Visual Studio 2005/2008: How can you share/force all developers to use the same formatting rules?

Asked 16 years, 3 months ago   Modified 11 years, 7 months ago

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5

I would like to have all developers on my team to use the same rules for formatting several types of code (ASPX, CSS, JavaScript, C#). Can I have visual studio look to a common place for these rules?

I would like to not rely on export/import settings as that brings many settings along. I (for example) don't care what font colors the developer uses when typing, I just want similar formatting. Can you import a subset of settings?

visual-studio   formatting

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1 Starting from VS 2017, you can use EditorConfig files, as explained in my answer to a later question. (That question could be considered a dupe, but it seems to be more visible, and I see no point in duping my answer in your question.)
– Frédéric Apr 2, 2021 at 16:36

10 Answers

Sorted by: Highest score (default) ⇕

StyleCop, originally called "Source Analysis" is the best choice for C#. The first version was rather inflexible, but after recognizing the value that it provides for the community, Microsoft has opened it up to extensions and customizations. It's a solid tool.

8

For Visual Studio settings, it's trivial to export a sub-set of your settings into a .settings file and require that other team members import and use these settings.

Like any standards, the tools are only as good as the team members, so it probably goes without saying that you will need team buy-in regardless of what tool you use for enforcement.

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edited May 15, 2013 at 9:59

collapsar
17.2k ● 4 ● 39 ● 65

answered Sep 3, 2008 at 12:57

Brad Tutterow
7,487 ● 3 ● 34 ● 33

If you're using C#, take a look at StyleCop.

3

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answered Sep 2, 2008 at 14:55

Luke Girvin
13.4k ● 10 ● 67 ● 85

3

Visual Studio uses the settings in Tools > Options > Text Editor > [your language] > Formatting to set how it auto-formats code.

You can set it up how you like and then use Tools > Import and Export settings to create a .settings file for your team to import and use. It won't enforce rules, but it will make the default VS behavior the same for everyone.

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answered Sep 2, 2008 at 14:56

brien
4,430 ● 4 ● 31 ● 32

1

There is a tool called NArrange which will arrange your code. This is particular useful to avoid conflicts in source control systems, but also has several other advantages. Check out the web site.
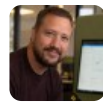
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answered Sep 2, 2008 at 15:05

No-one's mentioned [Team Settings](#) yet? You just export the desired settings to a network share, then get everyone to map to it. Job's a good 'un.

Tools -> Options -> Import and Export Settings, then tick "Use Team Settings"

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answered Nov 25, 2009 at 20:01

Keith Williams
2,357 ● 3 ● 19 ● 29

An extensive use of [Visual Assist](#)'s snippets (bits of pre-formatted codes) may help...

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answered Sep 2, 2008 at 14:57

Xavier Nodet
5,085 ● 2 ● 38 ● 49

I second Luke's answer. StyleCop can help you enforce common coding style across your team. If you want to share formatting rules take a look at ReSharper AFAIK it allows you to export and share this settings.

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answered Sep 2, 2008 at 15:00

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Editor settings are stored in the registry, so no luck having a single source for them. You'll need to go with an external tool to ensure uniformity.

A free, quick solution would be exporting the relevant registry settings and loading them up on everyone's machine. They'll still be able to change them (and they will -- naughty developers!), but you'll at least have a common starting point.

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answered Sep 2, 2008 at 15:02

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We use the following tools:

- StyleCop (as mentioned before)

- Resharper

- StyleCop for Resharper

The reason we use the latter two is twofold: First you are able to do a *Clean Up* of your code. This allows you to clean your code in one go and solve all warnings. At least that is what the brochure says. In reality you need to set quite a few settings in Resharper. Have a look at links like this to see how that works. Second: Resharper integrates

the Stylecop violations in the source editor. Extremely useful as they are visible while writing code and can therefore be solved on the spot.

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answered Nov 25, 2009 at 19:49

RandomProgrammer

1,640 ● 1 ● 16 ● 23

Code Review.

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answered Nov 25, 2009 at 19:51

Ian P

13k ● 6 ● 50 ● 70