```
template <class Iterator>
struct iterator_value
{
    typedef typename
        std::iterator_traits<Iterator>::value_type
        type;
};

template <class Iterator>
struct iterator_reference
{
    typedef typename
        std::iterator_traits<Iterator>::reference
        type;
};

template <class Iterator>
struct iterator_pointer
{
    typedef typename
        std::iterator_traits<Iterator>::pointer
        type;
};
```

```

};

template <class Iterator>
struct iterator_difference
{
    typedef typename
        detail::iterator_traits<Iterator>::difference_type
        type;
};

template <class Iterator>
struct iterator_category
{
    typedef typename
        detail::iterator_traits<Iterator>::iterator_category
        type;
};

```

## Broken Compiler Notes

Because of workarounds in Boost, you may find that these [metafunctions](#) actually work better than the facilities provided by your compiler's standard library.

On compilers that don't support partial specialization, such as Microsoft Visual C++ 6.0 or 7.0, you may need to manually invoke [BOOST\\_BROKEN\\_COMPILER\\_TYPE\\_TRAITS\\_SPECIALIZATION](#) on the `value_type` of pointers that are passed to these metafunctions.

Because of bugs in the implementation of GCC-2.9x, the name of `iterator_category` is changed to `iterator_category_` on that compiler. A macro, `BOOST_ITERATOR_CATEGORY`, that expands to either `iterator_category` or `iterator_category_`, as appropriate to the platform, is provided for portability.