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Mohammed Abu-Hadhoud
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Data Structures Level 2
What are Collection Interfaces?
Mohammed Abu-Hadhoud
MBA, PMOC, PgMP®, PMP®, PMI-RMP®, CM, ITILF, MCPD, MCSD
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We Studied Most of Collections

- In C#, collections are data structures used to store groups of objects.
- Unlike arrays, collections can grow and shrink dynamically, offering more flexibility in managing groups of objects.
- Collections are categorized based on their characteristics and operations they support, such as lists,queues, stacks, sets, and dictionaries..etc.

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What are Collection Interfaces?

- Collection interfaces (Contracts) define the operations (methods) and properties that a collection must implement.
- These interfaces (Contracts) are part of the .NET Framework's System.Collections and System.Collections.Generic namespaces.
- The use of interfaces allows developers to design functions and methods that can operate on multiple types of collections, improving code reusability and flexibility.

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Key Collection Interfaces in C#

- IEnumerable & IEnumerable<T>: The base interface for all collections, providing support for simple iteration over a collection.
- ICollection & ICollection<T>: Extends IEnumerable with methods for adding, removing, and counting elements.
- IList & IList<T>: Extends ICollection to provide methods for indexed access, adding, removing, and inserting elements.
- IDictionary & IDictionary<TKey, TValue>: Defines methods for managing a collection of key/value pairs, allowing for fast lookups.
- ISet & ISet<T>: Provides the abstraction for a collection that ensures no duplicate elements.

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Benefits of Using Collection Interfaces

- Abstraction: Interfaces provide a way to abstract the collection's implementation details, allowing developers to work with collections in a consistent manner.
- Flexibility: By programming against interfaces, it's easy to switch between different collection implementations without changing the consuming code.
- Interoperability: Interfaces allow collections to be passed between methods and classes that operate on abstract collection types, enhancing modularity and code reuse.
- Type Safety: Generic collection interfaces (e.g., ICollection<T>) provide type safety by ensuring that only objects of a specified type are added to the collection.

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Conclusion:

- Collection interfaces in C# play a critical role in creating flexible, reusable, and maintainable code.
- By understanding and leveraging these interfaces, developers can efficiently manage collections of data, ensuring their applications are robust and scalable.
- Programming against collection interfaces rather than concrete implementations enhances code quality and future-proofs applications against changes in collection implementations.

Mohammed Abu-Hadhoud
MBA, PMOC, PgMPD, PMPD, PMI-RMPD, CM, ITILF, MCPD, MCSD
26+ years of experience


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