

Data Naming Guidelines

This document summarizes guidelines for naming data components with syntactic consistency, semantic precision, and simplicity.

Naming data components by applying guidelines consistently makes it easier for users who aren't familiar with said components to identify, understand, use or re-use, and benefit from them.

1. Form of a Data Component Name

Generally, the name of a data component should take the form:

1. An object term,
2. a property term, and
3. if necessary, a representation term.

If necessary, qualifier terms may precede or follow an object, property, or representation term.

A **term** is a meaningful word, a commonly used-abbreviation for a word, or an acronym.

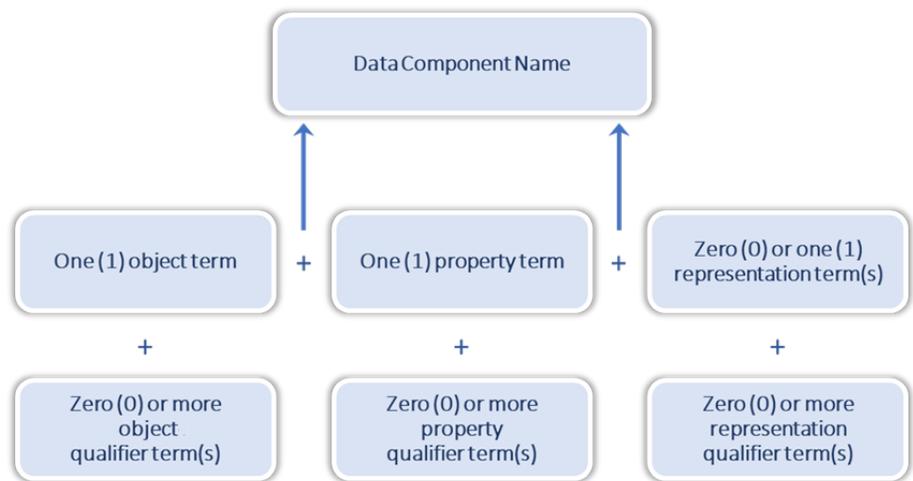


Figure 1 - Form of a Data Component Name

Object Term

An **object term** represents a class of real-world entities or concepts.

In the name “**Person Street Address Text**”, “**Person**” is the object term.

Property Term

A **property term** represents a characteristic of an object. A property has meaning but no inherent structure.

In the name “**Person Street Address Text**”, “**Address**” is the property term.

Representation Term

A **representation term** describes the data type or value set of a data component.

Don't use representation terms if they are redundant with property terms. For example, use “**Person First Name**” instead of “**Person First Name Name**”.

The name of a data component that doesn't have child components should always use an appropriate representation term.

In the name “**Person Street Address Text**”, “**Text**” is the representation term.

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Qualifier Term

A **qualifier term** modifies another term to increase semantic precision and reduce ambiguity.

Limit the number of qualifier terms to the minimum required to make a data component's name unique and understandable within the component's context.

In the name "**Person Street Address Text**", "**Street**" is a qualifier term modifying the term "**Address.**"

2. General Naming Guidelines

Guideline	Explanation
A name should be composed of English words.	A name should be composed of words from the English language, using the prevalent U.S. spelling.
A name should only have specific characters.	<p>Only use the following characters in name:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper-case letters: A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z • Lower-case letters: a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z • Digits: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 • Punctuation characters (underscore, hyphen, period): _ - . • Spaces <p>The allowable characters may be further limited in other contexts. For example, SQL names may not contain spaces, hyphens, or periods and might be interpreted with or without case sensitivity.</p>
Names should use consistent capitalization.	Within a context, names should follow a consistent capitalization convention (e.g., camelCase, PascalCase, infix_underscores).
A name should use common abbreviations.	A name should use commonly-used abbreviations instead of full meanings. For example, use " ID " instead of " Identifier. "
A name should use singular forms instead of plural.	A noun used as a term in a name should be in singular form (e.g., " Vehicle Depreciation Rate ") unless the concept itself is plural (e.g., " Tool Suite Total License Cost ").
A name should use the present tense.	A verb used as a term in a name should be used in the present tense unless the concept itself is past tense (e.g., " Petition Signatures Collected Amount ").
A name should only use essential words.	Avoid articles, conjunctions, and prepositions in a name except where required for clarity or by convention (e.g., " Power of Attorney Code ").