Chapter 28: Option Strict

Section 28.1: Why Use It?

Option Strict On prevents three things from happening:

1. Implicit Narrowing Conversion Errors

It prevents you from assigning to a variable that has *less precision or smaller capacity* (a narrowing conversion) without an explicit cast. Doing so would result in data loss.

Dim d As Double = 123.4
Dim s As Single = d 'This line does not compile with Option Strict On

2. Late Binding Calls

Late binding is not allowed. This is to prevent typos that would compile, but fail at runtime

Dim obj As New Object
obj.Foo 'This line does not compile with Option Strict On

3. Implicit Object Type Errors

This prevents variable being inferred as an Object when in fact they should have been declared as a type

Dim something = Nothing. 'This line does not compile with Option Strict On

Conclusion

Unless you need to do late binding, you should always have **Option** Strict **On** as it will cause the mentioned errors to generate compile time errors instead of runtime exceptions.

If you have to do late binding, you can either

- Wrap all your late binding calls into one class/module and use **Option** Strict Off at the top of the code file (this is the preferred method as it reduces the likelihood of a typos in other files), *or*
- Specify that Late Binding does not cause a compilation failure (Project Properties > Compile Tab > Warning Configuration)

Section 28.2: How to Switch It On

• You can switch it On at the Module/Class Level by placing the directive at the top of the code file.

Option Strict On

• You can switch it on at the project level via the menu in Visual Studio

Project > [Project] Properties > Compile Tab > Option Strict > On

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• You can switch it On by default for all new Projects by selecting:

Tools > Options > Projects and Solutions > VB defaults > Option Strict Set it to 0n.