

Specification: 0003

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Obsoletes: 0000

Specification Format

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Table of contents

1. Conventions	3
2. Character encoding	3
3. Line definition	3
3.1 Line numbering	3
4. Pages	3
4.1 Page header	3
4.2 Page footer	3
5. Paragraphs	3
6. Document header	4
6.1. Descriptive header	4
6.2. Short author identification	4
6.3. Publish date	4
7. Document footer	5
8. Section titles	5
9. Document title	5
10. Informative resources	6
11. Author information	7

1. Conventions

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "NOT RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this document are to be interpreted as described in RFC2119 when, and only when, they appear in all capitals, as shown here.

2. Character Encoding

Plain-text files for specifications MUST use the UTF-8 standard.

3. Line definition

A line of text is a sequence of 0 or more characters followed by a line feed character. For the sake of and clarity, the ending line feed character is not part of the line.

Lines MUST NOT exceed 80 characters in length, excluding the ending line feed character. A line is called a blank line if it consists of 0 characters.

3.1. Line numbering

Assuming a document is in digital format[1] and has a length of greater than 0 bytes, the first character in the document is part of line 1.

4. Pages

A page is a sequence of 60 lines. That means for every line number n , the line is the start of a new page when $n \bmod 60 = 1$.

4.1 Page header

The first line of a page SHOULD consist of a left-aligned spec number indicator, a centered (short) document title and a right-aligned short publishing date (see 6.3). Line 2 of a page MUST always be blank, excluding the first page of the document.

4.2 Page footer

The last line of a page MUST consist of a left-align last name of the author or authors and a right-aligned page number between square brackets. The second-to-last line of a page must be blank, just like line 2 of a page.

5. Paragraphs

A paragraph is a sequence of consecutive lines all of a length greater than 0 characters. Paragraphs are separated by either one or more blank lines or a page break. Paragraphs MUST NOT span multiple pages, limiting their size to 56 lines.

6. Document header

The first lines of the first page of a specification document **MUST** always contain left-aligned description headers (see 6.1) and right-aligned author identification and a right-aligned publishing date.

After the initial lines (see 6.1 through 6.3), references to other specifications **MUST** be included when the specification obsoletes or updates the references specification.

After the initial lines and the references, the document title is **REQUIRED** to be written on the first page of the document. For it's specification, see section 9.

The bottom of the first page of the document **MUST** include a copyright notice and/or license, a link to the license or the inclusion text required by the license in question.

6.1. Descriptive header

Each descriptive header is made up of a key and a value. Whitespace is not allowed in both the key and the value. Whitespace can only be included in the value by wrapping the value in quote characters.

The key of the header consists of all characters of the line up to the first semicolon, excluding the semicolon itself and omitting all white-space characters.

The value of the header starts at the first non-whitespace character after the first semicolon of the line. If the first character is a quote, the value ends at the next quote in the line. If the first character is not a quote, the value ends at the next whitespace character.

6.2. Short author identification

In order to allow the author or authors to take some credit and to track who has written what, the author's name **MUST** be added right-aligned on the first line of the first page of the document. To prevent mixing notations between documents, the names **SHOULD** be written as only the first letters of all given names in capitals, separated by dots, a space and the Family name starting with an uppercase character. When written by a group with a name, the short author identification string **SHOULD** state the group's name instead of the individual authors.

6.3. Publish date

Dates contained in specification documents following the format described in this document **MUST** follow the Gregorian calendar.

The publish date of the document **MUST** include a month starting with a capital character and fully written year. The day of the month **MAY** be added on the first page of the document, but **MUST NOT** be included in the short date on all pages.

7. Document footer

The document SHOULD close, starting on a new page, with all informative resources which were used to write the document, noting their keyword and document title. A URI to the resource SHOULD be included.

After the informative resources, the document SHOULD end with one or several pages dedicated to the information of the author or authors.

8. Section titles

Section titles SHOULD be a short text about the subject the section describes. Whether it is simply the keyword of what it explains, a problem statement or other type of text is up to the author as long as it's relevant to the section's body and fits within a single line.

A section title MUST start with a capital character & MUST NOT contain any other capital letters, excluding where they are required in names or abbreviations.

9. Document title

The title of the document should clearly state the main subject of the document and it's contents. Each word of the document title MUST start with a capital character when noted as the title of the document.

On the first page of the document, the title should be centered horizontally and have at least 2 blank lines both above and below it. The document title SHOULD be as close to the document's descriptive headers as possible.

10. Informative resources

[RFC2119] RFC Key Words
S. Bradner
<https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc2119>

11. Author information

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