FORMAT

FORMAT [(*rep*)]   *parameter* **...**

This chapter covers the following topics:

- Function

- Syntax Description

- Applicable Parameters

- Example

For an explanation of the symbols used in the syntax diagram, see *Syntax Symbols*.

Related Statements: AT END OF PAGE | AT TOP OF PAGE | CLOSE PRINTER | DEFINE
PRINTER | DISPLAY | EJECT | NEWPAGE | PRINT | SKIP | SUSPEND IDENTICAL SUPPRESS |
WRITE | WRITE TITLE | WRITE TRAILER

Belongs to Function Group: *Creation of Output Reports*

Function

The FORMAT statement is used to specify input and output parameter settings.

Settings specified with a FORMAT statement override (at compilation time) default settings in effect for
the session that have been set by a GLOBALS command, SET GLOBALS statement, or by the Natural
administrator.

These settings may in turn be overridden by parameters specified in a DISPLAY, INPUT, PRINT,
WRITE, WRITE TITLE, or WRITE TRAILER statement.

The settings remain in effect until the end of a program or until another FORMAT statement is
encountered.

A FORMAT statement does not generate any executable code in the Natural program. It is not executed in
dependence of the logical flow of a program. It is evaluated during program compilation in order to set
parameters for compiling DISPLAY, WRITE, PRINT and INPUT statements. The settings defined with a
FORMAT statement are applicable to all DISPLAY, WRITE, PRINT and INPUT statements which follow.

Syntax Description

Syntax Element	Description
`(rep)`	**Report Specification:** The notation (`rep`) may be used to specify the identification of the report for which the FORMAT statement is applicable. A value in the range `0 - 31` or a logical name which has been assigned using the `DEFINE PRINTER` statement may be specified. If (`rep`) is not specified, the FORMAT statement will be applicable to the first report (Report 0). For information on how to control the format of an output report created with Natural, see *Controlling Data Output* (in the *Programming Guide*).
parameter	**Parameter(s):** The parameters can be specified in any order and must be separated by one or more spaces. A single entry must not be split between two statement lines. Field sensitive parameter settings applied here will only be regarded for variable fields used in a `INPUT`, `WRITE`, `DISPLAY` or `PRINT` statement of the selected report. They do not apply for text-constants used in any of the mentioned statements. See also *Applicable Parameters* below.

Applicable Parameters

See the *Parameter Reference* for a detailed description of the session parameters which may be used.

Parameter	Description
`AD`	Attribute Definition
`AL`	Alphanumeric Length for Output
`CD`	Color Definition
`DF`	Date Format
`DL`	Display Length for Output
`EM`	Edit Mask
`ES`	Empty Line Suppression
`FC`	Filler Character
`FL`	Floating Point Mantissa Length
`GC`	Filler Character for Group Heading
`HC`	Header Centering
`HW`	Heading Width

Parameter	Description
IC	Insertion Character
IP	Input Prompting Text
IS	Identical Suppress
KD	Key Definition
LC	Leading Characters
LS	Line Size
MC	Multiple-Value Field Count (Can only be used in reporting mode.)
MP	Maximum Number of Pages of a Report, see Note below.
MS	Manual Skip
NL	Numeric Length for Output
PC	Periodic Group Count (Can only be used in reporting mode.)
PM	Print Mode
PS	Page Size, see Note below.
SF	Spacing Factor
SG	Sign Position
TC	Trailing Characters
UC	Underlining Character
ZP	Zero Printing

Note:

The parameters MP and PS do not take effect for a specific I/O statement, but apply to the complete output created for the report. If multiple settings for MP and PS are performed, the last definition is used.

See also *Underlining Character for Titles and Headers - UC Parameter* (in the *Programming Guide*).

Example

```
** Example 'FMTEX1': FORMAT
************************************************************************
DEFINE DATA LOCAL
1 EMPLOY-VIEW VIEW OF EMPLOYEES
   2 NAME
   2 CITY
   2 POST-CODE
   2 COUNTRY
END-DEFINE
*
FORMAT AL=7    /* Alpha-numeric field output length
       FC=+    /* Filler character for field header
       GC=*    /* Filler character for group header
       HC=L    /* Header left justified
       IC=<<   /* Insert characters
       IS=ON   /* Identical suppress on
       TC=>>   /* Trailing character
```

```
        UC==     /* Underline character
        ZP=OFF  /* Zero print off
*
LIMIT 5
READ EMPLOY-VIEW BY NAME
  DISPLAY NOTITLE
         NAME 3X CITY 3X POST-CODE 3X COUNTRY
END-READ
*
END
```

Output of Program FMTEX1:

```
NAME+++++++    CITY+++++++    POSTAL+++++    COUNTRY++++
                              ADDRESS++++

==========    ==========    ==========    ==========

<<ABELLAN>>   <<MADRID >>   <<28014  >>   <<E   >>
<<ACHIESO>>   <<DERBY  >>   <<DE3 4TR>>   <<UK >>
<<ADAM   >>   <<JOIGNY >>   <<89300  >>   <<F   >>
<<ADKINSO>>   <<BROOKLY>>   <<11201  >>   <<USA>>
              <<BEVERLE>>   <<90211  >>
```