

# Comparison with old cropping API

The selection API was introduced to cope with deficiencies of the older `ref: CROP API <crop>`, that was designed to control simple capture devices. Later the cropping API was adopted by video output drivers. The ioctls are used to select a part of the display where the video signal is inserted. It should be considered as an API abuse because the described operation is actually the composing. The selection API makes a clear distinction between composing and cropping operations by setting the appropriate targets.

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The CROP API lacks any support for composing to and cropping from an image inside a memory buffer. The application could configure a capture device to fill only a part of an image by abusing V4L2 API. Cropping a smaller image from a larger one is achieved by setting the field `bytesperline` at struct `:type:'v4l2_pix_format'`. Introducing an image offsets could be done by modifying field `m_userptr` at struct `:type:'v4l2_buffer'` before calling `ref: VIDIOC_QBUF <VIDIOC_QBUF>`. Those operations should be avoided because they are not portable (endianness), and do not work for macroblock and Bayer formats and mmap buffers.

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The selection API deals with configuration of buffer cropping/composing in a clear, intuitive and portable way. Next, with the selection API the concepts of the padded target and constraints flags are introduced. Finally, struct `:type:'v4l2_crop'` and struct `:type:'v4l2_cropcap'` have no reserved fields. Therefore there is no way to extend their functionality. The new struct `:type:'v4l2_selection'` provides a lot of place for future extensions.

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Driver developers are encouraged to implement only selection API. The former cropping API would be simulated using the new one.