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Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Range Requests  
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Abstract

The Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) is an application-level protocol for distributed, collaborative, hypertext information systems. This document defines range requests and the rules for constructing and combining responses to those requests.

Editorial Note (To be removed by RFC Editor)

Discussion of this draft takes place on the HTTPBIS working group mailing list ([ietf-http-wg@w3.org](mailto:ietf-http-wg@w3.org)), which is archived at <http://lists.w3.org/Archives/Public/ietf-http-wg/>.

The current issues list is at <http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/report/3> and related documents (including fancy diffs) can be found at <http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/>.

The changes in this draft are summarized in [Appendix E.4](#).

Status of This Memo

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## [1.](#) Introduction

Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) clients often encounter interrupted data transfers as a result of canceled requests or dropped connections. When a client has stored a partial representation, it is desirable to request the remainder of that representation in a subsequent request rather than transfer the entire representation. Likewise, devices with limited local storage might benefit from being able to request only a subset of a larger representation, such as a single page of a very large document, or the dimensions of an embedded image.

This document defines HTTP/1.1 range requests, partial responses, and the multipart/byteranges media type. Range requests are an OPTIONAL feature of HTTP, designed so that recipients not implementing this feature (or not supporting it for the target resource) can respond as if it is a normal GET request without impacting interoperability. Partial responses are indicated by a distinct status code to not be mistaken for full responses by caches that might not implement the feature.

Although the range request mechanism is designed to allow for extensible range types, this specification only defines requests for byte ranges.

### [1.1.](#) Conformance and Error Handling

The key words "MUST", "MUST NOT", "REQUIRED", "SHALL", "SHALL NOT", "SHOULD", "SHOULD NOT", "RECOMMENDED", "MAY", and "OPTIONAL" in this

document are to be interpreted as described in [[RFC2119](#)].

Conformance criteria and considerations regarding error handling are defined in Section 2.5 of [[Part1](#)].

## [1.2](#). Syntax Notation

This specification uses the Augmented Backus–Naur Form (ABNF) notation of [[RFC5234](#)] with the list rule extension defined in [Section 1.2](#) of [[Part1](#)]. [Appendix C](#) describes rules imported from other documents. [Appendix D](#) shows the collected ABNF with the list rule expanded.

## [2](#). Range Units

A representation can be partitioned into subranges according to various structural units, depending on the structure inherent in the representation's media type. This "range unit" is used in the Accept-Ranges ([Section 2.3](#)) response header field to advertise

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support for range requests, the Range ([Section 3.1](#)) request header field to delineate the parts of a representation that are requested, and the Content-Range ([Section 4.2](#)) payload header field to describe which part of a representation is being transferred.

range-unit = bytes-unit / other-range-unit

### [2.1](#). Byte Ranges

Since representation data is transferred in payloads as a sequence of octets, a byte range is a meaningful substructure for any representation transferable over HTTP (Section 3 of [[Part2](#)]). We define the "bytes" range unit for expressing subranges of the data's octet sequence.

bytes-unit = "bytes"

A byte range request can specify a single range of bytes, or a set of ranges within a single representation.

byte-ranges-specifier = bytes-unit "=" byte-range-set  
byte-range-set = 1#( byte-range-spec / suffix-byte-range-spec )

```
byte-range-spec = first-byte-pos "-" [ last-byte-pos ]
first-byte-pos  = 1*DIGIT
last-byte-pos   = 1*DIGIT
```

The first-byte-pos value in a byte-range-spec gives the byte-offset of the first byte in a range. The last-byte-pos value gives the byte-offset of the last byte in the range; that is, the byte positions specified are inclusive. Byte offsets start at zero.

Examples of byte-ranges-specifier values:

- o The first 500 bytes (byte offsets 0-499, inclusive):

```
bytes=0-499
```

- o The second 500 bytes (byte offsets 500-999, inclusive):

```
bytes=500-999
```

A byte-range-spec is invalid if the last-byte-pos value is present and less than the first-byte-pos.

A client can limit the number of bytes requested without knowing the size of the selected representation. If the last-byte-pos value is absent, or if the value is greater than or equal to the current length of the representation data, the byte range is interpreted as

the remainder of the representation (i.e., the server replaces the value of last-byte-pos with a value that is one less than the current length of the selected representation).

A client can request the last N bytes of the selected representation using a suffix-byte-range-spec.

```
suffix-byte-range-spec = "-" suffix-length
suffix-length = 1*DIGIT
```

If the selected representation is shorter than the specified suffix-length, the entire representation is used.

Additional examples, assuming a representation of length 10000:

- o The final 500 bytes (byte offsets 9500-9999, inclusive):

bytes=-500

Or:

bytes=9500-

- o The first and last bytes only (bytes 0 and 9999):

bytes=0-0,-1

- o Other valid (but not canonical) specifications of the second 500 bytes (byte offsets 500-999, inclusive):

bytes=500-600,601-999

bytes=500-700,601-999

If a valid byte-range-set includes at least one byte-range-spec with a first-byte-pos that is less than the current length of the representation, or at least one suffix-byte-range-spec with a non-zero suffix-length, then the byte-range-set is satisfiable. Otherwise, the byte-range-set is unsatisfiable.

In the byte range syntax, first-byte-pos, last-byte-pos, and suffix-length are expressed as decimal number of octets. Since there is no predefined limit to the length of a payload, recipients ought to anticipate potentially large decimal numerals and prevent parsing errors due to integer conversion overflows.

## [2.2.](#) Other Range Units

Range units are intended to be extensible. New range units ought to be registered with IANA, as defined in [Section 5.1](#).

other-range-unit = token

## [2.3.](#) Accept-Ranges

The "Accept-Ranges" header field allows a server to indicate that it supports range requests for the target resource.

```
Accept-Ranges      = acceptable-ranges
acceptable-ranges = 1#range-unit / "none"
```

Origin servers that support byte-range requests MAY send

```
Accept-Ranges: bytes
```

but are not required to do so. Clients MAY generate range requests without having received this header field for the resource involved. Range units are defined in [Section 2](#).

Servers that do not support any kind of range request for the target resource MAY send

```
Accept-Ranges: none
```

to advise the client not to attempt a range request.

### [3.](#) Range Requests

#### [3.1.](#) Range

The "Range" header field on a GET request modifies the method semantics to request transfer of only one or more subranges of the selected representation data, rather than the entire selected representation data.

```
Range = byte-ranges-specifier / other-ranges-specifier
other-ranges-specifier = other-range-unit "=" other-range-set
other-range-set = 1*CHAR
```

A server MAY ignore the Range header field. However, origin servers and intermediate caches ought to support byte ranges when possible, since Range supports efficient recovery from partially failed transfers and partial retrieval of large representations. A server MUST ignore a Range header field received with a request method other



An origin server MUST ignore a Range header field that contains a range unit it does not understand. A proxy MAY either discard a Range header field that contains a range unit it does not understand or pass it to the next inbound server when forwarding the request.

A server that supports range requests ought to ignore or reject a Range header field that consists of more than two overlapping ranges, or a set of many small ranges that are not listed in ascending order, since both are indications of either a broken client or a deliberate denial of service attack ([Section 6.1](#)). A client SHOULD NOT request multiple ranges that are inherently less efficient to process and transfer than a single range that encompasses the same data.

A client that is requesting multiple ranges SHOULD list those ranges in ascending order (the order in which they would typically be received in a complete representation) unless there is a specific need to request a later part earlier. For example, a user agent processing a large representation with an internal catalog of parts might need to request later parts first, particularly if the representation consists of pages stored in reverse order and the user agent wishes to transfer one page at a time.

The Range header field is evaluated after evaluating the precondition header fields defined in [\[Part4\]](#), and only if the result in absence of the Range header field would be a 200 (OK) response. In other words, Range is ignored when a conditional GET would result in a 304 (Not Modified) response.

The If-Range header field ([Section 3.2](#)) can be used as a precondition to applying the Range header field.

If all of the preconditions are true, the server supports the Range header field for the target resource, and the specified range(s) are valid and satisfiable (as defined in [Section 2.1](#)), the server SHOULD send a 206 (Partial Content) response with a payload containing one or more partial representations that correspond to the satisfiable ranges requested, as defined in [Section 4](#).

If all of the preconditions are true, the server supports the Range header field for the target resource, and the specified range(s) are invalid or unsatisfiable, the server SHOULD send a 416 (Range Not Satisfiable) response.

### [3.2.](#) If-Range

If a client has a partial copy of a representation and wishes to have an up-to-date copy of the entire representation, it could use the Range header field with a conditional GET (using either or both of If-Unmodified-Since and If-Match.) However, if the condition fails because the representation has been modified, the client would then have to make a second request to obtain the entire current representation.

The "If-Range" header field allows a client to "short-circuit" the second request. Informally, its meaning is: if the representation is unchanged, send me the part(s) that I am requesting in Range; otherwise, send me the entire representation.

If-Range = entity-tag / HTTP-date

A client MUST NOT generate an If-Range header field containing an entity-tag that is marked as weak. A client MUST NOT generate an If-Range header field containing a Last-Modified date unless the client has no entity-tag for the corresponding representation and the Last-Modified date is strong in the sense defined by Section 2.2.2 of [\[Part4\]](#).

A server that evaluates a conditional range request that is applicable to one of its representations MUST evaluate the condition as false if the entity-tag used as a validator is marked as weak or, when an HTTP-date is used as the validator, if the date value is not strong in the sense defined by Section 2.2.2 of [\[Part4\]](#). (A server can distinguish between a valid HTTP-date and any form of entity-tag by examining the first two characters.)

A client MUST NOT generate an If-Range header field in a request that does not contain a Range header field. A server MUST ignore an If-Range header field received in a request that does not contain a Range header field. An origin server MUST ignore an If-Range header field received in a request for a target resource that does not support Range requests.

If the validator given in the If-Range header field matches the current validator for the selected representation of the target resource, then the server SHOULD process the Range header field as requested. If the validator does not match, then the server MUST ignore the Range header field.

## [4.](#) Responses to a Range Request

### [4.1.](#) 206 Partial Content

The 206 (Partial Content) status code indicates that the server is successfully fulfilling a range request for the target resource by transferring one or more parts of the selected representation that correspond to the satisfiable ranges found in the request's Range header field ([Section 3.1](#)).

If a single part is being transferred, the server generating the 206 response MUST generate a Content-Range header field, describing what range of the selected representation is enclosed, and a payload consisting of the range. For example:

```
HTTP/1.1 206 Partial Content
Date: Wed, 15 Nov 1995 06:25:24 GMT
Last-Modified: Wed, 15 Nov 1995 04:58:08 GMT
Content-Range: bytes 21010-47021/47022
Content-Length: 26012
Content-Type: image/gif
```

... 26012 bytes of partial image data ...

If multiple parts are being transferred, the server generating the 206 response MUST generate a "multipart/byteranges" payload, as defined in [Appendix A](#), and a Content-Type header field containing the multipart/byteranges media type and its required boundary parameter. To avoid confusion with single part responses, a server MUST NOT generate a Content-Range header field in the HTTP header block of a multiple part response (this field will be sent in each part instead).

Within the header area of each body part in the multipart payload, the server MUST generate a Content-Range header field corresponding to the range being enclosed in that body part. If the selected representation would have had a Content-Type header field in a 200 (OK) response, the server SHOULD generate that same Content-Type field in the header area of each body part. For example:

HTTP/1.1 206 Partial Content

Date: Wed, 15 Nov 1995 06:25:24 GMT

Last-Modified: Wed, 15 Nov 1995 04:58:08 GMT

Content-Length: 1741

Content-Type: multipart/byteranges; boundary=THIS\_STRING\_SEPARATES

--THIS\_STRING\_SEPARATES

Content-Type: application/pdf

Content-Range: bytes 500-999/8000

...the first range...

--THIS\_STRING\_SEPARATES

Content-Type: application/pdf

Content-Range: bytes 7000-7999/8000

...the second range

--THIS\_STRING\_SEPARATES--

When multiple ranges are requested, a server MAY coalesce any of the ranges that overlap or that are separated by a gap that is smaller than the overhead of sending multiple parts, regardless of the order in which the corresponding byte-range-spec appeared in the received Range header field. Since the typical overhead between parts of a multipart/byteranges payload is around 80 bytes, depending on the selected representation's media type and the chosen boundary parameter length, it can be less efficient to transfer many small disjoint parts than it is to transfer the entire selected representation.

A server MUST NOT generate a multipart response to a request for a single range, since a client that does not request multiple parts might not support multipart responses. However, a server MAY

generate a multipart/byteranges payload with only a single body part if multiple ranges were requested and only one range was found to be satisfiable or only one range remained after coalescing. A client that cannot process a multipart/byteranges response MUST NOT generate a request that asks for multiple ranges.

When a multipart response payload is generated, the server SHOULD send the parts in the same order that the corresponding byte-range-spec appeared in the received Range header field, excluding those ranges that were deemed unsatisfiable or that were coalesced into other ranges. A client that receives a multipart response MUST inspect the Content-Range header field present in each body part in order to determine which range is contained in that body part; a client cannot rely on receiving the same ranges that it requested, nor the same order that it requested.

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When a 206 response is generated, the server MUST generate the following header fields, in addition to those required above, if the field would have been sent in a 200 (OK) response to the same request: Date, Cache-Control, ETag, Expires, Content-Location, and Vary.

If a 206 is generated in response to a request with an If-Range header field, the sender SHOULD NOT generate other representation header fields beyond those required above, because the client is understood to already have a prior response containing those header fields. Otherwise, the sender MUST generate all of the representation header fields that would have been sent in a 200 (OK) response to the same request.

A 206 response is cacheable unless otherwise indicated by explicit cache controls (see Section 4.1.2 of [\[Part6\]](#)).

#### [4.2.](#) Content-Range

The "Content-Range" header field is sent in a single part 206 (Partial Content) response to indicate the partial range of the selected representation enclosed as the message payload, sent in each part of a multipart 206 response to indicate the range enclosed within each body part, and sent in 416 (Range Not Satisfiable) responses to provide information about the selected representation.

Content-Range = byte-content-range  
/ other-content-range

byte-content-range = bytes-unit SP  
( byte-range-resp / unsatisfied-range )

byte-range-resp = byte-range "/" ( complete-length / "\*" )  
byte-range = first-byte-pos "-" last-byte-pos  
unsatisfied-range = "\*" / complete-length

complete-length = 1\*DIGIT

other-content-range = other-range-unit SP other-range-resp  
other-range-resp = \*CHAR

If a 206 (Partial Content) response contains a Content-Range header field with a range unit ([Section 2](#)) that the recipient does not understand, the recipient MUST NOT attempt to recombine it with a stored representation. A proxy that receives such a message SHOULD forward it downstream.

For byte ranges, a sender SHOULD indicate the complete length of the

representation from which the range has been extracted, unless the complete length is unknown or difficult to determine. An asterisk character ("\*") in place of the complete-length indicates that the representation length was unknown when the header field was generated.

The following example illustrates when the complete length of the selected representation is known by the sender to be 1234 bytes:

Content-Range: bytes 42-1233/1234

and this second example illustrates when the complete length is unknown:

Content-Range: bytes 42-1233/\*

A Content-Range field value is invalid if it contains a byte-range-resp that has a last-byte-pos value less than its first-byte-pos

value, or a complete-length value less than or equal to its last-byte-pos value. The recipient of an invalid Content-Range MUST NOT attempt to recombine the received content with a stored representation.

A server generating a 416 (Range Not Satisfiable) response to a byte range request SHOULD send a Content-Range header field with an unsatisfied-range value, as in the following example:

```
Content-Range: bytes */1234
```

The complete-length in a 416 response indicates the current length of the selected representation.

The "Content-Range" header field has no meaning for status codes that do not explicitly describe its semantic. For this specification, only the 206 (Partial Content) and 416 (Range Not Satisfiable) status codes describe a meaning for Content-Range.

The following are examples of Content-Range values in which the selected representation contains a total of 1234 bytes:

- o The first 500 bytes:

```
Content-Range: bytes 0-499/1234
```

- o The second 500 bytes:

```
Content-Range: bytes 500-999/1234
```

- o All except for the first 500 bytes:

```
Content-Range: bytes 500-1233/1234
```

- o The last 500 bytes:

```
Content-Range: bytes 734-1233/1234
```

#### [4.3.](#) Combining Ranges

A response might transfer only a subrange of a representation if the

connection closed prematurely or if the request used one or more Range specifications. After several such transfers, a client might have received several ranges of the same representation. These ranges can only be safely combined if they all have in common the same strong validator, where "strong validator" is defined to be either an entity-tag that is not marked as weak (Section 2.3 of [Part4]) or, if no entity-tag is provided, a Last-Modified value that is strong in the sense defined by Section 2.2.2 of [Part4].

A client that has received multiple partial responses to GET requests on a target resource MAY combine those responses into a larger continuous range if they share the same strong validator.

If the most recent response is an incomplete 200 (OK) response, then the header fields of that response are used for any combined response and replace those of the matching stored responses.

If the most recent response is a 206 (Partial Content) response and at least one of the matching stored responses is a 200 (OK), then the combined response header fields consist of the most recent 200 response's header fields. If all of the matching stored responses are 206 responses, then the stored response with the most recent header fields is used as the source of header fields for the combined response, except that the client MUST use other header fields provided in the new response, aside from Content-Range, to replace all instances of the corresponding header fields in the stored response.

The combined response message body consists of the union of partial content ranges in the new response and each of the selected responses. If the union consists of the entire range of the representation, then the client MUST process the combined response as if it were a complete 200 (OK) response, including a Content-Length header field that reflects the complete length. Otherwise, the client MUST process the set of continuous ranges as one of the following: an incomplete 200 (OK) response if the combined response is a prefix of the representation, a single 206 (Partial Content)

response containing a multipart/byteranges body, or multiple 206 (Partial Content) responses, each with one continuous range that is indicated by a Content-Range header field.



#### [4.4.](#) 416 Range Not Satisfiable

The 416 (Range Not Satisfiable) status code indicates that none of the ranges in the request's Range header field ([Section 3.1](#)) overlap the current extent of the selected resource or that the set of ranges requested has been rejected due to invalid ranges or an excessive request of small or overlapping ranges.

For byte ranges, failing to overlap the current extent means that the first-byte-pos of all of the byte-range-spec values were greater than the current length of the selected representation. When this status code is generated in response to a byte range request, the sender SHOULD generate a Content-Range header field specifying the current length of the selected representation ([Section 4.2](#)).

For example:

```
HTTP/1.1 416 Range Not Satisfiable
Date: Fri, 20 Jan 2012 15:41:54 GMT
Content-Range: bytes */47022
```

Note: Because servers are free to ignore Range, many implementations will simply respond with the entire selected representation in a 200 (OK) response. That is partly because most clients are prepared to receive a 200 (OK) to complete the task (albeit less efficiently) and partly because clients might not stop making an invalid partial request until they have received a complete representation. Thus, clients cannot depend on receiving a 416 (Range Not Satisfiable) response even when it is most appropriate.

## [5.](#) IANA Considerations

### [5.1.](#) Range Unit Registry

The HTTP Range Unit Registry defines the name space for the range unit names and refers to their corresponding specifications. The registry will be created and maintained at <http://www.iana.org/assignments/http-parameters>.

#### [5.1.1.](#) Procedure

Registration of an HTTP Range Unit MUST include the following fields:

- o Name
- o Description
- o Pointer to specification text

Values to be added to this name space require IETF Review (see [\[RFC5226\], Section 4.1](#)).

### [5.1.2](#). Registrations

The initial HTTP Range Unit Registry shall contain the registrations below:

| Range Unit Name | Description   | Reference                   |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------------|
| bytes           | a range of octets                                       | <a href="#">Section 2.1</a> |
| none            | reserved as keyword, indicating no ranges are supported | <a href="#">Section 2.3</a> |

The change controller is: "IETF (iesg@ietf.org) - Internet Engineering Task Force".

### [5.2](#). Status Code Registration

The HTTP Status Code Registry located at <http://www.iana.org/assignments/http-status-codes> shall be updated with the registrations below:

| Value | Description           | Reference                   |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 206   | Partial Content       | <a href="#">Section 4.1</a> |
| 416   | Range Not Satisfiable | <a href="#">Section 4.4</a> |

### [5.3](#). Header Field Registration

HTTP header fields are registered within the Message Header Field Registry maintained at <http://www.iana.org/assignments/message-headers/message-header-index.html>.

This document defines the following HTTP header fields, so their associated registry entries shall be updated according to the

permanent registrations below (see [\[BCP90\]](#)):

| Header Field Name | Protocol | Status   | Reference                   |
|-------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------|
| Accept-Ranges     | http     | standard | <a href="#">Section 2.3</a> |
| Content-Range     | http     | standard | <a href="#">Section 4.2</a> |
| If-Range          | http     | standard | <a href="#">Section 3.2</a> |
| Range             | http     | standard | <a href="#">Section 3.1</a> |

The change controller is: "IETF (iesg@ietf.org) - Internet Engineering Task Force".

## [6.](#) Security Considerations

This section is meant to inform developers, information providers, and users of known security concerns specific to the HTTP/1.1 range request mechanisms. More general security considerations are addressed in HTTP messaging [\[Part1\]](#) and semantics [\[Part2\]](#).

### [6.1.](#) Denial of Service Attacks using Range

Unconstrained multiple range requests are susceptible to denial of service attacks because the effort required to request many overlapping ranges of the same data is tiny compared to the time, memory, and bandwidth consumed by attempting to serve the requested data in many parts. Servers ought to ignore, coalesce, or reject egregious range requests, such as requests for more than two overlapping ranges or for many small ranges in a single set, particularly when the ranges are requested out of order for no apparent reason. Multipart range requests are not designed to support random access.

## [7.](#) Acknowledgments

See Section 9 of [\[Part1\]](#).

## [8.](#) References

### [8.1.](#) Normative References

[Part1] Fielding, R., Ed. and J. Reschke, Ed., "Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Message Syntax and Routing", [draft-ietf-httpbis-p1-messaging-23](#) (work in progress), July 2013.

[Part2] Fielding, R., Ed. and J. Reschke, Ed., "Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Semantics and Content", [draft-ietf-httpbis-p2-semantics-23](#) (work in progress),

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[Part4] Fielding, R., Ed. and J. Reschke, Ed., "Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Conditional Requests", [draft-ietf-httpbis-p4-conditional-23](#) (work in progress), July 2013.

[Part6] Fielding, R., Ed., Nottingham, M., Ed., and J. Reschke, Ed., "Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP/1.1): Caching", [draft-ietf-httpbis-p6-cache-23](#) (work in progress), July 2013.

[RFC2046] Freed, N. and N. Borenstein, "Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (MIME) Part Two: Media Types", [RFC 2046](#), November 1996.

[RFC2119] Bradner, S., "Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels", [BCP 14](#), [RFC 2119](#), March 1997.

[RFC5234] Crocker, D., Ed. and P. Overell, "Augmented BNF for Syntax Specifications: ABNF", STD 68, [RFC 5234](#), January 2008.

## [8.2.](#) Informative References

[BCP13] Freed, N., Klensin, J., and T. Hansen, "Media Type Specifications and Registration Procedures", [BCP 13](#), [RFC 6838](#), January 2013.

[BCP90] Klyne, G., Nottingham, M., and J. Mogul, "Registration Procedures for Message Header Fields", [BCP 90](#), [RFC 3864](#), September 2004.

[RFC2616] Fielding, R., Gettys, J., Mogul, J., Frystyk, H.,

Masinter, L., Leach, P., and T. Berners-Lee, "Hypertext Transfer Protocol -- HTTP/1.1", [RFC 2616](#), June 1999.

[RFC5226] Narten, T. and H. Alvestrand, "Guidelines for Writing an IANA Considerations Section in RFCs", [BCP 26](#), [RFC 5226](#), May 2008.

## [Appendix A](#). Internet Media Type multipart/byteranges

When a 206 (Partial Content) response message includes the content of multiple ranges, they are transmitted as body parts in a multipart message body ([\[RFC2046\]](#), [Section 5.1](#)) with the media type of "multipart/byteranges". The following definition is to be registered with IANA [[BCP13](#)].

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The multipart/byteranges media type includes one or more body parts, each with its own Content-Type and Content-Range fields. The required boundary parameter specifies the boundary string used to separate each body part.

Type name: multipart

Subtype name: byteranges

Required parameters: boundary

Optional parameters: none

Encoding considerations: only "7bit", "8bit", or "binary" are permitted

Security considerations: none

Interoperability considerations: none

Published specification: This specification (see [Appendix A](#)).

Applications that use this media type: HTTP components supporting multiple ranges in a single request.

Additional information:

Magic number(s): none

File extension(s): none

Macintosh file type code(s): none

Person and email address to contact for further information: See Authors Section.

Intended usage: COMMON

Restrictions on usage: none

Author: See Authors Section.

Change controller: IESG

Implementation Notes:

1. Additional CRLFs might precede the first boundary string in the body.

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2. Although [[RFC2046](#)] permits the boundary string to be quoted, some existing implementations handle a quoted boundary string incorrectly.
3. A number of clients and servers were coded to an early draft of the byteranges specification that used a media type of multipart/x-byteranges, which is almost (but not quite) compatible with this type.

Despite the name, the "multipart/byteranges" media type is not limited to byte ranges. The following example uses an "exampleunit" range unit:

```
HTTP/1.1 206 Partial Content
```

```
Date: Tue, 14 Nov 1995 06:25:24 GMT
```

```
Last-Modified: Tue, 14 July 04:58:08 GMT
```

```
Content-Length: 2331785
```

```
Content-Type: multipart/byteranges; boundary=THIS_STRING_SEPARATES
```

```
--THIS_STRING_SEPARATES
Content-Type: video/example
Content-Range: exampleunit 1.2-4.3/25
```

```
...the first range...
--THIS_STRING_SEPARATES
Content-Type: video/example
Content-Range: exampleunit 11.2-14.3/25
```

```
...the second range
--THIS_STRING_SEPARATES--
```

## [Appendix B](#). Changes from [RFC 2616](#)

A weak validator cannot be used in a 206 response. ([Section 4.1](#))

The Content-Range header field only has meaning when the status code explicitly defines its use. ([Section 4.2](#))

Servers are given more leeway in how they respond to a range request, in order to mitigate abuse by malicious (or just greedy) clients.

multipart/byteranges can consist of a single part. (Appendix A)

This specification introduces a Range Unit Registry. ([Section 5.1](#))

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## [Appendix C](#). Imported ABNF

The following core rules are included by reference, as defined in [Appendix B.1 of \[RFC5234\]](#): ALPHA (letters), CR (carriage return), CRLF (CR LF), CTL (controls), DIGIT (decimal 0-9), DQUOTE (double quote), HEXDIG (hexadecimal 0-9/A-F/a-f), LF (line feed), OCTET (any 8-bit sequence of data), SP (space), and VCHAR (any visible US-ASCII character).

Note that all rules derived from token are to be compared case-insensitively, like range-unit and acceptable-ranges.

The rules below are defined in [[Part1](#)]:

OWS = <OWS, defined in [[Part1](#)], Section 3.2.3>  
token = <token, defined in [[Part1](#)], Section 3.2.6>

The rules below are defined in other parts:

HTTP-date = <HTTP-date, defined in [[Part2](#)], Section 7.1.1.1>  
entity-tag = <entity-tag, defined in [[Part4](#)], Section 2.3>

#### [Appendix D](#). Collected ABNF

In the collected ABNF below, list rules are expanded as per [Section 1.2](#) of [[Part1](#)].

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Accept-Ranges = acceptable-ranges

Content-Range = byte-content-range / other-content-range

HTTP-date = <HTTP-date, defined in [[Part2](#)], Section 7.1.1.1>



If-Range = entity-tag / HTTP-date

OWS = <OWS, defined in [\[Part1\]](#), Section 3.2.3>

Range = byte-ranges-specifier / other-ranges-specifier

acceptable-ranges = ( \*( "," OWS ) range-unit \*( OWS "," [ OWS range-unit ] ) ) / "none"

byte-content-range = bytes-unit SP ( byte-range-resp / unsatisfied-range )

byte-range = first-byte-pos "-" last-byte-pos

byte-range-resp = byte-range "/" ( complete-length / "\*" )

byte-range-set = \*( "," OWS ) ( byte-range-spec / suffix-byte-range-spec ) \*( OWS "," [ OWS ( byte-range-spec / suffix-byte-range-spec ) ] )

byte-range-spec = first-byte-pos "-" [ last-byte-pos ]

byte-ranges-specifier = bytes-unit "=" byte-range-set

bytes-unit = "bytes"

complete-length = 1\*DIGIT

entity-tag = <entity-tag, defined in [\[Part4\]](#), Section 2.3>

first-byte-pos = 1\*DIGIT

last-byte-pos = 1\*DIGIT

other-content-range = other-range-unit SP other-range-resp

other-range-resp = \*CHAR

other-range-set = 1\*CHAR

other-range-unit = token

other-ranges-specifier = other-range-unit "=" other-range-set

range-unit = bytes-unit / other-range-unit

suffix-byte-range-spec = "-" suffix-length

suffix-length = 1\*DIGIT

token = <token, defined in [\[Part1\]](#), Section 3.2.6>

unsatisfied-range = "\*" complete-length

Appendix E. Change Log (to be removed by RFC Editor before publication)

Changes up to the first Working Group Last Call draft are summarized in <<http://tools.ietf.org/html/draft-ietf-httpbis-p5-range-19#appendix-D>>.

E.1. Since [draft-ietf-httpbis-p5-range-19](#)

Closed issues:

- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/358>>: "ABNF list expansion code problem"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/361>>: "ABNF requirements for recipients"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/367>>: "reserve 'none' as byte range unit"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/368>>: "note introduction of new IANA registries as normative changes"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/369>>: "range units vs leading zeroes vs size"

E.2. Since [draft-ietf-httpbis-p5-range-20](#)

- o Conformance criteria and considerations regarding error handling are now defined in Part 1.

E.3. Since [draft-ietf-httpbis-p5-range-21](#)

Closed issues:

- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/175>>: "Security consideration: range flooding"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/223>>: "Allowing heuristic caching for new status codes"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/311>>: "Add limitations to Range to reduce its use as a denial-of-service tool"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/407>>: "416 and multipart/byteranges"

#### E.4. Since [draft-ietf-httpbis-p5-range-22](#)

Closed issues:

- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/436>>: "explain list expansion in ABNF appendices"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/437>>: "incorrect example dates"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/438>>: "media type registration template issues"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/462>>: "Editorial suggestions"
- o <<http://tools.ietf.org/wg/httpbis/trac/ticket/485>>: "MUSTs and other feedback"

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