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Information technology — User system interfaces and symbols — Icon symbols and functions —

Part 1: Icons — General

Technologies de l'information — Interfaces pour système utilisateur et symboles — Symboles et fonctions d'icônes —

Partie 1: Icônes — Généralités

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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.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 3.

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.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this part of ISO/IEC 11581 may be the subject of patent rights. ISO and IEC shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

International Standard ISO/IEC 11581-1 was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 35, *User interfaces*.

ISO/IEC 11581 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Information technology — User system interfaces and symbols — Icon symbols and functions*:

- *Part 1: Icons — General*
- *Part 2: Object icons*
- *Part 3: Pointer icons*
- *Part 4: Control icons*
- *Part 5: Tool icons*
- *Part 6: Action icons*

Introduction

Icons are used on visual display terminals (VDTs, or screens) to facilitate interaction between computer-based applications (software products) and their users. Icon graphics can provide a language-independent means of communicating information to the user. They are part of a graphical interface that can facilitate the user's ability to learn, understand, and remember functional elements of the system, and aid in the manipulation of these elements.

Typically, a graphical user interface draws on a user's environment to provide a metaphorical representation of the user's tasks. A metaphor provides an analogy to concepts already familiar to the user, from which the user can deduce the system's use and behaviour. Icons can express the metaphor directly, as graphical representations of the metaphorical objects. They may also directly represent a physical object.

Icons are distinguished from other symbols on screens by the fact that they represent underlying system functions. Icons represent the objects, pointers, controls and tools making up the domain of an application and that users manipulate in doing their jobs. They can also represent status indicators used by the computer system to give information to the user and to mediate user interactions with software applications.

Figure 1 shows how the parts of ISO/IEC 11581 are organized. Symbols primarily intended for use on equipment other than screens are standardized in ISO 7000, ISO 7001, and IEC 60417.

Although different types of icons are distinguished for clarity, ISO/IEC 11581 does not imply that these types of symbols are disjoint. For example, a single icon may be simultaneously a pointer and a status indicator, or a status indicator may change to a pointer icon when the cursor is moved over a window that contains a different process.

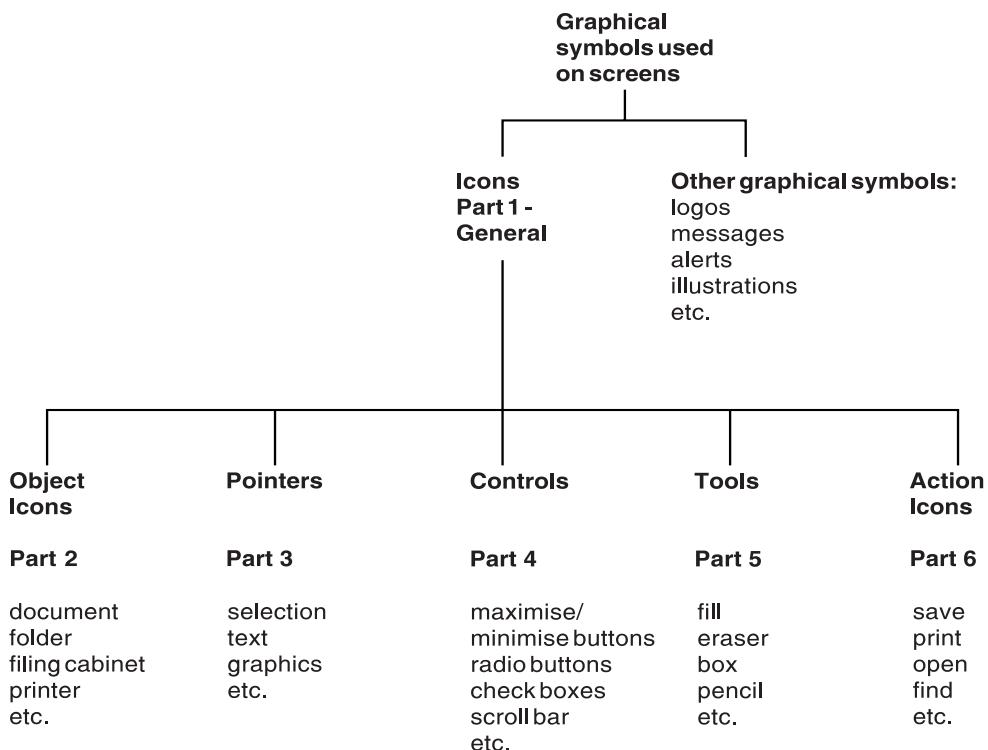


Figure 1 — Organization of ISO/IEC 11581