v 4

Revise spelling of keywords v4 proposal for C2x

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Over time C has integrated some new features as keywords (some genuine, some from C++) but the naming strategy has not be entirely consistent: some were integrated using non-reserved names (const, inline) others were integrated in an underscore-capitalized form. For some of them, the use of the lower-case form then is ensured via a set of library header files. The reason for this complicated mechanism had been backwards compatibility for existing code bases. Since now years or even decades have gone by, we think that it is time to switch and to use to the primary spelling.

This is a revsion of papers to N2368 and N2392 where we reduce the focus to the list of keywords that found consensus in the WG14 London 2019 meeting. Other papers will build on this for those keywords or features that need more investigation.

Changes in v3:

- Remove the requirement for implementations to have these keywords as macro names and adapt title and contents accordingly.
- Update Annex B.

Changes in v4:

— Move the changes for false and true to paper N2458.

1. INTRODUCTION

Several keywords in current C2x have weird spellings as reserved names that have ensured backwards compatibility for existing code bases:

_Alignas	_Bool	_Decimal32	_Imaginary	
_Alignof	_Complex	_Decimal64	_Noreturn	_Thread_local
_Atomic	_Decimal128	_Generic	_Static_assert	

Many of them have alternative spellings that are provided through special library headers:

alignas	bool	imaginary	static_assert
alignof	complex	noreturn	thread_local

In addition, several important constants or language constructs are provided through headers and have not achieved the status of first class language constructs:

NULL	_Imaginary_I	offsetof
_Complex_I	false	true

The use of these different keywords make C code often more difficult or unpleasant to read, and always need special care for code that is sought to be included in both languages, C and C++. For all of the features it will be ten years since their introduction when C2x comes out, a time that should be sufficient for all users of the identifiers to have upgraded to a non-conflicting form.

Some of the constructs mentioned above have their own specificities and need more coordination with WG21 and C++. E.g a common mechanism is currently sought for the derived type mechanisms for _Complex and _Atomic, or a keyword like _Noreturn might even be replaced by means of the attribute mechanism that has recently been voted into C2x.

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This paper reproposes those keywords of N2368 that found direct consensus in WG14, in the expectation that the thus proposed modifications can be integrated directly into C2x:

alignas bool thread_local alignof static_assert

The new keywords **false** and **true** also found consensus, but their possible use in the preprocessor needs more provisions than given here. They are thus moved to N2458. Other proposals will follow that will tackle other parts of N2368 and beyond:

- Handle false and true and make them of type bool.
- Make **noreturn** a keyword or replace it by an attribute.
- Introduce **nullptr** and **nullptr_t**.
- Make complex and imaginary keywords and/or provide __complex(T) and __imaginary(T) constructs for interoperability with C++.
- Make atomic (or __atomic) a keyword that resolves to the specifier form of _Atomic(T).
- Replace **_Complex_I** and **_Imaginary_I** by first-class language constructs.
- Make **offsetof** a keyword.
- Make generic a keyword that replaces **_Generic**.
- Make decimal32, decimal64 and decimal128 (or dec32, dec64 and dec128) keywords that replace _Decimal32, _Decimal64 and _Decimal128.

2. PROPOSED MECHANISM OF INTEGRATION

Many code bases use in fact the underscore-capitalized form of the keywords and not the compatible ones that are provided by the library headers. Therefore we need a mechanism that makes a final transition to the new keywords seamless. We propose the following:

- Allow for the keywords to also be macros, such that implementations may have an easy transition.
- Don't allow user code to change such macros.
- Allow the keywords to result in other spellings when they are expanded in with # or ## operators.
- Keep the alternative spelling with underscore-capitalized identifiers around for a while.

With this in mind, implementing these new keywords is in fact almost trivial for any implementation that is conforming to C17.

- 5 predefined macros (7 when adding **false** and **true**) have to be added to the startup mechanism of the translator. They should expand to similar tokens as had been defined in the corresponding library headers.
- If some of the macros are distinct to their previous definition, the library headers have to be amended with **#ifndef** tests. Otherwise, the equivalent macro definition in a header should not harm.

Needless to say that on the long run, it would be good if implementations would switch to full support as keywords, but there is no rush, and some implementations that have no need for C++ compatibility might never do this.

3. REFERENCE IMPLEMENTATION

To add minimal support for the proposed changes, an implementation would have to add definitions that are equivalent to the following lines to their startup code:

#define alignas _Alignas
fine alignof _Align

At the other end of the spectrum, an implementation that implements all new keywords as first-class constructs and also wants to provide them as macros (though they don't have to) can simply have definitions that are the token identity:

```
#define alignas alignas
#define alignof alignof
#define bool bool
#define false false
#define static_assert static_assert
#define thread_local thread_local
#define true true
```

4. MODIFICATIONS TO THE STANDARD TEXT

This proposal implies a large number of trivial modifications in the text, namely simple text processing that replaces the occurrence of one of the deprecated keywords by its new version. These modifications are not by themselves interesting and are not included in the following. WG14 members are invited to inspect them on the VC system, if they want, they are in the branch "keywords".

The following appendix lists the non-trivial changes:

- Changes to the "Keywords" clause 6.4.1, where we replace the keywords themselves (p1) and add provisions to have the new ones as macro names (p2) and establish the old keywords as alternative spellings (p4).
- A new subclause to 6.10.8.4 "Optional macros" that lists the new keywords that may also be macros.
- Modifications of the corresponding library clauses (7.2, 7.15, 7.18, and 7.26).
- Mark <stdalign.h> (and <stdbool.h> with the changes in N2458) to be obsolescent inside their specific text and in clause 7.31 "Future library directions".
- Update Annex A.

Appendix: pages with diffmarks of the proposed changes against the September 2019 working draft.

The following page numbers are from the particular snapshot and may vary once the changes are integrated.

6.4.1 Keywords

Syntax

1 *keyword:* one of

alignas	enum	signed	_Alignas
alignof	extern	sizeof	_Alignof
auto	float	static	_Atomic
bool	for	static_assert	_Bool
break	goto	struct	_Complex
case	if	switch	_Decimal128
char	inline	thread_local	_Decimal32
const	int	typedef	_Decimal64
continue	long	union	_Generic
default	register	unsigned	$_$ Imaginary
do	restrict	void	_Noreturn
double	return	volatile	_Static_assert
else	short	while	_Thread_local

Constraints

2 The keywords

alignas	alignof	bool	static_assert	thread_local
---------	---------	------	---------------	--------------

may optionally be predefined macro names (??). None of these shall be the subject of a **#define** or a **#undef** preprocessing directive.

Semantics

- The above tokens (case sensitive) are reserved (in translation phases 7 and 8) for use as keywords except in an attribute token, and shall not be used otherwise. The keyword **__Imaginary** is reserved for specifying imaginary types.⁷⁴⁾
- The following table provides alternate spellings for certain keywords. These can be used wherever the keyword can.⁷⁵⁾

keyword	alternative spelling
alignas	_Alignas
alignof	_Alignof
bool	_Bool
static_assert	_Static_assert
thread_local	_Thread_local

Their spelling inside expressions that are subject to the **#** and **##** preprocessing operators is unspecified.⁷⁶⁾

6.4.2 Identifiers

6.4.2.1 General

Syntax

1 identifier:

identifier-nondigit identifier identifier-nondigit identifier digit

⁷⁴⁾One possible specification for imaginary types appears in Annex G.

⁷⁵⁾These alternative keywords are obsolescent features and should not be used for new code.

⁷⁶⁾The intent of these specifications is to allow but not to force the implementation of the correspondig feature by means of a predefined macro.

2 An implementation that defines __STDC_NO_COMPLEX__ shall not define __STDC_IEC_60559_COMPLEX__ or __STDC_IEC_559_COMPLEX__.

6.10.8.4 Optional macros

1 The keywords

alignas alignof bool static_assert thread_local

optionally are also predefined macro names that expand to unspecified tokens.

6.10.9 Pragma operator

Semantics

1 A unary operator expression of the form:

```
_Pragma ( string-literal )
```

is processed as follows: The string literal is *destringized* by deleting any encoding prefix, deleting the leading and trailing double-quotes, replacing each escape sequence \" by a double-quote, and replacing each escape sequence \\ by a single backslash. The resulting sequence of characters is processed through translation phase 3 to produce preprocessing tokens that are executed as if they were the *pp-tokens* in a pragma directive. The original four preprocessing tokens in the unary operator expression are removed.

2 **EXAMPLE** A directive of the form:

```
#pragma listing on "..\listing.dir"
```

can also be expressed as:

```
_Pragma ("listing on \"..\\listing.dir\"")
```

The latter form is processed in the same way whether it appears literally as shown, or results from macro replacement, as in:

```
#define LISTING(x) PRAGMA(listing on #x)
#define PRAGMA(x) _Pragma(#x)

LISTING (..\listing.dir)
```

7.2 Diagnostics <assert.h>

The header <assert.h> defines the **assert** and **static_assert** macros macro and refers to another macro,

```
NDEBUG
```

which is *not* defined by <assert.h>. If **NDEBUG** is defined as a macro name at the point in the source file where <assert.h> is included, the **assert** macro is defined simply as

```
#define assert(ignore) ((void)0)
```

The **assert** macro is redefined according to the current state of **NDEBUG** each time that **<assert.h>** is included.

The **assert** macro shall be implemented as a macro, not as an actual function. If the macro definition is suppressed in order to access an actual function, the behavior is undefined.

The macro expands to _Static_assert.

7.2.1 Program diagnostics

7.2.1.1 The assert macro

Synopsis

```
#include <assert.h>
void assert(scalar expression);
```

Description

The assert macro puts diagnostic tests into programs; it expands to a void expression. When it is executed, if expression (which shall have a scalar type) is false (that is, compares equal to 0), the assert macro writes information about the particular call that failed (including the text of the argument, the name of the source file, the source line number, and the name of the enclosing function — the latter are respectively the values of the preprocessing macros __FILE__ and __LINE__ and of the identifier __func__) on the standard error stream in an implementation-defined format.²⁰⁵⁾ It then calls the abort function.

Returns

3 The **assert** macro returns no value.

Forward references: the **abort** function (7.22.4.1).

```
Assertion failed: expression, function abc, file xyz, line nnn.
```

²⁰⁵⁾The message written might be of the form:

7.15 Alignment < stdalign.h>

The header defines four macros.

The obsolescent header <stdalign.h> defines two macros that are suitable for use in **#if** preprocessing directives. They are

__alignas_is_defined

and

__alignof_is_defined

which both expand to the integer constant 1.

7.18 Boolean type and values <stdbool.h>

1 The header <stdbool.h> defines four macros.

expands to _Bool.

three macros that are suitable for use in **#if** preprocessing directives. They are

true

which expands to the integer constant 1,

false

which expands to the integer constant 0, and

__bool_true_false_are_defined

which expands to the integer constant 1.

Notwithstanding the provisions of 7.1.3, a program may undefine and perhaps then redefine the macros **bool**, **true**, and **false**.²⁸¹⁾

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²⁸¹⁾See "future library directions" (7.31.11).

7.26 Threads < threads.h>

7.26.1 Introduction

- The header <threads.h> includes the header <time.h>, defines macros, and declares types, enumeration constants, and functions that support multiple threads of execution.³³⁸⁾
- Implementations that define the macro **__STDC_NO_THREADS**__ need not provide this header nor support any of its facilities.

which expands to the keyword _Thread_local; The macros are

```
ONCE_FLAG_INIT
```

which expands to a value that can be used to initialize an object of type once_flag; and

TSS_DTOR_ITERATIONS

which expands to an integer constant expression representing the maximum number of times that destructors will be called when a thread terminates.

4 The types are

```
cnd_t
```

which is a complete object type that holds an identifier for a condition variable;

```
thrd_t
```

which is a complete object type that holds an identifier for a thread;

```
tss_t
```

which is a complete object type that holds an identifier for a thread-specific storage pointer;

```
mtx_t
```

which is a complete object type that holds an identifier for a mutex;

```
tss_dtor_t
```

which is the function pointer type **void** (*)(**void***), used for a destructor for a thread-specific storage pointer;

```
thrd_start_t
```

which is the function pointer type **int** (*)(**void***) that is passed to **thrd_create** to create a new thread; and

```
once_flag
```

which is a complete object type that holds a flag for use by call_once.

5 The enumeration constants are

```
mtx_plain
```

which is passed to mtx_init to create a mutex object that does not support timeout;

```
mtx_recursive
```

 $^{^{338)}\}mbox{See}$ "future library directions" (7.31.17).

cracosh	cratanh	crexp10	crlog1p	crrootn
cracospi	cratanpi	crexp2m1	crlog2p1	crrsqrt
cracos	cratan	crexp2	crlog2	crsinh
crasinh	crcompoundn	crexpm1	crlogp1	crsinpi
crasinpi	crcosh	crexp	crlog	crsin
crasin	crcospi	crhypot	crpown	crtanh
cratan2pi	crcos	crlog10p1	crpowr	crtanpi
cratan2	crexp10m1	crlog10	crpow	crtan

and the same names suffixed with **f**, **l**, **d32**, **d64**, or **d128** may be added to the <math.h> header. The **cr** prefix is intended to indicate a correctly rounded version of the function.

7.31.9 Signal handling <signal.h>

Macros that begin with either **SIG** and an uppercase letter or **SIG** and an uppercase letter may be added to the macros defined in the <signal.h> header.

7.31.10 Alignment < stdalign.h>

The header <stdalign.h> together with its defined macros <u>_alignas_is_defined</u> and <u>_alignas_is_defined</u> is an obsolescent feature.

7.31.11 Atomics < stdatomic.h>

- Macros that begin with ATOMIC_ and an uppercase letter may be added to the macros defined in the <stdatomic.h> header. Typedef names that begin with either atomic_ or memory_, and a lowercase letter may be added to the declarations in the <stdatomic.h> header. Enumeration constants that begin with memory_order_ and a lowercase letter may be added to the definition of the memory_order type in the <stdatomic.h> header. Function names that begin with atomic_ and a lowercase letter may be added to the declarations in the <stdatomic.h> header.
- 2 The macro **ATOMIC_VAR_INIT** is an obsolescent feature.

7.31.12 Boolean type and values <stdbool.h>

1 The ability to undefine and perhaps then redefine the macros bool, true, and false is an obsolescent feature.

7.31.13 Integer types <stdint.h>

Typedef names beginning with **int** or **uint** and ending with **_t** may be added to the types defined in the <stdint.h> header. Macro names beginning with **INT** or **UINT** and ending with **_MAX**, **_MIN**, **_WIDTH**, or **_C** may be added to the macros defined in the <stdint.h> header.

7.31.14 Input/output <stdio.h>

- Lowercase letters may be added to the conversion specifiers and length modifiers in **fprintf** and **fscanf**. Other characters may be used in extensions.
- The use of **ungetc** on a binary stream where the file position indicator is zero prior to the call is an obsolescent feature.

7.31.15 General utilities <stdlib.h>

- Function names that begin with **str** or **wcs** and a lowercase letter may be added to the declarations in the <stdlib.h> header.
- Invoking **realloc** with a size argument equal to zero is an obsolescent feature.

7.31.16 String handling <string.h>

Function names that begin with **str**, **mem**, or **wcs** and a lowercase letter may be added to the declarations in the <string.h> header.

Annex A (informative) Language syntax summary

NOTE The notation is described in 6.1.

A.1 Lexical grammar

A.1.1 Lexical elements

(6.4) token:

keyword identifier constant string-literal punctuator

(6.4) preprocessing-token:

header-name identifier pp-number character-constant string-literal punctuator

each non-white-space character that cannot be one of the above

A.1.2 Keywords

(6.4.1) keyword: one of

alignas	enum	signed	_Alignas
alignof	extern	sizeof	_Alignof
auto	float	static	_Atomic
bool	for	static_assert	_Bool
break	goto	struct	_Complex
case	if	switch	_Decimal128
char	inline	thread_local	_Decimal32
const	int	typedef	_Decimal64
continue	long	union	_Generic
default	register	unsigned	$_$ Imaginary
do	restrict	void	_Noreturn
double	return	volatile	_Static_assert
else	short	while	_Thread_local

A.1.3 Identifiers

(6.4.2.1) *identifier*:

identifier-nondigit

identifier identifier-nondigit

identifier digit

(6.4.2.1) identifier-nondigit:

nondigit

universal-character-name

other implementation-defined characters

```
(6.5.1.1) generic-selection:
                   _Generic (assignment-expression, generic-assoc-list)
(6.5.1.1) generic-assoc-list:
                   generic-association
                   generic-association, generic-association
(6.5.1.1) generic-association:
                   type-name: assignment-expression
                   default: assignment-expression
(6.5.2) postfix-expression:
                   primary-expression
                   postfix-expression [ expression ]
                   postfix-expression (argument-expression-list<sub>opt</sub>)
                   postfix-expression . identifier
                   postfix-expression -> identifier
                   postfix-expression ++
                   postfix-expression --
                    ( type-name ) { initializer-list }
                    ( type-name ) { initializer-list , }
(6.5.2) argument-expression-list:
                   assignment-expression
                   argument-expression-list, assignment-expression
(6.5.3) unary-expression:
                   postfix-expression
                   ++ unary-expression
                    -- unary-expression
                   unary-operator cast-expression
                   sizeof unary-expression
                   sizeof (type-name)
                   _Alignof alignof (type-name)
(6.5.3) unary-operator: one of
                  & * + - ~ !
(6.5.4) cast-expression:
                   unary-expression
                    ( type-name ) cast-expression
(6.5.5) multiplicative-expression:
                   cast-expression
                   multiplicative-expression * cast-expression
                   multiplicative-expression / cast-expression
                   multiplicative-expression % cast-expression
(6.5.6) additive-expression:
                   multiplicative-expression
                   additive-expression + multiplicative-expression
                   additive-expression - multiplicative-expression
(6.5.7) shift-expression:
                   additive-expression
                   shift-expression << additive-expression
                   shift-expression >> additive-expression
```

```
(6.7) init-declarator-list:
                     init-declarator
                     init-declarator-list , init-declarator
(6.7) init-declarator:
                     declarator
                     declarator = initializer
(6.7) attribute-declaration:
                     attribute-specifier-sequence;
(6.7.1) storage-class-specifier:
                     typedef
                     extern
                     static
                    _Thread_local
                     auto
                     register
(6.7.2) type-specifier:
                     void
                     char
                     short
                     int
                     long
                     float
                     double
                     signed
                     unsigned
                    <del>_Bool</del> bool
                    _Complex
                     _Decimal32
                     _Decimal64
                     _Decimal128
                     atomic-type-specifier
                     struct-or-union-specifier
                     enum-specifier
                     typedef-name
(6.7.2.1) struct-or-union-specifier:
                     struct-or-union attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub> identifier<sub>opt</sub> { member-declaration-list }
                     struct-or-union attribute-specifier-sequence opt identifier
(6.7.2.1) struct-or-union:
                     struct
                     union
(6.7.2.1) member-declaration-list:
                     member-declaration
                     member-declaration-list member-declaration
(6.7.2.1) member-declaration:
                     attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub> specifier-qualifier-list member-declarator-list<sub>opt</sub>;
                     static assert-declaration
(6.7.2.1) specifier-qualifier-list:
                     type-specifier-qualifier attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub>
                     type-specifier-qualifier specifier-qualifier-list
(6.7.2.1) type-specifier-qualifier:
                     type-specifier
                     type-qualifier
                     alignment-specifier
```

```
(6.7.2.1) member-declarator-list:
                      member-declarator
                      member-declarator-list, member-declarator
(6.7.2.1) member-declarator:
                      declarator
                      declarator_{opt}: constant-expression
(6.7.2.2) enum-specifier:
                      enum attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub> identifier<sub>opt</sub> { enumerator-list }
                      enum attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub> identifier<sub>opt</sub> { enumerator-list , }
                      enum identifier
(6.7.2.2) enumerator-list:
                      enumerator
                      enumerator-list, enumerator
(6.7.2.2) enumerator:
                      enumeration-constant attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub>
                      enumeration-constant attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub> = constant-expression
(6.7.2.4) atomic-type-specifier:
                       _Atomic (type-name)
(6.7.3) type-qualifier:
                      const
                      restrict
                      volatile
                      _Atomic
(6.7.4) function-specifier:
                      inline
                      _Noreturn
(6.7.5) alignment-specifier:
                     _Alignas alignas (type-name)
                     _Alignas alignas (constant-expression)
(6.7.6) declarator:
                      pointer<sub>opt</sub> direct-declarator
(6.7.6) direct-declarator:
                      identifier attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub>
                      ( declarator )
                      array-declarator attribute-specifier-sequence opt
                     function-declarator attribute-specifier-sequence opt
(6.7.6) array-declarator:
                      direct-declarator [ type-qualifier-list_{opt} assignment-expression_{opt} ]
                      direct-declarator [ static type-qualifier-list<sub>opt</sub> assignment-expression ]
                      direct-declarator [ type-qualifier-list static assignment-expression ]
                      direct-declarator [ type-qualifier-list_{opt} * ]
(6.7.6) function-declarator:
                      direct-declarator ( parameter-type-list_{opt} )
(6.7.6) pointer:
                      * attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub> type-qualifier-list<sub>opt</sub>
                      * attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub> type-qualifier-list<sub>opt</sub> pointer
(6.7.6) type-qualifier-list:
                      type-qualifier
                      type-qualifier-list type-qualifier
(6.7.6) parameter-type-list:
                      parameter-list
                      parameter-list, ...
```

```
(6.7.6) parameter-list:
                      parameter-declaration
                      parameter-list, parameter-declaration
(6.7.6) parameter-declaration:
                      attribute-specifier-sequence<sub>opt</sub> declaration-specifiers declarator
                      attribute-specifier-sequence opt declaration-specifiers abstract-declarator opt
(6.7.7) type-name:
                      specifier-qualifier-list abstract-declarator<sub>opt</sub>
(6.7.7) abstract-declarator:
                      pointer
                      pointer<sub>opt</sub> direct-abstract-declarator
(6.7.7) direct-abstract-declarator:
                      ( abstract-declarator )
                      array-abstract-declarator attribute-specifier-sequence opt
                      function-abstract-declarator attribute-specifier-sequence opt
(6.7.7) array-abstract-declarator:
                      direct-abstract-declarator<sub>opt</sub> [ type-qualifier-list<sub>opt</sub> assignment-expression<sub>opt</sub> ]
                      direct-abstract-declarator<sub>opt</sub> [ static type-qualifier-list<sub>opt</sub> assignment-expression ]
                      direct-abstract-declarator_{opt} [ type-qualifier-list static assignment-expression ]
                      direct-abstract-declarator<sub>opt</sub> [ * ]
(6.7.7) function-abstract-declarator:
                      direct-abstract-declarator<sub>opt</sub> ( parameter-type-list<sub>opt</sub> )
(6.7.8) typedef-name:
                      identifier
(6.7.9) initializer:
                      assignment-expression
                      { initializer-list }
                      { initializer-list , }
(6.7.9) initializer-list:
                      designation<sub>opt</sub> initializer
                      initializer-list , designation<sub>opt</sub> initializer
(6.7.9) designation:
                      designator-list =
(6.7.9) designator-list:
                      designator
                      designator-list designator
(6.7.9) designator:
                      [ constant-expression ]

    identifier

(6.7.10) static_assert-declaration:
                      _Static_assert static_assert (constant-expression, string-literal);
                      _Static_assert (constant-expression);
(6.7.11.1) attribute-specifier-sequence:
                      attribute-specifier-sequence opt attribute-specifier
(6.7.11.1) attribute-specifier:
                      [ [ attribute-list ] ]
(6.7.11.1) attribute-list:
                      attribute_{\mathrm{opt}}
                      attribute-list, attribute<sub>opt</sub>
(6.7.11.1) attribute:
                      attribute-token attribute-argument-clauseopt
```