

# INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

# ISO/IEC 3309

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## Information technology — Telecommunications and information exchange between systems — High-level data link control (HDLC) procedures — Frame structure

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*Technologies de l'information — Télécommunications et échange  
d'informations entre systèmes — Procédures de commande de  
liaison de données à haut niveau (HDLC) — Structure de trame*

ISO/IEC 3309:1993

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work.

In the field of information technology, ISO and IEC have established a joint technical committee, ISO/IEC JTC 1. Draft International Standards adopted by the joint technical committee are circulated to national bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the national bodies casting a vote.

International Standard ISO/IEC 3309 was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 6, *Telecommunications and information exchange between systems*.

This fifth edition cancels and replaces the fourth edition (ISO/IEC 3309:1991), and incorporates ISO/IEC 3309 amendment 2.

Annex A of this International Standard is for information only.

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## Introduction

This International Standard is one of a series to be used in the implementation of various applications which utilize synchronous or start/stop transmission facilities.

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# Information technology — Telecommunications and information exchange between systems — High-level data link control (HDLC) procedures — Frame structure

## 1 Scope

This International Standard specifies the frame structure for data communication systems using bit-oriented high-level data link control (HDLC) procedures. It defines the relative positions of the various components of the basic frame and the bit combination for the frame delimiting sequence (flag). The mechanisms used to achieve bit pattern independence (transparency) within the frame are also defined. In addition, two frame checking sequences (FCS) are specified; the rules for address field extension are defined; and the addressing conventions available are described.

Control field encodings and formats are defined in other International Standards.

## 2 Normative references

The following standards contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this International Standard. At the time of publication, the editions indicated were valid. All standards are subject to revision, and parties to agreements based on this International Standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the standards indicated below. Members of IEC and ISO maintain registers of currently valid International Standards.

ISO/IEC 646:1991, *Information technology — ISO 7-bit coded character set for information interchange*.

ISO 2382-9: 1984, *Data processing — Vocabulary — Part 09: Data communication*.

## 3 Basic frame structure

In HDLC, all transmissions are in frames. The basic frame structure does not include bits inserted for bit-synchronization

(i.e., start or stop elements, see 4.7.2) or bits or octets inserted for transparency (see 4.5).

Each frame consists of the following fields (transmission sequence left to right):

Flag	Address	Control	Information	FCS	Flag
01111110	8 bits	8 bits	*	16 or 32 bits	01111110

\* An unspecified number of bits which in some cases may be a multiple of a particular character size; for example, an octet.

where

Flag = flag sequence

Address = data station address field

Control = control field

Information = information field

FCS = frame checking sequence field

Frames containing only control sequences form a special case where there is no information field. The format for these frames shall be

Flag	Address	Control	FCS	Flag
01111110	8 bits	8 bits	16 or 32 bits	01111110

## 4 Elements of the frame

### 4.1 Flag sequence

All frames shall start and end with the flag sequence. All data stations which are attached to the data link shall continuously hunt for this sequence. Thus, the flag is used for frame

synchronization. A single flag may be used as both the closing flag for one frame and the opening flag for the next frame.

#### 4.2 Address field

In command frames, the address shall identify the data station(s) for which the command is intended. In response frames, the address shall identify the data station from which the response originated.

#### 4.3 Control field

The control field indicates the type of commands or responses, and contains sequence numbers, where appropriate. The control field shall be used

- a) to convey a command to the addressed data station(s) to perform a particular operation, or
- b) to convey a response to such a command from the addressed data station.

#### 4.4 Information field

Information may be any sequence of bits. In most cases it will be linked to a convenient character structure, for example octets, but, if required, it may be an unspecified number of bits and unrelated to a character structure.

For start/stop transmission there shall be eight (8) information bits between the start element and the stop element. If the information field is other than a multiple of 8 bits, the final remainder less than an octet will require pad bits to complete

the octet. The method of providing and unambiguously identifying the pad bits is not a subject of this International Standard.

### 4.5 Transparency

#### 4.5.1 Synchronous transmission

The transmitter shall examine the frame content between the two flag sequences including the address, control and FCS fields and shall insert a "0" bit after all sequences of 5 contiguous "1" bits (including the last 5 bits of the FCS) to ensure that a flag sequence is not simulated. The receiver shall examine the frame content and shall discard any "0" bit which directly follows 5 contiguous "1" bits.

#### 4.5.2 Start/stop transmission - basic transparency

Two levels of transparency processing are specified for use with start/stop mode transmission. These are seven-bit data path transparency (SBDPT), specified in subclause 4.5.2.1; and control-octet transparency, specified in subclause 4.5.2.2. Control-octet transparency shall always be performed. SBDPT is an option, use or non-use of which is selected for a given data link by means outside the scope of this International Standard (e.g., a priori knowledge, bilateral agreement, heuristic implementation techniques).

##### 4.5.2.1 Seven-bit data path transparency

When SBDPT is selected, the content of each frame, from address field to FCS field inclusive, shall be transferred between sender and receiver as a frame-image derived from the original frame as follows, and as indicated in figure 1.

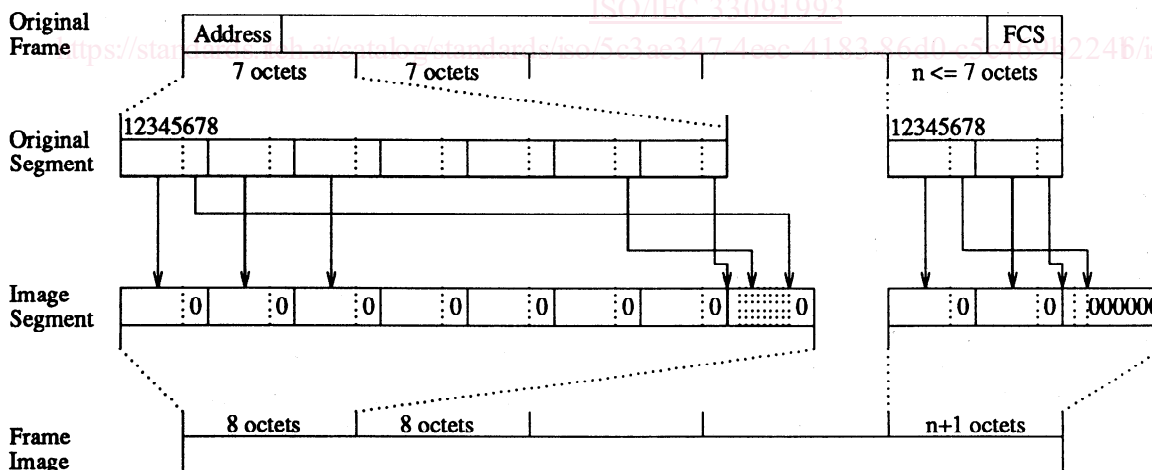


Figure 1 - Original Frame to Frame-Image Transition