
Trailing Function Return Types

This sometimes syntactically more convenient yet semantically equivalent alternative of using `->` to **declare** a function’s return type *after* its **parameter list** enables that type to refer to the individual **parameters** by name along with other class or namespace **members** without explicit qualification.

Description

C++11 offers an alternative function-**declaration** syntax in which the return type of a function is located to the right of its **signature** (name, **parameters**, and **qualifiers**), offset by the arrow token (`->`); the function itself is introduced by the keyword **auto**, which acts as a type **placeholder**:

```
auto f() -> void; // equivalent to void f();
```

When using the alternative, **trailing-return-type** syntax, any **const**, **volatile**, and **reference qualifiers** (see Section 3.1.“Ref-Qualifiers” on page 1157) are placed to the left of the `-> *<return-type>*`, and any **contextual keywords**, such as **override** and **final** (see Section 1.1.“**override**” on page 104 and Section 3.1.“**final**” on page 1011), are placed to its right:

```
struct Base
{
    virtual int e() const;    // const qualifier
    virtual int f() volatile; // volatile qualifier
    virtual int g() &;      // lvalue-reference qualifier
    virtual int h() &&;      // rvalue-reference qualifier
};

struct Derived : Base
{
    auto e() const    -> int override; // override contextual keyword
    auto f() volatile -> int final;    // final      "      "
    auto g() &        -> int override; // override  "      "
    auto h() &&       -> int final;    // final    "      "
};
```

Using a **trailing return type** allows the **parameters** of a function to be named as part of the specification of the return type, which can be useful in conjunction with **decltype**:

```
auto g(int x) -> decltype(x); // equivalent to int g(int x);
```

When using the **trailing-return-type** syntax in a **member function** definition outside the class **definition**, names appearing in the return type, unlike with the classic notation, will be looked up in class scope by default: