

Parallels Desktop

Advanced VM Configuration

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This guide provides information about a configuration file used to define the parameters for a Parallels virtual machine. When you create a new virtual machine, you choose its name, the operating system type, memory size, disk, and other options. Your choices are stored in an XML-based configuration file, which is placed into the virtual machine bundle. Since this is an XML file, it can be opened with a plain text editor for viewing and editing. The majority of the configuration parameters can be modified using the Parallels Desktop graphical user interface or through the API. Modifying the parameters directly in the configuration file is also possible. In addition, there are a number of useful configuration parameters that are not represented in the Parallels Desktop GUI, so they can only be modified by editing the configuration file directly or using the API. This document is intended for advanced Parallels Desktop users and system administrators, who would like to learn about the organization of the virtual machine configuration file in order to get more control over their virtual machines.

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Feedback

If you spot a typo in this guide, or if you have an opinion about how to make this guide more helpful, you can share your comments and suggestions with us by completing the Documentation Feedback form on our website (<http://www.parallels.com/en/support/usersdoc/>).

The Configuration File

The name of the virtual machine configuration file is `config.pvs`. The file is located in the virtual machine bundle (`.pvm` file), which is located in the `/Users/<user_name>/Documents/Parallels/` directory. To open the file through Finder, go to the Documents folder, then open the Parallels folder, select the virtual machine bundle of interest (`.pvm` file), right-click it and select **Show Package Contents** from the menu. You will see the `config.pvs` file in the bundle file list. The `config.pvs` file is an XML document. You can open it using the standard TextEdit application or any other text editor of your choice.

The XML document contained in the `config.pvs` file has a tree structure. The virtual machine configuration parameter values are stored in the leaf elements of the tree and are grouped by functionality. There are no specific constraints or rules besides the data types (the most commonly used data types are integer and string). Some elements may appear more than once in the same place in a document ($0..n$ cardinality). For example, a virtual machine can have more than one network adapter, so a separate `NetworkAdapter` element, which is used to define a network adapter, would exist for every one of them.

The root element of the XML tree is `ParallelsVirtualMachine`. The direct child elements of the root element are listed in the table below.

Element	Description
AppVersion	Contains the Parallels Desktop version and build number.
ValidRc	Used internally.
Identification	Contains parameters that identify the virtual machine on the host computer, including virtual machine name, UUID, file location, and others.
Security	Contains the virtual machine security settings. These settings are used internally by Parallels Desktop.
Settings	This is a large section that contains general virtual machine configuration parameters, startup and shutdown options, runtime options, Parallels Tools options, and others.
Hardware	This section contains parameters that define the virtual machine hardware, including CPU, memory, disk drives, video, network adapters, sounds, USB, etc.
InstalledSoftware	This section is used internally.

CHAPTER 2

Configuration Parameters

Before you make any modifications to the virtual machine configuration file, please read the important notes below:

- Some of the parameters are used internally by Parallels Desktop and should never be modified. If the parameter is not described in this document, then you shouldn't touch it.
- Some of the parameters are interlinked, meaning that modifying a parameter value may have negative effect on other parameters and the virtual machine performance in general. This mostly applies to hardware options and certain options in other groups. Please make sure you know what you are doing before modifying any of the configuration parameters.
- You should always fully stop a virtual machine before you make any changes to the virtual machine configuration file.

The rest of this chapter describes individual configuration parameters in detail.

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AppVersion

The AppVersion element contains the version and build number of Parallels Desktop with which this virtual machine was created.

Example:

```
<AppVersion>6.0.11598.587025</AppVersion>
```

Identification

The `Identification` group contains parameter that uniquely identify the virtual machine on the host computer.

VmUuid

The virtual machine universally unique ID (UUID). The UUID is automatically generated when the virtual machine is created.

VmName

The virtual machine name. You should not modify the virtual machine name here because it may affect other settings and cause unpredictable results. The virtual machine name should be changed in the Parallels Desktop application only.

ServerUuid

The host computer UUID.

VmFilesLocation

The location of the virtual machine files.

VmUptimeStartDateTime

The date and time the virtual machine was last started.

VmUptimeInSeconds

The virtual machine uptime in seconds (since when it was started the last time).

Settings

The `Settings` group contains parameters that are used to configure a broad range of virtual machine settings and options.

General

The parameters in the `General` group define the virtual machine general options.

OsType

Identifies the guest operating system type.

The operating system types are defined in the Parallels Virtualization SDK as macros with hexadecimal values. In the configuration file, their decimal equivalents are used:

```
#define PVS_GUEST_TYPE_FREEBSD 0x0A
#define PVS_GUEST_TYPE_LINUX 0x09
#define PVS_GUEST_TYPE_MACOS 0x07
#define PVS_GUEST_TYPE_MSDOS 0x0C
#define PVS_GUEST_TYPE_OS2 0x0B
#define PVS_GUEST_TYPE_SOLARIS 0x0E
#define PVS_GUEST_TYPE_WINDOWS 0x08
```

OsNumber

Identifies the operating system version.

The operating system versions are defined in the Parallels Virtualization SDK as macros. There are too many OS versions to list here. If needed, you can look it up in the **Parallels C API Reference** guide. Look for macros, which names begin with `PVS_GUEST_VER_` (for example, `PVS_GUEST_VER_WIN_WINDOWS7`).

VmDescription

This is a user-defined virtual machine description.

IsTemplate

Specifies whether the virtual machine is a template. Templates cannot be run as regular virtual machines but they can be used to create new virtual machines from them.

Startup

The parameters in the `Startup` group define the virtual machine startup options.

AutoStart

This parameter defines the virtual machine auto-start options.

Parameter values:

- 0 -- Never start the virtual machine automatically.
- 1 -- Start the virtual machine when the virtual machine window opens in Parallels Desktop.
- 2 -- Start the virtual machine when the Parallels Desktop application starts.

AutoStartDelay

This parameter allows to delay the automatic virtual machine startup. For example, if the virtual machine is set to start automatically when Parallels Desktop is launched, the delay will occur from the point when Parallels Desktop is fully running. If the parameter value is set to zero, there will be no delay and the virtual machine will be started as soon as Parallels Desktop is fully running. The delay is specified in seconds.

WindowMode

Defines the virtual machine window mode that will be used by default when the virtual machine starts.

Parameter values:

- 0 -- Same as last time
- 1 -- Window
- 2 -- Coherence
- 3 -- Full screen
- 4 -- Modality

BootOrder

The `BootOrder` node contains parameters that define boot device priority. The parameters here define which device the virtual machine will try to boot from first, then second, etc. To modify this list, you need to know the index assigned to each bootable device by Parallels Desktop. If needed, the device information can be obtained from the `Hardware` section.

The `BootOrder` node has child elements called `BootDevice`, each of which defines an individual boot device. There are usually multiple boot devices available (hard disk, CD/DVD, floppy, etc.). The `BootDevice` element has its own child elements:

Index -- An integer value identifying the device. The value can be looked up in the Hardware section, where hard disks and optical drives are defined.

Type -- Identifies the device type. The following is a list of the available device types as defined in the Parallels C API (this is the complete list, not all items are applicable here):

- PDE_GENERIC_DEVICE = 0,
- PDE_CLUSTERED_DEVICE = 1,
- PDE_STORAGE_DEVICE = 2,
- PDE_FLOPPY_DISK = 3,
- PDE_MASSSTORAGE_DEVICE = 4,
- PDE_OPTICAL_DISK = 5,
- PDE_HARD_DISK = 6,
- PDE_GENERIC_NETWORK_ADAPTER = 8,
- PDE_GENERIC_PORT = 9,
- PDE_SERIAL_PORT = 10,
- PDE_PARALLEL_PORT = 11,
- PDE_SOUND_DEVICE = 12,
- PDE_MIXER_DEVICE = 13,
- PDE_USB_DEVICE = 15,
- PDE_PRINTER = 16,
- PDE_GENERIC_PCI_DEVICE = 17,
- PDE_GENERIC_SCSI_DEVICE = 18,
- PDE_VIRTUAL_SNAPSHOT_DEVICE = 19,
- PDE_PCI_VIDEO_ADAPTER = 20,

BootNumber -- An integer specifying the device's place in the boot order list (0, 1, 2, 3, etc.)

Shutdown

The parameters in the `Shutdown` group are used to configure the virtual machine shut down options.

AutoStop

This parameter defines the action that will be taken on automatic virtual machine shutdown (e.g. when the user attempts to shutdown or restart the host computer).

Parameter values:

- 0 -- Suspend the virtual machine.
- 1 -- Forcefully stop the virtual machine.
- 2 -- Ask the user (display a dialog window) what to do.

OnVmWindowClose

This parameter defines the action that will be taken when the user attempts to close the virtual machine window.

Parameter values:

- 0 -- Stop the virtual machine.
- 1 -- Suspend the virtual machine.
- 2 -- Ask the user what to do.
- 3 -- Pause the virtual machine.
- 4 -- Shutdown the virtual machine (graceful shutdown).
- 5 -- Do nothing (the virtual machine will not be closed and will continue to run).

Runtime

The `Runtime` group defines the virtual machine runtime option.

ForegroundPriority

This parameter defines the priority level for the foreground virtual machine processes.

Parameter values:

0 -- Low priority.

1 -- Normal priority.

2 -- High priority.

BackgroundPriority

Defines the priority level for the background virtual machine processes.

Parameter Values:

0 -- Low priority.

1 -- Normal priority.

2 -- High priority.

CloseAppOnShutdown

This parameter allows to specify whether the Parallels Desktop application should be closed after the virtual machine is shut down.

Parameter values:

0 -- Do not close Parallels Desktop.

1 -- Close Parallels Desktop.

ActionOnStop

Defines the action taken when the virtual machine is stopped.

Parameter values:

0 -- Keep the virtual machine window open.

1 -- Close the virtual machine window.

2 -- Quit the Parallels Desktop application.

ShowBatteryStatus

If the host computer is a laptop, this parameter can be used to specify whether the laptop battery status will be shown in the virtual machine.

Parameter values:

0 -- Do not show the battery status.

1 -- Show the battery status.

EnableAdaptiveHypervisor

Enables or disables the Adaptive Hypervisor feature, which allows to automatically allocate more CPU resources to the guest or the host operating system depending on which one the user is currently working with.

Parameter values:

0 -- Disable Adaptive Hypervisor.

1 -- Enable Adaptive Hypervisor.

DisableSpeaker

This parameter can be used to enable or disable the host computer's built-in speaker in the virtual machine. If the speaker is enabled, it will be used to produce the default sounds (beeps) during the virtual machine startup and operation. If the speaker is disabled, it will be silent.

Parameter values:

0 -- Enable the speaker.

1 -- Disable the speaker.

HideBiosOnStartEnabled

This parameter can be used to enable or disable the virtual machine BIOS information display during the virtual machine startup.

Parameter values:

0 -- Display the BIOS information.

1 -- Do not display the BIOS information.

DisableWin7Logo

If a virtual machine is running Windows 7 as a guest operating system, you can enable or disable the Windows 7 logo during the virtual machine start-up.

Parameter values:

0 -- Do not display Windows 7 logo.

1 -- Display Windows 7 logo.

Tools

If Parallels Tools are installed in the virtual machine, you can use the parameters in the `Tools` group to configure their individual features.

Coherence

Parameters in the Coherence group are used to configure Coherence options.

ExcludeDock

When a virtual machine is running in the Coherence mode, Windows applications look like they are running on the Mac OS X desktop just like the native Mac applications. If you maximize an application window, it can occupy the entire Mac OS X desktop, including the Dock area, or it can be limited to occupy only the area above the Dock. You can control this by modifying the `ExcludeDock` parameter. If you set the parameter value to 1, Windows applications will never occupy the Dock area:

```
<ExcludeDock>1</ExcludeDock>
```

If you set it to 0, The Dock area will be available to Windows applications. Note that the Dock will always stay on top, so a portion of the Windows application window will be covered by it.

```
<ExcludeDock>0</ExcludeDock>
```

DoNotMinimizeToDock

When you minimize a Windows application, its icon can appear on the Windows taskbar or it can simultaneously appear on the taskbar and in the Dock. You can control this behavior by modifying the `DoNotMinimizeToDock` parameter. If you set the parameter value to 0, the icon will not appear in the Dock.

```
<DoNotMinimizeToDock>0</DoNotMinimizeToDock>
```

If you set it to 1, the icon will appear on the Windows taskbar and in the Dock.

```
<DoNotMinimizeToDock>1</DoNotMinimizeToDock>
```

BringToFront

A Windows application may display a notification to interact with the user. A notification is usually a window with a message to which the user has to respond. You have an option to display notification windows on top of any other application running on the Mac OS X desktop or always keep them in the background (you will see the notification if you bring the application itself to front by switching to it). This setting is stored in the `BringToFront` parameter. Set the parameter value to 0 to keep Windows application notifications in the background.

```
<BringToFront>0</BringToFront>
```

Set the value to 1 if you want to bring notifications to front.

```
<BringToFront>1</BringToFront>
```

AlwaysOnTop

In Windows, some applications have an option that allows them to run on top of any other application (the "Always on Top" option). You can extend this behavior to Mac OS X by making such applications to display on top of other applications on the Mac OS X desktop, including the native Mac applications. This is accomplished by modifying the `AlwaysOnTop` parameter. Set it to 1 to extend the "Always on Top" behavior to Mac OS X:

```
<AlwaysOnTop>1</AlwaysOnTop>
```

Set it to 0 to treat a Windows "Always on Top" application just like a regular one.

```
<AlwaysOnTop>0</AlwaysOnTop>
```



Sharing

SetExecBitForFiles

When you copy an executable file in a virtual machine to a folder shared with the Mac, its execution bit is not enabled by default, so you will not be able to run it on the Mac. You can enable the execution bit manually afterwards or you can set the `SetExecBitForFiles` parameter to change the default behavior. If the parameter is set to 1, the execution bit will be enabled automatically when you copy a file.

```
<SetExecBitForFiles>1</SetExecBitForFiles>
```

If you set the parameter to 0, the execution bit will not be enabled.

```
<SetExecBitForFiles>0</SetExecBitForFiles>
```

AutoMountNetworkDrives

Parallels Desktop has a feature called Smart Mount, which allows to automatically mount the virtual machine disk drives in the Mac. By default, Smart Mount will mount only the virtual machine hard disk(s) but not Windows network drives that may be mounted in the virtual machine. Mounting of the Windows network drives can be enabled by setting the `AutoMountNetworkDrives` parameter. Set it to 1 to enable the Windows network drives auto mounting.

```
<AutoMountNetworkDrives>1</AutoMountNetworkDrives>
```

Set it to 0 if you don't want the networks drives to appear in your Mac.

```
<AutoMountNetworkDrives>0</AutoMountNetworkDrives>
```

IconGroupingEnabled

If you have multiple instances of the same application opened in the virtual machine and then minimize one or more of them to the Dock, each instance can be displayed as a separate icon or a single icon can be used to hold all of them. By default, a single icon is used. You can modify this via the `IconGroupingEnabled` parameter. Set the parameter to 0 to display separate icons.

```
<IconGroupingEnabled>0</IconGroupingEnabled>
```

Set it to 1 to display a single icon.

```
<IconGroupingEnabled>1</IconGroupingEnabled>
```

SharedVolumes

Parallels Desktop allows to automatically mount Mac disk drives in the virtual machine. By default, if you enable Mac disk sharing, all disk drives (hard disk, DVD, external disks, network disks) will be shared with the virtual machine. You can override this and turn the sharing off for the specific disk types. The parameters that control this functionality are stored in the `SharedVolumes` group.

External disk drives

To turn the sharing on or off for external disks (e.g. USB, FireWire), modify the `UseExternalDisks` parameter. Set it to 1 to share external disks.

```
<UseExternalDisks>0</UseExternalDisks>
```

Set it to 0 to turn the sharing off.

```
<UseExternalDisks>1</UseExternalDisks>
```

CD/DVD disk drives

For CD/DVD disks, set the value of the UseDVDs parameter.

Mount CD/DVD disks:

```
<UseDVDs>1</UseDVDs>
```

Don't mount CD/DVD disks:

```
<UseDVDs>1</UseDVDs>
```

Network disk drives

Sharing of network disk drives mounted in the Mac can be turned on or off by modifying the UseConnectedServers parameter. The value of 1 will turn the sharing on.

```
<UseConnectedServers>1</UseConnectedServers>
```

The value of 0 will turn the sharing off.

```
<UseConnectedServers>1</UseConnectedServers>
```

Gestures

Enabled

Gestures can be optionally enabled or disabled in the virtual machine. By default gestures are enabled. You can change that by modifying the Gestures/Enabled parameter. To enable gestures, set the parameter value to 1.

```
<Gestures>
  <Enabled>1</Enabled>
</Gestures>
```

To disable gestures, set it to 0.

```
<Gestures>
  <Enabled>0</Enabled>
</Gestures>
```

Autoprotect

The parameters in the **Autoprotect** group are used to configure SmartGuard, a Parallels Desktop feature that can be used to take scheduled snapshots of a virtual machine.

Enabled

Enables or disable SmartGuard. Please note that the AutoCompress (p. 20) feature cannot be used together with SmartGuard. If you enable SmartGuard, the AutoCompress will stop functioning as soon as the first automatic snapshot of the virtual machine is taken.

Parameter values:

0 -- Disable SmartGuard.

1 -- Enable SmartGuard.

Period

The number of hours between each automatic virtual machine snapshot. For example, if the value is set to 24, a snapshot will be taken every 24 hours. You can use a value between 1 and 48 hours.

TotalSnapshots

The maximum number of snapshots that will be kept on the host computer at any given time. Once the maximum number of snapshots is reached, every new snapshot will cause the deletion of the oldest snapshot. The maximum allowed value is 100 snapshots.

Schema

Defines the SmartGuard operation scheme.

Parameter values:

1 -- Optimize for Time Machine. If this value is set, the SmartGuard will be configured automatically.

2 -- User defined schema. If this value is set, the user defined values will be used.

NotifyBeforeCreation

Specifies whether the user will be notified via a dialog window before an automatic snapshot is taken by SmartGuard.

Parameter values:

0 -- Do not notify the user.

1 -- Notify the user.

AutoCompress

The parameters in the `AutoCompress` group are used to configure the automatic virtual machine disk compression utility. This feature allows to automatically compress an expanding virtual disk to free up disk space used by it on the host computer.

Enabled

Enables or disables the `AutoCompress` utility.

Parameter values:

0 -- Disable `AutoCompress`.

1 -- Enable `AutoCompress`.

Period

Defines the number of seconds between each automatic compression. For example, if the number is set to 86400, an automatic compression of the hard disk will be performed every 24 hours. The actual compression operation will be performed on as-needed basis according to the value set in the `FreeDiskSpaceRatio` parameter (below) and on the amount of the unused space on the hard disk.

FreeDiskSpaceRatio

Defines the unused amount of disk space in percent that will be used as an indication that the automatic compression should be performed. For example, if you set this value to 50, an automatic compression will only be performed if the amount of unused hard disk space is equal or greater than 50% of the entire disk space.

Hardware

The parameters in the `Hardware` group are used to configure the virtual machine hardware options. The virtual machine CPU, memory, and virtual devices (disk drives, network adapters, video, sound, etc.) are defined in this group.

CPU

The parameters in the CPU group are used to configure the virtual machine CPU options.

Number

Defines the number of CPUs in the virtual machine. This number should not exceed the number of CPUs in the host computer.

Mode

Defines the virtual machine CPU mode. The virtual machine CPU can be used in 32 bit or 64 bit modes. Depending on the CPU type installed in the host computer, you can set the virtual CPU mode to the desired value.

Parameter values:

0 -- 32 bit.

1 -- 64 bit.

AccelerationLevel

Defines the virtual machine CPU acceleration level.

Parameter values:

0 -- Acceleration disabled.

1 -- Normal acceleration.

2 -- High acceleration.

EnableVTxSupport

Allows to enable or disable VTx support in the virtual machine CPU:

Parameter values:

0 -- disable VTx support.

1 -- enable VTx support.

Memory

The parameters in the Memory group are used to configure the virtual machine memory options.

RAM

Defines the amount of the virtual machine RAM, in megabytes. The amount of memory should be chosen based on the total memory installed in the host computer, which should be divided fairly between the host and the guest operating systems.

Video

The parameters in the Video group are used to configure the virtual machine video adapter options.

Enabled

Enables or disables the video adapter. If you disable the adapter, the virtual machine will not see it and it will not be available for selection in the Parallels Desktop GUI.

VideoMemorySize

Video memory size, in megabytes.

EnableDirectXShaders

Enables or disables DirectX Shaders.

Parameter values:

0 -- disable DirectX shaders.

1 -- enable DirectX shaders.

Enable3DAcceleration

Enables or disables 3D acceleration in the virtual video adapter.

Parameter values:

0 -- Disable 3D acceleration.

1 -- Enable 3D acceleration.

EnableVSync

Enables or disables the frame buffer and the screen vertical synchronization. Enable this feature if you are experiencing a page tearing artifact in your graphics application.

Parameter values:

0 -- Disable vertical synchronization.

1 -- Enabled vertical synchronization.



CdRom

Index

The CD/DVD drive index (integer, beginning with zero).

Enabled

Enables or disable the CD/DVD drive. A disabled CD/DVD drive will be completely hidden from the virtual machine. In addition, it will not be available for selection in the Parallels Desktop GUI.

Parameter values:

0 -- Disable the CD drive.

1 -- Enable the CD drive.

Connected

Connects or disconnects the CD drive to/from the virtual machine.

Parameter values:

0 -- Disconnect the drive.

1 -- Connect the drive.

EmulatedType

Defines the emulation type: real CD/DVD drive or an image file.

Parameter values:

0 -- Use real device.

1 -- Use image file. The image file name and path is specified in the `SystemName` parameter below.

SystemName

A system name that was given to the device by the operating system. If the `EmulatedType` parameter is set to 1 (image file), this parameter should contain the ISO image file name and path.

UserFriendlyName

A user-defined friendly name.

Hdd

The `Hdd` node defines a hard disk installed in a virtual machine. The basic device information is similar to `CdRom`. The hard disk-specific information defines the disk size, type, partition information, etc.

You should not modify any of the hard disk information. The values contained here are closely linked to the hard disk file, which can only be modified through the Parallels Desktop GUI or the API.

Serial

The `Serial` node contains information about serial ports in the virtual machine. The information is similar to other devices, like `CdRom` (above) with an addition of some serial port-related parameters.

NetworkAdapter

The `NetworkAdapter` node defines a network adapter installed in a virtual machine.

Index

The network adapter index (integer, beginning with zero) identifying the adapter.

Enabled

Enables or disable the network adapter. A disabled network adapter will be hidden from the virtual machine and will not show up in the Parallels Desktop GUI.

Connected

Connects or disconnects the network adapter from the virtual machine.

EmulatedType

Emulation type. This parameter allows to select the type of networking to use with the adapter.

Parameter values:

0 -- Use real device (host-only networking).

1 -- Use image file (shared networking).

2 -- Use output file (bridged ethernet).

SystemName

A system name assigned to the adapter by the operating system.

UserFriendlyName

User-defined friendly name.

AdapterNumber

In a bridged networking mode, a network adapter inside a virtual machine is bound to an adapter on the host. This parameter specifies the host adapter index number.

AdapterName

Same as `AdapterNumber` above, but contains the host adapter name.

MAC

The MAC address assigned to the adapter.

Sound

The Sound node contains parameters that define a sound card installed in the virtual machine.

Enabled

Enables or disable the sound card. A disabled sound card will not be found by the virtual machine and will not show up in the Parallels Desktop GUI.

Connected

Connects or disconnects the sound card from the virtual machine.

EmulatedType

Emulation type:

0 -- Use real device (AC'97).

1 -- Use image file (Creative).

SystemName

The sound card system name.

UserFriendlyName

User-defined friendly name.

SoundInputs

Defines sound input options.

SoundOutputs

Defines sound output options.

USB

The USB node contains parameters that define the USB interface in a virtual machine.

AutoConnect

When you connect a USB device to the host computer, Parallels Desktop intercepts this event and allows the user to select from the following choices:

- Automatically connect the device to the host operating system.
- Automatically connect the device to the guest operating system (virtual machine).
- Open a window where the user can select one of the options listed above.

This USB behavior is controlled by the `AutoConnect` parameter.

Parameter values:

0 -- Connect the device to the host operating system.

1 -- Connect the device to the guest operating system.

2 -- Ask the user what to do.

CACSupportEnabled

Enables or disables support for the Common Access Card (CAC) reader.

Parameter values:

0 -- Disable CAC support.

1 -- Enable CAC support.

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