

Scala 3 Reference / Dropped Features / Dropped: private[this] and protected[this]



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Dropped: private[this] and protected[this]

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The private[this] and protected[this] access modifiers are deprecated and will be phased out.

Previously, these modifiers were needed for

- avoiding the generation of getters and setters
- excluding code under a private[this] from variance checks. (Scala 2 also excludes protected[this] but this was found to be unsound and was therefore removed).
- avoiding the generation of fields, if a private[this] val is not accessed by a class method.

The compiler now infers for private members the fact that they are only accessed via this. Such members are treated as if they had been declared private[this]. protected[this] is dropped without a replacement.

This change can in some cases change the semantics of a Scala program, since a private val is no longer guaranteed to generate a field. The field is omitted if

- the val is only accessed via this, and
- the val is not accessed from a method in the current class.

This can cause problems if a program tries to access the missing private field via reflection. The recommended fix is to declare the field instead to be qualified private with the enclosing class as qualifier. Example:

```
class C(x: Int):
private[C] val field = x + 1
// [C] needed if `field` is to be accessed through reflection
```

