

Reference Counting

System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) refcounting.rst, line 1)

Unknown directive type "highlight".

```
.. highlight:: c
```

The macros in this section are used for managing reference counts of Python objects.

System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) refcounting.rst, line 14)

Unknown directive type "c:function".

```
.. c:function:: void Py_INCREF(PyObject *o)
```

Increment the reference count for object *o*.

This function is usually used to convert a :term:`borrowed reference` to a :term:`strong reference` in-place. The :c:func:`Py_NewRef` function can be used to create a new :term:`strong reference`.

The object must not be ``NULL``; if you aren't sure that it isn't ``NULL``, use :c:func:`Py_X_INCREF`.

System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) refcounting.rst, line 26)

Unknown directive type "c:function".

```
.. c:function:: void Py_X_INCREF(PyObject *o)
```

Increment the reference count for object *o*. The object may be ``NULL``, in which case the macro has no effect.

See also :c:func:`Py_XNewRef`.

System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) refcounting.rst, line 34)

Unknown directive type "c:function".

```
.. c:function:: PyObject* Py_NewRef(PyObject *o)
```

Create a new :term:`strong reference` to an object: increment the reference count of the object *o* and return the object *o*.

When the :term:`strong reference` is no longer needed, :c:func:`Py_DECREF` should be called on it to decrement the object reference count.

The object *o* must not be ``NULL``; use :c:func:`Py_XNewRef` if *o* can be ``NULL``.

For example::

```
Py_INCREF(obj);
self->attr = obj;
```

can be written as::

```
self->attr = Py_NewRef(obj);
```

See also :c:func:`Py_INCREF`.

```
.. versionadded:: 3.10
```

System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) refcounting.rst, line 59)

Unknown directive type "c:function".

```
.. c:function:: PyObject* Py_XNewRef(PyObject *o)
```

Similar to :c:func:`Py_NewRef`, but the object `*o` can be `NULL`.

If the object `*o` is `NULL`, the function just returns `NULL`.

```
.. versionadded:: 3.10
```

System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) refcounting.rst, line 68)

Unknown directive type "c:function".

```
.. c:function:: void Py_DECREF(PyObject *o)
```

Decrement the reference count for object `*o`.

If the reference count reaches zero, the object's type's deallocation function (which must not be `NULL`) is invoked.

This function is usually used to delete a :term:`strong reference` before exiting its scope.

The object must not be `NULL`; if you aren't sure that it isn't `NULL`, use :c:func:`Py_XDECREF`.

```
.. warning::
```

The deallocation function can cause arbitrary Python code to be invoked (e.g. when a class instance with a :meth:`__del__` method is deallocated). While exceptions in such code are not propagated, the executed code has free access to all Python global variables. This means that any object that is reachable from a global variable should be in a consistent state before :c:func:`Py_DECREF` is invoked. For example, code to delete an object from a list should copy a reference to the deleted object in a temporary variable, update the list data structure, and then call :c:func:`Py_DECREF` for the temporary variable.

System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) refcounting.rst, line 93)

Unknown directive type "c:function".

```
.. c:function:: void Py_XDECREF(PyObject *o)
```

Decrement the reference count for object `*o`. The object may be `NULL`, in which case the macro has no effect; otherwise the effect is the same as for :c:func:`Py_DECREF`, and the same warning applies.

System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) refcounting.rst, line 100)

Unknown directive type "c:function".

```
.. c:function:: void Py_CLEAR(PyObject *o)
```

Decrement the reference count for object `*o`. The object may be `NULL`, in which case the macro has no effect; otherwise the effect is the same as for :c:func:`Py_DECREF`, except that the argument is also set to `NULL`. The warning for :c:func:`Py_DECREF` does not apply with respect to the object passed because the macro carefully uses a temporary variable and sets the argument to `NULL` before decrementing its reference count.

It is a good idea to use this macro whenever decrementing the reference count of an object that might be traversed during garbage collection.

The following functions are for runtime dynamic embedding of Python: `Py_IncRef(PyObject *o)`, `Py_DecRef(PyObject *o)`. They are simply exported function versions of `:func:'Py_XINCREF'` and `:func:'Py_XDECREF'`, respectively.

System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) `refcounting.rst`, line 113); [backlink](#)

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System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) `refcounting.rst`, line 113); [backlink](#)

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The following functions or macros are only for use within the interpreter core: `:func:'_Py_Dealloc'`, `:func:'_Py_ForgetReference'`, `:func:'_Py_NewReference'`, as well as the global variable `:data:'_Py_RefTotal'`.

System Message: ERROR/3 (D:\onboarding-resources\sample-onboarding-resources\cpython-main\Doc\c-api\cpython-main) (Doc) (c-api) `refcounting.rst`, line 118); [backlink](#)

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