

What does the @ symbol before a variable name mean in C#? [duplicate]

Asked 10 years, 7 months ago Active 3 years, 5 months ago Viewed 176k times



487



66

Possible Duplicate:

[What's the use/meaning of the @ character in variable names in C#?](#)

I understand that the @ symbol can be used before a string literal to change how the compiler parses the string. But what does it mean when a variable name is prefixed with the @ symbol?



edited May 23 '17 at 12:10



Community ♦

1 1

asked Jan 9 '09 at 20:10



Greg

4,318

5

31

57

marked as duplicate by [Jeff Atwood](#) May 15 '11 at 6:46

This question has been asked before and already has an answer. If those answers do not fully address your question, please [ask a new question](#).

see stackoverflow.com/questions/91817 – [Simon](#) Jun 16 '09 at 8:02

4 Answers



The @ symbol allows you to use reserved word. For example:

625

```
int @class = 15;
```

By using our site, you acknowledge that you have read and understand our [Cookie Policy](#), [Privacy Policy](#), and our [Terms of Service](#).



```
int class = 15;
```

answered Jan 9 '09 at 20:12

**Michael Meadows****24k** 4 42 59

27 With what is it any different than, say, an underscore? – [Vilx-](#) Jan 9 '09 at 20:15

89 With an @ symbol, the name is recorded in the assembly as "class", vs. with an underscore it is "_class". Thus, if another .NET language doesn't define "class" as a reserved word, they could use the name just "class". – [P Daddy](#) Jan 9 '09 at 20:23

39 If you used @class for a property name, you could access it like so: MyClass.class instead of MyClass._class – [John Sheehan](#) Jan 9 '09 at 20:24

78 Just when you think you know everything there is to know about C#, you learn something new. :) – [Randolpho](#) Dec 9 '09 at 20:19

16 @Vilx- In ASP.net MVC it's very common to use it because that's the only way to express some things. For example if you want to set an element's class attribute you'd type `new { @class = "mc" };` even tho you meant just "class", that's the only way. The point I'm trying to make is that the @ is **not** part of the actual name of the variable. – [MasterMastic](#) Mar 2 '13 at 13:09



The @ symbol serves 2 purposes in C#:

371

Firstly, it allows you to use a reserved keyword as a variable like this:



```
int @int = 15;
```

The second option lets you specify a string without having to escape any characters. For instance the '\' character is an escape character so typically you would need to do this:

```
var myString = "c:\\myfolder\\myfile.txt"
```

alternatively you can do this:

```
var mvString = @"c:\mvFolder\mvfile.txt"
```

By using our site, you acknowledge that you have read and understand our [Cookie Policy](#), [Privacy Policy](#), and our [Terms of Service](#).



ww1711

5 7



Micah

58.7k 75 215 311

-
- 30 How it affects strings was exactly what I was looking for. Thanks! – [Scott](#) Mar 9 '11 at 15:24
-
- 5 Thank you, the usage of @ for strings was exactly what I was looking for – [Oliver](#) Nov 7 '12 at 10:17
-
- 3 You still need to escape double quotes by doubling them. – [Justin Skiles](#) Jan 29 '14 at 19:32
-
- 5 This is the better answer IMO – [But I'm Not A Wrapper Class](#) Jun 25 '14 at 19:56
-
- 3 @CyberneticTwerkGuruOrc While this is a more detailed answer it goes beyond what the OP asked, the marked answer addresses the specific issue of the @ when used with variables and is therefore (IMO) the more *correct* answer. – [Mike](#) Mar 17 '15 at 8:10
-



58



An important point that the other answers forgot, is that "@keyword" is compiled into "keyword" in the CIL.

So if you have a framework that was made in, say, F#, which requires you to define a class with a property named "class", you can actually do it.

It is not *that* useful in practice, but not having it would prevent C# from some forms of language interop.

I usually see it used not for interop, but to avoid the keyword restrictions (usually on local variable names, where this is the *only* effect) ie.

```
private void Foo(){
    int @this = 2;
}
```

but I would strongly discourage that! Just find another name, even if the 'best' name for the variable is one of the reserved names.

[edited Jan 9 '09 at 20:38](#)

[answered Jan 9 '09 at 20:26](#)



Rasmus Faber

39.2k 19 126 176

-
- 3 That's probably good advice. I *think* that the @ qualifier is the equivalent of VB.Net's square bracket, so the VB equivalent would be: dim [Class] as Int32 = 15 – [Michael Meadows](#) Jan 9 '09 at 21:01
-

By using our site, you acknowledge that you have read and understand our [Cookie Policy](#), [Privacy Policy](#), and our [Terms of Service](#).

- 3 As a late comment - "not that it is THAT useful" - in MVC that is the way you can pass forward a property named "class" to the render e - which turns into html "class" to define the CSS class. – [TomTom](#) Feb 27 '16 at 18:00
-

▲ It allows you to use a C# keyword as a variable. For example:

11

▼

```
class MyClass
{
    public string name { get; set; }
    public string @class { get; set; }
}
```

answered Jan 9 '09 at 20:13



[Joel Coehoorn](#)

320k 100 507 744

By using our site, you acknowledge that you have read and understand our [Cookie Policy](#), [Privacy Policy](#), and our [Terms of Service](#).