

The New C Standard (Excerpted material)

An Economic and Cultural Commentary

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6.11.6 Function declarators

function
declarators
future language
directions

The use of function declarators with empty parentheses (not prototype-format parameter type declarators) is an obsolescent feature. 2040

Commentary

This position has not changed since the publication of the C90 Standard.

Rationale

It was obviously out of the question to remove syntax used in the overwhelming majority of extant C code, so the Standard specifies two ways of writing function declarations and function definitions. Characterizing the old style as obsolescent is meant to discourage its use and to serve as a strong endorsement by the Committee of the new style. It confidently expects that approval and adoption of the prototype style will make it feasible for some future C Standard to remove the old style syntax.

function
definitions
future language
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Removing support for this form of declaration could also impact its definition.

Coding Guidelines

function ??
declaration
use prototype

If the guideline recommendation specifying the use of function prototypes is followed then any future change will not be an issue.

References