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# JSON Web Signature (JWS) draft-ietf-jose-json-web-signature-15

## Abstract

JSON Web Signature (JWS) represents content secured with digital signatures or Message Authentication Codes (MACs) using JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) based data structures. Cryptographic algorithms and identifiers for use with this specification are described in the separate JSON Web Algorithms (JWA) specification and an IANA registry defined by that specification. Related encryption capabilities are described in the separate JSON Web Encryption (JWE) specification.

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## 1. Introduction

JSON Web Signature (JWS) represents content secured with digital signatures or Message Authentication Codes (MACs) using JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) **[RFC4627]** based data structures. The JWS cryptographic mechanisms provide integrity protection for an arbitrary sequence of octets.

Two closely related serializations for JWS objects are defined. The JWS Compact Serialization is a compact, URL-safe representation intended for space constrained environments such as HTTP Authorization headers and URI query parameters. The JWS JSON Serialization represents JWS objects as JSON objects and enables multiple signatures and/or MACs to be applied to the same content. Both share the same cryptographic underpinnings.

Cryptographic algorithms and identifiers for use with this specification are described in the separate JSON Web Algorithms (JWA) **[JWA]** specification and an IANA registry defined by that specification. Related encryption capabilities are described in the separate JSON Web Encryption (JWE) **[JWE]** specification.

Names defined by this specification are short because a core goal is for the resulting representations to be compact.

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### 1.1. Notational Conventions

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 Key words for use in RFCs to Indicate Requirement Levels **[RFC2119]**.

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## 2. Terminology

### JSON Web Signature (JWS)

A data structure representing a digitally signed or MACed message. The structure represents three values: the JWS Header, the JWS Payload, and the JWS Signature.

### JSON Text Object

A UTF-8 **[RFC3629]** encoded text string representing a JSON object; the syntax of JSON objects is defined in Section 2.2 of **[RFC4627]**.

### JWS Header

A JSON Text Object (or JSON Text Objects, when using the JWS JSON Serialization) that describes the digital signature or MAC operation applied to create the JWS Signature value. The members of the JWS Header object(s) are Header Parameters.

### JWS Payload

The sequence of octets to be secured -- a.k.a., the message. The payload can contain an arbitrary sequence of octets.

### JWS Signature

A sequence of octets containing the cryptographic material that ensures the integrity of the JWS Protected Header and the JWS Payload. The JWS Signature value is a digital signature or MAC value calculated over the JWS Signing Input using the parameters specified in the JWS Header.

### JWS Protected Header

A JSON Text Object that contains the portion of the JWS Header that is integrity protected. For the JWS Compact Serialization, this comprises the entire JWS Header. For the JWS JSON Serialization, this is one component of the JWS Header.

### Header Parameter

A name/value pair that is member of the JWS Header.

### Header Parameter Name

The name of a member of the JWS Header.

### Header Parameter Value

The value of a member of the JWS Header.

### Base64url Encoding

Base64 encoding using the URL- and filename-safe character set defined in Section 5 of **RFC 4648** [RFC4648], with all trailing '=' characters omitted (as

permitted by Section 3.2). (See **Appendix C** for notes on implementing base64url encoding without padding.)

Encoded JWS Header

Base64url encoding of the JWS Protected Header.

Encoded JWS Payload

Base64url encoding of the JWS Payload.

Encoded JWS Signature

Base64url encoding of the JWS Signature.

JWS Signing Input

The concatenation of the Encoded JWS Header, a period ('.') character, and the Encoded JWS Payload.

JWS Compact Serialization

A representation of the JWS as the concatenation of the Encoded JWS Header, the Encoded JWS Payload, and the Encoded JWS Signature in that order, with the three strings being separated by two period ('.') characters. This representation is compact and URL-safe.

JWS JSON Serialization

A representation of the JWS as a JSON structure containing JWS Header, Encoded JWS Payload, and Encoded JWS Signature values. Unlike the JWS Compact Serialization, the JWS JSON Serialization enables multiple digital signatures and/or MACs to be applied to the same content. This representation is neither compact nor URL-safe.

Collision Resistant Namespace

A namespace that allows names to be allocated in a manner such that they are highly unlikely to collide with other names. Examples of Collision Resistant Namespaces include: Domain Names, Object Identifiers (OIDs) as defined in the ITU-T X.660 and X.670 Recommendation series, and Universally Unique IDentifiers (UUIDs) **[RFC4122]**. When using an administratively delegated namespace, the definer of a name needs to take reasonable precautions to ensure they are in control of the portion of the namespace they use to define the name.

StringOrURI

A JSON string value, with the additional requirement that while arbitrary string values MAY be used, any value containing a ":" character MUST be a URI **[RFC3986]**. StringOrURI values are compared as case-sensitive strings with no transformations or canonicalizations applied.

---

### 3. JSON Web Signature (JWS) Overview

TOC

JWS represents digitally signed or MACed content using JSON data structures and base64url encoding. Three values are represented in a JWS: the JWS Header, the JWS Payload, and the JWS Signature. In the Compact Serialization, the three values are base64url-encoded for transmission, and represented as the concatenation of the encoded strings in that order, with the three strings being separated by two period ('.') characters. A JSON Serialization for this information is also defined in **Section 7.2**.

The JWS Header describes the signature or MAC method and parameters employed. The JWS Payload is the message content to be secured. The JWS Signature ensures the integrity of both the JWS Protected Header and the JWS Payload.

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#### 3.1. Example JWS

TOC

The following example JWS Header declares that the encoded object is a JSON Web Token (JWT) **[JWT]** and the JWS Header and the JWS Payload are secured using the HMAC SHA-256 algorithm:

```
{ "typ": "JWT",  
  "alg": "HS256" }
```

Base64url encoding the octets of the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Header yields this Encoded JWS Header value:

```
eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLA0KICJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9
```

The following is an example of a JSON object that can be used as a JWS Payload. (Note that the payload can be any content, and need not be a representation of a JSON object.)

```
{"iss": "joe",  
  "exp": 1300819380,  
  "http://example.com/is_root": true}
```

The following octet sequence, which is the UTF-8 representation of the JSON object above, is the JWS Payload:

```
[123, 34, 105, 115, 115, 34, 58, 34, 106, 111, 101, 34, 44, 13, 10, 32, 34, 101, 120, 112, 34,  
58, 49, 51, 48, 48, 56, 49, 57, 51, 56, 48, 44, 13, 10, 32, 34, 104, 116, 116, 112, 58, 47, 47,  
101, 120, 97, 109, 112, 108, 101, 46, 99, 111, 109, 47, 105, 115, 95, 114, 111, 111, 116, 34,  
58, 116, 114, 117, 101, 125]
```

Base64url encoding the JWS Payload yields this Encoded JWS Payload (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFT  
cGx1LmNvbS9pc19yb290Ijp0cnV1fQ
```

Computing the HMAC of the octets of the ASCII **[USASCII]** representation of the JWS Signing Input (the concatenation of the Encoded JWS Header, a period ('.') character, and the Encoded JWS Payload) with the HMAC SHA-256 algorithm using the key specified in **Appendix A.1** and base64url encoding the result yields this Encoded JWS Signature value:

```
dBjftJeZ4CVP-mB92K27uhbUJU1p1r_wW1gFWF0EjXk
```

Concatenating these values in the order Header.Payload.Signature with period ('.') characters between the parts yields this complete JWS representation using the JWS Compact Serialization (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLA0KICJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9  
.  
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFT  
cGx1LmNvbS9pc19yb290Ijp0cnV1fQ  
.  
dBjftJeZ4CVP-mB92K27uhbUJU1p1r_wW1gFWF0EjXk
```

This computation is illustrated in more detail in **Appendix A.1**. See **Appendix A** for additional examples.

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## 4. JWS Header

TOC

The members of the JSON object(s) representing the JWS Header describe the digital signature or MAC applied to the Encoded JWS Header and the Encoded JWS Payload and optionally additional properties of the JWS. The Header Parameter Names within the JWS Header **MUST** be unique; recipients **MUST** either reject JWSs with duplicate Header Parameter Names or use a JSON parser that returns only the lexically last duplicate member name, as specified in Section 15.12 (The JSON Object) of ECMAScript 5.1 **[ECMAScript]**.

Implementations are required to understand the specific header parameters defined by this specification that are designated as "MUST be understood" and process them in the manner

defined in this specification. All other header parameters defined by this specification that are not so designated MUST be ignored when not understood. Unless listed as a critical header parameter, per **Section 4.1.10**, all header parameters not defined by this specification MUST be ignored when not understood.

There are three classes of Header Parameter Names: Reserved Header Parameter Names, Public Header Parameter Names, and Private Header Parameter Names.

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## 4.1. Reserved Header Parameter Names TOC

The following Header Parameter Names are reserved with meanings as defined below.

Additional reserved Header Parameter Names can be defined via the IANA JSON Web Signature and Encryption Header Parameters registry **Section 8.1**. As indicated by the common registry, JWSs and JWEs share a common header parameter space; when a parameter is used by both specifications, its usage must be compatible between the specifications.

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### 4.1.1. "alg" (Algorithm) Header Parameter TOC

The `alg` (algorithm) header parameter identifies the cryptographic algorithm used to secure the JWS. The signature, MAC, or plaintext value is not valid if the `alg` value does not represent a supported algorithm, or if there is not a key for use with that algorithm associated with the party that digitally signed or MACed the content. `alg` values SHOULD either be registered in the IANA JSON Web Signature and Encryption Algorithms registry **[JWA]** or be a value that contains a Collision Resistant Namespace. The `alg` value is a case sensitive string containing a StringOrURI value. Use of this header parameter is REQUIRED. This header parameter MUST be understood by implementations.

A list of defined `alg` values can be found in the IANA JSON Web Signature and Encryption Algorithms registry **[JWA]**; the initial contents of this registry are the values defined in Section 3.1 of the JSON Web Algorithms (JWA) **[JWA]** specification.

---

### 4.1.2. "jku" (JWK Set URL) Header Parameter TOC

The `jku` (JWK Set URL) header parameter is a URI **[RFC3986]** that refers to a resource for a set of JSON-encoded public keys, one of which corresponds to the key used to digitally sign the JWS. The keys MUST be encoded as a JSON Web Key Set (JWK Set) **[JWK]**. The protocol used to acquire the resource MUST provide integrity protection; an HTTP GET request to retrieve the JWK Set MUST use TLS **[RFC2818]** **[RFC5246]**; the identity of the server MUST be validated, as per Section 3.1 of HTTP Over TLS **[RFC2818]**. Use of this header parameter is OPTIONAL.

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### 4.1.3. "jwk" (JSON Web Key) Header Parameter TOC

The `jwk` (JSON Web Key) header parameter is the public key that corresponds to the key used to digitally sign the JWS. This key is represented as a JSON Web Key **[JWK]**. Use of this header parameter is OPTIONAL.

---

### 4.1.4. "x5u" (X.509 URL) Header Parameter TOC

The `x5u` (X.509 URL) header parameter is a URI **[RFC3986]** that refers to a resource for the X.509 public key certificate or certificate chain **[RFC5280]** corresponding to the key used to digitally sign the JWS. The identified resource MUST provide a representation of the certificate



or certificate chain that conforms to **RFC 5280** [RFC5280] in PEM encoded form **[RFC1421]**. The certificate containing the public key corresponding to the key used to digitally sign the JWS MUST be the first certificate. This MAY be followed by additional certificates, with each subsequent certificate being the one used to certify the previous one. The protocol used to acquire the resource MUST provide integrity protection; an HTTP GET request to retrieve the certificate MUST use TLS **[RFC2818]** **[RFC5246]**; the identity of the server MUST be validated, as per Section 3.1 of HTTP Over TLS **[RFC2818]**. Use of this header parameter is OPTIONAL.

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#### 4.1.5. "x5t" (X.509 Certificate Thumbprint) Header Parameter

TOC

The `x5t` (X.509 Certificate Thumbprint) header parameter is a base64url encoded SHA-1 thumbprint (a.k.a. digest) of the DER encoding of the X.509 certificate **[RFC5280]** corresponding to the key used to digitally sign the JWS. Use of this header parameter is OPTIONAL.

If, in the future, certificate thumbprints need to be computed using hash functions other than SHA-1, it is suggested that additional related header parameters be defined for that purpose. For example, it is suggested that a new `x5t#S256` (X.509 Certificate Thumbprint using SHA-256) header parameter could be defined by registering it in the IANA JSON Web Signature and Encryption Header Parameters registry **Section 8.1**.

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#### 4.1.6. "x5c" (X.509 Certificate Chain) Header Parameter

TOC

The `x5c` (X.509 Certificate Chain) header parameter contains the X.509 public key certificate or certificate chain **[RFC5280]** corresponding to the key used to digitally sign the JWS. The certificate or certificate chain is represented as a JSON array of certificate value strings. Each string in the array is a base64 encoded (**[RFC4648]** Section 4 -- not base64url encoded) DER **[ITU.X690.1994]** PKIX certificate value. The certificate containing the public key corresponding to the key used to digitally sign the JWS MUST be the first certificate. This MAY be followed by additional certificates, with each subsequent certificate being the one used to certify the previous one. The recipient MUST verify the certificate chain according to **[RFC5280]** and reject the signature if any validation failure occurs. Use of this header parameter is OPTIONAL.

See **Appendix B** for an example `x5c` value.

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#### 4.1.7. "kid" (Key ID) Header Parameter

TOC

The `kid` (key ID) header parameter is a hint indicating which key was used to secure the JWS. This parameter allows originators to explicitly signal a change of key to recipients. Should the recipient be unable to locate a key corresponding to the `kid` value, they SHOULD treat that condition as an error. The interpretation of the `kid` value is unspecified. Its value MUST be a string. Use of this header parameter is OPTIONAL.

When used with a JWK, the `kid` value can be used to match a JWK `kid` parameter value.

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#### 4.1.8. "typ" (Type) Header Parameter

TOC

The `typ` (type) header parameter MAY be used to declare the type of this complete JWS object in an application-specific manner in contexts where this is useful to the application. This parameter has no effect upon the JWS processing. The type value `JOSE` MAY be used by applications to indicate that this object is a JWS or JWE using the JWS Compact Serialization or the JWE Compact Serialization. The type value `JOSE+JSON` MAY be used by applications to indicate that this object is a JWS or JWE using the JWS JSON Serialization or the JWE JSON Serialization. Other type values MAY be used, and if not understood, SHOULD be ignored.

The `typ` value is a case sensitive string. Use of this header parameter is OPTIONAL.

MIME Media Type [\[RFC2046\]](#) values MAY be used as `typ` values.

`typ` values SHOULD either be registered in the IANA JSON Web Signature and Encryption Type Values registry [Section 8.2](#) or be a value that contains a Collision Resistant Namespace.

---

#### 4.1.9. "cty" (Content Type) Header Parameter

TOC

The `cty` (content type) header parameter MAY be used to declare the type of the secured content (the payload) in an application-specific manner in contexts where this is useful to the application. This parameter has no effect upon the JWS processing. Content type values that are not understood SHOULD be ignored. The `cty` value is a case sensitive string. Use of this header parameter is OPTIONAL.

The values used for the `cty` header parameter come from the same value space as the `typ` header parameter, with the same rules applying.

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#### 4.1.10. "crit" (Critical) Header Parameter

TOC

The `crit` (critical) header parameter indicates that extensions to [\[\[ this specification \]\]](#) are being used that MUST be understood and processed. Its value is an array listing the header parameter names defined by those extensions that are used in the JWS Header. If any of the listed extension header parameters are not understood and supported by the receiver, it MUST reject the JWS. Senders MUST NOT include header parameter names defined by [\[\[ this specification \]\]](#) or by [\[JWA\]](#) for use with JWS, duplicate names, or names that do not occur as header parameter names within the JWS Header in the `crit` list. Senders MUST not use the empty list `[]` as the `crit` value. Recipients MAY reject the JWS if the critical list contains any header parameter names defined by [\[\[ this specification \]\]](#) or by [\[JWA\]](#) for use with JWS, or any other constraints on its use are violated. This header parameter MUST be integrity protected, and therefore MUST occur only with the JWS Protected Header, when used. Use of this header parameter is OPTIONAL. This header parameter MUST be understood by implementations.

An example use, along with a hypothetical `exp` (expiration-time) field is:

```
{ "alg": "ES256",
  "crit": ["exp"],
  "exp": 1363284000
}
```

---

## 4.2. Public Header Parameter Names

TOC

Additional Header Parameter Names can be defined by those using JWSs. However, in order to prevent collisions, any new Header Parameter Name SHOULD either be registered in the IANA JSON Web Signature and Encryption Header Parameters registry [Section 8.1](#) or be a Public Name: a value that contains a Collision Resistant Namespace. In each case, the definer of the name or value needs to take reasonable precautions to make sure they are in control of the part of the namespace they use to define the Header Parameter Name.

New header parameters should be introduced sparingly, as they can result in non-interoperable JWSs.

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## 4.3. Private Header Parameter Names

TOC



A producer and consumer of a JWS may agree to use Header Parameter Names that are Private Names: names that are not Reserved Names **Section 4.1** or Public Names **Section 4.2**. Unlike Public Names, Private Names are subject to collision and should be used with caution.

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## 5. Producing and Consuming JWSs

TOC

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### 5.1. Message Signing or MACing

TOC

To create a JWS, one MUST perform these steps. The order of the steps is not significant in cases where there are no dependencies between the inputs and outputs of the steps.

1. Create the content to be used as the JWS Payload.
2. Base64url encode the octets of the JWS Payload. This encoding becomes the Encoded JWS Payload.
3. Create a JWS Header containing the desired set of header parameters. Note that white space is explicitly allowed in the representation and no canonicalization need be performed before encoding.
4. Base64url encode the octets of the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Protected Header to create the Encoded JWS Header. If the JWS Protected Header is not present (which can only happen when using the JWS JSON Serialization and no `protected` member is present), let the Encoded JWS Header be the empty string.
5. Compute the JWS Signature in the manner defined for the particular algorithm being used over the JWS Signing Input (the concatenation of the Encoded JWS Header, a period ('.') character, and the Encoded JWS Payload). The `alg` (algorithm) header parameter MUST be present in the JWS Header, with the algorithm value accurately representing the algorithm used to construct the JWS Signature.
6. Base64url encode the representation of the JWS Signature to create the Encoded JWS Signature.
7. The three encoded parts are result values used in both the JWS Compact Serialization and the JWS JSON Serialization representations.
8. If the JWS JSON Serialization is being used, repeat this process for each digital signature or MAC value being applied.
9. Create the desired serialized output. The JWS Compact Serialization of this result is the concatenation of the Encoded JWS Header, the Encoded JWS Payload, and the Encoded JWS Signature in that order, with the three strings being separated by two period ('.') characters. The JWS JSON Serialization is described in **Section 7.2**.

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### 5.2. Message Signature or MAC Validation

TOC

When validating a JWS, the following steps MUST be taken. The order of the steps is not significant in cases where there are no dependencies between the inputs and outputs of the steps. If any of the listed steps fails, then the signature or MAC cannot be validated.

It is an application decision which signatures, MACs, or plaintext values must successfully validate for the JWS to be accepted. In some cases, all must successfully validate or the JWS will be rejected. In other cases, only a specific signature, MAC, or plaintext value needs to be successfully validated. However, in all cases, at least one signature, MAC, or plaintext value MUST successfully validate or the JWS MUST be rejected.

1. Parse the serialized input to determine the values of the JWS Header, the Encoded JWS Payload, and the Encoded JWS Signature. When using the JWS Compact Serialization, the Encoded JWS Header, the Encoded JWS Payload, and the Encoded JWS Signature are represented as text strings in that order, separated by two period ('.') characters. The JWS JSON Serialization is described in **Section 7.2**.
2. The Encoded JWS Header MUST be successfully base64url decoded following the

- restriction given in this specification that no padding characters have been used.
3. Let the JWS Protected Header value be the result of base64url decoding the Encoded JWS Header.
  4. The resulting JWS Protected Header MUST be a completely valid JSON object conforming to **RFC 4627** [RFC4627].
  5. If using the JWS Compact Serialization, let the JWS Header be the JWS Protected Header; otherwise, when using the JWS JSON Serialization, let the JWS Header be the union of the members of the corresponding `protected` and `header` header parameter values, all of which must be completely valid JSON objects.
  6. The resulting JWS Header MUST NOT contain duplicate Header Parameter Names. When using the JWS JSON Serialization, this restriction includes that the same Header Parameter Name also MUST NOT occur in distinct JSON Text Object values that together comprise the JWS Header.
  7. The resulting JWS Header MUST be validated to only include parameters and values whose syntax and semantics are both understood and supported or that are specified as being ignored when not understood.
  8. The Encoded JWS Payload MUST be successfully base64url decoded following the restriction given in this specification that no padding characters have been used.
  9. The Encoded JWS Signature MUST be successfully base64url decoded following the restriction given in this specification that no padding characters have been used.
  10. The JWS Signature MUST be successfully validated against the JWS Signing Input (the concatenation of the Encoded JWS Header, a period ('.') character, and the Encoded JWS Payload) in the manner defined for the algorithm being used, which MUST be accurately represented by the value of the `alg` (algorithm) header parameter, which MUST be present.
  11. If the JWS JSON Serialization is being used, repeat this process for each digital signature or MAC value contained in the representation.

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### 5.3. String Comparison Rules

TOC

Processing a JWS inevitably requires comparing known strings to values in JSON objects. For example, in checking what the algorithm is, the Unicode string encoding `alg` will be checked against the member names in the JWS Header to see if there is a matching Header Parameter Name. A similar process occurs when determining if the value of the `alg` header parameter represents a supported algorithm.

Comparisons between JSON strings and other Unicode strings MUST be performed as specified below:

1. Remove any JSON escaping from the input JSON string and convert the string into a sequence of Unicode code points.
2. Likewise, convert the string to be compared against into a sequence of Unicode code points.
3. Unicode Normalization **[USA15]** MUST NOT be applied at any point to either the JSON string or to the string it is to be compared against.
4. Comparisons between the two strings MUST be performed as a Unicode code point to code point equality comparison. (Note that values that originally used different Unicode encodings (UTF-8, UTF-16, etc.) may result in the same code point values.)

Also, see the JSON security considerations in **Section 9.2** and the Unicode security considerations in **Section 9.3**.

---

## 6. Key Identification

TOC

It is necessary for the recipient of a JWS to be able to determine the key that was employed for the digital signature or MAC operation. The key employed can be identified using the Header Parameter methods described in **Section 4.1** or can be identified using methods that are outside the scope of this specification. Specifically, the Header Parameters `jku`, `jwk`, `x5u`, `x5t`, `x5c`, and `kid` can be used to identify the key used. These header parameters MUST be integrity protected if the information about the key that they convey is to be

considered trusted.

The sender SHOULD include sufficient information in the Header Parameters to identify the key used, unless the application uses another means or convention to determine the key used. Validation of the signature or MAC fails when the algorithm used requires a key (which is true of all algorithms except for `none`) and the key used cannot be determined.

The means of exchanging any shared symmetric keys used is outside the scope of this specification.

---

## 7. Serializations

TOC

JWS objects use one of two serializations, the JWS Compact Serialization or the JWS JSON Serialization. The JWS Compact Serialization is mandatory to implement. Implementation of the JWS JSON Serialization is OPTIONAL.

---

### 7.1. JWS Compact Serialization

TOC

The JWS Compact Serialization represents digitally signed or MACed content as a compact URL-safe string. This string is the concatenation of the Encoded JWS Header, the Encoded JWS Payload, and the Encoded JWS Signature in that order, with the three strings being separated by two period ('.') characters. Only one signature/MAC is supported by the JWS Compact Serialization.

---

### 7.2. JWS JSON Serialization

TOC

The JWS JSON Serialization represents digitally signed or MACed content as a JSON object. Unlike the JWS Compact Serialization, content using the JWS JSON Serialization can be secured with more than one digital signature and/or MAC value.

The representation is closely related to that used in the JWS Compact Serialization, with the following differences for the JWS JSON Serialization:

- Values in the JWS JSON Serialization are represented as members of a JSON object, rather than as base64url encoded strings separated by period ('.') characters. (However binary values and values that are integrity protected are still base64url encoded.)
- The Encoded JWS Payload value is stored in the `payload` member.
- There can be multiple signature and/or MAC values, rather than just one. A JSON array in the `signatures` member is used to hold values that are specific to a particular signature or MAC computation, with one array element per signature/MAC represented. These array elements are JSON objects.
- Each Encoded JWS Signature value, if non-empty, is stored in the `signature` member of a JSON object that is an element of the `signatures` array.
- Each Encoded JWS Header value, which is a base64url encoded set of header parameter values that are included in the signature/MAC computation, if non-empty, is stored in the `protected` member of the corresponding element of the `signatures` array.
- Unlike the JWS Compact Serialization, in the JWS JSON Serialization there can also be header parameter values that are not included in the signature/MAC computation. If present, unprotected header parameter values are represented as an unencoded JSON Text Object in the `header` member of the corresponding element of the `signatures` array.
- The header parameter values used when creating or validating individual signature or MAC values are the union of the two sets of header parameter values that may be present: (1) the integrity-protected per-signature/MAC values represented in the `protected` member of the signature/MAC's array element, and (2) the non-integrity-protected per-signature/MAC values in the `header` member of the signature/MAC's array element. The union of these sets

of header parameters comprises the JWS Header. The header parameter names in the two locations MUST be disjoint.

The syntax of a JWS using the JWS JSON Serialization is as follows:

```
{
  "payload": "<payload contents>"
  "signatures": [
    {"protected": "<integrity-protected header 1 contents>",
      "header": "<non-integrity-protected header 1 contents>",
      "signature": "<signature 1 contents>"},
    ...
    {"protected": "<integrity-protected header N contents>",
      "header": "<non-integrity-protected header N contents>",
      "signature": "<signature N contents>"}],
}
```

Of these members, only the `payload`, `signatures`, and `signature` members MUST be present. At least one of the `protected` and `header` members MUST be present for each signature/MAC computation so that an `alg` header parameter value is conveyed.

The contents of the Encoded JWS Payload and Encoded JWS Signature values are exactly as defined in the rest of this specification. They are interpreted and validated in the same manner, with each corresponding Encoded JWS Signature and set of header parameter values being created and validated together. The JWS Header values used are the union of the header parameters in the corresponding `protected` and `header` members, as described earlier.

Each JWS Signature value is computed on the JWS Signing Input using the parameters of the corresponding JWS Header value in the same manner as for the JWS Compact Serialization. This has the desirable property that each Encoded JWS Signature value in the `signatures` array is identical to the value that would have been computed for the same parameter in the JWS Compact Serialization, provided that the Encoded JWS Header value for that signature/MAC computation (which represents the integrity-protected header parameter values) matches that used in the JWS Compact Serialization.

See [Appendix A.6](#) for an example of computing a JWS using the JWS JSON Serialization.

---

## 8. IANA Considerations

TOC

The following registration procedure is used for all the registries established by this specification.

Values are registered with a Specification Required [\[RFC5226\]](#) after a two-week review period on the `[TBD]@ietf.org` mailing list, on the advice of one or more Designated Experts. However, to allow for the allocation of values prior to publication, the Designated Expert(s) may approve registration once they are satisfied that such a specification will be published.

Registration requests must be sent to the `[TBD]@ietf.org` mailing list for review and comment, with an appropriate subject (e.g., "Request for access token type: example"). [[ Note to RFC-EDITOR: The name of the mailing list should be determined in consultation with the IESG and IANA. Suggested name: `jose-reg-review`. ]]

Within the review period, the Designated Expert(s) will either approve or deny the registration request, communicating this decision to the review list and IANA. Denials should include an explanation and, if applicable, suggestions as to how to make the request successful.

IANA must only accept registry updates from the Designated Expert(s) and should direct all requests for registration to the review mailing list.

---

### 8.1. JSON Web Signature and Encryption Header Parameters Registry

TOC

This specification establishes the IANA JSON Web Signature and Encryption Header Parameters registry for reserved JWS and JWE Header Parameter Names. The registry records the reserved Header Parameter Name and a reference to the specification that defines it. The same Header Parameter Name MAY be registered multiple times, provided that the parameter usage is compatible between the specifications. Different registrations of the same Header Parameter Name will typically use different Header Parameter Usage Location(s) values.

---

### 8.1.1. Registration Template

TOC

#### Header Parameter Name:

The name requested (e.g., "example"). This name is case sensitive. Names that match other registered names in a case insensitive manner SHOULD NOT be accepted.

#### Header Parameter Usage Location(s):

The header parameter usage locations, which should be one or more of the values [JWS](#) or [JWE](#).

#### Change Controller:

For Standards Track RFCs, state "IETF". For others, give the name of the responsible party. Other details (e.g., postal address, email address, home page URI) may also be included.

#### Specification Document(s):

Reference to the document(s) that specify the parameter, preferably including URI(s) that can be used to retrieve copies of the document(s). An indication of the relevant sections may also be included but is not required.

---

### 8.1.2. Initial Registry Contents

TOC

This specification registers the Header Parameter Names defined in [Section 4.1](#) in this registry.

- Header Parameter Name: [alg](#)
- Header Parameter Usage Location(s): [JWS](#)
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): [Section 4.1.1](#) of [[ this document ]]
  
- Header Parameter Name: [jku](#)
- Header Parameter Usage Location(s): [JWS](#)
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): [Section 4.1.2](#) of [[ this document ]]
  
- Header Parameter Name: [jwk](#)
- Header Parameter Usage Location(s): [JWS](#)
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification document(s): [Section 4.1.3](#) of [[ this document ]]
  
- Header Parameter Name: [x5u](#)
- Header Parameter Usage Location(s): [JWS](#)
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): [Section 4.1.4](#) of [[ this document ]]
  
- Header Parameter Name: [x5t](#)
- Header Parameter Usage Location(s): [JWS](#)
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): [Section 4.1.5](#) of [[ this document ]]
  
- Header Parameter Name: [x5c](#)
- Header Parameter Usage Location(s): [JWS](#)
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): [Section 4.1.6](#) of [[ this document ]]
  
- Header Parameter Name: [kid](#)

- Header Parameter Usage Location(s): JWS
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): **Section 4.1.7** of [[ this document ]]
- Header Parameter Name: `typ`
- Header Parameter Usage Location(s): JWS
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): **Section 4.1.8** of [[ this document ]]
- Header Parameter Name: `cty`
- Header Parameter Usage Location(s): JWS
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): **Section 4.1.9** of [[ this document ]]
- Header Parameter Name: `crit`
- Header Parameter Usage Location(s): JWS
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): **Section 4.1.10** of [[ this document ]]

## 8.2. JSON Web Signature and Encryption Type Values Registry

TOC

This specification establishes the IANA JSON Web Signature and Encryption Type Values registry for values of the JWS and JWE `typ` (type) header parameter. It is RECOMMENDED that all registered `typ` values also include a MIME Media Type **[RFC2046]** value that the registered value is a short name for. The registry records the `typ` value, the MIME type value that it is an abbreviation for (if any), and a reference to the specification that defines it.

MIME Media Type **[RFC2046]** values MUST NOT be directly registered as new `typ` values; rather, new `typ` values MAY be registered as short names for MIME types.

### 8.2.1. Registration Template

TOC

"typ" Header Parameter Value:

The name requested (e.g., "example"). This name is case sensitive. Names that match other registered names in a case insensitive manner SHOULD NOT be accepted.

Abbreviation for MIME Type:

The MIME type that this name is an abbreviation for (e.g., "application/example").

Change Controller:

For Standards Track RFCs, state "IETF". For others, give the name of the responsible party. Other details (e.g., postal address, email address, home page URI) may also be included.

Specification Document(s):

Reference to the document(s) that specify the parameter, preferably including URI(s) that can be used to retrieve copies of the document(s). An indication of the relevant sections may also be included but is not required.

### 8.2.2. Initial Registry Contents

TOC

This specification registers the JOSE and JOSE+JSON type values in this registry:

- "typ" Header Parameter Value: JOSE
- Abbreviation for MIME type: application/jose
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): **Section 4.1.8** of [[ this document ]]
- "typ" Header Parameter Value: JOSE+JSON
- Abbreviation for MIME type: application/jose+json
- Change Controller: IETF
- Specification Document(s): **Section 4.1.8** of [[ this document ]]



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## 8.3. Media Type Registration

TOC

---

### 8.3.1. Registry Contents

TOC

This specification registers the `application/jose` Media Type **[RFC2046]** in the MIME Media Type registry **[RFC4288]**, which can be used to indicate that the content is a JWS or JWE object using the JWS Compact Serialization or the JWE Compact Serialization and the `application/jose+json` Media Type in the MIME Media Type registry, which can be used to indicate that the content is a JWS or JWE object using the JWS JSON Serialization or the JWE JSON Serialization.

- Type name: application
  - Subtype name: jose
  - Required parameters: n/a
  - Optional parameters: n/a
  - Encoding considerations: application/jose values are encoded as a series of base64url encoded values (some of which may be the empty string) separated by period ('.') characters.
  - Security considerations: See the Security Considerations section of [[ this document ]]
  - Interoperability considerations: n/a
  - Published specification: [[ this document ]]
  - Applications that use this media type: OpenID Connect, Mozilla Persona, Salesforce, Google, numerous others that use signed JWTs
  - Additional information: Magic number(s): n/a, File extension(s): n/a, Macintosh file type code(s): n/a
  - Person & email address to contact for further information: Michael B. Jones, mbj@microsoft.com
  - Intended usage: COMMON
  - Restrictions on usage: none
  - Author: Michael B. Jones, mbj@microsoft.com
  - Change Controller: IETF
- 
- Type name: application
  - Subtype name: jose+json
  - Required parameters: n/a
  - Optional parameters: n/a
  - Encoding considerations: application/jose+json values are represented as a JSON Object; UTF-8 encoding SHOULD be employed for the JSON object.
  - Security considerations: See the Security Considerations section of [[ this document ]]
  - Interoperability considerations: n/a
  - Published specification: [[ this document ]]
  - Applications that use this media type: TBD
  - Additional information: Magic number(s): n/a, File extension(s): n/a, Macintosh file type code(s): n/a
  - Person & email address to contact for further information: Michael B. Jones, mbj@microsoft.com
  - Intended usage: COMMON
  - Restrictions on usage: none
  - Author: Michael B. Jones, mbj@microsoft.com
  - Change Controller: IETF

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## 9. Security Considerations

TOC

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### 9.1. Cryptographic Security Considerations

TOC

All of the security issues faced by any cryptographic application must be faced by a JWS/JWE/JWK agent. Among these issues are protecting the user's private and symmetric keys, preventing various attacks, and helping the user avoid mistakes such as inadvertently encrypting a message for the wrong recipient. The entire list of security considerations is beyond the scope of this document, but some significant concerns are listed here.

All the security considerations in **XML DSIG 2.0** [W3C.CR-xmlsig-core2-20120124], also apply to this specification, other than those that are XML specific. Likewise, many of the best practices documented in **XML Signature Best Practices** [W3C.WD-xmlsig-bestpractices-20110809] also apply to this specification, other than those that are XML specific.

Keys are only as strong as the amount of entropy used to generate them. A minimum of 128 bits of entropy should be used for all keys, and depending upon the application context, more may be required. In particular, it may be difficult to generate sufficiently random values in some browsers and application environments.

Creators of JWSs should not allow third parties to insert arbitrary content into the message without adding entropy not controlled by the third party.

When utilizing TLS to retrieve information, the authority providing the resource **MUST** be authenticated and the information retrieved **MUST** be free from modification.

When cryptographic algorithms are implemented in such a way that successful operations take a different amount of time than unsuccessful operations, attackers may be able to use the time difference to obtain information about the keys employed. Therefore, such timing differences must be avoided.

A SHA-1 hash is used when computing `x5t` (x.509 certificate thumbprint) values, for compatibility reasons. Should an effective means of producing SHA-1 hash collisions be developed, and should an attacker wish to interfere with the use of a known certificate on a given system, this could be accomplished by creating another certificate whose SHA-1 hash value is the same and adding it to the certificate store used by the intended victim. A prerequisite to this attack succeeding is the attacker having write access to the intended victim's certificate store.

If, in the future, certificate thumbprints need to be computed using hash functions other than SHA-1, it is suggested that additional related header parameters be defined for that purpose. For example, it is suggested that a new `x5t#S256` (X.509 Certificate Thumbprint using SHA-256) header parameter could be defined and used.

---

## 9.2. JSON Security Considerations

TOC

Strict JSON validation is a security requirement. If malformed JSON is received, then the intent of the sender is impossible to reliably discern. Ambiguous and potentially exploitable situations could arise if the JSON parser used does not reject malformed JSON syntax.

Section 2.2 of the JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) specification [**RFC4627**] states "The names within an object **SHOULD** be unique", whereas this specification states that "Header Parameter Names within this object **MUST** be unique; recipients **MUST** either reject JWSs with duplicate Header Parameter Names or use a JSON parser that returns only the lexically last duplicate member name, as specified in Section 15.12 (The JSON Object) of ECMAScript 5.1 [**ECMAScript**]". Thus, this specification requires that the Section 2.2 "SHOULD" be treated as a "MUST" by senders and that it be either treated as a "MUST" or in the manner specified in ECMAScript 5.1 by receivers. Ambiguous and potentially exploitable situations could arise if the JSON parser used does not enforce the uniqueness of member names or returns an unpredictable value for duplicate member names.

Some JSON parsers might not reject input that contains extra significant characters after a valid input. For instance, the input `{"tag": "value"}ABCD` contains a valid JSON object followed by the extra characters `ABCD`. Such input **MUST** be rejected in its entirety.

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### 9.3. Unicode Comparison Security Considerations

TOC

Header Parameter Names and algorithm names are Unicode strings. For security reasons, the representations of these names must be compared verbatim after performing any escape processing (as per **RFC 4627** [RFC4627], Section 2.5). This means, for instance, that these JSON strings must compare as being equal ("sig", "\u0073ig"), whereas these must all compare as being not equal to the first set or to each other ("SIG", "Sig", "si\u0047").

JSON strings can contain characters outside the Unicode Basic Multilingual Plane. For instance, the G clef character (U+1D11E) may be represented in a JSON string as "\uD834\uDD1E". Ideally, JWS implementations SHOULD ensure that characters outside the Basic Multilingual Plane are preserved and compared correctly; alternatively, if this is not possible due to these characters exercising limitations present in the underlying JSON implementation, then input containing them MUST be rejected.

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### 9.4. TLS Requirements

TOC

Implementations MUST support TLS. Which version(s) ought to be implemented will vary over time, and depend on the widespread deployment and known security vulnerabilities at the time of implementation. At the time of this writing, TLS version 1.2 **[RFC5246]** is the most recent version, but has very limited actual deployment, and might not be readily available in implementation toolkits. TLS version 1.0 **[RFC2246]** is the most widely deployed version, and will give the broadest interoperability.

To protect against information disclosure and tampering, confidentiality protection MUST be applied using TLS with a ciphersuite that provides confidentiality and integrity protection.

Whenever TLS is used, a TLS server certificate check MUST be performed, per **RFC 6125** [RFC6125].

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## 10. References

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### 10.1. Normative References

TOC

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## Appendix A. JWS Examples

TOC

This section provides several examples of JWSs. While the first three examples all represent JSON Web Tokens (JWTs) [\[JWT\]](#), the payload can be any octet sequence, as shown in [Appendix A.4](#).

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### A.1. Example JWS using HMAC SHA-256

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#### A.1.1. Encoding

TOC

The following example JWS Header declares that the data structure is a JSON Web Token (JWT) [\[JWT\]](#) and the JWS Signing Input is secured using the HMAC SHA-256 algorithm.

```
{"typ": "JWT",  
  "alg": "HS256"}
```

The following octet sequence contains the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Header:

```
[123, 34, 116, 121, 112, 34, 58, 34, 74, 87, 84, 34, 44, 13, 10, 32, 34, 97, 108, 103, 34, 58,  
34, 72, 83, 50, 53, 54, 34, 125]
```

Base64url encoding these octets yields this Encoded JWS Header value:

```
eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLA0KICJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9
```

The JWS Payload used in this example is the octets of the UTF-8 representation of the JSON

object below. (Note that the payload can be any base64url encoded octet sequence, and need not be a base64url encoded JSON object.)

```
{"iss": "joe",  
  "exp": 1300819380,  
  "http://example.com/is_root": true}
```

The following octet sequence, which is the UTF-8 representation of the JSON object above, is the JWS Payload:

```
[123, 34, 105, 115, 115, 34, 58, 34, 106, 111, 101, 34, 44, 13, 10, 32, 34, 101, 120, 112, 34,  
58, 49, 51, 48, 48, 56, 49, 57, 51, 56, 48, 44, 13, 10, 32, 34, 104, 116, 116, 112, 58, 47, 47,  
101, 120, 97, 109, 112, 108, 101, 46, 99, 111, 109, 47, 105, 115, 95, 114, 111, 111, 116, 34,  
58, 116, 114, 117, 101, 125]
```

Base64url encoding the JWS Payload yields this Encoded JWS Payload value (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFt  
cGx1LmNvbS9pc19yb290Ijp0cnVlfQ
```

Concatenating the Encoded JWS Header, a period ('.') character, and the Encoded JWS Payload yields this JWS Signing Input value (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLA0KICJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9  
.  
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFt  
cGx1LmNvbS9pc19yb290Ijp0cnVlfQ
```

The ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input is the following octet sequence:

```
[101, 121, 74, 48, 101, 88, 65, 105, 79, 105, 74, 75, 86, 49, 81, 105, 76, 65, 48, 75, 73, 67,  
74, 104, 98, 71, 99, 105, 79, 105, 74, 73, 85, 122, 73, 49, 78, 105, 74, 57, 46, 101, 121, 74,  
112, 99, 51, 77, 105, 79, 105, 74, 113, 98, 50, 85, 105, 76, 65, 48, 75, 73, 67, 74, 108, 101,  
72, 65, 105, 79, 106, 69, 122, 77, 68, 65, 52, 77, 84, 107, 122, 79, 68, 65, 115, 68, 81, 111,  
103, 73, 109, 104, 48, 100, 72, 65, 54, 76, 121, 57, 108, 101, 71, 70, 116, 99, 71, 120, 108,  
76, 109, 78, 118, 98, 83, 57, 112, 99, 49, 57, 121, 98, 50, 57, 48, 73, 106, 112, 48, 99, 110,  
86, 108, 102, 81]
```

HMACs are generated using keys. This example uses the symmetric key represented in JSON Web Key **[JWK]** format below (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
{"kty": "oct",  
  "k": "AyM1SysPpbyDfgZld3umj1qzK0bwVMkoqQ-EstJQLr_T-1qS0gZH75  
  aKtMN3Yj0iPS4hcgUuTwjAzZr1Z9CAow"  
}
```

Running the HMAC SHA-256 algorithm on the octets of the ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input with this key yields this octet sequence:

```
[116, 24, 223, 180, 151, 153, 224, 37, 79, 250, 96, 125, 216, 173, 187, 186, 22, 212, 37, 77,  
105, 214, 191, 240, 91, 88, 5, 88, 83, 132, 141, 121]
```

Base64url encoding the above HMAC output yields this Encoded JWS Signature value:

```
dBjftJeZ4CVP-mB92K27uhbUJU1p1r_wW1gFWF0EjXk
```

Concatenating these values in the order Header.Payload.Signature with period ('.') characters between the parts yields this complete JWS representation using the JWS Compact

Serialization (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJ0eXAiOiJKV1QiLA0KICJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9
.
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGZt
cGx1LmNvbS9pc19yb290Ijpb0cnV1fQ
.dBjftJeZ4CVP-mB92K27uhbUJU1p1r_wW1gFwF0EjXk
```

---

## A.1.2. Decoding

TOC

Decoding the JWS requires base64url decoding the Encoded JWS Header, Encoded JWS Payload, and Encoded JWS Signature to produce the JWS Header, JWS Payload, and JWS Signature octet sequences. The octet sequence containing the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Header is decoded into the JWS Header string.

---

## A.1.3. Validating

TOC

Next we validate the decoded results. Since the `alg` parameter in the header is `HS256`, we validate the HMAC SHA-256 value contained in the JWS Signature. If any of the validation steps fail, the JWS MUST be rejected.

First, we validate that the JWS Header string is legal JSON.

To validate the HMAC value, we repeat the previous process of using the correct key and the ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input as input to the HMAC SHA-256 function and then taking the output and determining if it matches the JWS Signature. If it matches exactly, the HMAC has been validated.

---

## A.2. Example JWS using RSASSA-PKCS-v1\_5 SHA-256

TOC

---

### A.2.1. Encoding

TOC

The JWS Header in this example is different from the previous example in two ways: First, because a different algorithm is being used, the `alg` value is different. Second, for illustration purposes only, the optional "typ" parameter is not used. (This difference is not related to the algorithm employed.) The JWS Header used is:

```
{"alg": "RS256"}
```

The following octet sequence contains the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Header:

```
[123, 34, 97, 108, 103, 34, 58, 34, 82, 83, 50, 53, 54, 34, 125]
```

Base64url encoding these octets yields this Encoded JWS Header value:

```
eyJhbGciOiJSUzI1NiJ9
```

The JWS Payload used in this example, which follows, is the same as in the previous example. Since the Encoded JWS Payload will therefore be the same, its computation is not repeated here.



```
{ "iss": "joe",  
  "exp": 1300819380,  
  "http://example.com/is_root": true }
```

Concatenating the Encoded JWS Header, a period ('.') character, and the Encoded JWS Payload yields this JWS Signing Input value (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJhbGciOiJSUzI1NiJ9  
.  
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFtcGxlIj09eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFtcGxlIj09eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFtcGxlIj09
```

The ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input is the following octet sequence:

```
[101, 121, 74, 104, 98, 71, 99, 105, 79, 105, 74, 83, 85, 122, 73, 49, 78, 105, 74, 57, 46, 101,  
121, 74, 112, 99, 51, 77, 105, 79, 105, 74, 113, 98, 50, 85, 105, 76, 65, 48, 75, 73, 67, 74,  
108, 101, 72, 65, 105, 79, 106, 69, 122, 77, 68, 65, 52, 77, 84, 107, 122, 79, 68, 65, 115, 68,  
81, 111, 103, 73, 109, 104, 48, 100, 72, 65, 54, 76, 121, 57, 108, 101, 71, 70, 116, 99, 71,  
120, 108, 76, 109, 78, 118, 98, 83, 57, 112, 99, 49, 57, 121, 98, 50, 57, 48, 73, 106, 112, 48,  
99, 110, 86, 108, 102, 81]
```

This example uses the RSA key represented in JSON Web Key [JWK] format below (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
{ "kty": "RSA",  
  "n": "ofgWCUlJybRlzo0tZWJjNiuSfb4p4fAkd_wWJcyQoTbj9k0l8W26mPddx  
HmfHQp-Vaw-4qPCJrcS2mJPMEzP1Pt0Bm4d4Q1L-yRT-SFd2lZS-pCgNMs  
D1W_YpRPEw0WvG6b32690r2jZ47soMZo9wGzjb_70Mg0LOL-bSf63kpaSH  
SXndS5z5rexMdbBYUsLA9e-KXBdQOS-UTo7WTBEMa2R2CapHg665xsmtdV  
MTBQY4uDZ1xvb3qCo5ZwKh9kG4LT6_I5Ih1JH7aGhyxXFvUK-DWNmoudF8  
NAco9_h9iaGNj8q2ethFKMLs91kzk2PAcDTW9gb54h4FRWyuXpoQ",  
  "e": "AQAB",  
  "d": "Eq5xpGnNCivDf1JsRQBxHx1hdR1k6U1we2JZD50LpXyWPEAeP88vLN097I  
j1A7_GQ5sLKMgvfTeXZx9SE-7YwVol2NX0oAJe46sui395IW_GO-pWJ100  
BkTGoVen2bKVRUCgu-GjBVaYLU6f3l9kJfFNS3E0QbvdxzubSu3Mkqzjkn  
439X0M_V51gfpRLI9JYanrc4D4qAdGcopV_0ZHHzQ1BjudU2QvXt4ehNYT  
CBR6XCLQUShb1juU01ZdiYoFaFQT5Tw8bGU1_x_jTj3ccPDVZFD9pIuhLh  
B0neufuBiB4cS98l2SR_RQyGWSewjnczT0QU91p1Dh0VRu0oopznQ"  
}
```

The RSA private key is then passed to the RSA signing function, which also takes the hash type, SHA-256, and the octets of the ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input as inputs. The result of the digital signature is an octet sequence, which represents a big endian integer. In this example, it is:

```
[112, 46, 33, 137, 67, 232, 143, 209, 30, 181, 216, 45, 191, 120, 69, 243, 65, 6, 174, 27, 129,  
255, 247, 115, 17, 22, 173, 209, 113, 125, 131, 101, 109, 66, 10, 253, 60, 150, 238, 221, 115,  
162, 102, 62, 81, 102, 104, 123, 0, 11, 135, 34, 110, 1, 135, 237, 16, 115, 249, 69, 229, 130,  
173, 252, 239, 22, 216, 90, 121, 142, 232, 198, 109, 219, 61, 184, 151, 91, 23, 208, 148, 2,  
190, 237, 213, 217, 217, 112, 7, 16, 141, 178, 129, 96, 213, 248, 4, 12, 167, 68, 87, 98, 184,  
31, 190, 127, 249, 217, 46, 10, 231, 111, 36, 242, 91, 51, 187, 230, 244, 74, 230, 30, 177, 4,  
10, 203, 32, 4, 77, 62, 249, 18, 142, 212, 1, 48, 121, 91, 212, 189, 59, 65, 238, 202, 208, 102,  
171, 101, 25, 129, 253, 228, 141, 247, 127, 55, 45, 195, 139, 159, 175, 221, 59, 239, 177,  
139, 93, 163, 204, 60, 46, 176, 47, 158, 58, 65, 214, 18, 202, 173, 21, 145, 18, 115, 160, 95,  
35, 185, 232, 56, 250, 175, 132, 157, 105, 132, 41, 239, 90, 30, 136, 121, 130, 54, 195, 212,  
14, 96, 69, 34, 165, 68, 200, 242, 122, 122, 45, 184, 6, 99, 209, 108, 247, 202, 234, 86, 222,  
64, 92, 178, 33, 90, 69, 178, 194, 85, 102, 181, 90, 193, 167, 72, 160, 112, 223, 200, 163, 42,  
70, 149, 67, 208, 25, 238, 251, 71]
```

Base64url encoding the digital signature produces this value for the Encoded JWS Signature (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
cC4hiUPoj9Eetdgtv3hF80EGrhuB__dzERat0XF9g2VtQgr9PJbu3X0iZj5RZmh7
AAuHIm4Bh-0Qc_lF5YKt_08W2Fp5jujGbds9uJdbF9CUAr7t1dnZcAcQjbKBYNX4
BAynRFdiuB--f_nZLgrnbyTyWz075vRK5h6xBarLIARNPvkSjtQBMH1b1L07Qe7K
0GarZRmB_eSN9383Lc0Ln6_d0--xi12jzDwusc-e0kHWesqtFZESc6BfI7no0Pqv
hJ1phCnvWh6IeYI2w9Q0YEUIpUTI8np6LbgGY9Fs98rqVt5AXLIhWkWyw1VmtVrB
p0igcN_IoypG1UPQGe77Rw
```

Concatenating these values in the order Header.Payload.Signature with period ('.') characters between the parts yields this complete JWS representation using the JWS Compact Serialization (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJhbGciOiJSUzI1NiJ9
.
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFt
cGx1LmNvbS9pc19yb290Ijpb0cnV1fQ
.
cC4hiUPoj9Eetdgtv3hF80EGrhuB__dzERat0XF9g2VtQgr9PJbu3X0iZj5RZmh7
AAuHIm4Bh-0Qc_lF5YKt_08W2Fp5jujGbds9uJdbF9CUAr7t1dnZcAcQjbKBYNX4
BAynRFdiuB--f_nZLgrnbyTyWz075vRK5h6xBarLIARNPvkSjtQBMH1b1L07Qe7K
0GarZRmB_eSN9383Lc0Ln6_d0--xi12jzDwusc-e0kHWesqtFZESc6BfI7no0Pqv
hJ1phCnvWh6IeYI2w9Q0YEUIpUTI8np6LbgGY9Fs98rqVt5AXLIhWkWyw1VmtVrB
p0igcN_IoypG1UPQGe77Rw
```

---

## A.2.2. Decoding

TOC

Decoding the JWS requires base64url decoding the Encoded JWS Header, Encoded JWS Payload, and Encoded JWS Signature to produce the JWS Header, JWS Payload, and JWS Signature octet sequences. The octet sequence containing the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Header is decoded into the JWS Header string.

---

## A.2.3. Validating

TOC

Since the `alg` parameter in the header is `RS256`, we validate the RSASSA-PKCS-v1\_5 SHA-256 digital signature contained in the JWS Signature. If any of the validation steps fail, the JWS MUST be rejected.

First, we validate that the JWS Header string is legal JSON.

Validating the JWS Signature is a little different from the previous example. First, we base64url decode the Encoded JWS Signature to produce a digital signature `S` to check. We then pass `(n, e)`, `S` and the octets of the ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input to an RSASSA-PKCS-v1\_5 signature verifier that has been configured to use the SHA-256 hash function.

---

## A.3. Example JWS using ECDSA P-256 SHA-256

TOC

---

### A.3.1. Encoding

TOC

The JWS Header for this example differs from the previous example because a different algorithm is being used. The JWS Header used is:

```
{"alg": "ES256"}
```

The following octet sequence contains the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Header:

[123, 34, 97, 108, 103, 34, 58, 34, 69, 83, 50, 53, 54, 34, 125]

Base64url encoding these octets yields this Encoded JWS Header value:

```
eyJhbGciOiJIJFuzI1NiJ9
```

The JWS Payload used in this example, which follows, is the same as in the previous examples. Since the Encoded JWS Payload will therefore be the same, its computation is not repeated here.

```
{"iss": "joe",  
 "exp": 1300819380,  
 "http://example.com/is_root": true}
```

Concatenating the Encoded JWS Header, a period ('.') character, and the Encoded JWS Payload yields this JWS Signing Input value (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJhbGciOiJIJFuzI1NiJ9  
.  
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFt  
cGxlLmNvbS9pc19yb290IjpcnVlfQ
```

The ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input is the following octet sequence:

[101, 121, 74, 104, 98, 71, 99, 105, 79, 105, 74, 70, 85, 122, 73, 49, 78, 105, 74, 57, 46, 101, 121, 74, 112, 99, 51, 77, 105, 79, 105, 74, 113, 98, 50, 85, 105, 76, 65, 48, 75, 73, 67, 74, 108, 101, 72, 65, 105, 79, 106, 69, 122, 77, 68, 65, 52, 77, 84, 107, 122, 79, 68, 65, 115, 68, 81, 111, 103, 73, 109, 104, 48, 100, 72, 65, 54, 76, 121, 57, 108, 101, 71, 70, 116, 99, 71, 120, 108, 76, 109, 78, 118, 98, 83, 57, 112, 99, 49, 57, 121, 98, 50, 57, 48, 73, 106, 112, 48, 99, 110, 86, 108, 102, 81]

This example uses the elliptic curve key represented in JSON Web Key [JWK] format below:

```
{"kty": "EC",  
 "crv": "P-256",  
 "x": "f830J3D2xF1Bg8vub9tLe1gHMzV76e8Tus9uPHvRVEU",  
 "y": "x_FEzRu9m36HLN_tue659LNpXW6pCyStikYjKIWI5a0",  
 "d": "jpsQnnGQmL-YBIffH1136cspYG6-0iY7X1fCE9-E9LI"  
}
```

The ECDSA private part d is then passed to an ECDSA signing function, which also takes the curve type, P-256, the hash type, SHA-256, and the octets of the ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input as inputs. The result of the digital signature is the EC point (R, S), where R and S are unsigned integers. In this example, the R and S values, given as octet sequences representing big endian integers are:

Result Name	Value
R	[14, 209, 33, 83, 121, 99, 108, 72, 60, 47, 127, 21, 88, 7, 212, 2, 163, 178, 40, 3, 58, 249, 124, 126, 23, 129, 154, 195, 22, 158, 166, 101]
S	[197, 10, 7, 211, 140, 60, 112, 229, 216, 241, 45, 175, 8, 74, 84, 128, 166, 101, 144, 197, 242, 147, 80, 154, 143, 63, 127, 138, 131, 163, 84, 213]

Concatenating the S array to the end of the R array and base64url encoding the result produces this value for the Encoded JWS Signature (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
DtEhU31jbEg8L38VwAfUAq0yKAM6-Xx-F4GawxaepmXFCgfTjDxw5djxLa8ISlSA  
pmWQxfKTUJqPP3-Kg6NU1Q
```

Concatenating these values in the order Header.Payload.Signature with period ('.') characters between the parts yields this complete JWS representation using the JWS Compact Serialization (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJhbGciOiJIJFuzI1NiJ9  
.  
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGZt  
cGx1LmNvbS9pc19yb290Ijp0cnV1fQ  
.  
DtEhU31jbEg8L38VwAfUAq0yKAM6-Xx-F4GawxaepmXFCgfTjDxw5djxLa8ISlSA  
pmWQxfKTUJqPP3-Kg6NU1Q
```

---

### A.3.2. Decoding

TOC

Decoding the JWS requires base64url decoding the Encoded JWS Header, Encoded JWS Payload, and Encoded JWS Signature to produce the JWS Header, JWS Payload, and JWS Signature octet sequences. The octet sequence containing the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Header is decoded into the JWS Header string.

---

### A.3.3. Validating

TOC

Since the `alg` parameter in the header is [ES256](#), we validate the ECDSA P-256 SHA-256 digital signature contained in the JWS Signature. If any of the validation steps fail, the JWS MUST be rejected.

First, we validate that the JWS Header string is legal JSON.

Validating the JWS Signature is a little different from the first example. First, we base64url decode the Encoded JWS Signature as in the previous examples but we then need to split the 64 member octet sequence that must result into two 32 octet sequences, the first R and the second S. We then pass (x, y), (R, S) and the octets of the ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input to an ECDSA signature verifier that has been configured to use the P-256 curve with the SHA-256 hash function.

As explained in Section 3.4 of the JSON Web Algorithms (JWA) [\[JWA\]](#) specification, the use of the K value in ECDSA means that we cannot validate the correctness of the digital signature in the same way we validated the correctness of the HMAC. Instead, implementations MUST use an ECDSA validator to validate the digital signature.

---

## A.4. Example JWS using ECDSA P-521 SHA-512

TOC

---

### A.4.1. Encoding

TOC

The JWS Header for this example differs from the previous example because different ECDSA curves and hash functions are used. The JWS Header used is:

```
{"alg": "ES512"}
```

The following octet sequence contains the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Header:

[123, 34, 97, 108, 103, 34, 58, 34, 69, 83, 53, 49, 50, 34, 125]

Base64url encoding these octets yields this Encoded JWS Header value:

```
eyJhbGciOiJIJFZ1eXMiJ9
```

The JWS Payload used in this example, is the ASCII string "Payload". The representation of this string is the octet sequence:

[80, 97, 121, 108, 111, 97, 100]

Base64url encoding these octets yields this Encoded JWS Payload value:

```
UGF5bG9hZA
```

Concatenating the Encoded JWS Header, a period ('.') character, and the Encoded JWS Payload yields this JWS Signing Input value:

```
eyJhbGciOiJIJFZ1eXMiJ9.UGF5bG9hZA
```

The ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input is the following octet sequence:

[101, 121, 74, 104, 98, 71, 99, 105, 79, 105, 74, 70, 85, 122, 85, 120, 77, 105, 74, 57, 46, 85, 71, 70, 53, 98, 71, 57, 104, 90, 65]

This example uses the elliptic curve key represented in JSON Web Key [JWK] format below (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
{ "kty": "EC",
  "crv": "P-521",
  "x": "AekpBQ8ST8a8VcfVOTN1353vSrDCLLJXmPk06wTjxrjcbpXp5E0nYG_
NjFZ60vLFV1jSfS9tsz4qUxcWceqwQGk",
  "y": "ADSmRA43Z1DSNx_RvcLI87cdL0716jQyyBXMoxVg_12Th-x3S1WDhjDl
y79ajL4Kkd0AZMaZmh9ubmf63e3kyMj2",
  "d": "AY5pb7A0UFiB3RELSd64fTLOSV_jazdF7fLYyuTw810fRhWg6Y6rUrPA
xerEzgdRhajnu0ferB0d53vM9mE15j2C"
}
```

The ECDSA private part d is then passed to an ECDSA signing function, which also takes the curve type, P-521, the hash type, SHA-512, and the octets of the ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input as inputs. The result of the digital signature is the EC point (R, S), where R and S are unsigned integers. In this example, the R and S values, given as octet sequences representing big endian integers are:

Result Name	Value
R	[1, 220, 12, 129, 231, 171, 194, 209, 232, 135, 233, 117, 247, 105, 122, 210, 26, 125, 192, 1, 217, 21, 82, 91, 45, 240, 255, 83, 19, 34, 239, 71, 48, 157, 147, 152, 105, 18, 53, 108, 163, 214, 68, 231, 62, 153, 150, 106, 194, 164, 246, 72, 143, 138, 24, 50, 129, 223, 133, 206, 209, 172, 63, 237, 119, 109]
S	[0, 111, 6, 105, 44, 5, 41, 208, 128, 61, 152, 40, 92, 61, 152, 4, 150, 66, 60, 69, 247, 196, 170, 81, 193, 199, 78, 59, 194, 169, 16, 124, 9, 143, 42, 142, 131, 48, 206, 238, 34, 175, 83, 203, 220, 159, 3, 107, 155, 22, 27, 73, 111, 68, 68, 21, 238, 144, 229, 232, 148, 188, 222, 59, 242, 103]

Concatenating the S array to the end of the R array and base64url encoding the result produces this value for the Encoded JWS Signature (with line breaks for display purposes)

only):

```
AdwMgeerwtHoh-1192160hp9wAHZfVJbLfd_UxMi70cwnZ0YaRI1bKPWR0c-mZZq  
wqT2SI-KGDKB34X00aw_7XdtAG8GaSwFKdCAPZgoXD2YBJZCPEX3xKpRwcd008Kp  
EHwJjyq0gzD07iKvU8vcnwNrmxYbSW9ERBXuk0Xo1Lze0_Jn
```

Concatenating these values in the order Header.Payload.Signature with period ('.') characters between the parts yields this complete JWS representation using the JWS Compact Serialization (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJhbGciOiJIJFuzUxMiJ9  
.  
UGF5bG9hZA  
.  
AdwMgeerwtHoh-1192160hp9wAHZfVJbLfd_UxMi70cwnZ0YaRI1bKPWR0c-mZZq  
wqT2SI-KGDKB34X00aw_7XdtAG8GaSwFKdCAPZgoXD2YBJZCPEX3xKpRwcd008Kp  
EHwJjyq0gzD07iKvU8vcnwNrmxYbSW9ERBXuk0Xo1Lze0_Jn
```

---

## A.4.2. Decoding

TOC

Decoding the JWS requires base64url decoding the Encoded JWS Header, Encoded JWS Payload, and Encoded JWS Signature to produce the JWS Header, JWS Payload, and JWS Signature octet sequences. The octet sequence containing the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Header is decoded into the JWS Header string.

---

## A.4.3. Validating

TOC

Since the `alg` parameter in the header is `ES512`, we validate the ECDSA P-521 SHA-512 digital signature contained in the JWS Signature. If any of the validation steps fail, the JWS MUST be rejected.

First, we validate that the JWS Header string is legal JSON.

Validating the JWS Signature is similar to the previous example. First, we base64url decode the Encoded JWS Signature as in the previous examples but we then need to split the 132 member octet sequence that must result into two 66 octet sequences, the first R and the second S. We then pass (x, y), (R, S) and the octets of the ASCII representation of the JWS Signing Input to an ECDSA signature verifier that has been configured to use the P-521 curve with the SHA-512 hash function.

As explained in Section 3.4 of the JSON Web Algorithms (JWA) **[JWA]** specification, the use of the K value in ECDSA means that we cannot validate the correctness of the digital signature in the same way we validated the correctness of the HMAC. Instead, implementations MUST use an ECDSA validator to validate the digital signature.

---

## A.5. Example Plaintext JWS

TOC

The following example JWS Header declares that the encoded object is a Plaintext JWS:

```
{"alg": "none"}
```

Base64url encoding the octets of the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Header yields this Encoded JWS Header:

---



```
eyJhbGciOiJub251In0
```

The JWS Payload used in this example, which follows, is the same as in the previous examples. Since the Encoded JWS Payload will therefore be the same, its computation is not repeated here.

```
{"iss": "joe",  
 "exp": 1300819380,  
 "http://example.com/is_root": true}
```

The Encoded JWS Signature is the empty string.

Concatenating these parts in the order Header.Payload.Signature with period ('.') characters between the parts yields this complete JWS (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJhbGciOiJub251In0  
.  
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFt  
cGx1LmNvbS9pc19yb290Ijp0cnV1fQ  
.
```

---

## A.6. Example JWS Using JWS JSON Serialization

TOC

This section contains an example using the JWS JSON Serialization. This example demonstrates the capability for conveying multiple digital signatures and/or MACs for the same payload.

The Encoded JWS Payload used in this example is the same as that used in the examples in [Appendix A.2](#) and [Appendix A.3](#) (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFt  
cGx1LmNvbS9pc19yb290Ijp0cnV1fQ
```

Two digital signatures are used in this example: the first using RSASSA-PKCS-v1\_5 SHA-256 and the second using ECDSA P-256 SHA-256. For the first, the JWS Protected Header and key are the same as in [Appendix A.2](#), resulting in the same JWS Signature value; therefore, its computation is not repeated here. For the second, the JWS Protected Header and key are the same as in [Appendix A.3](#), resulting in the same JWS Signature value; therefore, its computation is not repeated here.

---

### A.6.1. JWS Per-Signature Protected Headers

TOC

The JWS Protected Header value used for the first signature is:

```
{"alg": "RS256"}
```

Base64url encoding these octets yields this Encoded JWS Header value:

```
eyJhbGciOiJSUzI1NiJ9
```

The JWS Protected Header value used for the second signature is:

```
{"alg": "ES256"}
```

Base64url encoding these octets yields this Encoded JWS Header value:

```
eyJhbGciOiJFUzI1NiJ9
```

---

### A.6.2. JWS Per-Signature Unprotected Headers

TOC

Key ID values are supplied for both keys using per-signature header parameters. The two values used to represent these Key IDs are:

```
{"kid": "2010-12-29"}
```

and:

```
{"kid": "e9bc097a-ce51-4036-9562-d2ade882db0d"}
```

---

### A.6.3. Complete JWS Header Values

TOC

Combining the protected and unprotected header values supplied, the JWS Header values used for the first and second signatures respectively are:

```
{"alg": "RS256",  
 "kid": "2010-12-29"}
```

and:

```
{"alg": "ES256",  
 "kid": "e9bc097a-ce51-4036-9562-d2ade882db0d"}
```

---

### A.6.4. Complete JWS JSON Serialization Representation

TOC

The complete JSON Web Signature JSON Serialization for these values is as follows (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
{"payload":  
  "eyJpc3MiOiJqb2UiLA0KICJleHAiOjEzMDA4MTkzODAsDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFtcGxlLmNvbS9pc19yb290Ijpc0cnVlfnQ",  
  "signatures": [  
    {"protected": "eyJhbGciOiJSUzI1NiJ9",  
      "header":  
        {"kid": "2010-12-29"},  
      "signature":  
        "cC4hiUPoj9Eetdgtv3hF80EGrhuB__dzERat0XF9g2VtQgr9PJbu3X0iZj5RZ  
mh7AAuHIm4Bh-0Qc_lF5YKt_08W2Fp5jujGbds9uJdbF9CUAr7t1dnZcAcQjb  
KBYNX4BAynRFdiuB--f_nZLgrnbyTyWz075vRK5h6xBARLIARNPvkSjtQBMH1  
b1L07Qe7K0GarZRmB_eSN9383Lc0Ln6_d0--xi12jzDwusC-e0kHWesqtFZES  
c6BfI7no0PqvhJ1phCnvWh6IeYI2w9Q0YEUipUTI8np6LbgGY9Fs98rqVt5AX  
LIhWkWywlvmtVrBp0igcN_IoypGlUPQGe77Rw"}},
```

```
{
  "protected": "eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9",
  "header": {
    "kid": "e9bc097a-ce51-4036-9562-d2ade882db0d"},
  "signature":
    "DtEhU31jbEg8L38VwAFUAqOyKAM6-Xx-F4GawxaepmXFCgfTjDxw5djxLa8IS
    lSAPmWQxfKTUJqPP3-Kg6NU1Q"}
}
```

## Appendix B. "x5c" (X.509 Certificate Chain) Example

TOC

The JSON array below is an example of a certificate chain that could be used as the value of an `x5c` (X.509 Certificate Chain) header parameter, per **Section 4.1.6**. Note that since these strings contain base64 encoded (not base64url encoded) values, they are allowed to contain white space and line breaks.

```
[
  "MIIE3jCCA8agAwIBAgICAwEwDQYJKoZIhvcNAQEFBQAwYzELMAkGA1UEBhMCVVMxITAFBgNVBAAoTGFROZSBHbyBEYWRRkeSBHcm91cCwgSW5jLjExMC8GA1UECxMoR28gRGFkZHkgQ2xhc3MgMiBDZXJ0aWZpY2F0aW9uIEF1dGhvcml0eTAeFw0wNjExMTYwMTU0MzdaFw0yNjExMTYwMTU0MzdaMIIHkMQswCQYDVQQGEwJVUzEQMA4GA1UECBMHQXJpem9uYTETMBEGA1UEBxMKU2NvdHRzZGFsZTEaMBgGA1UEChMRRR29EYWRkeS5jb20sIEluYy4xMzAxMzBgNVBAsTKmh0dHA6Ly9jZXJ0aWZpY2F0ZXMuZ29kYWRRkeS5jb20vcmlvbnM3NpdG9yeTEwMC4GA1UEAxMnR28gRGFkZHkgU2VjdXJlIENlc nRpZm1jYXRpb24gQXV0aG9yaXR5MR5wEwDwYDQYJFwgcwYDQYJFwgcwYDQYJFwgcwYDQYJKoZIhvcNAQEBBQADgGEPADCCAQoCggEBAMQt1RWmncZM7DI161+4WQFapmGBWtTwY6vj3D3HKrjJM9N55DrtpDAjH6zMBs2sofDPZVUBJ7fmd0LJR4h3mUpfjwoqVTr9vcyOdQmVZwt7/v+WibXnvQAjYwqDL1CBM6nPt27oDyqu9SoWlm2r4arV3aL GbqGmu75RpRSgAvSMeYddi5Kcju+GztCpyz8/x4fKL4o/K1w/05epHBp+Y1Lpyo7Rj1bmr2EkRTcDCVw5wrWCs9CHRK8r5RsL+H0EwnWGu1NcWdrxcx+AuP7q2BNgWJCJjP0q81h8BJ6qf9Z/dFjpfMFDniNow1fho3/Rb2cRGadDAW/h0Uoz+EDU8CAwEAAaOCATiWggEuMB0GA1UdDgQWBBT9rGEyk2xF1uLuhV+auud2mWjM5zAfBgNVHSMEGDAWgBTSxLDSkdRMEXGzYcs9of7dqGrU4zASBgNVHRMBAf8ECDAGAQH/AgEAMDGMGCCsGAQUFBwEBBCCwJTAjBggrBgEFBQcwAYYXaHR0cDovL29jc3AuZ29kYWRRkeS5jb20wRgYDVVR0fBD8wPTA7oDmgn4Y1aHR0cDovL2N1cnRpZm1jYXRlc3V5bnB2RhZGR5LmNvbS9yZXVvc2l0b3J5L2dkcm9vdC5jcmwwSwYDVR0gBEQwQjBAbGRVHSAAMDgWNgYIKwYBBQUHAgEWMh0dHA6Ly9jZXJ0aWZpY2F0ZXMuZ29kYWRRkeS5jb20vcmlvbnM3NpdG9yeTA0BgNVHQ8BAf8EBAMCAQYwDQYJKoZIhvcNAQEFBQADggEBANKGw0y9+aG2Z+5mC6IG0gRQjhVyrEp0lVPLN8tESe8HkGsz2Zbw1Fa1EzAFPIUyIXvJxwqoJKSQ3kbTJSMUA2fCENZvd117esyfxVgqwcSeIaha86ykRv0e5GPLL5CkKSkB2XIIsKd83ASe8T+5o0yGPwLPk9Qnt0hCqU7S+8MxZC9Y71hyVJEnfzuz9p0iRFEU00jZv2kwzRaJBydTXRE4+uXR21aITVSzGh601mawGhId/dQb8vxRMDsxuxN89txJx90jxUUAiKEngHUuHqDTMBqLdElrRhjZkAzVvb3du6/KFUJheqwnTrZEjYx8WnM25sgVj0uH0aBsXBTWVU+4=",
  "MIIE+ZCCBGsgAwIBAgICAQ0wDQYJKoZIhvcNAQEFBQAwgbsxJDAiBgNVBAcTGTZhbGlDZXJ0IFZhbG1kYXRpb24gTmV0d29yazEXMBUGA1UEChMOVmFsaUN1cnQsIEluYy4xNTAzaWZpY2F0aW9uIEF1dGhvcml0eTAeFw0wNjExMTYwMTU0MzdaFw0yNjExMTYwMTU0MzdaMIIHkMQswCQYDVQQGEwJVUzEQMA4GA1UECBMHQXJpem9uYTETMBEGA1UEBxMKU2NvdHRzZGFsZTEaMBgGA1UEChMRRR29EYWRkeS5jb20vcmlvbnM3NpdG9yeTEwMC4GA1UEAxMnR28gRGFkZHkgU2VjdXJlIENlc nRpZm1jYXRpb24gQXV0aG9yaXR5MR5wEwDwYDQYJFwgcwYDQYJFwgcwYDQYJFwgcwYDQYJKoZIhvcNAQEBBQADgGEPADCCAQoCggEBANADCCAQgCggEBAN6d1+pXGEmhw+vXX0iG6r7d/+TvZxz0ZWizV3GgXne77ZtJ6XCAPVYYYwhv2vLM0D9/AlQiVBDYsoHUWU9S3/Hd8M+eKsaA7Ugay9qk7HFih7Eux6wwdhFJ2+qN1j3hybX2C32qRe3H3I2TqYXP2WYktsqbl2i/ojgC95/5Y0V4evL0tXiEqITLdiOr18SPaAIBQi2XKVL0ARFmr6jYGB0xUG1cmIbYsUfb18aQr4CUWwo riMYavx4A6lNf4DD+qta/KFApMoZfv6yy09ecw3ud72a9nmYvLEHZ6IVDd2gWMEewo+YihfukEHU1jPEX44dMX4/7Vpki+Ed0qXG68CAQ0jggHhMIIB3TAdBgNVHQ4EFgQU0sSw0pHUTBFxs2HLPaH+3ahq10MwgdIGA1UdIwSByjCBx6GBwaSBvjCBuzEkMCIGA1UEBxMmVmFsaUN1cnQgVmFsaWRhdGlubiB0ZXR3b3JrMRcwFQYDVQQKEw5WYXxpQ2VydCwgSW5jLjExMGMGA1UECxMsVmFsaUN1cnQgQ2xhc3MgMiBQb2xpY3kgVmFsaWRhdGlubiBDbXR0b3JpdHkxITAFBgNVBAMTGgh0dHA6Ly93d3cuZmFsaUN1cnQy29tLzEgMB4GCsqGSIB3DQEJARYRaw5mb0B2YwXpY2VydC5jb22CAQEwDwYDVR0TAAQH/BAUwAwEB/zAzBggrBgEFBQcBAQQAQnMCUwIwYIKwYBBQUHMAGGF2h0dHA6Ly9vY3NwLmdvZGFkZHkuY29tMEQGA1UdHwQ9MDSw0aA3oDWMG2h0dHA6Ly9jZXJ0aWZpY2F0ZXMuZ29kYWRRkeS5jb20vcmlvbnM3NpdG9yeS9yb290LmNybd
```

```
BLBgNVHSAERDBCMEAGBFUdIAAW0DA2BggrBgEFBQcCARYqaHR0cDovL2N1cnRpZm1jYXRlc3R5bnB2RmVudD0VmsfSx0aFIqII6hR8INMqzW/Rn453HWkrugp++85j09VZw==",
"MIIC5zCCA1ACAQEwDQYJKoZIhvcNAQEFBQAwwgsxJDAiBgNVBACtG1ZhbG1DZXJ0IFZhbG1kYXRpb24gTmV0d29yazEXMBUGA1UEChMOVmFsaUN1cnQsIEluYy4xNTAzBgNVBAsTTFZhbG1DZXJ0IENsYXNzIDIGUG9saWN5IFZhbG1kYXRpb24gQXV0aG9yaXR5MSEwHwYDVQDEExodHRwOi8vd3d3LnZhbG1jZXJ0LmNvbS8xIDAeBgkqhkiG9w0BCQEWEluZm9AdmFsaWN1cnQuY29tMB4XDTE1MDYyNjAwMTk1NFowDTE1MDYyNjAwMTk1NFowgsxJDAiBgNVBACtG1ZhbG1DZXJ0IFZhbG1kYXRpb24gTmV0d29yazEXMBUGA1UEChMOVmFsaUN1cnQsIEluYy4xNTAzBgNVBAsTTFZhbG1DZXJ0IENsYXNzIDIGUG9saWN5IFZhbG1kYXRpb24gQXV0aG9yaXR5MSEwHwYDVQDEExodHRwOi8vd3d3LnZhbG1jZXJ0LmNvbS8xIDAeBgkqhkiG9w0BCQEWEluZm9AdmFsaWN1cnQuY29tMIGfMA0GCSqGSIb3DQEBAQUAA4GNADCBiQKBgQD00nHK5avIWZJV16vYdA757tn2VUdZZUc0BVXc65g2PFxTXdMwzzj svUGJ7SVCCSRrCl6zfN1SLUzm1NZ9WlmpZdRJEy0kTRxQb7XBhVQ7/nHk01xC+YDgkRoKwzk2Z/M/VXwbP7RfZHM047Qsv4dk+NoS/zcnwbNDu+97bi5p9wIDAQABMA0GCSqGSIb3DQEBBQUAA4GBADt/UG9vUJSZSWI40B9L+KXIPqeCgfYrx+jFzug6EILLGACOTb2oWH+heQC1u+mNr0HZDzTuIYEZodJJKPTEjlbVUjP9UNV+mWwD5M1M/Mtsq2azSiGM5bUMMJ4QssxsodyamEwCW/P0uZ6lcg5Ktz885hZo+L7tdEy8W9ViH0Pd"]
```

## Appendix C. Notes on implementing base64url encoding without padding

TOC

This appendix describes how to implement base64url encoding and decoding functions without padding based upon standard base64 encoding and decoding functions that do use padding.

To be concrete, example C# code implementing these functions is shown below. Similar code could be used in other languages.

```
static string base64urlencode(byte [] arg)
{
    string s = Convert.ToBase64String(arg); // Regular base64 encoder
    s = s.Split('=')[0]; // Remove any trailing '='s
    s = s.Replace('+', '-'); // 62nd char of encoding
    s = s.Replace('/', '_'); // 63rd char of encoding
    return s;
}

static byte [] base64urldecode(string arg)
{
    string s = arg;
    s = s.Replace('-', '+'); // 62nd char of encoding
    s = s.Replace('_', '/'); // 63rd char of encoding
    switch (s.Length % 4) // Pad with trailing '='s
    {
        case 0: break; // No pad chars in this case
        case 2: s += "=="; break; // Two pad chars
        case 3: s += "="; break; // One pad char
        default: throw new System.Exception(
            "Illegal base64url string!");
    }
    return Convert.FromBase64String(s); // Standard base64 decoder
}
```

As per the example code above, the number of '=' padding characters that needs to be added to the end of a base64url encoded string without padding to turn it into one with padding is a deterministic function of the length of the encoded string. Specifically, if the length mod 4 is 0, no padding is added; if the length mod 4 is 2, two '=' padding characters are added; if the length mod 4 is 3, one '=' padding character is added; if the length mod 4 is 1, the input is malformed.

An example correspondence between unencoded and encoded values follows. The octet sequence below encodes into the string below, which when decoded, reproduces the octet sequence.

```
3 236 255 224 193
```

```
A-z_4ME
```

---

## Appendix D. Negative Test Case for "crit" Header Parameter

TOC

Conforming implementations must reject input containing critical extensions that are not understood or cannot be processed. The following JWS must be rejected by all implementations, because it uses an extension header parameter name <http://example.invalid/UNDEFINED> that they do not understand. Any other similar input, in which the use of the value <http://example.invalid/UNDEFINED> is substituted for any other header parameter name not understood by the implementation, must also be rejected.

The JWS Header value for this JWS is:

```
{ "alg": "none",  
  "crit": ["http://example.invalid/UNDEFINED"],  
  "http://example.invalid/UNDEFINED": true  
}
```

The complete JWS that must be rejected is as follows (with line breaks for display purposes only):

```
eyJhbGciOiAiub25lIiwNCiAiY3JpdCI6WyJodHRwOi8vZXhhbXBsZS5jb20vVU5ERU  
ZJTkVEIl0sDQogImh0dHA6Ly9leGFtcGxlLmNvbS9VTkRFRk10RUQiOnRydWUNCn0.  
RkFJTA.
```

---

## Appendix E. Acknowledgements

TOC

Solutions for signing JSON content were previously explored by **Magic Signatures** [MagicSignatures], **JSON Simple Sign** [JSS], and **Canvas Applications** [CanvasApp], all of which influenced this draft.

Thanks to Axel Nennker for his early implementation and feedback on the JWS and JWE specifications.

This specification is the work of the JOSE Working Group, which includes dozens of active and dedicated participants. In particular, the following individuals contributed ideas, feedback, and wording that influenced this specification:

Dirk Balfanz, Richard Barnes, Brian Campbell, Breno de Medeiros, Dick Hardt, Joe Hildebrand, Jeff Hodges, Edmund Jay, Yaron Y. Goland, Ben Laurie, James Manger, Matt Miller, Tony Nadalin, Axel Nennker, John Panzer, Emmanuel Raviart, Eric Rescorla, Jim Schaad, Paul Tarjan, Hannes Tschofenig, and Sean Turner.

Jim Schaad and Karen O'Donoghue chaired the JOSE working group and Sean Turner and Stephen Farrell served as Security area directors during the creation of this specification.

---

## Appendix F. Document History

TOC

[[ to be removed by the RFC editor before publication as an RFC ]]

-15

- Clarified that it is an application decision which signatures, MACs, or plaintext values must successfully validate for the JWS to be accepted, addressing issue #35.
- Corrected editorial error in ES512 example.
- Changes to address editorial and minor issues #34, #96, #100, #101, #104, #105, and #106.

-14

- Stated that the `signature` parameter is to be omitted in the JWS JSON Serialization when its value would be empty (which is only the case for a Plaintext JWS).

-13

- Made all header parameter values be per-signature/MAC, addressing issue #24.

-12

- Clarified that the `typ` and `cty` header parameters are used in an application-specific manner and have no effect upon the JWS processing.
- Replaced the MIME types `application/jws+json` and `application/jws` with `application/jose+json` and `application/jose`.
- Stated that recipients MUST either reject JWSs with duplicate Header Parameter Names or use a JSON parser that returns only the lexically last duplicate member name.
- Added a Serializations section with parallel treatment of the JWS Compact Serialization and the JWS JSON Serialization and also moved the former Implementation Considerations content there.

-11

- Added Key Identification section.
- For the JWS JSON Serialization, enable header parameter values to be specified in any of three parameters: the `protected` member that is integrity protected and shared among all recipients, the `unprotected` member that is not integrity protected and shared among all recipients, and the `header` member that is not integrity protected and specific to a particular recipient. (This does not affect the JWS Compact Serialization, in which all header parameter values are in a single integrity protected JWE Header value.)
- Removed suggested compact serialization for multiple digital signatures and/or MACs.
- Changed the MIME type name `application/jws-js` to `application/jws+json`, addressing issue #22.
- Tightened the description of the `crit` (critical) header parameter.
- Added a negative test case for the `crit` header parameter

-10

- Added an appendix suggesting a possible compact serialization for JWSs with multiple digital signatures and/or MACs.

-09

- Added JWS JSON Serialization, as specified by draft-jones-jose-jws-json-serialization-04.
- Registered `application/jws-js` MIME type and `JWS-JS` typ header parameter value.
- Defined that the default action for header parameters that are not understood is to ignore them unless specifically designated as "MUST be understood" or included in the new `crit` (critical) header parameter list. This addressed issue #6.
- Changed term "JWS Secured Input" to "JWS Signing Input".
- Changed from using the term "byte" to "octet" when referring to 8 bit values.



- Changed member name from `recipients` to `signatures` in the JWS JSON Serialization.
- Added complete values using the JWS Compact Serialization for all examples.

-08

- Applied editorial improvements suggested by Jeff Hodges and Hannes Tschofenig. Many of these simplified the terminology used.
- Clarified statements of the form "This header parameter is OPTIONAL" to "Use of this header parameter is OPTIONAL".
- Added a Header Parameter Usage Location(s) field to the IANA JSON Web Signature and Encryption Header Parameters registry.
- Added seriesInfo information to Internet Draft references.

-07

- Updated references.

-06

- Changed `x5c` (X.509 Certificate Chain) representation from being a single string to being an array of strings, each containing a single base64 encoded DER certificate value, representing elements of the certificate chain.
- Applied changes made by the RFC Editor to RFC 6749's registry language to this specification.

-05

- Added statement that "StringOrURI values are compared as case-sensitive strings with no transformations or canonicalizations applied".
- Indented artwork elements to better distinguish them from the body text.

-04

- Completed JSON Security Considerations section, including considerations about rejecting input with duplicate member names.
- Completed security considerations on the use of a SHA-1 hash when computing `x5t` (x.509 certificate thumbprint) values.
- Refer to the registries as the primary sources of defined values and then secondarily reference the sections defining the initial contents of the registries.
- Normatively reference **XML DSIG 2.0** [W3C.CR-xmlsig-core2-20120124] for its security considerations.
- Added this language to Registration Templates: "This name is case sensitive. Names that match other registered names in a case insensitive manner SHOULD NOT be accepted."
- Reference draft-jones-jose-jws-json-serialization instead of draft-jones-json-web-signature-json-serialization.
- Described additional open issues.
- Applied editorial suggestions.

-03

- Added the `cty` (content type) header parameter for declaring type information about the secured content, as opposed to the `typ` (type) header parameter, which declares type information about this object.
- Added "Collision Resistant Namespace" to the terminology section.
- Reference ITU.X690.1994 for DER encoding.
- Added an example JWS using ECDSA P-521 SHA-512. This has particular illustrative value because of the use of the 521 bit integers in the key and signature values. This is also an example in which the payload is not a base64url encoded JSON object.
- Added an example `x5c` value.
- No longer say "the UTF-8 representation of the JWS Secured Input (which is the same as the ASCII representation)". Just call it "the ASCII representation of the JWS Secured Input".
- Added Registration Template sections for defined registries.
- Added Registry Contents sections to populate registry values.
- Changed name of the JSON Web Signature and Encryption "typ" Values registry to be the JSON Web Signature and Encryption Type Values registry, since it is

used for more than just values of the `typ` parameter.

- Moved registries JSON Web Signature and Encryption Header Parameters and JSON Web Signature and Encryption Type Values to the JWS specification.
- Numerous editorial improvements.

-02

- Clarified that it is an error when a `kid` value is included and no matching key is found.
- Removed assumption that `kid` (key ID) can only refer to an asymmetric key.
- Clarified that JWSs with duplicate Header Parameter Names MUST be rejected.
- Clarified the relationship between `typ` header parameter values and MIME types.
- Registered application/jws MIME type and "JWS" `typ` header parameter value.
- Simplified JWK terminology to get replace the "JWK Key Object" and "JWK Container Object" terms with simply "JSON Web Key (JWK)" and "JSON Web Key Set (JWK Set)" and to eliminate potential confusion between single keys and sets of keys. As part of this change, the Header Parameter Name for a public key value was changed from `jpk` (JSON Public Key) to `jwk` (JSON Web Key).
- Added suggestion on defining additional header parameters such as `x5t#S256` in the future for certificate thumbprints using hash algorithms other than SHA-1.
- Specify RFC 2818 server identity validation, rather than RFC 6125 (paralleling the same decision in the OAuth specs).
- Generalized language to refer to Message Authentication Codes (MACs) rather than Hash-based Message Authentication Codes (HMACs) unless in a context specific to HMAC algorithms.
- Reformatted to give each header parameter its own section heading.

-01

- Moved definition of Plaintext JWSs (using "alg":"none") here from the JWT specification since this functionality is likely to be useful in more contexts that just for JWTs.
- Added `jpk` and `x5c` header parameters for including JWK public keys and X.509 certificate chains directly in the header.
- Clarified that this specification is defining the JWS Compact Serialization. Referenced the new JWS-JS spec, which defines the JWS JSON Serialization.
- Added text "New header parameters should be introduced sparingly since an implementation that does not understand a parameter MUST reject the JWS".
- Clarified that the order of the creation and validation steps is not significant in cases where there are no dependencies between the inputs and outputs of the steps.
- Changed "no canonicalization is performed" to "no canonicalization need be performed".
- Corrected the Magic Signatures reference.
- Made other editorial improvements suggested by JOSE working group participants.

-00

- Created the initial IETF draft based upon draft-jones-json-web-signature-04 with no normative changes.
- Changed terminology to no longer call both digital signatures and HMACs "signatures".

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