Arrow Notation Encyclopedia Article

Arrow Notation

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Contents

Arrow Notation Encyclopedia Article.....1

Contents.....2

Arrow Notation.....3

Arrow Notation

Arrow notation specifies a class of **data** using a combination of other classes of data. In this sense it is analogous to the "listof" notation in some **programming** languages. Symbolically, the arrow notation is represented by an arrow symbol.

The specification of a data class involves the creation of so-called direct data definitions, actual aspects of the data as opposed to a name. More concretely, the arrow notation specifies the types of arguments that define the data and the kind of **value** it produces

An arrow notation serves several useful functions. In some programming languages, like **Perl**, the use of the block notation to describe an item can be difficult to read. Arrow notation can make the description crisper and more easily interpretable. For example, a block notation reference description could appear as:

- @{array_ref}[5]{Name}

The alternative arrow notation, conveying the same information, would be:

- $array_ref5]

Arrow notation is also useful for large numbers. An up-arrow notation system for large numbers was devised by **Donald Knuth** in 1976. The number of up arrows corresponds to a certain value. As an example, in Knuth's system a googol, which is 10 to the power of 100 is represented as 10 10 2.