

Section 1.1 C++11

Deleted Functions

Let’s now suppose it *is* our intention to suppress generation of the default constructor, and to make our intention clear, we elect to explicitly **declare** and **delete** it:

```
struct S2 // Implicit declaration of the default constructor is suppressed.
{
    S2() = delete; // explicit declaration of inaccessible default constructor
    S2(int);      // explicit declaration of value constructor
};

S2 y2(5); // OK, invokes the explicitly declared value constructor
S2 x2;    // Error, use of deleted function, S2::S2()
```

By declaring and then deleting the default constructor we have, it would appear that we (1) made our intentions clear and (2) improved diagnostics for our clients at the cost of a single extra line of self-documenting code. Ah, if only C++ were that straightforward.

Deleting certain **special member functions** — i.e., *default* constructor, *move* constructor, or *move-assignment* operator — that are not necessarily implicitly declared can have non-obvious consequence that adversely affect subtle compile-time properties of a class. One such subtle property is whether the compiler considers it to be a **literal type**, i.e., a type whose *value* is eligible for use as part of a **constant expression**. This same property of being a **literal type** is what determines whether an arbitrary type may be passed by value in the interface of a **constexpr** function; see Section 2.1. “**constexpr** Functions” on page 257.

As a simple illustration of a subtle compile-time difference between **S1** and **S2**, consider this practically useful *pattern* for a developer’s “test” function that will compile if and only if its by-value parameter, *x*, is of a literal type:

```
constexpr int test(S0 x) { return 0; } // OK, S0 is a literal type.
constexpr int test(S1 x) { return 0; } // Error, S1 is not a literal type.
constexpr int test(S2 x) { return 0; } // OK, S2 is a literal type.
```

For the compiler to treat a given class type as a **literal type**, it must, among other things, have at least one constructor (other than the *copy* or *move* constructor) declared as **constexpr**.

In the case of the empty **S0** class, the implicitly generated default constructor is **trivial** and so it is implicitly *declared* **constexpr** too. Class **S1**’s explicitly declared *nonconstexpr* value constructor suppresses the declaration of its only **constexpr** constructor, the default constructor; hence, **S1** does not qualify as a *literal type*.

Finally, by conspicuously declaring and deleting **S2**’s default constructor, we *declare* it nonetheless. What’s more, the declaration brought about by deleting it is the same as if it had been generated implicitly (or declared explicitly and then defaulted); hence, **S2**, unlike **S1**, *is* a *literal type*. Go figure!