

Constraints in an entity-relationship model

Constraints are only available in the [NIAM view](#), and they are used for modeling limitations on the relations between entities. There are three types of constraints:

- *Uniqueness constraint* for indicating the key of an entity for uniquely identifying the entity. Is linked to attributes of an entity.
- *Exclusion constraint* for indicating that each of the entities excludes the other. Is linked to predicates of a fact.
- *Completeness constraint* for indicating that two entities together complete the collection. Is linked to predicates of a fact.

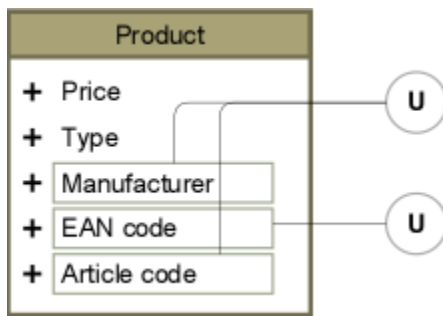
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Uniquely identifying an entity with uniqueness constraints

Like keys in a Crows Foot logical view, uniqueness constraints can be used for uniquely identifying an entity by linking it to one or more attributes in the entity. A single entity can have multiple uniqueness constraints.

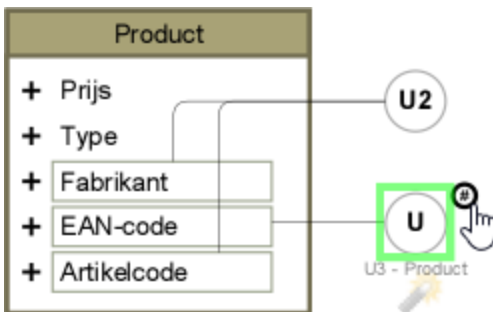
To model the key, add a Uniqueness constraint object to the view. After that connect the key to the attributes in the entity you want to make a part of this key by using a Link relation.



Setting a sequence number for uniqueness constraints

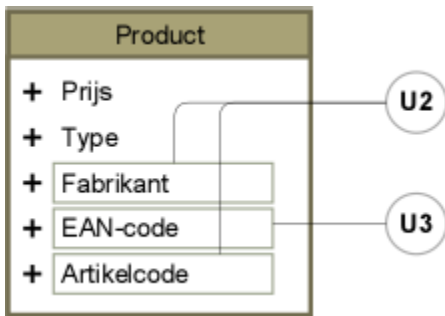
If multiple uniqueness constraints are used, it is possible to assign them a sequence number. To assign a sequence number, follow these steps:

1. In the view, select the uniqueness constraint, and then click .



2. In the **Enter sequence number** window, type the number and click **OK**.

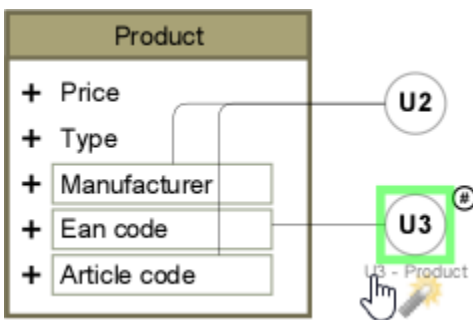
The sequence number is now displayed in the constraint:



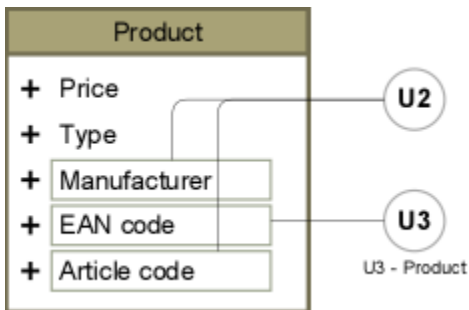
Displaying the name of a constraint relation

When a constraint is linked to an attribute in an entity or to a fact, only the constraint is shown with a relation to the other element. To explicitly show which element the constraint is linked to, you can display the name of the relation. To display the name, do as follows:

- In the view, select the constraint, and then click the name that appears below the constraint.



The name is now displayed below the constraint:



You can hide the name again by clicking it.