

# universally unique identifier

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.

## Example

- ac527bed-9c70-4aad-8fc9-015828b148d9

## Alternatives

- UUID

## Related Links

- International Telecommunications Union
  - [Universally Unique Identifiers](#)
- Wikipedia
  - [Universally Unique Identifier](#)