# GO language

The current version of the GO language is described on the [go.dev](https://go.dev/ref/spec) site.

## Types

[Understanding Golang Type System - The New Stack](https://thenewstack.io/understanding-golang-type-system/)

GO language provides rich set of built-in **basic types**. They are listed in [BasicKind](https://cs.opensource.google/go/go/+/refs/tags/go1.20.7:src/go/types/basic.go;l=8) iota. **Aggregate** types consists of arrays and structures. Pointers, slices, maps, functions, and channels represent **reference** types. **Interfaces** are a separate group of compositional types, which we will consider in the section "Interfaces".

#### Arrays

Array stores collection of items with the same type (homogeneous) and are stored in continuous memory locations. Array has **fixed** size. Each element of the array can be accessed with the help of an index. Unlike other programming languages, an **array** is a **value** type. Array declaration:

a := [3]int{1,2,3} // Given fixed size

a := [...]int{1,2,3} // Array literal with length inferred

var a [3]int

a[0] = 1

a[1] = 2

a[2] = 3

The run-time copies array refer into the different underlying data, pass an address if you want the same location:

b := a // b is a copy of a

c := &a // c and a occupy the same location

#### Structures

A **struct** (short for structure) is used to create a collection of members of different data types, into a single variable. To declare a structure in Go, use the **type** and **struct** keywords:

type struct\_name struct {

member1 datatype;

member2 datatype;

member3 datatype;

...

}

To access any member of a structure, use the dot operator (.) between the structure variable name and the structure member:

package main

import "fmt"

type Creature struct {

Name string

}

func main() {

c := Creature{

Name: "Sammy the Shark",

}

fmt.Println(**c.Name**)

}

Within the body of main, we create an instance of Creature by placing a pair of braces after the name of the type, Creature, and then specifying values for that instance’s fields. The instance in c will have its Name field set to “Sammy the Shark”. If every field value will be provided during the instantiation of a struct, you can omit the field names (short declaration):

package main

import "fmt"

type Creature struct {

Name string

Type string

}

func main() {

c := **Creature{"Sammy", "Shark"}**

fmt.Println(c.Name, "the", c.Type)

}

You must provide values for each field in the **struct** when using the short declaration.

If a field name begins with a capital letter, it will be readable and writeable by code outside of the package where the struct was defined (exported field). If the field begins with a lowercase letter, only code within that struct’s package will be able to read and write that field:

package main

import "fmt"

type Creature struct {

Name string

Type string

password string

}

func main() {

c := Creature{

Name: "Sammy",

Type: "Shark",

**password: "secret"**,

}

fmt.Println(c.Name, "the", c.Type)

fmt.Println("Password is", c.password)

}

Field **password** is accessible in **main** package only.

You can also define an **inline struct**. Inline struct definitions appear on the right-hand side of a variable assignment. You must provide an instantiation of them immediately after by providing an additional pair of braces with values for each of the fields you define:

package main

import "fmt"

func main() {

c := struct {

Name string

Type string

}{

Name: "Sammy",

Type: "Shark",

}

fmt.Println(c.Name, "the", c.Type)

}

Methods

In GO, only variables can be specified inside a structure. Functions are described outside the structure and are connected using the **receiver**:

type my\_type struct { }

...

func (**m my\_type**) my\_func() int {

//code

}

In this example, the expression before the function name **(m my\_type)** defines the **receiver** and its **type**. A function written this way is called a **method**. Remember that the receiver is actually a hidden parameter of the method and is passed by value. If a method changes the fields inside the structure, it is necessary to pass the pointer, otherwise the changes will not be saved:

package main

import (

"fmt"

"math"

)

type Vertex struct {

X, Y float64

}

func (v Vertex) Abs() float64 { // copy of the receiver

return math.Sqrt(v.X\*v.X + v.Y\*v.Y)

}

func (v \*Vertex) Scale(f float64) { // pointer to the receiver

v.X = v.X \* f

v.Y = v.Y \* f

}

func main() {

v := Vertex{3, 4}

v.Scale(10) // Compiler will convert **v** into the pointer of this value

fmt.Println(v.Abs())

}

Methods can be bound not only to structures, but also to any custom type described in the same module:

...

type **WalkerFunc** func() // Custom type

func (wf WalkerFunc) Walk() { // Method attached to WalkerFunc

fmt.Println("start walking")

wf()

fmt.Printf("stop walking\n\n")

}

…

## Interfaces

In Go language, the [interface](https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/interfaces-in-golang/) is a custom type that is used to specify a set of one or more method signatures. Interface is an abstract type, so you are not allowed to create an instance of the interface but you are allowed to create a variable of an interface type and this variable can be assigned with a concrete type value that has all methods the interface requires. In Go language, you can create an interface using the following syntax:

type interface\_name interface{

// Method signatures

}

In the Go language, it is necessary to implement all the methods declared in the interface for implementing an interface. The **go** language **interfaces** are implemented implicitly. It does not contain any specific keyword to implement an interface just like other languages:

type ianimal interface {

speak()

sayHello()

}

type animal struct {

}

func (animal) speak() {

fmt.Println("???")

}

func (nml animal) sayHello() {

nml.speak()

}

Type **animal** implements interface **ianimal**.

Important Points:

* The zero value of the interface is nil.
* The interface type consists of two subtypes one is static and dynamic. The **static** type is the interface itself. A **dynamic** type occurs after a value is assigned to a variable of an interface type.
* An interface with no methods (**interface{}**) is called an **empty interface** and has the alias **any**. Value of any type may be assigned to a variable of the **emty interface** type. This interface was widely used for programming containers before the advent of generic functions.

#### Operations with interfaces

Declaration of a variable

Interface is custom type thus declaration a variable of this type follows common rules:

var pet ianimal

The variable pet will have the value nil. It is possible to declare a variable with an initial value:

var pet ianimal = dog{}

Such a declaration is possible if the structure **dog** supports the interface **ianimal**.

Assignment

A value of any custom type may be assigned to a variable of the interface type. The go compiler will reject the assignment if a type of the value does not suppport an interface:

package main

import "fmt"

type ianimal interface {

speak()

}

type dog struct {

}

func (dog) speak() {

fmt.Println("gav gav")

}

type cat struct {

}

func (cat) sing() {

fmt.Println("miau miau")

}

func main() {

var flint, robber ianimal

flint = dog{}

**robber = cat{}**

flint.speak()

robber.speak()

}

The compiler will capture an error because **cat** has no the speak() function. Change the name of the sing() function and this example will compile:

func (cat) speak() { // sing()

Interfaces provide go with what other languages call polymorphism:

func main() {

var myPet ianimal

myPet = dog{}

**myPet.speak()**

myPet = cat{}

**myPet.speak()**

}

The same operator **myPet.speak()** will print two different values:

gav gav

miau miau

The static type of the **myPet** variable is the **ianimal** interface, but after assignments this variable takes on two different dynamic types: **dog** and **cat**.

#### Type Assertions

Type assertion is a process to extract the values of the interface:

value, ok := a.(T)

Here, **a** is the value or the expression of the interface, and **T** is the type also known as asserted type. The **value** contains the dynamic value of the **a** and **ok** will set to **true** if a dynamic type of the **a** is equal to **T**.The operation sets **ok** to **false**, **value** will have zero if the type of the **a** is not equal to **T**. The ok variable can be omitted:

value := a.(T)

but the operation will panics if the dynamic type of the interface does not match **T**.

#### Type Switch

Type switch is used to compare the concrete type of an interface with the multiple types provide in the case statements. It is similar to type assertion with only one difference, i.e, **case** specifies **types**, not the values. You can also compare a type to the interface type.

func myfun(a interface{}) {

switch a.(type) {

case int:

fmt.Println("Type: int, Value:", a.(int))

case string:

fmt.Println("\nType: string, Value: ", a.(string))

case float64:

fmt.Println("\nType: float64, Value: ", a.(float64))

default:

fmt.Println("\nType not found")

}

}

#### Composition

The name of another interface can be specified in the list of interface methods. The new interface inherits all the methods of the nested interface. This operation is called **interface** **composition** and is exactly the same as **object composition**.

type BasicDatabase interface {

CreateTable(string) error

DeleteTable(string) error

}

type SpecificDatabase interface {

BasicDatabase

CreateUserRecord(User) error

}

[Interfaces in Golang - GeeksforGeeks](https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/interfaces-in-golang/)

[The power of single-method interfaces in Go - Eli Bendersky's website (thegreenplace.net)](https://eli.thegreenplace.net/2023/the-power-of-single-method-interfaces-in-go/)

[The power of single-method interfaces in Go (golang.ch)](https://golang.ch/the-power-of-single-method-interfaces-in-go/)