

TypeScript Crash Course

*A hands-on guide to building safer and
more reliable web applications*

Daniel Cavalcante



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First Edition 2024

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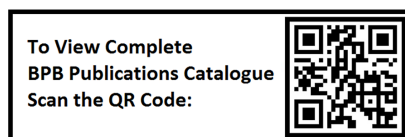
ISBN: 978-93-55516-763

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Dedicated to

My amazing son Pedro

and

My supporting parents and family

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Acknowledgement

I am truly thankful for the unwavering support and encouragement from my parents, George and Noeme, and my son Pedro, for inspiring me to be more creative and bolder. I am also thankful to my siblings Marina, Carolina and David.

I also extend my thanks to BPB Publications for their expert guidance and support in bringing this book to life. The process of textual and technical revision was a collaborative effort that enriched both the quality of this book and my technical knowledge.

I also want to highlight the invaluable lessons and feedback from colleagues and collaborators that I have met in the tech industry. A shoutout to the team at Osmosis.org, especially the founder Shiv. He remains a friend and mentor who taught me a lot about expressing gratitude.

Finally, my appreciation goes to all the readers who have shown an interest in my book. Your support makes this dream a reality and I hope it contributes to making your TypeScript journey more enjoyable!

Preface

The immense popularity of the Web has hoisted JavaScript to the top of the most popular programming languages. From small websites to large-scale enterprise applications, the dynamic nature of JavaScript has challenged developers due to the unpredictability of increasingly larger codebases. TypeScript has been established as the de facto solution to this problem, a statically typed superset that introduces type safety and powerful development tools. It is a layer of abstraction ultimately converted into JavaScript itself.

This book will help you start developing enterprise-level applications using TypeScript, beginning with the basics, covering its syntax and key features such as types, interfaces, functions, and classes. Then, we explore more advanced topics including, how to work with modules, manage asynchronous code with promises and `async/await`, etc.

Whether you are new to TypeScript and looking to understand its application in enterprise development, or an experienced developer aiming to enhance your skills in building scalable and maintainable applications, this book offers valuable knowledge and insights. By the end of this book, you will have a solid foundation in TypeScript and the skills necessary to tackle the challenges of enterprise application development head-on.

Chapter 1: Introduction to TypeScript - This chapter serves as the starting point to learning TypeScript, a powerful extension of JavaScript that introduces types to your code. It begins with the basics, outlining TypeScript's significance, and the advantages it brings to large-scale application development.

Chapter 2: Installation and Setup – This chapter focuses on the initial steps required to integrate TypeScript into your development workflow, including the installation process across Windows, MacOS, and Linux. It covers setting up popular code editors to work seamlessly with TypeScript. We have laid a special emphasis on debugging techniques and the configuration of the TypeScript compiler for optimal development. This chapter ensures that you are well-prepared to write, debug, and compile TypeScript code efficiently.

Chapter 3: TypeScript's Fundamentals – This chapter discusses the core concepts of TypeScript, providing a comprehensive overview of its syntax, type system, and the foundational knowledge necessary for effective coding. From basic syntax and type annotations to more intricate features like enums and tuples, this chapter builds a solid base for understanding how TypeScript enhances JavaScript by adding static types.

Chapter 4: Structuring and Extending Types– This chapter explores the power of TypeScript's type system, focusing on creating and using interfaces, classes, and advanced types to build

well-organized and maintainable code. This chapter discusses how TypeScript's type system allows for defining complex data structures, implementing inheritance and encapsulation with classes, and utilizing utility types for more flexible code

Chapter 5: Working with Advanced TypeScript Features – This chapter unveils the more sophisticated aspects of TypeScript, including generics, decorators, and advanced type manipulation techniques such as mapped and conditional types. This chapter empowers readers to leverage these advanced features to write highly reusable and flexible code. Through practical examples and in-depth explanations, readers will learn how to use generics to create highly adaptable functions and classes, decorators to add metadata and behavior to code, and advanced types for precise type transformations.

Chapter 6: Migrating a JavaScript Web App to TypeScript – This chapter provides a step-by-step guide on transitioning an existing JavaScript application to TypeScript. Using a Todo List app as a practical example, this chapter walks through the process of converting JavaScript code to TypeScript, integrating third-party libraries, and addressing common challenges encountered during migration.

Chapter 7: Adding TypeScript to a React Application – This chapter takes the principles of the Todo List app and applies them to a React application, demonstrating how to enhance a React project with TypeScript's static typing. This chapter covers setting up a React project with TypeScript, refactoring components to use TypeScript features, and addressing specific type challenges inherent in React development.

Chapter 8: Using TypeScript with a Node.js Application – This chapter expands the application of TypeScript to server-side development with Node. This chapter outlines how to integrate TypeScript into a Node project, from setting up the development environment to converting an existing app to use TypeScript.

Chapter 9: Building TypeScript for Production – This chapter focuses on the practical aspects of preparing a TypeScript project for production deployment. It covers topics such as optimizing TypeScript code for performance, setting up continuous integration and continuous deployment (CI/CD) pipelines, and managing dependencies. This chapter also explores using TypeScript with modern tooling like bundlers and task runners, ensuring readers are equipped to deliver efficient, scalable, and maintainable TypeScript applications.

Chapter 10: Best Practices and Next Steps – This chapter concludes the book by summarizing best practices for using TypeScript effectively and exploring pathways for further learning and mastery. This chapter emphasizes strategies for incremental adoption of TypeScript, tips for maintaining clean and type-safe code, and resources for continuing education in TypeScript and its ecosystem. By the end of this book, you will leave with a roadmap for advancing your TypeScript skills and integrating them into future projects.

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction to TypeScript	1
Introduction.....	1
Structure.....	2
Objectives	2
Introduction to TypeScript	2
<i>Brief overview of TypeScript</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>The motivation behind creating TypeScript</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>TypeScript's relationship with JavaScript</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Microsoft and TypeScript.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Visual Studio Code as a TypeScript editor</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>The TypeScript ecosystem</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Plugins</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Libraries</i>	<i>6</i>
What is a type system and why it matters?	7
<i>Static and dynamic typing</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Static typing.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Dynamic typing</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Static versus dynamic typing</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Historical context and implications of JavaScript.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>A Brief history of TypeScript.....</i>	<i>9</i>
TypeScript's key features	10
<i>Type annotation.....</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Compile-time type checking</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Type inference.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Type erasure.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Other features.....</i>	<i>13</i>
Differences between TypeScript and JavaScript	14
<i>Performance implications and trade-offs.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Team collaboration benefits with TypeScript.....</i>	<i>15</i>

<i>TypeScript's additional build and compilation steps</i>	16
Benefits of a type system in large-scale projects	17
<i>Better readability with type annotations and interfaces</i>	18
<i>Maintainability benefits</i>	18
<i>Early error detection through static typing</i>	19
<i>Refactoring support and safe code modifications</i>	19
<i>Encouraging best practices and design patterns</i>	19
<i>Modular architecture and namespace organization</i>	19
<i>Facilitating collaboration in large teams</i>	19
<i>Supporting complex codebases and growing projects</i>	20
<i>Autocompletion and IntelliSense in Visual Studio Code</i>	20
<i>Additional benefits of using TypeScript</i>	20
<i>Angular's adoption of TypeScript</i>	21
<i>TypeScript support in React and other UI frameworks</i>	21
<i>TypeScript support in Node.js</i>	22
Conclusion.....	22
Points to remember	23
2. Installation and Setup	25
Introduction.....	25
Structure.....	25
Objectives	25
Installing TypeScript	26
<i>Installation on Windows</i>	26
<i>Installation on MacOS</i>	26
<i>Installation on Linux</i>	27
<i>Choosing a code editor</i>	28
Configuring your code editor for TypeScript.....	29
<i>Visual Studio Code (VSCode)</i>	29
<i>WebStorm</i>	30
<i>Sublime Text</i>	30
<i>Atom</i>	31

<i>Vim</i>	31
<i>Emacs</i>	31
Debugging your TypeScript code	32
<i>Debugging in VSCode</i>	32
<i>Debugging in other code editors and browsers</i>	33
Working with the TypeScript compiler	34
<i>Compiler configuration</i>	34
<i>Common options for tsconfig.json</i>	35
<i>Compiling TypeScript files</i>	35
<i>Common compilation options</i>	35
<i>Compiling TypeScript with popular frameworks</i>	36
<i>Integration with React</i>	36
<i>Integration with Vue</i>	36
Conclusion.....	37
Points to remember	37
3. TypeScript's Fundamentals	39
Introduction.....	39
Structure.....	39
Objectives	40
Basic syntax and structure of TypeScript	40
Type annotations and type inference.....	41
<i>Type annotations</i>	41
<i>Type inference</i>	41
<i>When to use type annotations and type inference?</i>	42
Declaring variables and their types.....	43
<i>Variable declaration keywords</i>	43
<i>Declaring without type annotations</i>	43
<i>Declaring with type annotations</i>	44
<i>Declaring multiple variables at once</i>	44
<i>Optional type annotations</i>	44
<i>Any type</i>	45

Primitive data types in TypeScript.....	45
<i>Number</i>	45
<i>String</i>	46
<i>Boolean</i>	46
<i>Null and undefined</i>	46
Operators and expressions in TypeScript.....	47
Control flow statements	48
<i>If/else statements</i>	48
<i>Switch statements</i>	49
<i>For/While loops</i>	50
Functions in TypeScript.....	51
<i>Defining functions</i>	51
<i>Function parameters</i>	52
<i>Return types</i>	52
<i>First-Class Functions in TypeScript</i>	53
<i>Function type definitions in TypeScript</i>	53
Arrays and tuples in TypeScript.....	54
<i>Arrays in TypeScript</i>	54
<i>Tuples in TypeScript</i>	54
Enums in TypeScript.....	55
Conclusion.....	56
Points to remember	57
4. Structuring and Extending Types	59
Introduction.....	59
Structure.....	59
Objectives	60
Role of type system in structuring and extending types.....	60
Interfaces.....	61
<i>Interface basics</i>	61
<i>Optional properties and methods in interfaces</i>	63
<i>Extending interfaces</i>	63

Classes.....	65
<i>Class basics and constructors</i>	65
<i>Inheritance in classes</i>	66
<i>Encapsulation: private, public, and protected modifiers</i>	68
<i>Public modifier</i>	68
<i>Private modifier</i>	69
<i>Protected modifier</i>	70
Type compatibility and coercion.....	71
<i>Type coercion and type assertions</i>	72
<i>Covariance and contravariance in TypeScript</i>	73
Readonly and Partial types.....	74
<i>Readonly types</i>	74
<i>Partial types</i>	76
Defining and using custom types	77
<i>Type aliases</i>	77
<i>Union and intersection types</i>	78
<i>Union types</i>	78
<i>Intersection types</i>	79
<i>Type guards and type predicates</i>	79
Type system limitations, trade-offs, and performance considerations.....	81
<i>Understanding type system limitations</i>	81
<i>Type system trade-offs</i>	82
<i>Performance considerations</i>	82
Conclusion.....	83
Points to remember	83
5. Working with Advanced TypeScript Features	85
Introduction.....	85
Structure.....	85
Objectives	85
Advanced type system concepts.....	86
<i>Type guards</i>	86

<i>Union types</i>	87
<i>Discriminated unions</i>	87
<i>Union type narrowing</i>	88
<i>Type aliases</i>	89
Working with generics in TypeScript	90
<i>Generics basics</i>	90
<i>Generics with interfaces and classes</i>	92
<i>Generics with interfaces</i>	92
<i>Generics with classes</i>	92
<i>Generics with constraints</i>	93
Using decorators to simplify your code	94
<i>Understanding decorators</i>	94
<i>Practical use cases of decorators</i>	96
<i>Logging with decorators</i>	96
<i>Data validation with decorators</i>	97
<i>Timing decorator</i>	97
Advanced type manipulation with mapped and conditional types	98
<i>Mapped types</i>	98
<i>Conditional types</i>	99
Advanced type inference techniques	100
<i>Contextual typing</i>	101
<i>Control flow based type analysis</i>	101
Using TypeScript with functional programming concepts	102
<i>Higher-order functions in TypeScript</i>	102
<i>Immutability and pure functions</i>	104
<i>Functional programming libraries for TypeScript</i>	106
Conclusion	108
Points to remember	108
6. Migrating a JavaScript Web App to TypeScript	109
Introduction	109
Structure	109

Objectives	110
Building a Todo List and migrating to TypeScript	110
<i>Overview of a Todo List application</i>	110
<i>State management and data handling</i>	112
<i>Exploring the existing JavaScript code</i>	112
<i>Structure of the files</i>	113
HTML	114
CSS	115
Script.js	117
<i>Identifying HTML elements</i>	117
<i>Initializing the tasks array</i>	117
<i>Task editing functions</i>	117
<i>Creating the task HTML element</i>	118
<i>Task management</i>	119
<i>Local storage management</i>	120
<i>Event listeners</i>	121
Rendering the application on the browser	121
Converting JavaScript code to TypeScript	122
<i>Setting up TypeScript for the project</i>	122
<i>Watching for changes on TypeScript</i>	123
<i>Strict mode option</i>	124
<i>Adding types to variables and functions</i>	124
<i>Identifying HTML elements</i>	124
<i>Initializing the tasks array</i>	125
<i>Task editing functions</i>	125
<i>Creating the task HTML element</i>	126
<i>Task management</i>	126
<i>Local storage management</i>	127
<i>Event listeners</i>	127
<i>Creating interfaces for complex data structures</i>	127
<i>Defining the task interface</i>	128
<i>Updating the tasks array with the task interface</i>	128

<i>Using the task interface in function parameters</i>	128
Working with third-party libraries	129
<i>JavaScript versus TypeScript: importing libraries</i>	130
<i>Adding UUID to our TypeScript project</i>	130
Handling missing type definitions and errors.....	131
<i>Handling errors in TypeScript</i>	132
<i>Type incompatibilities</i>	132
<i>Overriding type incompatibilities with type assertion</i>	133
<i>Error handling on the TypeScript compiler</i>	134
<i>Error handling with VS Code</i>	134
<i>Code analysis and error detection</i>	135
<i>Quick fixes</i>	135
<i>Advanced error reporting at the Problems panel</i>	135
Testing with TypeScript.....	136
<i>Preparing the test environment</i>	136
<i>Installing and configuring Jest with TypeScript support</i>	136
<i>Refactoring the code for testing</i>	137
<i>Writing the tests</i>	139
Conclusion.....	140
Points to remember	141
7. Adding TypeScript to a React Application	143
Introduction.....	143
Structure.....	143
Objectives	144
Setting up React with TypeScript support.....	144
<i>Starting a new React project with TypeScript</i>	144
<i>Using vite</i>	144
<i>Using create React app</i>	144
<i>Adding TypeScript to an existing React project</i>	145
Refactoring the Todo List app with React.....	146
<i>Structure of the React components</i>	146

<i>Migrating the Todo List application to React</i>	147
<i>Creating a style.css</i>	151
Adding TypeScript to React components	152
<i>Refactoring the code with TypeScript</i>	153
TypeScript features specific for React.....	156
<i>Handling props and state of components</i>	156
<i>Navigating type inference</i>	157
<i>Event types in React with TypeScript</i>	157
<i>Dealing with React refs and TypeScript</i>	157
<i>Higher order components and TypeScript</i>	158
<i>Generic components</i>	159
<i>Using children prop</i>	160
<i>Union and intersection types with props</i>	160
<i>Adding TypeScript to the context</i>	161
Type incompatibilities in React	162
<i>Incorrectly inferring useState value</i>	163
<i>Mistyping useEffect dependencies</i>	163
<i>Misunderstanding any and unknown</i>	164
<i>Incorrect assertion with the as keyword</i>	164
<i>Non-nullable type assertion with optional chaining</i>	164
Using TypeScript with React libraries and plugins.....	165
<i>Redux with TypeScript</i>	165
<i>Using TypeScript with React Router</i>	167
<i>Using TypeScript with Formik</i>	167
Writing tests for React with TypeScript.....	168
Conclusion.....	170
Points to remember	171
8. Using TypeScript with a Node.js Application	173
Introduction.....	173
Structure.....	173
Objectives	174

Creating a Todo List application in Node.js	174
<i>Overview of a Todo List application</i>	175
<i>Data management and request handling</i>	175
Defining the code	176
<i>Structure of the files</i>	176
Exploring server.js	177
<i>Importing the modules</i>	177
<i>Initializing the server and middleware</i>	178
<i>Data initialization</i>	178
<i>API routes</i>	179
<i>Starting the server</i>	181
Exploring utils.js	181
<i>Importing readFile and writeFile from fs/promises</i>	182
<i>loadData function</i>	182
<i>saveData function</i>	183
<i>Exporting the functions</i>	183
Trying the Todo List API	183
<i>Start the server</i>	183
<i>Testing API routes with cURL</i>	183
<i>Creating a new task (POST /tasks)</i>	184
<i>Getting all tasks (GET /tasks)</i>	184
<i>Getting a specific task (GET /tasks/:id)</i>	184
<i>Updating a task (PUT /tasks/:id)</i>	185
<i>Deleting a task (DELETE /tasks/:id)</i>	185
Migrating to TypeScript	185
<i>Setting up TypeScript for the project</i>	185
<i>Importing modules</i>	186
<i>Declaring the tasks array</i>	186
<i>Loading initial data</i>	186
<i>API routes</i>	186
<i>Initializing the server</i>	187
Using Node.js Libraries with TypeScript	188

<i>Adding @types for the libraries</i>	188
<i>Integrating TypeORM and SQLite with TypeScript</i>	189
<i>SQLite Installation</i>	189
<i>Setting up TypeORM</i>	190
<i>Defining a task entity</i>	190
<i>Updating utils.js</i>	191
<i>Refactoring server.ts</i>	192
Testing Node.js with Jest and TypeScript	194
<i>Setting up the test environment</i>	194
<i>Writing unit tests</i>	194
<i>Setting up the tests</i>	194
<i>Testing saveData</i>	195
<i>Testing loadData</i>	196
<i>Testing deleteData</i>	196
<i>Running the tests</i>	197
Conclusion.....	197
Points to remember	197
9. Building TypeScript for Production	199
Introduction.....	199
Structure.....	199
Objectives	200
Introduction to TypeScript on production.....	200
Optimizing TypeScript performance.....	201
<i>Best practices in writing efficient TypeScript code</i>	202
<i>Leveraging TypeScript compiler options</i>	203
Using TypeScript with JavaScript bundlers.....	203
<i>Configuring Webpack for TypeScript</i>	204
<i>Configuring Rollup for TypeScript</i>	205
<i>Configuring vite for TypeScript</i>	206
Deploying TypeScript to hosting platforms	207
<i>Deploying to cloud platforms</i>	207

<i>Deploying to a VPS</i>	208
<i>Deploying to PaaS</i>	208
<i>TypeScript with serverless architectures</i>	208
<i>TypeScript with AWS Lambda</i>	209
<i>TypeScript with Azure Functions</i>	209
<i>TypeScript with Google Cloud Functions</i>	210
Working with CI/CD Pipelines and TypeScript.....	211
<i>Enforcing code linters</i>	212
Automated testing and TypeScript.....	213
Logging with TypeScript.....	215
<i>Source maps</i>	215
<i>Logging with tslog</i>	216
<i>Structured logging</i>	216
<i>TypeScript with Winston</i>	217
<i>TypeScript with Bunyan</i>	217
<i>TypeScript with Pino</i>	218
Using TypeScript with databases.....	218
<i>TypeORM</i>	218
<i>Prisma</i>	219
<i>Sequelize</i>	220
Using TypeScript with GraphQL.....	222
<i>TypeScript with GraphQL schema</i>	222
<i>Generating TypeScript types from GraphQL schemas</i>	223
<i>Generating GraphQL schemas from TypeScript types</i>	223
Documenting TypeScript code.....	224
<i>Generating documentation with Typedoc</i>	225
<i>Enhancing documentation with JSDoc</i>	225
Conclusion.....	226
Points to remember.....	226
10. Best Practices and Next Steps	229
Introduction.....	229

Structure.....	229
Objectives	229
Best practices.....	230
<i>Incremental adoption strategy</i>	230
<i>Start small</i>	230
<i>Gradually tighten the type checking</i>	230
<i>Avoid using type any</i>	231
Code Linters and Typescript.....	232
<i>Setting Up ESLint with TypeScript</i>	232
Using the readonly modifier.....	233
Using type guards and assertions.....	234
<i>Type guards</i>	234
<i>Type assertions</i>	235
<i>Utility types and their usage</i>	235
Next steps and learning resources	237
<i>Learning resources</i>	237
<i>Beyond the basics</i>	238
<i>Ideas for TypeScript projects</i>	239
<i>Closing thoughts</i>	240
Conclusion.....	241
Points to remember	241
Index	243-250

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to TypeScript

Introduction

This chapter introduces you to TypeScript, a popular programming language that extends JavaScript by adding types. You will learn about the importance of a type system, TypeScript's history, its key features and how it compares to JavaScript.

In the upcoming chapters of this crash course book, we will explore the various features of TypeScript and learn how to leverage them effectively to build robust and scalable applications. Starting from the basics and finishing with practical examples on how to integrate TypeScript with existing JavaScript and NodeJS projects.

You will learn about the **TypeScript compiler (tsc)**, a command line tool used to check for type errors and convert TypeScript to equivalent JavaScript, which is the actual code that will be executed on the runtime of the browser or NodeJS.

Also, we are going to leverage Visual Studio Code, a popular development environment for TypeScript, that offers features like autocompletion and type checking that significantly speeds up the development process. By providing better tooling and editor support, TypeScript makes it easier for developers to navigate and refactor their code.

Structure

The chapter covers the following topics:

- Introduction to TypeScript
- What is a type system and why does it matter?
- TypeScript's key features
- Differences between TypeScript and JavaScript
- Benefits of a type system in large-scale projects

Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will understand what TypeScript is, what type systems are, the differences between TypeScript and JavaScript, and finally the advantages TypeScript offers for building scalable web applications.

Introduction to TypeScript

TypeScript is a programming language that extends JavaScript by adding static types on top of it. Created by Microsoft developer *Anders Hejlsberg*, TypeScript was released in 2012 as an open-source project.

Brief overview of TypeScript

TypeScript provides the ability to write scalable and maintainable applications while leveraging the features and versatility of JavaScript. As a *superset* of JavaScript, TypeScript is compatible with any valid JavaScript code, allowing developers to gradually adopt it in their existing projects without the need for a complete rewrite. It enables developers to specify the type of variables, function parameters, and return types. This allows for catching errors at compile-time rather than runtime, resulting in improved code quality, maintainability, readability, and fewer bugs in production. Additionally, it can result in fewer lines of code, as values do not need to be explicitly checked for type.

TypeScript also introduces a range of advanced features such as interfaces and generics. These features enhance the development experience by providing a way to define contracts, organize code into reusable components, and enforce type safety across the application. Through this last decade, TypeScript has gained significant popularity in the web development community due to its ability to address many challenges faced by JavaScript developers. It is becoming the preferred choice for large-scale applications and has been widely adopted by notable companies like Microsoft, Google, Airbnb, and Slack. With a growing community and support from major industry players, TypeScript's future is bright for years to come!

Community-driven projects like **DefinitelyTyped** provide TypeScript definitions for popular JavaScript libraries, making it easier for developers to leverage existing code while enjoying the benefits of TypeScript's type system on the web browser, NodeJS or any JavaScript runtime.

The motivation behind creating TypeScript

TypeScript was created to address the limitations and challenges faced by JavaScript developers when working on large-scale applications. As web applications grows both in size and complexity, the flexibility of JavaScript's dynamic typing becomes a double-edged sword, leading to runtime errors, maintainability issues, and difficulty scaling codebases.

One of the primary motivations behind creating TypeScript was to introduce static typing to JavaScript, enabling developers to catch errors at compile time instead of runtime. This would result in more robust, maintainable, and scalable applications. Since TypeScript is a superset of JavaScript, it allows developers to gradually adopt its features without having to rewrite their entire codebase.

Another motivation was to improve tooling and editor support. With static typing, editors can provide better code navigation, autocompletion, and refactoring capabilities, ultimately improving developer productivity. The type information also enables better documentation and code understanding, making it easier for teams to collaborate and maintain their projects.

TypeScript also enables better code organization and scalability through the introduction of features like classes, modules, and interfaces. These language constructs allow developers to structure their code in a more modular and maintainable manner, facilitating code reuse and separation of concerns.

TypeScript's relationship with JavaScript

TypeScript is a superset of JavaScript, which means that any valid JavaScript code is also valid TypeScript code. TypeScript extends JavaScript by adding optional static typing and a host of other features that make it easier to develop, maintain, and scale large web applications.

Developers can start by writing JavaScript code and then gradually introduce type annotations to enhance the code with static typing. This allows projects to transition to TypeScript at their own pace, without the need for a complete rewrite to start using it.

One of the key benefits of TypeScript's relationship with JavaScript is its ability to leverage its vast ecosystem. TypeScript can use existing JavaScript libraries, frameworks, and tools seamlessly, enabling developers to utilize popular JavaScript libraries like React or Express in their TypeScript projects without any issues.