

identifier

An unique reference to a [SNOMED CT component](#) or [reference set member](#).

Component Identifiers

Each SNOMED CT component is identified by a [SNOMED CT identifier](#) (SCTID) which is defined as follows:

- A unique *integer* identifier applied to each [SNOMED CT component](#) ([Concept](#), [Description](#), or [Relationship](#)).

Notes

- Each *SNOMED CT Identifier (SCTID)* includes an item identifier, a [check-digit](#), a [partition identifier](#) and, depending on the [partition identifier](#), it may also include a [namespace identifier](#).

Reference Set Member Identifiers

Each reference set member is identified by a [Universally Unique Identifier](#) (UUID) which is defined as follows:

- A 128-bit integer used to uniquely identify information in computer systems.

Notes

- *Universally unique identifier* are generated by widely available algorithms. They are used to identify information in computer systems world-wide.
- In SNOMED CT *universally unique identifiers* is used to uniquely identify [reference set members](#). Since *universally unique identifiers* are unique and it is unnecessary to track the issuing of identifiers for the thousands of [reference set members](#) that are needed in some implementations.
- In [SNOMED CT release files](#), *universally unique identifiers* are represented as a string following a standard [canonical form](#) - a 36 character string containing 32 hexadecimal digits and four hyphens. The hexadecimal digits are arranged in five groups separated by the hyphens. The first group contains 8 hexadecimal digits, the last group contains 12 and each of the three other groups contains 4. So the overall pattern is 8-4-4-4-12.