

XBin Format

The XBin (XINA Binary) format provides a XINA standard binary format for time based data files. It uses the file extension `xbin`.

The xbin format organizes **key-value** data by **time**. The data content is a series of **rows** in ascending time order, with each row having a single microsecond precision Unix time, unique within the file.

Segment Format

XBin data is often encoded in **segments**, which are defined by an initial 1, 2, or 4 byte unsigned integer length, then that number of bytes. These are referred to in this document as:

- **seg1** (up to 255 bytes)
- **seg2** (up to 65,535 bytes)
- **seg4** (up to 2,147,483,647 bytes)

If the length value of a segment is zero there is no following data and the value is considered **empty**.

Examples

The string `"foo"` has a 3 byte UTF-8 encoding: `0x66`, `0x6f`, `0x6f`.

As a seg1, this is encoded with a total of 4 bytes (the initial byte containing the length, 3):

`0x03` `0x66` `0x6f` `0x6f`

As a seg2, 5 bytes:

`0x00` `0x03` `0x66` `0x6f` `0x6f`

And as a seg4, 7 bytes:

`0x00` `0x00` `0x00` `0x03` `0x66` `0x6f` `0x6f`

Value Format

Each value starts with a 1 byte unsigned integer indicating the value type, followed by additional byte(s) containing the value itself, as applicable.

Value Type Definition

Code	Value	Length (bytes)	Description
<code>0</code>	<code>null</code>	0	literal <code>null</code> / empty string
<code>1</code>	ref dict index	1	index 0 to 255 (see below)

Code	Value	Length (bytes)	Description
2	ref dict index	2	index 256 to 65,535
3	ref dict index	4	index 65,536 to 2,147,483,647
4	true	0	boolean literal
5	false	0	boolean literal
6	int1	1	1 byte signed integer
7	int2	2	2 byte signed integer
8	int4	4	4 byte signed integer
9	int8	8	8 byte signed integer
10	float4	4	4 byte floating point
11	float8	8	8 byte floating point
12	string1	variable	seg1 UTF-8 encoded string
13	string2	variable	seg2 UTF-8 encoded string
14	string4	variable	seg4 UTF-8 encoded string
15	json1	variable	seg1 UTF-8 encoded JSON
16	json2	variable	seg2 UTF-8 encoded JSON
17	json4	variable	seg4 UTF-8 encoded JSON
18	jsonarray1	variable	seg1 UTF-8 encoded JSON array
19	jsonarray2	variable	seg2 UTF-8 encoded JSON array
20	jsonarray4	variable	seg4 UTF-8 encoded JSON array
21	jsonobject1	variable	seg1 UTF-8 encoded JSON object
22	jsonobject2	variable	seg2 UTF-8 encoded JSON object
23	jsonobject4	variable	seg4 UTF-8 encoded JSON object
24	bytes1	variable	seg1 raw byte array
25	bytes2	variable	seg2 raw byte array
26	bytes4	variable	seg4 raw byte array
27	xstring1	variable	seg1 xstring
28	xstring2	variable	seg2 xstring
29	xstring4	variable	seg4 xstring
30	xjsonarray1	variable	seg1 xjson array
31	xjsonarray2	variable	seg2 xjson array
32	xjsonarray4	variable	seg4 xjson array
33	xjsonobject1	variable	seg1 xjson object

Code	Value	Length (bytes)	Description
34	xjsonobject2	variable	seg2 xjson object
35	xjsonobject4	variable	seg4 xjson object
36 - 255	unused, reserved		

XString Format

The **xstring** value type allows chaining multiple encoded values to be interpreted as a string. The xstring segment length must be the total number of bytes of all encoded values in the string.

Note that although any data type may be included in an xstring, the exact string representation of certain values may vary depending on the decoding environment (specifically, the formatting of floating point values) and thus it is not recommended to include them in xstring values. JSON values will be converted to their minimal string representation. Byte arrays will be converted to a hex string. Null values will be treated as an empty string.

XJSON Array Format

The **xjsonarray** value type allows chaining multiple encoded values to be interpreted as a JSON array. The xjsonarray segment length must be the total number of bytes of all encoded values in the array.

XJSON Object Format

The **xjsonobject** value type allows chaining multiple encoded values to be interpreted as a JSON object. Each pair of values in the list is interpreted as a key-value pair. The xjsonobject segment length must be the total number of bytes of all encoded key-value pairs in the object. Note that key values must resolve to a string, xstring, number, boolean, or null (which will be interpreted as an empty string key).

Examples

Null Value:

Code	Content (0 bytes)
0x00	

300 (as 2 byte integer):

Code	Content (2 bytes)
0x07	0x01 0x2c

0.24 (as 8 byte float):

Code	Content (8 bytes)
0x0b	0x3f 0xce 0xb8 0x51 0xEB 0x85 0x1E 0xb8

"foo" (as string1):

Code	Content (4 bytes)
0x0c	0x03 0x66 0x6f 0x6f

`{"foo":"bar"}` (as json1):

Code	Content (14 bytes)
0x0f	0x0d0x7b0x220x660x6f0x6f0x220x3a0x220x620x610x720x220x7d

`"foo123"` (as xstring1, split as string1 "foo" and int1 123):

Code	Content (7 bytes)
0x1b	[0x06](total length) [0x030x660x6f0x6f]("foo") [0x040x7b](123)

Reference Dictionary

The xbin format provides user-managed compression through the reference dictionary. It can contain up to the 4 byte signed integer index space (2,147,483,647). The order of values affects the compression ratio; index 0-255 can be represented with a single byte, 256-65,535 with 2 bytes, and above requires 4 bytes.

Binary File Format

UUID

The file starts with a 16 byte binary encoded UUID. This is intended to uniquely identify the file, but the exact implementation and usage beyond this is not explicitly defined as part of the format definition. For XINA purposes two xbin files with the same UUID would be expected to be identical.

Header

A value which must either be `null` or a `jsonobject1`, `jsonobject2`, or `jsonobject4`. This is currently a placeholder with no defined parameters.

Reference Dict

A seg4 containing 0 to 2,147,483,647 encoded values, which may be referenced by zero based index with the reference dict index value types.

Rows

Each row contains:

- 8 byte signed integer containing Unix time with microsecond precision
- seg4 of row data, containing
 - header, single value which must either be `null` or a `jsonobject1`, `jsonobject2`, or `jsonobject4`
 - one or more key,value pairs

The row header is currently a placeholder with no defined parameters.

Example File

Given a data set with UUID 9462ef87-f232-4694-922c-12b93c95e27c:

t	voltage	current	label
0	5	10	"foo"
1			"bar"
2	5	null	

A corresponding xbin file containing the same data would be:

UUID (16 bytes)

0x94 0x62 0xef 0x87 0xf2 0x32 0x46 0x94 0x92 0x2c 0x12 0xb9 0x3c 0x95 0xe2 0x7c

Header (1 byte)

0x00 (null, 1 byte)

Reference Dict, three values, "voltage", "current", "label" (29 bytes)

0x00 0x00 0x00 0x19 (seg4 length, 25)

0x0a 0x07 0x76 0x6f 0x6c 0x74 0x61 0x67 0x65 ("voltage", 9 bytes)

0x0a 0x07 0x63 0x75 0x72 0x72 0x65 0x6e 0x74 ("current", 9 bytes)

0x0a 0x05 0x6c 0x61 0x62 0x65 0x6c ("label", 7 bytes)

Row t0 (22 bytes)

0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 (time, 0, 8 bytes)

0x00 0x00 0x00 0x0e (row length, 15, 4 bytes)

0x00 (header, null, 1 byte)

0x01 0x00 (reference to index 0, "voltage", 2 bytes)

0xff (type code reference to index 0, 5, 1 byte)

0x01 0x01 (reference to index 1, "current", 2 bytes)

0x04 0x0a (integer value 10, 2 bytes)

0x01 0x02 (reference to index 2, "label", 2 bytes)

0x0a 0x03 0x66 0x6f 0x6f (string "foo", 5 bytes)

Row t1 (20 bytes)

0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x01 (time, 1, 8 bytes)

0x00 0x00 0x00 0x08 (row length, 8, 4 bytes)

0x00 (header, null, 1 byte)

0x01 0x02 (reference to index 2, "label", 2 bytes)

0x0a 0x03 0x62 0x61 0x72 (string "bar", 5 bytes)

Row t2 (19 bytes)

0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x00 0x02 (time, 2, 8 bytes)

0x00 0x00 0x00 0x0e (row length, 15, 4 bytes)

0x00 (header, null, 1 byte)

0x01 0x00 (reference to index 0, "voltage", 2 bytes)

0x00 (type code reference to index 0, 5, 1 byte)

0x01 0x01 (reference to index 1, "current", 2 bytes)

0x00 (null, 1 byte)

Revision #34

Created 2 August 2022 17:27:24 by Nick Dobson

Updated 5 February 2025 15:28:14 by Nick Dobson