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508-647-7000 (Phone)



508-647-7001 (Fax)



The MathWorks, Inc.
3 Apple Hill Drive
Natick, MA 01760-2098

For contact information about worldwide offices, see the MathWorks Web site.

MATLAB Programming Fundamentals

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Syntax Basics

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Create Variables

This example shows several ways to assign a value to a variable.

```
x = 5.71;  
A = [1 2 3; 4 5 6; 7 8 9];  
I = besseli(x,A);
```

You do not have to declare variables before assigning values.

If you do not end an assignment statement with a semicolon (;), MATLAB® displays the result in the Command Window. For example,

```
x = 5.71
```

displays

```
x =  
    5.7100
```

If you do not explicitly assign the output of a command to a variable, MATLAB generally assigns the result to the reserved word `ans`. For example,

```
5.71
```

returns

```
ans =  
    5.7100
```

The value of `ans` changes with every command that returns an output value that is not assigned to a variable.

Create Numeric Arrays

This example shows how to create a numeric variable. In the MATLAB computing environment, all variables are arrays, and by default, numeric variables are of type `double` (that is, double-precision values). For example, create a scalar value.

```
A = 100;
```

Because scalar values are single element, 1-by-1 arrays,

```
whos A
```

returns

Name	Size	Bytes	Class	Attributes
A	1x1	8	double	

To create a *matrix* (a two-dimensional, rectangular array of numbers), you can use the `[]` operator.

```
B = [12, 62, 93, -8, 22; 16, 2, 87, 43, 91; -4, 17, -72, 95, 6]
```

When using this operator, separate columns with a comma or space, and separate rows with a semicolon. All rows must have the same number of elements. In this example, B is a 3-by-5 matrix (that is, B has three rows and five columns).

```
B =
    12    62    93    -8    22
    16     2    87    43    91
    -4    17   -72    95     6
```

A matrix with only one row or column (that is, a 1-by-n or n-by-1 array) is a *vector*, such as

```
C = [1, 2, 3]
```

or

```
D = [10; 20; 30]
```

For more information, see:

- “Multidimensional Arrays”
- “Matrix Indexing”

Continue Long Statements on Multiple Lines

This example shows how to continue a statement to the next line using ellipses (...).

```
s = 1 - 1/2 + 1/3 - 1/4 + 1/5 ...  
    - 1/6 + 1/7 - 1/8 + 1/9;
```

Build a long character string by concatenating shorter strings together:

```
mystring = ['Accelerating the pace of ' ...  
           'engineering and science'];
```

The start and end quotation marks for a string must appear on the same line. For example, this code returns an error, because each line contains only one quotation mark:

```
mystring = 'Accelerating the pace of ...  
           engineering and science'
```

An ellipses outside a quoted string is equivalent to a space. For example,

```
x = [1.23...  
     4.56];
```

is the same as

```
x = [1.23 4.56];
```

Call Functions

These examples show how to call a MATLAB function. To run the examples, you must first create numeric arrays **A** and **B**, such as:

```
A = [1 3 5];  
B = [10 6 4];
```

Enclose inputs to functions in parentheses:

```
max(A)
```

Separate multiple inputs with commas:

```
max(A,B)
```

Store output from a function by assigning it to a variable:

```
maxA = max(A)
```

Enclose multiple outputs in square brackets:

```
[maxA, location] = max(A)
```

Call a function that does not require any inputs, and does not return any outputs, by typing only the function name:

```
clc
```

Enclose text string inputs in single quotation marks:

```
disp('hello world')
```

Related Examples

- “Ignore Function Outputs” on page 1-7

Ignore Function Outputs

This example shows how to request specific outputs from a function.

Request all three possible outputs from the `fileparts` function.

```
helpFile = which('help');  
[helpPath,name,ext] = fileparts(helpFile);
```

The current workspace now contains three variables from `fileparts`: `helpPath`, `name`, and `ext`. In this case, the variables are small. However, some functions return results that use much more memory. If you do not need those variables, they waste space on your system.

Request only the first output, ignoring the second and third.

```
helpPath = fileparts(helpFile);
```

For any function, you can request only the first N outputs (where N is less than or equal to the number of possible outputs) and ignore any remaining outputs. If you request more than one output, enclose the variable names in square brackets, `[]`.

Ignore the first output using a tilde (`~`).

```
[~,name,ext] = fileparts(helpFile);
```

You can ignore any number of function outputs, in any position in the argument list. Separate consecutive tildes with a comma, such as

```
[~,-,ext] = fileparts(helpFile);
```

Variable Names

In this section...

“Valid Names” on page 1-8

“Conflicts with Function Names” on page 1-8

Valid Names

A valid variable name starts with a letter, followed by letters, digits, or underscores. MATLAB is case sensitive, so *A* and *a* are *not* the same variable. The maximum length of a variable name is the value that the `namelengthmax` command returns.

You cannot define variables with the same names as MATLAB keywords, such as `if` or `end`. For a complete list, run the `iskeyword` command.

Examples of valid names:

`x6`

`lastValue`

`n_factorial`

Invalid names:

`6x`

`end`

`n!`

Conflicts with Function Names

Avoid creating variables with the same name as a function (such as `i`, `j`, `mode`, `char`, `size`, and `path`). In general, variable names take precedence over function names. If you create a variable that uses the name of a function, you sometimes get unexpected results.

Check whether a proposed name is already in use with the `exist` or `which` function. `exist` returns 0 if there are no existing variables, functions, or other artifacts with the proposed name. For example:

```
exist checkname
```

```
ans =  
    0
```

If you inadvertently create a variable with a name conflict, remove the variable from memory with the `clear` function.

Another potential source of name conflicts occurs when you define a function that calls `load` or `eval` (or similar functions) to add variables to the workspace. In some cases, `load` or `eval` add variables that have the same names as functions. Unless these variables are in the function workspace before the call to `load` or `eval`, the MATLAB parser interprets the variable names as function names. For more information, see:

- “Troubleshooting: Loading Variables within a Function”
- “Alternatives to the `eval` Function” on page 2-94

See Also

`clear` | `exist` | `iskeyword` | `namelengthmax` | `which`

Case and Space Sensitivity

MATLAB code is sensitive to casing, but insensitive to blank spaces.

Upper and Lowercase

In MATLAB code, use an exact match with regard to case for variables, files, and functions. For example, if you have a variable `a`, you cannot refer to that variable as `A`. It is a best practice to use lowercase only when naming functions. This is especially useful when you use both Microsoft® Windows® and UNIX¹ platforms because their file systems behave differently with regard to case.

When you use the `help` function, the help displays some function names in all uppercase, for example, `PLOT`, solely to distinguish a function name from the rest of the text. Some functions for interfacing to Sun Microsystems™ Java™ software do use mixed case and the command-line help and the documentation accurately reflect that.

Spaces

Blank spaces around operators such as `-`, `:`, and `()`, are optional, but they can improve readability. For example, MATLAB interprets the following statements the same way.

```
y = sin (3 * pi) / 2
y=sin(3*pi)/2
```

1. UNIX is a registered trademark of The Open Group in the United States and other countries.

Command vs. Function Syntax

In this section...

“Command and Function Syntaxes” on page 1-11

“Avoid Common Syntax Mistakes” on page 1-12

“How MATLAB Recognizes Command Syntax” on page 1-13

Command and Function Syntaxes

In MATLAB, these statements are equivalent:

```
load durer.mat           % Command syntax
load('durer.mat')       % Function syntax
```

This equivalence is sometimes referred to as *command-function duality*.

All functions support this standard *function syntax*:

```
[output1, ..., outputM] = functionName(input1, ..., inputN)
```

If you do not require any outputs from the function, and all of the inputs are literal strings (that is, text enclosed in single quotation marks), you can use this simpler *command syntax*:

```
functionName input1 ... inputN
```

With command syntax, you separate inputs with spaces rather than commas, and do not enclose input arguments in parentheses. Because all inputs are literal strings, single quotation marks are optional, unless the input string contains spaces. For example:

```
disp 'hello world'
```

When a function input is a variable, you must use function syntax to pass the value to the function. Command syntax always passes inputs as literal text and cannot pass variable values. For example, create a variable and call the `disp` function with function syntax to pass the value of the variable:

```
A = 123;
disp(A)
```

This code returns the expected result,

```
123
```

You cannot use command syntax to pass the value of A, because this call

```
disp A
```

is equivalent to

```
disp('A')
```

and returns

```
A
```

Avoid Common Syntax Mistakes

Suppose that your workspace contains these variables:

```
filename = 'accounts.txt';
A = int8(1:8);
B = A;
```

The following table illustrates common misapplications of command syntax.

This Command...	Is Equivalent to...	Correct Syntax for Passing Value
open filename	open('filename')	open(filename)
isequal A B	isequal('A','B')	isequal(A,B)
strcmp class(A) int8	strcmp('class(A)','int8')	strcmp(class(A),'int8')
cd matlabroot	cd('matlabroot')	cd(matlabroot)
isnumeric 500	isnumeric('500')	isnumeric(500)
round 3.499	round('3.499'), same as round([51 46 52 57 57])	round(3.499)

Passing Variable Names

Some functions expect literal strings for variable names, such as `save`, `load`, `clear`, and `whos`. For example,

```
whos -file durer.mat X
```

requests information about variable `X` in the example file `durer.mat`. This command is equivalent to

```
whos('-file','durer.mat','X')
```

How MATLAB Recognizes Command Syntax

Consider the potentially ambiguous statement

```
ls ./d
```

This could be a call to the `ls` function with the folder `./d` as its argument. It also could request elementwise division on the array `ls`, using the variable `d` as the divisor.

If you issue such a statement at the command line, MATLAB can access the current workspace and path to determine whether `ls` and `d` are functions or variables. However, some components, such as the Code Analyzer and the Editor/Debugger, operate without reference to the path or workspace. In those cases, MATLAB uses syntactic rules to determine whether an expression is a function call using command syntax.

In general, when MATLAB recognizes an identifier (which might name a function or a variable), it analyzes the characters that follow the identifier to determine the type of expression, as follows:

- An equal sign (=) implies assignment. For example:

```
ls =d
```

- An open parenthesis after an identifier implies a function call. For example:

```
ls('./d')
```

- Space after an identifier, but not after a potential operator, implies a function call using command syntax. For example:

```
ls ./d
```

- Spaces on both sides of a potential operator, or no spaces on either side of the operator, imply an operation on variables. For example, these statements are equivalent:

```
ls ./ d
```

```
ls./d
```

Therefore, the potentially ambiguous statement `ls ./d` is a call to the `ls` function using command syntax.

The best practice is to avoid defining variable names that conflict with common functions, to prevent any ambiguity.

Common Errors When Calling Functions

In this section...
“Conflicting Function and Variable Names” on page 1-15
“Undefined Functions or Variables” on page 1-15

Conflicting Function and Variable Names

MATLAB throws an error if a variable and function have been given the same name and there is insufficient information available for MATLAB to resolve the conflict. You may see an error message something like the following:

```
Error: <functionName> was previously used as a variable,  
      conflicting with its use here as the name of a function  
      or command.
```

where <functionName> is the name of the function.

Certain uses of the `eval` and `load` functions can also result in a similar conflict between variable and function names. For more information, see:

- “Conflicts with Function Names” on page 1-8
- “Troubleshooting: Loading Variables within a Function”
- “Alternatives to the `eval` Function” on page 2-94

Undefined Functions or Variables

You may encounter the following error message, or something similar, while working with functions or variables in MATLAB:

```
Undefined function or variable 'x'.
```

These errors usually indicate that MATLAB cannot find a particular variable or MATLAB program file in the current directory or on the search path. The root cause is likely to be one of the following:

- The name of the function has been misspelled.

- The function name and name of the file containing the function are not the same.
- The toolbox to which the function belongs is not installed.
- The search path to the function has been changed.
- The function is part of a toolbox that you do not have a license for.

Follow the steps described in this section to resolve this situation.

Verify the Spelling of the Function Name

One of the most common errors is misspelling the function name. Especially with longer function names or names containing similar characters (e.g., letter l and numeral one), it is easy to make an error that is not easily detected.

If you misspell a MATLAB function, a suggested function name appears in the Command Window. For example, this command fails because it includes an uppercase letter in the function name:

```
accumArray
```

```
Undefined function or variable 'accumArray'.
```

```
Did you mean:  
>> accumarray
```

Press **Enter** to execute the suggested command or **Esc** to dismiss it.

Make Sure the Function Name Matches the File Name

You establish the name for a function when you write its function definition line. This name should always match the name of the file you save it to. For example, if you create a function named `curveplot`,


```
function curveplot(xVal, yVal)  
    - program code -
```

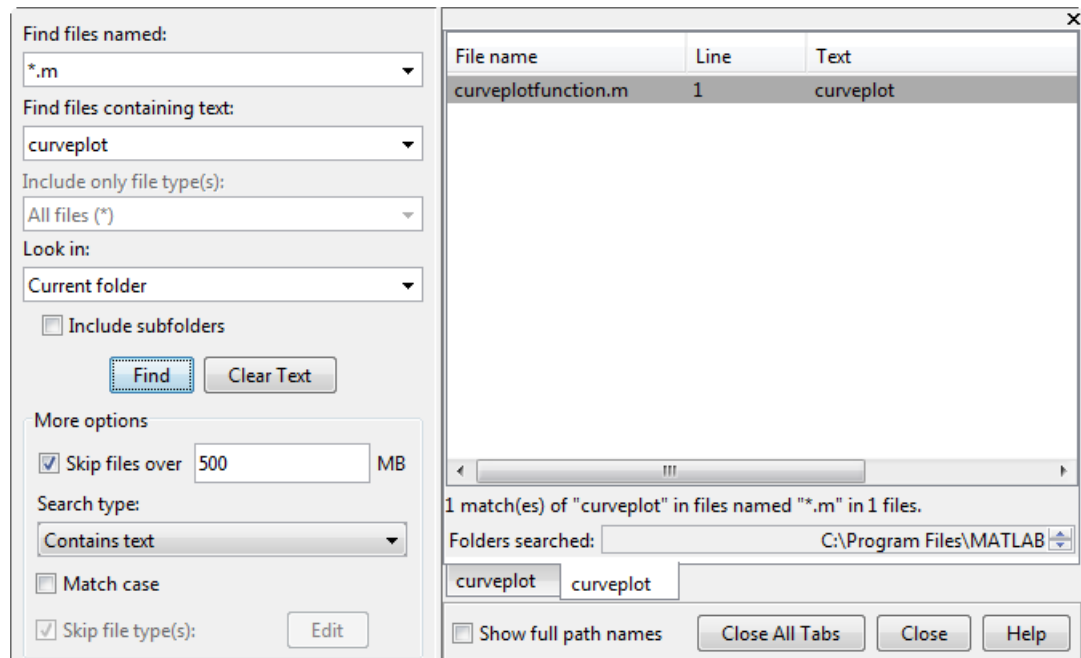
then you should name the file containing that function `curveplot.m`. If you create a `pcode` file for the function, then name that file `curveplot.p`. In the case of conflicting function and file names, the file name overrides the name given to the function. In this example, if you save the `curveplot` function to a

file named `curveplotfunction.m`, then attempts to invoke the function using the function name will fail:

```
curveplot
Undefined function or variable 'curveplot'.
```

If you encounter this problem, change either the function name or file name so that they are the same. If you have difficulty locating the file that uses this function, use the MATLAB **Find Files** utility as follows:

- 1 On the **Home** tab, in the **File** section, click  **Find Files**.
- 2 Under **Find files named:** enter `*.m`
- 3 Under **Find files containing text:** enter the function name.
- 4 Click the **Find** button



Make Sure the Toolbox Is Installed

If you are unable to use a built-in function from MATLAB or its toolboxes, make sure that the function is installed. If you do not know which toolbox supports the function you need, reference the following list:


http://www.mathworks.com/support/functions/alpha_list.html

Once you know which toolbox the function belongs to, use the `ver` function to see which toolboxes are installed on the system from which you run MATLAB. The `ver` function displays a list of all currently installed MathWorks® products. If you can locate the toolbox you need in the output displayed by `ver`, then the toolbox is installed. For help with installing MathWorks products, see the Installation Guide documentation.

If you do not see the toolbox and you believe that it is installed, then perhaps the MATLAB path has been set incorrectly. Go on to the next section.

Verify the Path Used to Access the Function

This step resets the path to the default. Because MATLAB stores the toolbox information in a cache file, you will need to first update this cache and then reset the path. To do this,

- 1** On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.

The Preference dialog box appears.

- 2** Under the **General** node, click the **Update Toolbox Path Cache** button.

- 3** On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Set Path...**

The Set Path dialog box opens.

- 4** Click **Default**.

A small dialog box opens warning that you will lose your current path settings if you proceed. Click **Yes** if you decide to proceed.

(If you have added any custom paths to MATLAB, you will need to restore those later)

Run `ver` again to see if the toolbox is installed. If not, you may need to reinstall this toolbox to use this function. See the Related Solution 1-1CBD3, "How do I install additional toolboxes into my existing MATLAB" for more information about installing a toolbox.

Once `ver` shows your toolbox, run the following command to see if you can find the function:

```
which -all <functionname>
```

replacing `<functionname>` with the name of the function. You should be presented with the path(s) of the function file. If you get a message indicating that the function name was not found, you may need to reinstall that toolbox to make the function active.

Verify that Your License Covers The Toolbox

If you receive the error message "Has no license available", there is a licensing related issue preventing you from using the function. To find the error that is occurring, you can use the following command:

```
license checkout <toolbox_license_key_name>
```

replacing `<toolbox_license_key_name>` with the proper key name for the toolbox that contains your function. To find the license key name, look at the `INCREMENT` lines in your license file. For information on how to find your license file see the related solution: 1-63ZIR6, "Where are the license files for MATLAB located?"

The license key names of all the toolboxes are located after each `INCREMENT` tag in the `license.dat` file. For example:

```
INCREMENT MATLAB MLM 17 00-jan-0000 0 k  
B454554BADECED4258 \HOSTID=123456 SN=123456
```

If your `license.dat` file has no `INCREMENT` lines, refer to your license administrator for them. For example, to test the licensing for Symbolic Math Toolbox™, you would run the following command:

```
license checkout Symbolic_Toolbox
```

A correct testing gives the result "ANS=1". An incorrect testing results in an error from the license manager. You can either troubleshoot the error by looking up the license manager error here:

<http://www.mathworks.com/support/install.html>

or you can contact the Installation Support Team with the error here:

http://www.mathworks.com/support/contact_us/index.html

When contacting support, provide your license number, your MATLAB version, the function you are using, and the license manager error (if applicable).

Program Components

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- “Special Values” on page 2-13
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Operators

In this section...
“Arithmetic Operators” on page 2-2
“Relational Operators” on page 2-3
“Logical Operators” on page 2-4
“Operator Precedence” on page 2-11

Arithmetic Operators

Arithmetic operators perform numeric computations, for example, adding two numbers or raising the elements of an array to a given power. The following table provides a summary. For more information, see the arithmetic operators reference page.

Operator	Description
+	Addition
-	Subtraction
.*	Multiplication
./	Right division
.\	Left division
+	Unary plus
-	Unary minus
:	Colon operator
.^	Power
.'	Transpose
'	Complex conjugate transpose
*	Matrix multiplication
/	Matrix right division
\	Matrix left division
^	Matrix power

Arithmetic Operators and Arrays

Except for some matrix operators, MATLAB arithmetic operators work on corresponding elements of arrays with equal dimensions. For vectors and rectangular arrays, both operands must be the same size unless one is a scalar. If one operand is a scalar and the other is not, MATLAB applies the scalar to every element of the other operand—this property is known as *scalar expansion*.

This example uses scalar expansion to compute the product of a scalar operand and a matrix.

```
A = magic(3)
A =
     8     1     6
     3     5     7
     4     9     2

3 * A
ans =
    24     3    18
     9    15    21
    12    27     6
```

Relational Operators

Relational operators compare operands quantitatively, using operators like “less than” and “not equal to.” The following table provides a summary. For more information, see the relational operators reference page.

Operator	Description
<	Less than
<=	Less than or equal to
>	Greater than
>=	Greater than or equal to
==	Equal to
~=	Not equal to

Relational Operators and Arrays

The MATLAB relational operators compare corresponding elements of arrays with equal dimensions. Relational operators always operate element-by-element. In this example, the resulting matrix shows where an element of A is equal to the corresponding element of B.

```
A = [2 7 6;9 0 5;3 0.5 6];  
B = [8 7 0;3 2 5;4 -1 7];
```

```
A == B  
ans =  
     0     1     0  
     0     0     1  
     0     0     0
```

For vectors and rectangular arrays, both operands must be the same size unless one is a scalar. For the case where one operand is a scalar and the other is not, MATLAB tests the scalar against every element of the other operand. Locations where the specified relation is true receive logical 1. Locations where the relation is false receive logical 0.

Relational Operators and Empty Arrays

The relational operators work with arrays for which any dimension has size zero, as long as both arrays are the same size or one is a scalar. However, expressions such as

```
A == []
```

return an error if A is not 0-by-0 or 1-by-1. This behavior is consistent with that of all other binary operators, such as +, -, >, <, &, |, etc.

To test for empty arrays, use the function

```
isempty(A)
```

Logical Operators

MATLAB offers three types of logical operators and functions:

- Element-wise — operate on corresponding elements of logical arrays.

- Bit-wise — operate on corresponding bits of integer values or arrays.
- Short-circuit — operate on scalar, logical expressions.

The values returned by MATLAB logical operators and functions, with the exception of bit-wise functions, are of type `logical` and are suitable for use with logical indexing.

Element-Wise Operators and Functions

The following logical operators and functions perform element-wise logical operations on their inputs to produce a like-sized output array.

The examples shown in the following table use vector inputs A and B, where

```
A = [0 1 1 0 1];
B = [1 1 0 0 1];
```

Operator	Description	Example
&	Returns 1 for every element location that is true (nonzero) in both arrays, and 0 for all other elements.	A & B = 01001
	Returns 1 for every element location that is true (nonzero) in either one or the other, or both arrays, and 0 for all other elements.	A B = 11101
~	Complements each element of the input array, A.	~A = 10010
xor	Returns 1 for every element location that is true (nonzero) in only one array, and 0 for all other elements.	xor(A,B) = 10100

For operators and functions that take two array operands, (&, |, and xor), both arrays must have equal dimensions, with each dimension being the same size. The one exception to this is where one operand is a scalar and the other is not. In this case, MATLAB tests the scalar against every element of the other operand.

Note MATLAB converts any finite nonzero, numeric values used as inputs to logical expressions to logical 1, or `true`.

Operator Overloading. You can overload the `&`, `|`, and `~` operators to make their behavior dependent upon the class on which they are being used. Each of these operators has a representative function that is called whenever that operator is used. These are shown in the table below.

Logical Operation	Equivalent Function
<code>A & B</code>	<code>and(A, B)</code>
<code>A B</code>	<code>or(A, B)</code>
<code>~A</code>	<code>not(A)</code>

Other Array Functions. Two other MATLAB functions that operate logically on arrays, but not in an element-wise fashion, are `any` and `all`. These functions show whether *any* or *all* elements of a vector, or a vector within a matrix or an array, are nonzero.

When used on a matrix, `any` and `all` operate on the columns of the matrix. When used on an N-dimensional array, they operate on the first nonsingleton dimension of the array. Or, you can specify an additional dimension input to operate on a specific dimension of the array.

The examples shown in the following table use array input A, where

```
A = [0  1  2;  
     0 -3  8;  
     0  5  0];
```


Function	Description	Example
<code>any(A)</code>	Returns 1 for a vector where <i>any</i> element of the vector is true (nonzero), and 0 if no elements are true.	<code>any(A) ans = 0</code> <code>1 1</code>
<code>all(A)</code>	Returns 1 for a vector where <i>all</i> elements of the vector are true (nonzero), and 0 if all elements are not true.	<code>all(A) ans = 0</code> <code>1 0</code>

Note The `all` and `any` functions ignore any NaN values in the input arrays.

Short-Circuiting in element-wise Operators. When used in the context of an `if` or `while` expression, and only in this context, the element-wise `|` and `&` operators use short-circuiting in evaluating their expressions. That is, `A|B` and `A&B` ignore the second operand, `B`, if the first operand, `A`, is sufficient to determine the result.

So, although the statement `1|[]` evaluates to `false`, the same statement evaluates to `true` when used in either an `if` or `while` expression:

```
A = 1;   B = [];  
if(A|B) disp 'The statement is true', end;  
    The statement is true
```

while the reverse logical expression, which does not short-circuit, evaluates to `false`

```
if(B|A) disp 'The statement is true', end;
```

Another example of short-circuiting with element-wise operators shows that a logical expression such as the following, which under most circumstances is invalid due to a size mismatch between `A` and `B`,

```
A = [1 1];   B = [2 0 1];  
A|B          % This generates an error.
```

works within the context of an `if` or `while` expression:

```
if (A|B) disp 'The statement is true', end;
```

The statement is true

Logical Expressions Using the find Function. The `find` function determines the indices of array elements that meet a given logical condition. The function is useful for creating masks and index matrices. In its most general form, `find` returns a single vector of indices. This vector can be used to index into arrays of any size or shape.

For example,

```
A = magic(4)
A =
    16     2     3    13
     5    11    10     8
     9     7     6    12
     4    14    15     1
```

```
i = find(A > 8);
A(i) = 100
A =
    100     2     3   100
     5  100  100     8
    100     7     6   100
     4  100  100     1
```

Note An alternative to using `find` in this context is to index into the matrix using the logical expression itself. See the example below.

The last two statements of the previous example can be replaced with this one statement:

```
A(A > 8) = 100;
```

You can also use `find` to obtain both the row and column indices of a rectangular matrix for the array values that meet the logical condition:

```
A = magic(4)
A =
    16     2     3    13
```

```

5  11  10  8
9  7   6  12
4  14  15  1

[row, col] = find(A > 12)
row =
     1
     4
     4
     1
col =
     1
     2
     3
     4

```

Bit-Wise Functions

The following functions perform bit-wise logical operations on integer inputs. Inputs may be scalar or in arrays. If in arrays, these functions produce a like-sized output array.

The examples shown in the following table use scalar inputs A and B, where

```

A = 28;           % binary 00011100
B = 21;           % binary 00010101

```

Function	Description	Example
bitand	Returns the bit-wise AND of two integer arguments.	bitand(A,B) = 20 (binary 00010100)
bitor	Returns the bit-wise OR of two integer arguments.	bitor(A,B) = 29 (binary 00011101)

Function	Description	Example
<code>bitcmp</code>	Returns the bit-wise complement, assuming the second argument specifies the integer data type of the first argument. By default, MATLAB treats double values as <code>uint64</code> integers.	<code>bitcmp(A,'int8') = -29</code> (binary 11100011)
<code>bitxor</code>	Returns the bit-wise exclusive OR of two integer arguments.	<code>bitxor(A,B) = 9</code> (binary 00001001)

Short-Circuit Operators

The following operators perform AND and OR operations on logical expressions containing scalar values. They are *short-circuit* operators in that they evaluate their second operand only when the result is not fully determined by the first operand.

Operator	Description
<code>&&</code>	Returns logical 1 (<code>true</code>) if both inputs evaluate to <code>true</code> , and logical 0 (<code>false</code>) if they do not.
<code> </code>	Returns logical 1 (<code>true</code>) if either input, or both, evaluate to <code>true</code> , and logical 0 (<code>false</code>) if they do not.

The statement shown here performs an AND of two logical terms, A and B:

```
A && B
```

If A equals zero, then the entire expression will evaluate to logical 0 (`false`), regardless of the value of B. Under these circumstances, there is no need to evaluate B because the result is already known. In this case, MATLAB short-circuits the statement by evaluating only the first term.

A similar case is when you OR two terms and the first term is `true`. Again, regardless of the value of B, the statement will evaluate to `true`. There is no need to evaluate the second term, and MATLAB does not do so.

Advantage of Short-Circuiting. You can use the short-circuit operators to evaluate an expression only when certain conditions are satisfied. For example, you want to execute a function only if the function file resides on the current MATLAB path.

Short-circuiting keeps the following code from generating an error when the file, `myfun.m`, cannot be found:

```
comp = (exist('myfun.m') == 2) && (myfun(x) >= y)
```

Similarly, this statement avoids attempting to divide by zero:

```
x = (b ~= 0) && (a/b > 18.5)
```

You can also use the `&&` and `||` operators in `if` and `while` statements to take advantage of their short-circuiting behavior:

```
if (nargin >= 3) && (ischar(varargin{3}))
```

Operator Precedence

You can build expressions that use any combination of arithmetic, relational, and logical operators. Precedence levels determine the order in which MATLAB evaluates an expression. Within each precedence level, operators have equal precedence and are evaluated from left to right. The precedence rules for MATLAB operators are shown in this list, ordered from highest precedence level to lowest precedence level:

- 1 Parentheses (`()`)
- 2 Transpose (`.'`), power (`.^`), complex conjugate transpose (`'`), matrix power (`^`)
- 3 Unary plus (`+`), unary minus (`-`), logical negation (`~`)
- 4 Multiplication (`.*`), right division (`./`), left division (`.\`), matrix multiplication (`*`), matrix right division (`/`), matrix left division (`\`)
- 5 Addition (`+`), subtraction (`-`)
- 6 Colon operator (`:`)

- 7 Less than (<), less than or equal to (<=), greater than (>), greater than or equal to (>=), equal to (==), not equal to (~=)
- 8 Element-wise AND (&)
- 9 Element-wise OR (|)
- 10 Short-circuit AND (&&)
- 11 Short-circuit OR (||)

Precedence of AND and OR Operators

MATLAB always gives the & operator precedence over the | operator. Although MATLAB typically evaluates expressions from left to right, the expression `a|b&c` is evaluated as `a|(b&c)`. It is a good idea to use parentheses to explicitly specify the intended precedence of statements containing combinations of & and |.

The same precedence rule holds true for the && and || operators.

Overriding Default Precedence

The default precedence can be overridden using parentheses, as shown in this example:

```
A = [3 9 5];
B = [2 1 5];
C = A./B.^2
C =
    0.7500    9.0000    0.2000

C = (A./B).^2
C =
    2.2500   81.0000    1.0000
```

Special Values

Several functions return important special values that you can use in your own program files.

Function	Return Value
<code>ans</code>	Most recent answer (variable). If you do not assign an output variable to an expression, MATLAB automatically stores the result in <code>ans</code> .
<code>eps</code>	Floating-point relative accuracy. This is the tolerance the MATLAB software uses in its calculations.
<code>intmax</code>	Largest 8-, 16-, 32-, or 64-bit integer your computer can represent.
<code>intmin</code>	Smallest 8-, 16-, 32-, or 64-bit integer your computer can represent.
<code>realmax</code>	Largest floating-point number your computer can represent.
<code>realmin</code>	Smallest positive floating-point number your computer can represent.
<code>pi</code>	3.1415926535897...
<code>i, j</code>	Imaginary unit.
<code>inf</code>	Infinity. Calculations like $n/0$, where n is any nonzero real value, result in <code>inf</code> .
<code>NaN</code>	Not a Number, an invalid numeric value. Expressions like $0/0$ and inf/inf result in a NaN, as do arithmetic operations involving a NaN. Also, if n is complex with a zero real part, then $n/0$ returns a value with a NaN real part.
<code>computer</code>	Computer type.
<code>version</code>	MATLAB version string.

Here are some examples that use these values in MATLAB expressions.

```
x = 2 * pi
x =
    6.2832
```

```
A = [3+2i 7-8i]
A =
    3.0000 + 2.0000i    7.0000 - 8.0000i
```

```
tol = 3 * eps
tol =
    6.6613e-016
```

```
intmax('uint64')
ans =
    18446744073709551615
```


Conditional Statements

Conditional statements enable you to select at run time which block of code to execute. The simplest conditional statement is an `if` statement. For example:

```
% Generate a random number
a = randi(100, 1);

% If it is even, divide by 2
if rem(a, 2) == 0
    disp('a is even')
    b = a/2;
end
```

`if` statements can include alternate choices, using the optional keywords `elseif` or `else`. For example:

```
a = randi(100, 1);

if a < 30
    disp('small')
elseif a < 80
    disp('medium')
else
    disp('large')
end
```

Alternatively, when you want to test for equality against a set of known values, use a `switch` statement. For example:

```
[dayNum, dayString] = weekday(date, 'long', 'en_US');

switch dayString
    case 'Monday'
        disp('Start of the work week')
    case 'Tuesday'
        disp('Day 2')
    case 'Wednesday'
        disp('Day 3')
    case 'Thursday'
        disp('Day 4')
```

```
        case 'Friday'
            disp('Last day of the work week')
        otherwise
            disp('Weekend!')
    end
```

For both `if` and `switch`, MATLAB executes the code corresponding to the first true condition, and then exits the code block. Each conditional statement requires the `end` keyword.

In general, when you have many possible discrete, known values, `switch` statements are easier to read than `if` statements. However, you cannot test for inequality between `switch` and `case` values. For example, you cannot implement this type of condition with a `switch`:

```
yourNumber = input('Enter a number: ');

if yourNumber < 0
    disp('Negative')
elseif yourNumber > 0
    disp('Positive')
else
    disp('Zero')
end
```

Loop Control Statements

With loop control statements, you can repeatedly execute a block of code. There are two types of loops:

- **for** statements loop a specific number of times, and keep track of each iteration with an incrementing index variable.

For example, preallocate a 10-element vector, and calculate five values:

```
x = ones(1,10);
for n = 2:6
    x(n) = 2 * x(n - 1);
end
```

- **while** statements loop as long as a condition remains true.

For example, find the first integer n for which `factorial(n)` is a 100-digit number:

```
n = 1;
nFactorial = 1;
while nFactorial < 1e100
    n = n + 1;
    nFactorial = nFactorial * n;
end
```

Each loop requires the `end` keyword.

It is a good idea to indent the loops for readability, especially when they are nested (that is, when one loop contains another loop):

```
A = zeros(5,100);
for m = 1:5
    for n = 1:100
        A(m, n) = 1/(m + n - 1);
    end
end
```

You can programmatically exit a loop using a `break` statement, or skip to the next iteration of a loop using a `continue` statement. For example, count

the number of lines in the help for the `magic` function (that is, all comment lines until a blank line):

```
fid = fopen('magic.m','r');
count = 0;
while ~feof(fid)
    line = fgetl(fid);
    if isempty(line)
        break
    elseif ~strncmp(line,'% ',1)
        continue
    end
    count = count + 1;
end
fprintf('%d lines in MAGIC help\n',count);
fclose(fid);
```

Tip If you inadvertently create an infinite loop (a loop that never ends on its own), stop execution of the loop by pressing **Ctrl+C**.

Represent Dates and Times in MATLAB

MATLAB represents date and time information in any of three formats:

- Date String — A character string.

Example: Thursday, August 23, 2012 9:45:44.946 AM

- Date Vector — A 1-by-6 numeric vector containing the year, month, day, hour, minute, and second.

Example: [2012 8 23 9 45 44.946]

- Serial Date Number — A single number equal to the number of days since January 0, 0000.

Example: 7.3510e+005

You can use any of these formats. If you work with more than one date and time format, you can convert from one format to another using the `datestr`, `datevec`, and `datenum` functions.

Date Strings

A date string is a character string composed of fields related to a specific date and/or time. There are several ways to represent dates and times in character string format. For example, all of the following are date strings for August 23, 2010 at 04:35:42 PM:

```
'23-Aug-2010 04:35:06 PM'
```

```
'Wednesday, August 23'
```

```
'08/23/10 16:35'
```

```
'Aug 23 16:35:42.946'
```

You can represent time in a date string using either a 12-hour or 24-hour system.

When you create a date string, include any characters you might need to separate the fields, such as the hyphen, space, and colon used here:

```
d = '23-Aug-2010 16:35:42'
```

Date Vectors

A date vector is a 1-by-6 matrix of double-precision numbers arranged in the following order:

year month day hour minute second

The following date vector represents 10:45:07 AM on October 24, 2009:

```
[2009 10 24 10 45 07]
```

Date vectors must follow these guidelines:

- All six elements, or *fields*, of the vector are required. If you are interested only in the date, and not the time, you can set the last three digits of the vector to zero.
- Date vectors have no separate field in which to specify milliseconds. However, the `seconds` field has a fractional part and accurately keeps the milliseconds field.
- Time values are expressed in 24-hour notation. There is no AM or PM setting.

Serial Date Numbers

A serial date number represents a calendar date as the number of days that has passed since a fixed base date. In MATLAB, serial date number 1 is January 1, 0000.

MATLAB also uses serial time to represent fractions of days beginning at midnight; for example, 6 p.m. equals 0.75 serial days. So the string `'31-Oct-2003, 6:00 PM'` in MATLAB is date number 731885.75.

If you pass date vectors or date strings to a MATLAB function that accepts such inputs, MATLAB first converts the input to serial date numbers. If you are working with a large number of dates or doing extensive calculations with dates, use serial date numbers for better performance.

Compute Elapsed Time

In this section...
“Compute Elapsed Time” on page 2-21
“Compute Future Date” on page 2-22

Compute Elapsed Time

This example shows how to compute the time elapsed between 8:15 a.m. and 3:45 p.m. on different days, and display the result.

Define the start and finish dates. Your data might be in date string or date vector format.

```
start = '20-Apr-2012 8:15';  
finish = [2012 04 23 15 45 00];
```

Convert date strings and date vectors to serial date numbers using the `datenum` function. Work with serial date numbers when computing elapsed time.

```
start_n = datenum(start, 'dd-mmm-yyyy HH:MM');  
finish_n = datenum(finish);
```

Subtract the start date from the finish date. Subtracting serial date numbers returns a rational number of days.

```
n = finish_n - start_n
```

```
n =  
    3.3125
```

The elapsed time is 3.3125 days.

Display the elapsed time in days, hours, and minutes using the `datestr` function.

```
days = floor(n);  
hrs = datestr(n, 'HH');  
mins = datestr(n, 'MM');
```

```
fprintf('\n  %d days, %s hours, %s minutes\n', ...
       days, hrs, mins);
```

```
3 days, 07 hours, 30 minutes
```

Compute Future Date

You can compute future dates by adding to a date. This topic shows two ways to do this.

- “Add Days to a Serial Date Number” on page 2-22
- “Add Years, Months, Days, or Time to a Date” on page 2-23

Add Days to a Serial Date Number

You can add a rational number of days to a serial date number.

The `now` function returns the current date in serial date number format. You can add a number to this date. For this example, add 50 days.

```
futurdate = now+50
```

```
futurdate =
 7.3500e+05
```

Alternatively, the initial date might be in date string format. Convert the date to a serial date number using the `datenum` function.

```
initialdate = datenum('21.03.2012 13:15','dd.mm.yyyy HH:MM');
```

Add a rational number of dates to the initial date. In this example, add 5.5 days.

```
futurdate = initialdate + 5.5
```

```
futurdate =
 7.3496e+05
```

You can convert the future date to date string format.

```
datestr(futurdate,'dd.mm.yyyy HH:MM')
```



```
ans =  
27.03.2012 01:15
```

Add Years, Months, Days, or Time to a Date

The `addtodate` function adds a number of years, months, days, hours, minutes, seconds, or milliseconds to a date in serial date number format. For example, add 5 months to January 3, 2012:

Convert the date string to serial date number format.

```
initialdate = datenum('03/01/2012','dd/mm/yyyy');
```

Use the `addtodate` function to add 5 months to the initial date.

```
futuredate = addtodate(initialdate,5,'month')
```

```
futuredate =  
735023
```

To convert the future date to a date string, use the `datestr` function.

```
datestr(futuredate, 'dddd, mmmm dd')
```

```
ans =  
Sunday, June 03
```

See Also

`addtodate` | `datenum` | `datestr` | `now`

Carryover in Date Vectors and Strings

When computing date vectors, MATLAB automatically carries over date vector elements that lie outside their conventional ranges to the next element. Elements can have negative values. For example, month values greater than 12 are carried to years. Month values less than 1 are set to 1. Day values, D, less than 1 are set to the last day of the previous month minus |D|.

In the following example, the month element has a value of 22. MATLAB increments the year value to 2010 and sets the month to October.

```
datestr([2009 22 03 00 00 00])
```

```
ans =  
    03-Oct-2010
```

The carrying forward of values also applies to time and day values in date strings. For example, October 3, 2010 and September 33, 2010 are interpreted to be the same date, and correspond to the same serial date number.

```
datenum('03-Oct-2010')
```

```
ans =  
    734414
```

```
datenum('33-Sep-2010')
```

```
ans =  
    734414
```

The following example takes the input month (07, or July), finds the last day of the previous month (June 30), and subtracts the number of days in the field specifier (5 days) from that date to yield a return date of June 25, 2010.

```
datestr([2010 07 -05 00 00 00])
```

```
ans =  
    25-Jun-2010
```

Troubleshooting: Converting Date Vector Returns Unexpected Output

In the following example, the year 3000 is beyond the range of years for which MATLAB defaults to date vector format. Because of this, the input is considered to be a vector of date numbers:

```
datestr([3000 11 05 10 32 56])
ans =
    18-Mar-0008
    11-Jan-0000
    05-Jan-0000
    10-Jan-0000
    01-Feb-0000
    25-Feb-0000
```

If you intend for the input to be a date vector instead, explicitly convert the date vector to a date number first using the `datenum` function. Then, convert the value returned by `datenum` to the desired format:

```
dn = datenum([3000 11 05 10 32 56]);
ds = datestr(dn)
ds =
    05-Nov-3000 10:32:56
```

When working with date format conversions of vectors, MATLAB defaults to date vector format if the values for each of the elements in a six-element vector are within an approximate range of 300 greater than or 550 less than the value for that element corresponding to the current date. If a value for any of the elements is outside of this range, MATLAB considers the vector to be a vector of six serial date numbers.

Regular Expressions

In this section...
“Overview” on page 2-26
“Calling Regular Expression Functions from MATLAB” on page 2-28
“Parsing Strings with Regular Expressions” on page 2-32
“Other Benefits of Using Regular Expressions” on page 2-36
“Metacharacters and Operators” on page 2-37
“Character Type Operators” on page 2-39
“Character Representation” on page 2-43
“Grouping Operators” on page 2-44
“Nonmatching Operators” on page 2-46
“Positional Operators” on page 2-47
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“Quantifiers” on page 2-54
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“Dynamic Regular Expressions” on page 2-66
“String Replacement” on page 2-75
“Handling Multiple Strings” on page 2-77
“Function, Mode Options, Operator, Return Value Summaries” on page 2-77

Overview

A regular expression is a string of characters that defines a certain pattern. You normally use a regular expression to search text for a group of words that matches the pattern. For example, while parsing program input or while processing a block of text.

The string `'Joh?n\w*'` is an example of a regular expression. It defines a pattern that starts with the letters `Jo`, is optionally followed by the letter `h` (indicated by `'h?'`), is then followed by the letter `n`, and ends with any number of *word characters*² (indicated by `'\w*'`). This pattern matches any of the following:

Jon, John, Jonathan, Johnny

Regular expressions provide a unique way to search a volume of text for a particular subset of characters within that text. Instead of looking for an exact character match as you would do with a function like `strfind`, regular expressions give you the ability to look for a particular *pattern* of characters.

For example, several ways of expressing a metric rate of speed are:

km/h
km/hr
km/hour
kilometers/hour
kilometers per hour

You could locate any of the above terms in your text by issuing five separate search commands:

```
strfind(text, 'km/h');  
strfind(text, 'km/hour');  
- etc. -
```

2. The term “word characters” in this text refers to characters that are alphabetic, numeric, or underscore.

Note The examples in this and some of the later sections of this documentation use expressions that can be difficult to decipher for anyone not previously exposed to them. The purpose of these initial examples is to introduce the basic use of regular expressions in MATLAB. Learning how to translate the expressions begins in the “Metacharacters and Operators” on page 2-37 section.

MATLAB Regular Expression Functions

There are four MATLAB functions that support searching and replacing characters using regular expressions. The first three are similar in the input values they accept and the output values they return. For details, click the links in the table to see the corresponding function reference pages in the MATLAB Help.

Function	Description
<code>regexp</code>	Match regular expression.
<code>regexpi</code>	Match regular expression, ignoring case.
<code>regexprep</code>	Replace string using regular expression.
<code>regexptranslate</code>	Translate string into regular expression.

When calling any of the first three functions, pass the string to be parsed and the regular expression in the first two input arguments. When calling `regexprep`, pass an additional input that is an expression that specifies a pattern for the replacement string.

Returning the Desired Information

The `regexp` and `regexpi` functions return 1 to 7 output values, providing the following information:

- The content or array indices of all matching strings
- The content of all nonmatching strings
- The content, names, or array indices of all tokens that were found

Unless you specify otherwise, MATLAB returns as many output values as you have output variables for. These are returned in the order shown by the “Return Value Summary” on page 2-85 table.

The following call to `regexp` returns all 7 outputs:

```
[matchStart, matchEnd, tokenIndices, matchStrings, ...  
    tokenStrings, tokenName, splitStrings] = regexp(str, expr);
```

To specify fewer values to return, include an identifying keyword in the input argument list when you call `regexp` or `regexp`. For example, the following statement uses two of these keywords, `match` and `start`:

```
[matchStrings, matchStart] = regexp(str, expr, 'match', 'start')
```

When you execute this statement, MATLAB assigns a cell array of all strings that match the pattern to variable `matchStrings`, and assigns an array of doubles containing the starting index of each match to variable `matchStart`.

For information on these output values and selecting which outputs to return, see the `regexp` function reference page.

Modifying Parameters of the Search (Modes)

You can fine-tune your regular expression parsing using the optional mode inputs: Case Sensitivity, Empty Match, Dot Matching, Anchor Type, and Spacing. These modes tell MATLAB whether or not to:

- Consider letter case when matching an expression to a string (Case Sensitivity mode).
- Allow successful matches of length zero (Empty Match mode).
- Include the newline (`\n`) character when matching the dot (`.`) metacharacter in a regular expression (Dot Matching mode).
- Consider the `^` and `$` metacharacters to represent the beginning and end of a string or the beginning and end of a line (Anchor Type mode).
- Ignore space characters and comments in the expression or to interpret them literally (Spacing mode).

See the reference page for the `regexp` function for more information on regular expression modes.

Applying Modes. You can apply any of these modes in either of two ways. (This is with the exception of Empty Match mode that applies only to all of the regular expression):

- Apply the mode to *all* of a regular expression by passing the mode specifier in the argument list of the call. See Example 1, below.
- Apply the mode to *specific parts* of your expression by specifying the mode symbolically within the regular expression itself. See Example 2, below.

Example 1 – Applying Case Sensitivity Mode to the Entire String.

Create two slightly different strings, `s1` and `s2`. Then write an expression `expr` that you can use to match both of these strings, but only when ignoring case. (The expression operators `.` and `+` match any consecutive series of any character between the `MAT` or `mat` phrases.)

```
s1 = 'Save your MATLAB data to a .mat file in C:\work\matlab';
s2 = 'Save your MATLAB data to a .MAT file in C:\work\matlab';
expr = '.+MAT.+mat.+mat.+';
```

Run `regexp` on both strings at the same time in `ignorecase` mode and examine the output in cell array `c`:

```
c = regexp({s1, s2}, expr, 'match', 'ignorecase');
c{:}
ans =
    'Save your MATLAB data to a .mat file in C:\work\matlab'
ans =
    'Save your MATLAB data to a .MAT file in C:\work\matlab'
```

Because of the `ignorecase` mode, there is a match for both strings. When you use `matchcase` mode instead, only the exact case match is accepted:

```
c = regexp({s1, s2}, expr, 'match', 'matchcase');
c{:}
ans =
    'Save your MATLAB data to a .mat file in C:\work\matlab'
```

```
ans =  
    {}
```

Example 2 – Applying Case Sensitivity Mode Selectively. This example uses symbolic mode designators within the expression itself. The (?i) symbol tells `regexp` to ignore case for that part of the expression that immediately follows it. Similarly, the (?-i) symbol requires case to match for the part of the expression following it.

Here are three strings that vary slightly in case. Following that is the expression `expr` that employs the two states of the Case Sensitivity mode. Note that each of the (?-i) or (?i) symbols used in this expression applies only to the letters `MAT` or `mat` that immediately follow it:

```
s1 = 'Save your MATLAB data to a .mat file in C:\work\matlab';  
s2 = 'Save your MATLAB data to a .MAT file in C:\work\MATLAB';  
s3 = 'Save your MATLAB data to a .MAT file in C:\work\matlab';  
expr = '.*(?-i)MAT.*(?i)mat.*(?-i)mat';
```

Run `regexp` on the three strings. According to the expression `expr`, the first and third instances of the letters 'mat' must be in upper and lower case, respectively. Case is ignored for the second instance. Only strings `s1` and `s3` satisfy this condition:

```
c = regexp({s1,s2,s3}, expr, 'match');  
c{:}  
ans =  
    'Save your MATLAB data to a .mat file in C:\work\mat'  
ans =  
    {}  
ans =  
    'Save your MATLAB data to a .MAT file in C:\work\mat'
```

Parsing Strings with Regular Expressions

MATLAB parses a string from left to right, “consuming” the string as it goes. If matching characters are found, `regexp` records the location and resumes parsing the string, starting just after the end of the most recent match. There is no overlapping of characters in this process. See Examples 2a and 2b under “Using the Lookahead Operator” if you need to match overlapping character groups.

There are three steps involved in using regular expressions to search text for a particular string:

1 Identify unique patterns in the string

This entails breaking up the string you want to search for into groups of like character types. These character types could be a series of lowercase letters, a dollar sign followed by three numbers and then a decimal point, etc.

2 Express each pattern as a regular expression

Use the *metacharacters* and operators described in this documentation to express each segment of your search string as a regular expression. Then combine these expression segments into the single expression to use in the search.

3 Call the appropriate search function

Pass the string you want to parse to one of the search functions, such as `regexp` or `regexpi`, or to the string replacement function, `regxprep`.

The example shown in this section searches a record containing contact information belonging to a group of five friends. This information includes each person's name, telephone number, place of residence, and email address. The goal is to extract specific information from one or more of the strings.

```
contacts = { ...
'Harry 287-625-7315 Columbus, OH hparker@hmail.com'; ...
'Janice 529-882-1759 Fresno, CA jan_stephens@horizon.net'; ...
'Mike 793-136-0975 Richmond, VA sue_and_mike@hmail.net'; ...
'Nadine 648-427-9947 Tampa, FL nadine_berry@horizon.net'; ...
'Jason 697-336-7728 Montrose, CO jason_blake@mymail.com'};
```

The first part of the example builds a regular expression that represents the format of a standard email address. Using that expression, the example then searches the information for the email address of one of the group of friends. Contact information for Janice is in row 2 of the `contacts` cell array:

```
contacts{2}
ans =
    Janice 793-882-1759 Fresno, CA jan_stephens@horizon.net
```

Step 1 – Identify Unique Patterns in the String

A typical email address is made up of standard components: the user's account name, followed by an @ sign, the name of the user's internet service provider (ISP), a dot (period), and the domain to which the ISP belongs. The table below lists these components in the left column, and generalizes the format of each component in the right column.

Unique patterns of an email address	General description of each pattern
Start with the account name jan_stephens . . .	One or more lowercase letters and underscores
Add '@' jan_stephens@ . . .	@ sign
Add the ISP jan_stephens@horizon . . .	One or more lowercase letters, no underscores
Add a dot (period) jan_stephens@horizon. . . .	Dot (period) character
Finish with the domain jan_stephens@horizon.net	com or net

Step 2 – Express Each Pattern as a Regular Expression

In this step, you translate the general formats derived in Step 1 into segments of a regular expression. You then add these segments together to form the entire expression.

The table below shows the generalized format descriptions of each character pattern in the left-most column. (This was carried forward from the right column of the table in Step 1.) The second column links to tables in this documentation that show the appropriate expressions to use in translating this description into a regular expression. The third column shows the operators or metacharacters chosen from those tables to represent the character pattern.

Description of each segment	Tables referenced	Related metacharacters
One or more lowercase letters and underscores	See Character Types on page 2-79, Quantifiers on page 2-82.	[a-z_]+
@ sign	See Character Representation on page 2-80.	@
One or more lowercase letters, no underscores	See Character Types on page 2-79, Quantifiers on page 2-82.	[a-z]+
Dot (period) character	See Character Representation on page 2-80.	\.
com or net	See Grouping Operators on page 2-80.	(com net)

Assembling these metacharacters into one string gives you the complete expression:

```
email = '[a-z_]+@[a-z]+\.(com|net)';
```

Step 3 – Call the Appropriate Search Function

In this step, you use the regular expression derived in Step 2 to match an email address for one of the friends in the group. Use the `regexp` function to perform the search.

Here is the list of contact information shown earlier in this section. Each person's record occupies a row of the `contacts` cell array:

```
contacts = { ...
'Harry 287-625-7315 Columbus, OH hparker@hmail.com'; ...
'Janice 529-882-1759 Fresno, CA jan_stephens@horizon.net'; ...
'Mike 793-136-0975 Richmond, VA sue_and_mike@hmail.net'; ...
'Nadine 648-427-9947 Tampa, FL nadine_berry@horizon.net'; ...
'Jason 697-336-7728 Montrose, CO jason_blake@mymail.com'};
```

This is the regular expression that represents an email address, as derived in Step 2:

```
email = '[a-z_]+@[a-z]+\.(com|net)';
```

Call the `regexp` function, passing row 2 of the `contacts` cell array and the `email` regular expression. This returns the email address for Janice.

```
regexp(contacts{2}, email, 'match')
ans =
    'jan_stephens@horizon.net'
```

Note The last input passed to `regexp` in this command is the keyword `'match'`. This keyword causes `regexp` to return the output as a string instead of as indices into the cell array.

Make the same call, but this time for the fifth person in the list:

```
regexp(contacts{5}, email, 'match')
ans =
    'jason_blake@mymail.com'
```

You can also search for the email address of everyone in the list by using the entire cell array for the input string argument:

```
regexp(contacts, email, 'match');
```

Other Benefits of Using Regular Expressions

In addition to parsing single strings, you can also use the MATLAB regular expression functions for any of the following tasks:

- “Parsing or Replacing with Multiple Expressions and Strings” on page 2-36
- “Replacing Parts of a String” on page 2-37
- “Matching with Tokens Taken from the String” on page 2-37
- “Matching and Replacing Strings Dynamically” on page 2-37

Parsing or Replacing with Multiple Expressions and Strings

The MATLAB regular expression functions also work on multiple strings contained in a cell array. You can use multiple strings as the strings to be parsed, as regular expressions to match against the parse string(s), as replacement strings, or most combinations of these.

Replacing Parts of a String

String replacement with regular expressions requires the `regexprep` function. This function accepts two regular expressions in its input argument list. Each expression specifies a character pattern to match in the string to be parsed. The function then replaces occurrences of the first pattern with occurrences of the second.

Matching with Tokens Taken from the String

A token is one or more characters selected from within the string being parsed that you can use to match other characters in the same string. The characters representing a token are not constants; they depend upon the contents of the parse string that match a part of the expression. You define a token by enclosing part of a regular expression in parentheses. You search for that token using the metacharacters `\1`, `\2`, etc. You can also use tokens in specifying a replacement string for the `regexprep` function. In this case, you refer to specific tokens using the metacharacters `$1`, `$2`, etc.

Matching and Replacing Strings Dynamically

With dynamic expressions, you can:

- Execute a MATLAB command within your expression parsing command.
- Execute a MATLAB command, and include the returned string in the match expression.
- Parse a regular expression and include the resulting string in the match expression.

Metacharacters and Operators

Much of the remainder of this section on regular expressions documents the various metacharacters and operators that you need to compose your expressions.

Category	Metacharacters and Operators
“Character Type Operators” on page 2-39	One of a certain group of characters (e.g., a character in a predefined set or range, a whitespace character, an alphabetic, numeric, or underscore character, or a character that is not in one of these groups).
“Character Representation” on page 2-43	Metacharacters that represent a special character (e.g., backslash, new line, tab, hexadecimal values, any untranslated literal character, etc).
“Grouping Operators” on page 2-44	A grouping of letters or metacharacters to apply a regular expression operator to.
“Nonmatching Operators” on page 2-46	Text included in an expression for the purpose of adding a comment statement, but not to be used as a pattern to find a match for.
“Positional Operators” on page 2-47	Location in the string where the characters or pattern must be positioned for there to be a match (e.g., start or end of the string, start or end of a word, an entire word).
“Lookaround Operators” on page 2-48	Characters or patterns that immediately precede or follow the intended match, but are not considered to be part of the match itself.
“Quantifiers” on page 2-54	Various ways of expressing the number of times a character or pattern is to occur for there to be a match (e.g., exact number, minimum, maximum, zero or one, zero or more, one or more, etc.)
“Tokens” on page 2-57	Characters or patterns selected from the string being parsed that you can use to match other characters in the string.
“Named Capture” on page 2-62	Operators used in assigning names to matched tokens, thus making your code more maintainable and the output easier to interpret.
“Conditional Expressions” on page 2-64	Operators that express conditions under which a certain match is considered to be acceptable.

Category	Metacharacters and Operators
“Dynamic Regular Expressions” on page 2-66	Operators that include a subexpression or command that MATLAB parses or executes. MATLAB uses the result of that operation in parsing the overall expression.
“String Replacement” on page 2-75	Operators used with the <code>regexprep</code> function to specify the content of the replacement text.

Character Type Operators

Tables and examples in this and subsequent sections show the operators and syntax supported by the MATLAB `regexp`, `regexpi`, and `regexprep` functions. Expressions shown in the left column have special meaning and match one or more characters according to the usage described in the right column. Any character not having a special meaning, for example, any alphabetic character, matches that same character literally. To force one of the regular expression functions to interpret a sequence of characters literally (rather than as an operator) use the `regextranslate` function.

Character types represent either a specific set of characters (e.g., uppercase) or a certain type of character (e.g., nonwhitespace).

Operator	Usage
.	Any single character, including white space
[<i>c</i> ₁ <i>c</i> ₂ <i>c</i> ₃]	Any character contained within the brackets: <i>c</i> ₁ or <i>c</i> ₂ or <i>c</i> ₃
[^ <i>c</i> ₁ <i>c</i> ₂ <i>c</i> ₃]	Any character not contained within the brackets: anything but <i>c</i> ₁ or <i>c</i> ₂ or <i>c</i> ₃
[<i>c</i> ₁ - <i>c</i> ₂]	Any character in the range of <i>c</i> ₁ through <i>c</i> ₂
\s	Any white-space character; equivalent to [<code>\f\n\r\t\v</code>]
\S	Any nonwhitespace character; equivalent to [^ <code>\f\n\r\t\v</code>]

Operator	Usage
<code>\w</code>	Any alphabetic, numeric, or underscore character. For English character sets, this is equivalent to <code>[a-zA-Z_0-9]</code> .
<code>\W</code>	Any character that is not alphabetic, numeric, or underscore. For English character sets, this is equivalent to <code>[^a-zA-Z_0-9]</code> .
<code>\d</code>	Any numeric digit; equivalent to <code>[0-9]</code>
<code>\D</code>	Any nondigit character; equivalent to <code>[^0-9]</code>

The following examples demonstrate how to use the character classes listed above. See the `regexp` reference page for help with syntax. Most of these examples use the following string:

```
str = 'The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain.';
```

Any Character — .

The `.` operator matches any single character, including whitespace.

Example 1 — Matching Any Character. Use the dot (`.`) operator to locate sequences of five consecutive characters that end with `'ain'`. The regular expression used in this example is

```
expr = '..ain';
```

Find each occurrence of the expression `expr` within the input string `str`. Return a vector of the indices at which any matches begin:

```
str = 'The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain.';
```

```
startIndex = regexp(str, expr)
startIndex =
     4     13     24     39
```

Here is the input string with the returned `startIndex` values shown below it. Note that the dot operator not only matches the letters in the string, but whitespace characters as well:

```
The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain.
    |         |         |         |
    4         13        24         39
```

If you would prefer to have MATLAB return the text of the matching substrings, use the 'match' qualifier in the command:

```
matchStr = regexp(str, expr, 'match')
matchStr =
    'rain'    'Spain'    'main'    'plain'
```

Example 2 – Returning Strings Rather than Indices. Here is the same example, this time specifying the command qualifier 'match'. In this case, `regexp` returns the *text* of the matching strings rather than the starting index:

```
regexp(str, '..ain', 'match')
ans =
    'rain'    'Spain'    'main'    'plain'
```

Selected Characters – [c₁c₂c₃]

Use [c₁c₂c₃] in an expression to match selected characters r, p, or m followed by 'ain'. Specify two qualifiers this time, 'match' and 'start', along with an output argument for each, `mat` and `idx`. This returns the matching strings and the starting indices of those strings:

```
[mat idx] = regexp(str, '[rpm]ain', 'match', 'start')
mat =
    'rain'    'pain'    'main'
idx =
    5     14     25
```

Range of Characters — [c1 - c2]

Use [c₁-c₂] in an expression to find words that begin with a letter in the range of A through Z:

```
[mat idx] = regexp(str, '[A-Z]\w*', 'match', 'start')
mat =
    'The'      'Spain'
idx =
     1      13
```

Word and White-Space Characters — \w, \s

Use \w and \s in an expression to find words that end with the letter n followed by a white-space character. Add a new qualifier, 'end', to return the str index that marks the end of each match:

```
[mat ix1 ix2] = regexp(str, '\w*n\s', 'match', 'start', 'end')
mat =
    'rain '    'in '    'Spain '    'on '
ix1 =
     5      10      13      32
ix2 =
     9      12      18      34
```

Numeric Digits — \d

Use \d to find numeric digits in the following string:

```
numstr = 'Easy as 1, 2, 3';

[mat idx] = regexp(numstr, '\d', 'match', 'start')
mat =
    '1'      '2'      '3'
idx =
     9      12      15
```

Character Representation

The following character combinations represent specific character and numeric values.

Operator	Usage
\a	Alarm (beep)
\\	Backslash
\\$	Dollar sign
\b	Backspace
\f	Form feed
\n	New line
\r	Carriage return
\t	Horizontal tab
\v	Vertical tab
\oN or \o{N}	Character of octal value N
\xN or \x{N}	Character of hexadecimal value N
\char	If a character has special meaning in a regular expression, precede it with backslash (\) to match it literally.

Octal and Hexadecimal – \o, \x

Use \x and \o in an expression to find a comma (hex 2C) followed by a space (octal 40) followed by the character 2:

```
numstr = 'Easy as 1, 2, 3';
```

```
[mat idx] = regexp(numstr, '\x2C{o{40}2', 'match', 'start')
mat =
    ', 2'
idx =
    10
```

Grouping Operators

When you need to use one of the regular expression operators on a number of consecutive elements in an expression, group these elements together with one of the grouping operators and apply the operation to the entire group. For example, this command matches a capital letter followed by a numeral and then an optional space character. These elements have to occur at least two times in succession for there to be a match. To apply the `{2,}` multiplier to all three consecutive characters, you can first make a group of the characters and then apply the `(?:)` quantifier to this group:

```
regexp('B5 A2 6F 63 R6 P4 B2 BC', '(?:[A-Z]\d\s){2,}', 'match')
ans =
    'B5 A2 '      'R6 P4 B2 '
```

There are three types of explicit grouping operators that you can use when you need to apply an operation to more than just one element in an expression. Also in the grouping category is the alternative match (logical OR) operator, `|`. This creates two or more groups of elements in the expression and applies an operation to one of the groups.

Operator	Usage
<code>(expr)</code>	Group regular expressions and capture tokens.
<code>(?:expr)</code>	Group regular expressions, but do not capture tokens.
<code>(?>expr)</code>	Group atomically.
<code>expr₁ expr₂</code>	Match expression <code>expr₁</code> or expression <code>expr₂</code> .

Grouping and Capture — `(expr)`

When you enclose an expression in parentheses, MATLAB not only treats all of the enclosed elements as a group, but also captures a token from these elements whenever a match with the input string is found. For an example of how to use this, see “Using Tokens — Example 1” on page 2-59.

Grouping Only — `(?:expr)`

Use `(?:expr)` to group a non-vowel (consonant, numeric, whitespace, punctuation, etc.) followed by a vowel in the palindrome `psrtr`. Specify at least

two consecutive occurrences (`{2,}`) of this group. Return the starting and ending indices of the matched substrings:

```
pstr = 'Marge lets Norah see Sharon''s telegram';
expr = '(?:[aeiou][aeiou]){2,}';

[mat ix1 ix2] = regexp(pstr, expr, 'match', 'start', 'end')
mat =
    'Nora'      'haro'      'tele'
ix1 =
    12      23      31
ix2 =
    15      26      34
```

Remove the grouping, and the `{2,}` now applies only to `[aeiou]`. The command is entirely different now as it looks for a non-vowel followed by at least two consecutive vowels:

```
expr = '[^aeiou][aeiou]{2,}';

[mat ix1 ix2] = regexp(pstr, expr, 'match', 'start', 'end')
mat =
    'see'
ix1 =
    18
ix2 =
    20
```

Alternative Match – `expr1|expr2`

Use `p1|p2` to pick out words in the string that start with `let` or `tel`:

```
regexpi(pstr, '(let|tel)\w+', 'match')
ans =
    'lets'      'telegram'
```

Note The expressions `A | B` and `B | A` may return different answers. If there is a match with the first part of the expression (before the `|` symbol), then the second part (that follows the `|` symbol) is not considered.

See the following example. Both calls to `regexp` parse the same string, and, except for the order of the OR conditions, the same expression. But the first call returns two values and the second returns just one:

```
string = 'one two';    expr1 = '(\w+\s\w+)';    expr2 = '(\w+)';

regexp(string, [expr1 '|' expr2], 'match')
ans =
    'one two'

regexp(string, [expr2 '|' expr1], 'match')
ans =
    'one'    'two'
```

Nonmatching Operators

The comment operator enables you to insert comments into your code to make it more maintainable. The text of the comment is ignored by MATLAB when matching against the input string.

Operator	Usage
(?#comment)	Insert a comment into the expression. Comments are ignored in matching.

Including Comments – (?#expr)

Use `(?#expr)` to add a comment to this expression that matches capitalized words in `pstr`. Comments are ignored in the process of finding a match:

```
regexp(pstr, '(?# Match words in caps)[A-Z]\w+', 'match')
ans =
    'Marge'    'Norah'    'Sharon'
```


Positional Operators

Positional operators in an expression match parts of the input string not by content, but by where they occur in the string (e.g., the first N characters in the string).

Operator	Usage
<code>^expr</code>	Match <code>expr</code> if it occurs at the beginning of the input string.
<code>expr\$</code>	Match <code>expr</code> if it occurs at the end of the input string.
<code>\<expr</code>	Match <code>expr</code> when it occurs at the beginning of a word.
<code>expr\></code>	Match <code>expr</code> when it occurs at the end of a word.
<code>\<expr\></code>	Match <code>expr</code> when it represents the entire word.

Start and End of String Match — `^expr`, `expr$`

Use `^expr` to match words starting with the letter `m` or `M` only when it begins the string, and `expr$` to match words ending with `m` or `M` only when it ends the string:

```
regexpi(pstr, '^m\w*|\w*m$', 'match')
ans =
    'Marge'    'telegram'
```

Start and End of Word Match — `\<expr`, `expr\>`

Use `\<expr` to match any words starting with `n` or `N`, or ending with `e` or `E`:

```
regexpi(pstr, '\<n\w*|\w*e\>', 'match')
ans =
    'Marge'    'Norah'    'see'
```

Exact Word Match — `\<expr\>`

Use `\<expr\>` to match a word starting with an `n` or `N` and ending with an `h` or `H`:

```
regexpi(pstr, '\<n\w*h\>', 'match')
ans =
    'Norah'
```

Lookaround Operators

Lookaround operators tell MATLAB to look either ahead or behind the current location in the string for a specified expression. If the expression is found, MATLAB attempts to match a given pattern.

This table shows the four lookahead expressions: lookahead, negative lookahead, lookbehind, and negative lookbehind.

Operator	Usage
(?=expr)	Look ahead from current position and test if expr is found.
(?!expr)	Look ahead from current position and test if expr is not found
(?<=expr)	Look behind from current position and test if expr is found.
(?<!expr)	Look behind from current position and test if expr is not found.

Lookaround operators do not change the current parsing location in the input string. They are more of a condition that must be satisfied for a match to occur.

For example, the following command uses an expression that matches alphabetic, numeric, or underscore characters (`\w*`) that meet the condition that they *look ahead to* (i.e., are immediately followed by) the letters `vision`. The resulting match includes only that part of the string that matches the `\w*` operator; it does not include those characters that match the lookahead expression (`?=vision`):

```
[s e] = regexp('telegraph television telephone', ...
               '\w*(?=vision)', 'start', 'end')
s =
    11
e =
```

14

If you repeat this command and match one character beyond the lookahead expression, you can see that parsing of the input string resumes at the letter v, thus demonstrating that matching the lookahead operator has not consumed any characters in the string:

```
regexp('telegraph television telephone', ...
       '\w*(?=vision).', 'match')
ans =
    'telev'
```

Note You can also use lookaround operators to perform a logical AND of two elements. See “Using Lookaround as a Logical Operator” on page 2-53.

Using the Lookahead Operator – `expr(?=test)`

Example 1 – Lookahead. Look ahead to a file name (`fileread.m`), and return only the name of the folder in which it resides, not the file name itself. Note that the lookahead part of the expression serves only as a condition for the match; it is not part of the match itself:

```
str = which('fileread')
str =
    C:\Program Files\MATLAB\toolbox\matlab\iofun\fileread.m

% Look ahead to a backslash (\\), followed by a file name (\w+)
% with an .m or .p extension (\.[mp]). Capture the letters
% that precede this sequence.
regexp(str, '\w+(?=\w+\.[mp])', 'match')
ans =
    'iofun'
```

Example 2a – Matching Sequential Character Groups. MATLAB parses a string from left to right, “consuming” the string as it goes. If matching characters are found, `regexp` records the location and resumes parsing the string from the location of the most recent match. There is no overlapping of characters in this process.

Find all sequences of 6 nonwhitespace characters in the input string shown below. Following the MATLAB default behavior, do not allow for overlap. That is, begin looking for your next match starting just after the *end* of the current match:

```
string = 'Locate several 6-char. phrases';
regexpi(string, '\S{6}')
ans =
     1     8    16    24
```

This statement finds the phrases:

```
Locate  severa  6-char  phrase
```

Example 2b – Using Lookahead to Match Overlapping Character

Groups. If you need to find *every* sequence of characters that match a pattern, including sequences that overlap another, capture only the first character and look ahead for the remainder of the pattern. In other words, begin looking for your next match starting after the *next character* of the current match:

```
string = 'Locate several 6-char. phrases';
regexpi(string, '\S(?=\S{5})')
ans =
     1     8     9    16    17    24    25
```

This statement finds the phrases:

```
Locate  severa  everal  6-char  -char.  phrase  hrases
```

Using the Negative Lookahead Operator – `expr(?!test)`

Example – Negative Lookbehind and Lookahead. Generate a series of sequential numbers:

```
n = num2str(5:15)
n =
     5     6     7     8     9    10    11    12    13    14    15
```

Use both the negative lookbehind and negative lookahead operators together to precede only the single-digit numbers with zero:

```

regexprep(n, '(?!\d)(\d)(?!\d)', '0$1')
ans =
    05    06    07    08    09    10    11    12    13    14    15

```

Using the Lookbehind Operator – (?<=test)expr

Example 1 – Positive and Negative Lookbehind Operators. Using the lookbehind operator, find the letter r that is preceded by the letter u:

```

str = 'Neural Network Toolbox';

startIndex = regexp(str, '(?<=u)r', 'start')
startIndex =
     4

```

Using the negative lookbehind operator, find the letter r that is *not* preceded by the letter u:

```

startIndex = regexp(str, '(?!u)r', 'start')
startIndex =
    13

```

Example 2 – Lookbehind. Return the names and 7-digit telephone numbers for those people in the list that are in the 617 area code. The lookbehind (?<=^617-) finds those lines that begin with the number 617:

```

phone_list = {...
'978-389-2457 Kevin';      '617-922-3091 Ruth'; ...
'781-147-1748 Alan';      '508-643-9648 George'; ...
'617-774-6642 Lisa';      '617-241-0275 Greg'; ...
'413-995-9114 Jason';     '781-276-0482 Victoria'};
len = length(phone_list);

ph617 = regexp(phone_list, '(?<=^617-).*', 'match');

for k=1:len
str = char(ph617{k});
if ~isempty(str), fprintf(' %s\n', str), end
end

```

MATLAB returns the three numbers that have a 617 area code:

```
922-3091 Ruth
774-6642 Lisa
241-0275 Greg
```

Using the Negative Lookbehind Operator— (?<!test)expr

Example — Negative Lookbehind. This example uses negative lookbehind to find those tasks that are not labelled as Done or Pending, Create a list of tasks, each with status information to the left:

```
tasks = {...
'ToDo      3892457';      'Done      9223091'; ...
'Pending   1471748';      'Maybe    7746642'; ...
'ToDo      2410275';      'Pending   4723596'; ...
'ToDo      9959114';      'Maybe    2760482'; ...
'ToDo      3080027';      'Done      1221941'};
count = length(tasks);
```

The regular expression looks for those task numbers that do not have a Done or Pending status. Note that you can use the or (|) operator in a lookaround to check for more than one condition:

```
doNow = regexp(tasks, '(?<!^(Done|Pending).*)\d+', 'match');
```

Now print out the results:

```
disp 'The following tasks need attention:'
for k=1:count
    s = char(doNow{k});
    if ~isempty(s), fprintf('  %s\n', s), end
end
```

The output displays all but the Done and Pending tasks:

```
The following tasks need attention:
3892457
7746642
```

```
2410275
9959114
2760482
3080027
```

Using Lookaround as a Logical Operator

One way in which a lookahead operation can be useful is to perform a logical AND between two conditions. This example initially attempts to locate all lowercase consonants in a text string. The text string is the first 50 characters of the help for the `normest` function:

```
helptext = help('normest');
str = helptext(1:50)
str =
  NORMEST Estimate the matrix 2-norm.
  NORMEST(S
```

Merely searching for non-vowels (`[^aeiouAEIOU]`) does not return the expected answer, as the output includes capital letters, space characters, and punctuation:

```
c = regexp(str, '[^aeiouAEIOU]', 'match')
c =
  Columns 1 through 12
   ' ' 'N' 'R' 'M' 'S' 'T' ' ' 's' 't' 'm' 't'
   -- etc. --
```

Try this again, using a lookahead operator to create the following AND condition:

```
(lowercase letter) AND (not a vowel).
```

This time, the result is correct:

```
c = regexp(str, '(?=[a-z])[^aeiou]', 'match')
c =
  's' 't' 'm' 't' 't' 'h' 'm' 't' 'r' 'x'
  'n' 'r' 'm'
```

Note that when using a lookahead operator to perform an AND, you need to place the match expression *expr* *after* the test expression *test*:

`(?=test)expr` or `(?!test)expr`

Quantifiers

With the quantifiers shown below, you can specify how many instances of an element are to be matched. The basic quantifying operators are listed in the first six rows of the table.

By default, MATLAB matches as much of an expression as possible. Using the operators shown in the last two rows of the table, you can override this default behavior. Specify these options by appending a `+` or `?` immediately following one of the six basic quantifying operators.

Operator	Usage
<code>expr{m,n}</code>	Must occur at least <i>m</i> times but no more than <i>n</i> times.
<code>expr{m,}</code>	Must occur at least <i>m</i> times.
<code>expr{n}</code>	Must match exactly <i>n</i> times. Equivalent to <code>{n,n}</code> .
<code>expr?</code>	Match the preceding element 0 times or 1 time. Equivalent to <code>{0,1}</code> .
<code>expr*</code>	Match the preceding element 0 or more times. Equivalent to <code>{0,}</code> .
<code>expr+</code>	Match the preceding element 1 or more times. Equivalent to <code>{1,}</code> .
<code>q_expr+</code>	Match as much of the quantified expression as possible, but do not rescan any portions of the string if the initial match fails. The term <code>q_expr</code> represents any of the expressions shown in the top six rows of this table.
<code>q_expr?</code>	Match only as much of the quantified expression as necessary. The term <code>q_expr</code> represents any of the expressions shown in the top six rows of this table. For an example, see “Lazy Quantifiers — <code>expr*?</code> ” on page 2-56, below.

Zero or One – expr?

Use ? to make the HTML <code> and </code> tags optional in the string. The first string, hstr1, contains one occurrence of each tag. Since the expression uses ()? around the tags, one occurrence is a match:

```
hstr1 = '<td><a name="18854"></a><code>%%</code><br></td>';
expr = '</a>( <code>)?..(</code>)?<br>';
```

```
regexp(hstr1, expr, 'match')
ans =
    '</a><code>%%</code><br>'
```

The second string, hstr2, does not contain the code tags at all. Just the same, the expression matches because ()? allows for zero occurrences of the tags:

```
hstr2 = '<td><a name="18854"></a>%%<br></td>';
expr = '</a>( <code>)?..(</code>)?<br>';
```

```
regexp(hstr2, expr, 'match')
ans =
    '</a>%%<br>'
```

Zero or More – expr*

The first regexp command looks for at least one occurrence of
 and finds it. The second command parses a different string for at least one
 and fails. The third command uses * to parse the same line for zero or more line breaks and this time succeeds.

```
hstr1 = '<p>This string has <br><br>line breaks</p>';
regexp(hstr1, '<p>.*( <br>).*</p>', 'match')
ans =
    '<p>This string has <br><br>line breaks</p>';
```

```
hstr2 = '<p>This string has no line breaks</p>';
regexp(hstr2, '<p>.*( <br>).*</p>', 'match')
ans =
    {}
```

```
regexp(hstr2, '<p>.*( <br>)*.*</p>', 'match')
```

```
ans =  
  '<p>This string has no line breaks</p>';
```

One or More – expr+

Use `+` to verify that the HTML image source is not empty. This looks for one or more characters in the gif filename:

```
hstr = '<a href="s12.html">';  
expr = '</a><a href="s13.html#18760">';  
expr = '<a href="\w{1,}(\.html){1}(\#\d{5,8}){0,1}";  
  
regexp(hstr, expr, 'match')  
ans =  
  '<a href="s13.html#18760"'
```

Lazy Quantifiers – expr*?

This example shows the difference between the default (*greedy*) quantifier and the *lazy* quantifier (`?`). The first part of the example uses the default quantifier to match all characters from the opening `<tr` to the ending `</td>`:

```
hstr = '<tr valign=top><td><a name="19184"></a><br></td>';  
regexp(hstr, '</?t.*>', 'match')  
ans =
```

```
'<tr valign=top><td><a name="19184"></a><br></td>'
```

The second part uses the lazy quantifier to match the minimum number of characters between `<tr`, `<td`, or `</td` tags:

```
regexp(hstr, '</?t.*?>', 'match')
ans =
    '<tr valign=top>'    '<td>'    '</td>'
```

Tokens

Parentheses used in a regular expression not only group elements of that expression together, but also designate any matches found for that group as *tokens*. You can use tokens to match other parts of the same string. One advantage of using tokens is that they remember what they matched, so you can recall and reuse matched text in the process of searching or replacing.

This section covers

- “Operators Used with Tokens” on page 2-57
- “Introduction to Using Tokens” on page 2-58
- “Using Tokens — Example 1” on page 2-59
- “Using Tokens — Example 2” on page 2-59
- “Tokens That Are Not Matched” on page 2-60
- “Using Tokens in a Replacement String” on page 2-62

Operators Used with Tokens

Here are the operators you can use with tokens in MATLAB.

Operator	Usage
(expr)	Capture in a token all characters matched by the expression within the parentheses.
\N	Match the N th token generated by this command. That is, use \1 to match the first token, \2 to match the second, and so on.

Operator	Usage
\$N	Insert the match for the N th token in the replacement string. Used only by the <code>regexprep</code> function. If N is equal to zero, then insert the entire match in the replacement string.
(? (N) s1 s2)	If N th token is found, then match s1, else match s2

Introduction to Using Tokens

You can turn any pattern being matched into a token by enclosing the pattern in parentheses within the expression. For example, to create a token for a dollar amount, you could use `'(\$\d+)'`. Each token in the expression is assigned a number, starting from 1, going from left to right. To make a reference to a token later in the expression, refer to it using a backslash followed by the token number. For example, when referencing a token generated by the third set of parentheses in the expression, use `\3`.

As a simple example, if you wanted to search for identical sequential letters in a string, you could capture the first letter as a token and then search for a matching character immediately afterwards. In the expression shown below, the `(\S)` phrase creates a token whenever `regexp` matches any nonwhitespace character in the string. The second part of the expression, `'\1'`, looks for a second instance of the same character immediately following the first:

```
poestr = ['While I nodded, nearly napping, ' ...
         'suddenly there came a tapping,'];

[mat tok ext] = regexp(poestr, '(\S)\1', 'match', ...
    'tokens', 'tokenExtents');
mat
mat =
    'dd'    'pp'    'dd'    'pp'
```

The tokens returned in cell array `tok` are:

```
'd', 'p', 'd', 'p'
```

Starting and ending indices for each token in the input string `poestr` are:

11 11, 26 26, 35 35, 57 57

Using Tokens – Example 1

Here is an example of how tokens are assigned values. Suppose that you are going to search the following text:

andy ted bob jim andrew andy ted mark

You choose to search the above text with the following search pattern:

`and(y|rew)|(t)e(d)`

This pattern has three parenthetical expressions that generate tokens. When you finally perform the search, the following tokens are generated for each match.

Match	Token 1	Token 2
andy	y	
ted	t	d
andrew	rew	
andy	y	
ted	t	d

Only the highest level parentheses are used. For example, if the search pattern `and(y|rew)` finds the text `andrew`, token 1 is assigned the value `rew`. However, if the search pattern `(and(y|rew))` is used, token 1 is assigned the value `andrew`.

Using Tokens – Example 2

Use `(expr)` and `\N` to capture pairs of matching HTML tags (e.g., `<a>` and ``) and the text between them. The expression used for this example is

```
expr = '<(\w+).*?>.*?</\1>';
```

The first part of the expression, '`<(\w+)`', matches an opening bracket (`<`) followed by one or more alphabetic, numeric, or underscore characters. The enclosing parentheses capture token characters following the opening bracket.

The second part of the expression, '`. *?>. *?`', matches the remainder of this HTML tag (characters up to the `>`), and any characters that may precede the next opening bracket.

The last part, '`</\1>`', matches all characters in the ending HTML tag. This tag is composed of the sequence `</tag>`, where `tag` is whatever characters were captured as a token.

```
hstr = '!comment<a name="752507"></a><b>Default</b><br>';  
expr = '<(\w+). *?>. *?</\1>';
```

```
[mat tok] = regexp(hstr, expr, 'match', 'tokens');
```

```
mat{:}
```

```
ans =
```

```
    <a name="752507"></a>
```

```
ans =
```

```
    <b>Default</b>
```

```
tok{:}
```

```
ans =
```

```
    'a'
```

```
ans =
```

```
    'b'
```

Tokens That Are Not Matched

For those tokens specified in the regular expression that have no match in the string being evaluated, `regexp` and `regexpi` return an empty string ('') as the token output, and an extent that marks the position in the string where the token was expected.

The example shown here executes `regexp` on the path string `str` returned from the MATLAB `tempdir` function. The regular expression `expr` includes six token specifiers, one for each piece of the path string. The third specifier

[a-z]+ has no match in the string because this part of the path, Profiles, begins with an uppercase letter:

```
str = tempdir
str =
    C:\WINNT\Profiles\bascal\LOCALS-1\Temp\

expr = ['([A-Z:)]\ (WINNT)\ ([a-z]+)?.*\ ' ...
        '([a-z]+)\ ([A-Z]+~\d)\ (Temp)\ '];

[tok ext] = regexp(str, expr, 'tokens', 'tokenExtents');
```

When a token is not found in a string, MATLAB still returns a token string and token extent. The returned token string is an empty character string (''). The first number of the extent is the string index that marks where the token was expected, and the second number of the extent is equal to one less than the first.

In the case of this example, the empty token is the third specified in the expression, so the third token string returned is empty:

```
tok{:}
ans =
    'C:'      'WINNT'      ''      'bascal'      'LOCALS-1'      'Temp'
```

The third token extent returned in the variable `ext` has the starting index set to 10, which is where the nonmatching substring, Profiles, begins in the string. The ending extent index is set to one less than the starting index, or 9:

```
ext{:}
ans =
     1     2
     4     8
    10     9
    19    25
    27    34
    36    39
```

Using Tokens in a Replacement String

When using tokens in a replacement string, reference them using \$1, \$2, etc. instead of \1, \2, etc. This example captures two tokens and reverses their order. The first, \$1, is 'Norma Jean' and the second, \$2, is 'Baker'. Note that `regexprep` returns the modified string, not a vector of starting indices.

```
regexprep('Norma Jean Baker', '(\w+\s\w+)\s(\w+)', '$2, $1')
ans =
    Baker, Norma Jean
```

Named Capture

If you use a lot of tokens in your expressions, it may be helpful to assign them names rather than having to keep track of which token number is assigned to which token. Use the following operator to assign a name to a token that finds a match.

Operator	Usage
(?<name>expr)	Capture in a token all characters matched by the expression within the parentheses. Assign a name to the token.
\k<name>	Match the token referred to by name.
\$<name>	Insert the match for named token in a replacement string. Used only with the <code>regexprep</code> function.
(?(name)s1 s2)	If named token is found, then match s1; otherwise, match s2

When referencing a named token within the expression, use the syntax `\k<name>` instead of the numeric `\1`, `\2`, etc.:

```
poestr = ['While I nodded, nearly napping, ' ...
         'suddenly there came a tapping,'];

regexprep(poestr, '(?<anychar>.)\k<anychar>', 'match')
ans =
    'dd'    'pp'    'dd'    'pp'
```


Labeling Your Output

Named tokens can also be useful in labeling the output from the MATLAB regular expression functions. This is especially true when you are processing numerous strings.

This example parses different pieces of street addresses from several strings. A short name is assigned to each token in the expression string:

```
str1 = '134 Main Street, Boulder, CO, 14923';
str2 = '26 Walnut Road, Topeka, KA, 25384';
str3 = '847 Industrial Drive, Elizabeth, NJ, 73548';

p1 = '(?<adrs>\d+\s\S+\s(Road|Street|Avenue|Drive))';
p2 = '(?<city>[A-Z][a-z]+)';
p3 = '(?<state>[A-Z]{2})';
p4 = '(?<zip>\d{5})';

expr = [p1 ' ', ' p2 ', ' p3 ', ' p4];
```

As the following results demonstrate, you can make your output easier to work with by using named tokens:

```
loc1 = regexp(str1, expr, 'names')
loc1 =
    adrs: '134 Main Street'
    city: 'Boulder'
    state: 'CO'
    zip: '14923'

loc2 = regexp(str2, expr, 'names')
loc2 =
    adrs: '26 Walnut Road'
    city: 'Topeka'
    state: 'KA'
    zip: '25384'

loc3 = regexp(str3, expr, 'names')
loc3 =
    adrs: '847 Industrial Drive'
    city: 'Elizabeth'
```

```
state: 'NJ'  
zip: '73548'
```

Conditional Expressions

With conditional expressions, you can tell MATLAB to match an expression only if a certain condition is true. A conditional expression is similar to an if-then or an if-then-else clause in programming. MATLAB first tests the state of a given condition, and the outcome of this tests determines what, if anything, is to be matched next. The following table shows the two conditional syntaxes you can use with MATLAB.

Operator	Usage
<code>(?(cond)expr)</code>	If condition <code>cond</code> is true, then match expression <code>expr</code>
<code>(?(cond)expr₁ expr₂)</code>	If condition <code>cond</code> is true, then match expression <code>expr₁</code> . Otherwise match expression <code>expr₂</code>

The first entry in this table is the same as an if-then statement. MATLAB tests the state of condition `cond` and then matches expression `expr` only if the condition was found to be true. In the form of an if-then statement, it would look like this:

```
if cond then expr
```

The second entry in the table is the same as an if-then-else statement. If the condition is true, MATLAB matches `expr1`; if false, it matches `expr2` instead. This syntax is equivalent to the following programming statement:

```
if cond then expr1 else expr2
```

The condition `cond` in either of these syntaxes can be any one of the following:

- A specific token, identified by either number or name, is located in the input string. See “Conditions Based on Tokens” on page 2-65, below.
- A lookahead operation results in a match. See “Conditions Based on a Lookaround Match” on page 2-66, below.
- A dynamic expression of the form `(?@cmd)` returns a nonzero numeric value. See “Conditions Based on Return Values” on page 2-66, below.

Conditions Based on Tokens

In a conditional expression, MATLAB matches the expression only if the condition associated with it is met. If the condition is based on a token, then the condition is met if MATLAB matches more than one character for the token in the input string.

To specify a token in a condition, use either the token number or, for tokens that you have assigned a name to, its name. Token numbers are determined by the order in which they appear in an expression. For example, if you specify three tokens in an expression (that is, if you enclose three parts of the expression in parentheses), then you would refer to these tokens in a condition statement as 1, 2, and 3.

The following example uses the conditional statement `(?(1)her|his)` to match the string regardless of the gender used. You could translate this into the phrase, “**if** token 1 is found (i.e., Mr is followed by the letter s), **then** match her, **else** match his:

```
expr = 'Mr(s?)\..*?(?(1)her|his) son';

[mat tok] = regexp('Mr. Clark went to see his son', ...
    expr, 'match', 'tokens')
mat =
    'Mr. Clark went to see his son'
tok =
    {1x2 cell}

tok{:}
ans =
    ''      'his'
```

In the second part of the example, the token s is found and MATLAB matches the word her:

```
[mat tok] = regexp('Mrs. Clark went to see her son', ...
    expr, 'match', 'tokens')
mat =
    'Mrs. Clark went to see her son'
tok =
    {1x2 cell}
```

```
tok{:}  
ans =  
    's'      'her'
```

Note When referring to a token within a condition, use just the number of the token. For example, refer to token 2 by using the number 2 alone, and not \2 or \$2.

Conditions Based on a Lookaround Match

Lookaround statements look for text that either precedes or follows an expression. If this lookaround text is located, then MATLAB proceeds to match the expression. You can also use lookarounds in conditional statements. In this case, if the lookaround text is located, then MATLAB considers the condition to be met and matches the associated expression. If the condition is not met, then MATLAB matches the else part of the expression.

Conditions Based on Return Values

MATLAB supports different types of dynamic expressions. One type of dynamic expression, having the form (?@cmd), enables you to execute a MATLAB command (shown here as cmd) while matching an expression. You can use this type of dynamic expression in a conditional statement if the command in the expression returns a numeric value. The condition is considered to be met if the return value is nonzero.

Dynamic Regular Expressions

In a dynamic expression, you can make the pattern that you want `regexp` to match dependent on the content of the input string. In this way, you can more closely match varying input patterns in the string being parsed. You can also use dynamic expressions in replacement strings for use with the `regexprep` function. This gives you the ability to adapt the replacement text to the parsed input.

You can include any number of dynamic expressions in the `match_expr` or `replace_expr` arguments of these commands:

```

regexp(string, match_expr)
regexpi(string, match_expr)
regexprep(string, match_expr, replace_expr)

```

MATLAB supports three types of dynamic operators for use in a match expression. See “Dynamic Operators for the Match Expression” on page 2-68 for more information.

Operator	Usage
(? <i>expr</i>)	Parse <i>expr</i> as a separate regular expression, and include the resulting string in the match expression. This gives you the same results as if you called <code>regexprep</code> inside of a <code>regexp</code> match expression.
(? <i>@cmd</i>)	Execute the MATLAB command <i>cmd</i> , discarding any output that may be returned. This is often used for diagnosing a regular expression.
(? <i>@cmd</i>)	Execute the MATLAB command <i>cmd</i> , and include the string returned by <i>cmd</i> in the match expression. This is a combination of the two dynamic syntaxes shown above: (<i>?<i>expr</i></i>) and (<i>?<i>@cmd</i></i>).

MATLAB supports one type of dynamic expression for use in the replacement expression of a `regexprep` command. See “Dynamic Operators for the Replacement Expression” on page 2-73 for more information.

Operator	Usage
<code>\${<i>cmd</i>}</code>	Execute the MATLAB command <i>cmd</i> , and include the string returned by <i>cmd</i> in the replacement expression.

Example of a Dynamic Expression

As an example of a dynamic expression, the following `regexprep` command correctly replaces the term `internationalization` with its abbreviated form, `i18n`. However, to use it on a different term such as `globalization`, you have to use a different replacement expression:

```
match_expr = ' (^\w)(\w*)(\w$) ';
```

```
replace_expr1 = '$118$3';
regexprep('internationalization', match_expr, replace_expr1)
ans =
    i18n
```

```
replace_expr2 = '$111$3';
regexprep('globalization', match_expr, replace_expr2)
ans =
    g11n
```

Using a dynamic expression `${num2str(length($2))}` enables you to base the replacement expression on the input string so that you do not have to change the expression each time. This example uses the dynamic syntax `{cmd}` from the second table shown above:

```
match_expr = '^(\\w)(\\w*)(\\w$)';
replace_expr = '$1${num2str(length($2))}$3';

regexprep('internationalization', match_expr, replace_expr)
ans =
    i18n

regexprep('globalization', match_expr, replace_expr)
ans =
    g11n
```

Dynamic Operators for the Match Expression

There are three types of dynamic expressions you can use when composing a match expression:

- “Dynamic Expressions That Modify the Match Expression — `(??expr)`” on page 2-69
- “Dynamic Commands That Modify the Match Expression — `(??@cmd)`” on page 2-70
- “Dynamic Commands That Serve a Functional Purpose — `(?@cmd)`” on page 2-71

The first two of these actually modify the match expression itself so that it can be made specific to changes in the contents of the input string. When

MATLAB evaluates one of these dynamic statements, the results of that evaluation are included in the same location within the overall match expression.

The third operator listed here does not modify the overall expression, but instead enables you to run MATLAB commands during the parsing of a regular expression. This functionality can be useful in diagnosing your regular expressions.

Dynamic Expressions That Modify the Match Expression – (??expr).

The (??expr) operator parses expression expr, and inserts the results back into the match expression. MATLAB then evaluates the modified match expression.

Here is an example of the type of expression that you can use with this operator:

```
str = {'5XXXXX', '8XXXXXXXX', '1X'};
regexp(str, '^(\\d+)(??X{\\$1})$', 'match', 'once')
```

The purpose of this particular command is to locate a series of X characters in each of the strings stored in the input cell array. Note however that the number of Xs varies in each string. If the count did not vary, you could use the expression X{n} to indicate that you want to match n of these characters. But, a constant value of n does not work in this case.

The solution used here is to capture the leading count number (e.g., the 5 in the first string of the cell array) in a token, and then to use that count in a dynamic expression. The dynamic expression in this example is (??X{\\\$1}), where \\\$1 is the value captured by the token \\d+. The operator {\\\$1} makes a quantifier of that token value. Because the expression is dynamic, the same pattern works on all three of the input strings in the cell array. With the first input string, regexp looks for five X characters; with the second, it looks for eight, and with the third, it looks for just one:

```
regexp(str, '^(\\d+)(??X{\\$1})$', 'match', 'once')
ans =
    '5XXXXX'    '8XXXXXXXX'    '1X'
```

Dynamic Commands That Modify the Match Expression – (??@cmd).

MATLAB uses the (??@function) operator to include the results of a MATLAB command in the match expression. This command must return a string that can be used within the match expression.

The `regexp` command below uses the dynamic expression (??@fliplr(\$1)) to locate a palindrome string, “Never Odd or Even”, that has been embedded into a larger string:

```
regexp(pstr, '{3,}).?(??@fliplr($1))', 'match')
```

The dynamic expression reverses the order of the letters that make up the string, and then attempts to match as much of the reversed-order string as possible. This requires a dynamic expression because the value for \$1 relies on the value of the token (.{3,}):

```
% Put the string in lowercase.
str = lower(...
    'Find the palindrome Never Odd or Even in this string');

% Remove all nonword characters.
str = regexprep(str, '\W*', '')
str =
    findthepalindromeneveroddoeveninthisstring

% Now locate the palindrome within the string.
palstr = regexp(str, '{3,}).?(??@fliplr($1))', 'match')
str =
    'neveroddoeven'
```

Dynamic expressions in MATLAB have access to the currently active workspace. This means that you can change any of the functions or variables used in a dynamic expression just by changing variables in the workspace. Repeat the last command of the example above, but this time define the function to be called within the expression using a function handle stored in the base workspace:

```
fun = @fliplr;

palstr = regexp(str, '{3,}).?(??@fun($1))', 'match')
palstr =
```



```
'neverodddoreven'
```

Dynamic Commands That Serve a Functional Purpose — (?@cmd). The (?@cmd) operator specifies a MATLAB command that `regexp` or `regexprep` is to run while parsing the overall match expression. Unlike the other dynamic expressions in MATLAB, this operator does not alter the contents of the expression it is used in. Instead, you can use this functionality to get MATLAB to report just what steps it is taking as it parses the contents of one of your regular expressions.

The following example parses a word for zero or more characters followed by two identical characters followed again by zero or more characters:

```
regexp('mississippi', '\w*(\w)\1\w*', 'match')
ans =
    'mississippi'
```

To track the exact steps that MATLAB takes in determining the match, the example inserts a short script (?@disp(\$1)) in the expression to display the characters that finally constitute the match. Because the example uses greedy quantifiers, MATLAB attempts to match as much of the string as possible. So, even though MATLAB finds a match toward the beginning of the string, it continues to look for more matches until it arrives at the very end of the string. From there, it backs up through the letters `i` then `p` and the next `p`, stopping at that point because the match is finally satisfied:

```
regexp('mississippi', '\w*(\w)(?@disp($1))\1\w*');
i
p
p
```

Now try the same example again, this time making the first quantifier lazy (*?). Again, MATLAB makes the same match:

```
regexp('mississippi', '\w*(\w)\1\w*', 'match')
ans =
    'mississippi'
```

But by inserting a dynamic script, you can see that this time, MATLAB has matched the string quite differently. In this case, MATLAB uses the very first match it can find, and does not even consider the rest of the string:

```
regexp('mississippi', '\w*(\w)(?@disp($1))\1\w*');  
m  
i  
s
```

To demonstrate how versatile this type of dynamic expression can be, consider the next example that progressively assembles a cell array as MATLAB iteratively parses the input string. The (?!) operator found at the end of the expression is actually an empty lookahead operator, and forces a failure at each iteration. This forced failure is necessary if you want to trace the steps that MATLAB is taking to resolve the expression.

MATLAB makes a number of passes through the input string, each time trying another combination of letters to see if a fit better than last match can be found. On any passes in which no matches are found, the test results in an empty string. The dynamic script (?@if(~isempty(\$&))) serves to omit these strings from the matches cell array:

```
matches = {};  
expr = ['(Euler\s)?(Cauchy\s)?(Boole)?(?@if(~isempty($&)), ' ...  
      'matches{end+1}=$&;end) (?)'];  
  
regexp('Euler Cauchy Boole', expr);  
  
matches  
matches =  
      'Euler Cauchy Boole'      'Euler Cauchy '      'Euler '  
'Cauchy Boole'      'Cauchy '      'Boole'
```

The operators \$& (or the equivalent \$0), \$`, and \$' refer to that part of the input string that is currently a match, all characters that precede the current match, and all characters to follow the current match, respectively. These operators are sometimes useful when working with dynamic expressions, particularly those that employ the (?@cmd) operator.

This example parses the input string looking for the letter g. At each iteration through the string, regexp compares the current character with g, and not finding it, advances to the next character. The example tracks the progress of scan through the string by marking the current location being parsed with a ^ character.

(The `$`` and `$·` operators capture that part of the string that precedes and follows the current parsing location. You need two single-quotation marks (`$'`) to express the sequence `$·` when it appears within a string.)

```
str = 'abcdefghij';
expr = '(?@disp(sprintf(''starting match: [%s^%s]'',$`,`,$'))g';

regexp(str, expr, 'once');
starting match: [^abcdefghij]
starting match: [a^abcdefghij]
starting match: [ab^cdefghij]
starting match: [abc^defghij]
starting match: [abcd^efghij]
starting match: [abcde^fghij]
starting match: [abcdef^ghij]
```

Dynamic Operators for the Replacement Expression

The three types of dynamic expressions discussed above can be used only in the match expression (second input) argument of the regular expression functions. MATLAB provides one more type of dynamic expression; this one is for use in a replacement string (third input) argument of the `regexprep` function.

Dynamic Commands That Modify the Replacement Expression — `${cmd}`.

The `${cmd}` operator modifies the contents of a regular expression replacement string, making this string adaptable to parameters in the input string that might vary from one use to the next. As with the other dynamic expressions used in MATLAB, you can include any number of these expressions within the overall replacement expression.

In the `regexprep` call shown here, the replacement string is `'${convert($1,$2)}'`. In this case, the entire replacement string is a dynamic expression:

```
regexprep('This highway is 125 miles long', ...
          '(\d+\.?\d*)\W(\w+)', '${convert($1,$2)}')
```

The dynamic expression tells MATLAB to execute a function named `convert` using the two tokens `(\d+\.?\d*)` and `(\w+)`, derived from the string being

matched, as input arguments in the call to `convert`. The replacement string requires a dynamic expression because the values of `$1` and `$2` are generated at runtime.

The following example defines the file named `convert` that converts measurements from imperial units to metric. To convert values from the string being parsed, `regexprep` calls the `convert` function, passing in values for the quantity to be converted and name of the imperial unit:

```
function valout = convert(valin, units)
switch(units)
    case 'inches'
        fun = @(in)in .* 2.54;    uout = 'centimeters';
    case 'miles'
        fun = @(mi)mi .* 1.6093; uout = 'kilometers';
    case 'pounds'
        fun = @(lb)lb .* 0.4536; uout = 'kilograms';
    case 'pints'
        fun = @(pt)pt .* 0.4731; uout = 'litres';
    case 'ounces'
        fun = @(oz)oz .* 28.35;  uout = 'grams';
end
val = fun(str2num(valin));
valout = [num2str(val) ' ' uout];
```

```
regexprep('This highway is 125 miles long', ...
          '(\d+\.? \d*)\W(\w+)', '${convert($1,$2)}')
ans =
    This highway is 201.1625 kilometers long
```

```
regexprep('This pitcher holds 2.5 pints of water', ...
          '(\d+\.? \d*)\W(\w+)', '${convert($1,$2)}')
ans =
    This pitcher holds 1.1828 litres of water
```

```
regexprep('This stone weighs about 10 pounds', ...
          '(\d+\.? \d*)\W(\w+)', '${convert($1,$2)}')
```

```
ans =
    This stone weighs about 4.536 kilograms
```

As with the (??@) operator discussed in an earlier section, the \${ } operator has access to variables in the currently active workspace. The following regexprep command uses the array A defined in the base workspace:

```
A = magic(3)
A =
     8     1     6
     3     5     7
     4     9     2

regexprep('The columns of matrix _nam are _val', ...
          {'_nam', '_val'}, ...
          {'A', '${sprintf('%d%d%d ', A)}'})
ans =
The columns of matrix A are 834 159 672
```

String Replacement

The regexprep function enables you to replace a string that is identified by a regular expression with another string. The following syntax replaces all occurrences of the regular expression `expr` in string `str` with the string `repstr`. The new string is returned in `s`. If no matches are found, return string `s` is the same as input string `str`.

```
s = regexprep('str', 'expr', 'repstr')
```

The replacement string can include any ordinary characters and also any of the operators shown in the following table.

Operator	Usage
Operators from the “Character Representation” on page 2-43 table	The character represented by the operator sequence
\$`	That part of the input string that precedes the current match

Operator	Usage
<code>\$&</code> or <code>\$0</code>	That part of the input string that is currently a match
<code>\$'</code>	That part of the input string that follows the current match. In MATLAB, use <code>\$'</code> to represent the character sequence <code>\$'</code>
<code>\$N</code>	The string represented by the token identified by the number <code>N</code>
<code>\$<name></code>	The string represented by the token identified by <code>name</code>
<code>\${cmd}</code>	The string returned when MATLAB executes the command <code>cmd</code>

You can capture parts of the input string as tokens and then reuse them in the replacement string. Specify the parts of the string to capture using the token capture operator (`.`). Specify the tokens to use in the replacement string using the operators `$1`, `$2`, `$N` to reference the first, second, and `N`th tokens captured. (See the section on “Tokens” on page 2-57 and the example “Using Tokens in a Replacement String” on page 2-62 in this documentation for information on using tokens.)

Note When referring to a token within a replacement string, use the number of the token preceded by a dollar sign. For example, refer to token 2 by using `$2`, and not `2` or `\2`.

The following example uses both the `${cmd}` and `$N` operators in the replacement strings of nested `regxprep` commands to capitalize the first letter of each sentence. The inner `regxprep` looks for the start of the entire string and capitalizes the single instance; the outer `regxprep` looks for the first letter following a period and capitalizes the two instances:

```
s1 = 'here are a few sentences.';
s2 = 'none are capitalized.';
s3 = 'let''s change that.';
```

```
str = [s1 ' ' s2 ' ' s3]

regexprep(regexprep(str, '^.', '${upper($1)}'), ...
    '(?<=\. \s*)([a-z])', '${upper($1)}')

ans =
Here are a few sentences. None are capitalized. Let's change that.
```

Make `regexprep` more specific to your needs by specifying any of a number of options with the command. See the `regexprep` reference page for more information on these options.

Handling Multiple Strings

You can use any of the MATLAB regular expression functions with cell arrays of strings as well as with single strings. Any or all of the input parameters (the string, expression, or replacement string) can be a cell array of strings. The `regexp` function requires that the string and expression arrays have the same number of elements. The `regexprep` function requires that the expression and replacement arrays have the same number of elements. (The cell arrays do not have to have the same shape.)

Whenever either input argument in a call to `regexp`, or the first input argument in a call to `regexprep` function is a cell array, all output values are cell arrays of the same size.

Function, Mode Options, Operator, Return Value Summaries

- “Function Summary” on page 2-78
- “Mode Options Summary” on page 2-78
- “Operator Summary” on page 2-79
- “Return Value Summary” on page 2-85

Function Summary

MATLAB Regular Expression Functions

Function	Description
regexp	Match regular expression.
regexpi	Match regular expression, ignoring case.
regexprep	Replace string using regular expression.
regexprtranslate	Translate string into regular expression.

Mode Options Summary

Mode Keyword	Flag	Description
'ignorecase'	(?i)	Do not consider letter case when matching patterns to a string (the default for regexpi).
'matchcase'	(?-i)	Letter case must match when matching patterns to a string (the default for regexp).
'noemptymatch'	N/A	Do not allow successful matches of length zero (the default).
'emptymatch'	N/A	Allow successful matches of length zero.
'dotall'	(?s)	Match dot ('.') in the pattern string with any character (the default).
'dotexceptnewline'	(?-s)	Match dot in the pattern with any character that is not a newline.
'lineanchors'	(?m)	Match the ^ and \$ metacharacters at the beginning and end of a line.
'stringanchors'	(?-m)	Match the ^ and \$ metacharacters at the beginning and end of a string (the default).

Mode Keyword	Flag	Description
'freespacing'	(?x)	Ignore spaces and comments when parsing the string. (You must use '\ ' and '\#' to match space and # characters.)
'literalspacing'	(?-x)	Parse space characters and comments (the # character and any text to the right of it) in the same way as any other characters in the string (the default).

Operator Summary

Character Types

Operator	Usage
.	Any single character, including white space
[c ₁ c ₂ c ₃]	Any character contained within the brackets: c ₁ or c ₂ or c ₃
[^c ₁ c ₂ c ₃]	Any character not contained within the brackets: anything but c ₁ or c ₂ or c ₃
[c ₁ -c ₂]	Any character in the range of c ₁ through c ₂
\s	Any white-space character; equivalent to [\f\n\r\t\v]
\S	Any nonwhitespace character; equivalent to [^\f\n\r\t\v]
\w	Any alphabetic, numeric, or underscore character (For English character sets, this is equivalent to [a-zA-Z_0-9].)
\W	Any character that is not alphabetic, numeric, or underscore (For English character sets, this is equivalent to [^a-zA-Z_0-9].)
\d	Any numeric digit; equivalent to [0-9]
\D	Any nondigit character; equivalent to [^0-9]

Character Types (Continued)

Operator	Usage
<code>\oN</code> or <code>\o{N}</code>	Character of octal value N
<code>\xN</code> or <code>\x{N}</code>	Character of hexadecimal value N

Character Representation

Operator	Usage
<code>\\</code>	Backslash
<code>\a</code>	Alarm (beep)
<code>\b</code>	Backspace
<code>\f</code>	Form feed
<code>\n</code>	New line
<code>\r</code>	Carriage return
<code>\t</code>	Horizontal tab
<code>\v</code>	Vertical tab
<code>\char</code>	If a character has special meaning in a regular expression, precede it with backslash (<code>\</code>) to match it literally.

Grouping Operators

Operator	Usage
<code>(expr)</code>	Group regular expressions and capture tokens.
<code>(?:expr)</code>	Group regular expressions, but do not capture tokens.
<code>(?>expr)</code>	Group atomically.
<code>expr₁ expr₂</code>	Match expression <code>expr₁</code> or expression <code>expr₂</code> .

Nonmatching Operators

Operator	Usage
(?#comment)	Insert a comment into the expression. Comments are ignored in matching.

Positional Operators

Operator	Usage
^expr	Match expr if it occurs at the beginning of the input string.
expr\$	Match expr if it occurs at the end of the input string.
\<expr	Match expr when it occurs at the beginning of a word.
expr\>	Match expr when it occurs at the end of a word.
\<expr\>	Match expr when it represents the entire word.

Lookaround Operators

Operator	Usage
(?=expr)	Look ahead from current position and test if expr is found.
(?!expr)	Look ahead from current position and test if expr is not found
(?<=expr)	Look behind from current position and test if expr is found.
(?<!expr)	Look behind from current position and test if expr is not found.

Quantifiers

Operator	Usage
<code>expr{m,n}</code>	Match <code>expr</code> when it occurs at least <code>m</code> times but no more than <code>n</code> times consecutively.
<code>expr{m,}</code>	Match <code>expr</code> when it occurs at least <code>m</code> times consecutively.
<code>expr{n}</code>	Match <code>expr</code> when it occurs exactly <code>n</code> times consecutively. Equivalent to <code>{n,n}</code> .
<code>expr?</code>	Match <code>expr</code> when it occurs 0 times or 1 time. Equivalent to <code>{0,1}</code> .
<code>expr*</code>	Match <code>expr</code> when it occurs 0 or more times consecutively. Equivalent to <code>{0,}</code> .
<code>expr+</code>	Match <code>expr</code> when it occurs 1 or more times consecutively. Equivalent to <code>{1,}</code> .
<code>q_expr</code>	Match as much of the quantified expression as possible, where <code>q_expr</code> represents any of the expressions shown in the first six rows of this table.
<code>q_expr+</code>	Match as much of the quantified expression as possible, but do not rescan any portions of the string if the initial match fails.
<code>q_expr?</code>	Match only as much of the quantified expression as necessary.

Ordinal Token Operators

Operator	Usage
<code>(expr)</code>	Capture in a token all characters matched by the expression within the parentheses.
<code>\N</code>	Match the <code>Nth</code> token generated by this command. That is, use <code>\1</code> to match the first token, <code>\2</code> to match the second, and so on.

Ordinal Token Operators (Continued)

Operator	Usage
\$N	Insert the match for the N th token in the replacement string. If N is equal to zero, then insert the entire match in the replacement string. (Used only by the <code>regexprep</code> function.)
(?(N)s1 s2)	If N th token is found, then match s1; otherwise, match s2.

Named Token Operators

Operator	Usage
(?<name>expr)	Capture in a token all characters matched by the expression within the parentheses. Assign a name value to the token.
\k<name>	Match the token referred to by name.
\$<name>	Insert the match for named token in a replacement string. (Used only with the <code>regexprep</code> function.)
(?(name)s1 s2)	If named token is found, then match s1; otherwise, match s2.

Conditional Expression Operators

Operator	Usage
(?(cond)expr)	If condition <code>cond</code> is true, then match expression <code>expr</code> .
(?(cond)expr ₁ expr ₂)	If condition <code>cond</code> is true, then match expression <code>expr₁</code> . Otherwise match expression <code>expr₂</code> .

Dynamic Expression Operators

Operator	Usage
(??expr)	Parse expr as a separate regular expression, and include the resulting string in the match expression. This gives you the same results as if you called <code>regxprep</code> inside of a <code>regexp</code> match expression.
(??@cmd)	Execute the MATLAB command represented by cmd, and include the string returned by the command in the match expression. This is a combination of the two dynamic syntaxes shown previously: (??expr) and (?@cmd).
(?@cmd)	Execute the MATLAB command represented by cmd and discard any output the command returns. (Helpful for diagnosing regular expressions).
\${cmd}	Execute the MATLAB command represented by cmd, and include the string returned by the command in the replacement expression.

Replacement String Operators

Operator	Usage
Operators from “Character Representation” on page 2-43 table	The character represented by the operator sequence
\$'	That part of the input string that precedes the current match
\$& or \$0	That part of the input string that is currently a match
\$'	That part of the input string that follows the current match (In MATLAB, use \$' ' to represent the character sequence \$'.)
\$N	The string represented by the token identified by name

Replacement String Operators (Continued)

Operator	Usage
<code>\$<name></code>	The string represented by the token identified by name
<code>\${cmd}</code>	The string returned when MATLAB executes the command <code>cmd</code>

Return Value Summary

Qualifier	Description	Default Order
start	Row vector containing the starting index of each substring of <code>str</code> that matches <code>expr</code>	1
end	Row vector containing the ending index of each substring of <code>str</code> that matches <code>expr</code>	2
tokenExtents	Cell array containing the starting and ending indices of each substring of <code>str</code> that matches a token in <code>expr</code> (This is a double array when used with 'once'.)	3
match	Cell array containing the text of each substring of <code>str</code> that matches <code>expr</code> (This is a string when used with 'once'.)	4
tokens	Cell array of cell arrays of strings containing the text of each token captured by <code>regexp</code> (This is a cell array of strings when used with 'once'.)	5
names	Structure array containing the name and text of each <i>named</i> token captured by <code>regexp</code> (If there are no named tokens in <code>expr</code> , <code>regexp</code> returns a structure array with no fields.) Field names of the returned structure are set to the token names, and field values are the text of those tokens. Named tokens are generated by the expression <code>(?<tokenname>)</code> .	6
split	Cell array containing those parts of the input string that are delimited by substrings returned when using the <code>regexp</code> 'match' option	7

Comma-Separated Lists

In this section...
“What Is a Comma-Separated List?” on page 2-86
“Generating a Comma-Separated List” on page 2-86
“Assigning Output from a Comma-Separated List” on page 2-88
“Assigning to a Comma-Separated List” on page 2-89
“How to Use the Comma-Separated Lists” on page 2-90
“Fast Fourier Transform Example” on page 2-92

What Is a Comma-Separated List?

Typing in a series of numbers separated by commas gives you what is called a *comma-separated list*. The MATLAB software returns each value individually:

```
1, 2, 3
ans =
    1
ans =
    2
ans =
    3
```

Such a list, by itself, is not very useful. But when used with large and more complex data structures like MATLAB structures and cell arrays, the comma-separated list can enable you to simplify your MATLAB code.

Generating a Comma-Separated List

This section describes how to generate a comma-separated list from either a cell array or a MATLAB structure.

Generating a List from a Cell Array

Extracting multiple elements from a cell array yields a comma-separated list. Given a 4-by-6 cell array as shown here


```
C = cell(4, 6);
for k = 1:24, C{k} = k * 2; end
```

```
C
C =
     [2]     [10]     [18]     [26]     [34]     [42]
     [4]     [12]     [20]     [28]     [36]     [44]
     [6]     [14]     [22]     [30]     [38]     [46]
     [8]     [16]     [24]     [32]     [40]     [48]
```

extracting the fifth column generates the following comma-separated list:

```
C{:, 5}
ans =
    34
ans =
    36
ans =
    38
ans =
    40
```

This is the same as explicitly typing

```
C{1, 5}, C{2, 5}, C{3, 5}, C{4, 5}
```

Generating a List from a Structure

For structures, extracting a field of the structure that exists across one of its dimensions yields a comma-separated list.

Start by converting the cell array used above into a 4-by-1 MATLAB structure with six fields: `f1` through `f6`. Read field `f5` for all rows and MATLAB returns a comma-separated list:

```
S = cell2struct(C, {'f1', 'f2', 'f3', 'f4', 'f5', 'f6'}, 2);

S.f5
ans =
    34
ans =
```

```
36
ans =
38
ans =
40
```

This is the same as explicitly typing

```
S(1).f5, S(2).f5, S(3).f5, S(4).f5
```

Assigning Output from a Comma-Separated List

You can assign any or all consecutive elements of a comma-separated list to variables with a simple assignment statement. Using the cell array `C` from the previous section, assign the first row to variables `c1` through `c6`:

```
C = cell(4, 6);
for k = 1:24, C{k} = k * 2; end

[c1 c2 c3 c4 c5 c6] = C{1,1:6};

c5
c5 =
34
```

If you specify fewer output variables than the number of outputs returned by the expression, MATLAB assigns the first `N` outputs to those `N` variables, and then discards any remaining outputs. In this next example, MATLAB assigns `C{1,1:3}` to the variables `c1`, `c2`, and `c3`, and then discards `C{1,4:6}`:

```
[c1 c2 c3] = C{1,1:6};
```

You can assign structure outputs in the same manner:

```
S = cell2struct(C, {'f1', 'f2', 'f3', 'f4', 'f5', 'f6'}, 2);

[sf1 sf2 sf3] = S.f5;

sf3
sf3 =
38
```

You also can use the `deal` function for this purpose.

Assigning to a Comma-Separated List

The simplest way to assign multiple values to a comma-separated list is to use the `deal` function. This function distributes all of its input arguments to the elements of a comma-separated list.

This example initializes a comma-separated list to a set of vectors in a cell array, and then uses `deal` to overwrite each element in the list:

```
c{1} = [31 07];    c{2} = [03 78];
```

```
c{:}
ans =
    31     7
ans =
     3    78
```

```
[c{:}] = deal([10 20],[14 12]);
```

```
c{:}
ans =
    10    20
ans =
    14    12
```

This example does the same as the one above, but with a comma-separated list of vectors in a structure field:

```
s(1).field1 = [31 07];    s(2).field1 = [03 78];
```

```
s.field1
ans =
    31     7
ans =
     3    78
```

```
[s.field1] = deal([10 20],[14 12]);
```

```
s.field1  
ans =  
    10    20  
ans =  
    14    12
```

How to Use the Comma-Separated Lists

Common uses for comma-separated lists are

- “Constructing Arrays” on page 2-90
- “Displaying Arrays” on page 2-91
- “Concatenation” on page 2-91
- “Function Call Arguments” on page 2-91
- “Function Return Values” on page 2-92

The following sections provide examples of using comma-separated lists with cell arrays. Each of these examples applies to MATLAB structures as well.

Constructing Arrays

You can use a comma-separated list to enter a series of elements when constructing a matrix or array. Note what happens when you insert a *list* of elements as opposed to adding the cell itself.

When you specify a list of elements with `C{: , 5}`, MATLAB inserts the four individual elements:

```
A = {'Hello', C{: , 5}, magic(4)}  
A =  
    'Hello'    [34]    [36]    [38]    [40]    [4x4 double]
```

When you specify the `C` cell itself, MATLAB inserts the entire cell array:

```
A = {'Hello', C, magic(4)}  
A =  
    'Hello'    {4x6 cell}    [4x4 double]
```

Displaying Arrays

Use a list to display all or part of a structure or cell array:

```
A{:}
ans =
    Hello
ans =
    34
ans =
    36
ans =
    38
.
.
.
```

Concatenation

Putting a comma-separated list inside square brackets extracts the specified elements from the list and concatenates them:

```
A = [C{:}, 5:6]
A =
    34    36    38    40    42    44    46    48

whos A
  Name      Size      Bytes  Class

  A         1x8         64   double array
```

Function Call Arguments

When writing the code for a function call, you enter the input arguments as a list with each argument separated by a comma. If you have these arguments stored in a structure or cell array, then you can generate all or part of the argument list from the structure or cell array instead. This can be especially useful when passing in variable numbers of arguments.

This example passes several attribute-value arguments to the `plot` function:

```
X = -pi:pi/10:pi;
Y = tan(sin(X)) - sin(tan(X));

C{1,1} = 'LineWidth';           C{2,1} = 2;
C{1,2} = 'MarkerEdgeColor';    C{2,2} = 'k';
C{1,3} = 'MarkerFaceColor';    C{2,3} = 'g';

plot(X, Y, '--rs', C{:})
```

Function Return Values

MATLAB functions can also return more than one value to the caller. These values are returned in a list with each value separated by a comma. Instead of listing each return value, you can use a comma-separated list with a structure or cell array. This becomes more useful for those functions that have variable numbers of return values.

This example returns three values to a cell array:

```
C = cell(1, 3);
[C{:}] = fileparts('work/mytests/strArrays.mat')
C =
    'work/mytests'    'strArrays'    '.mat'
```

Fast Fourier Transform Example

The `fftshift` function swaps the left and right halves of each dimension of an array. For a simple vector such as `[0 2 4 6 8 10]` the output would be `[6 8 10 0 2 4]`. For a multidimensional array, `fftshift` performs this swap along each dimension.

`fftshift` uses vectors of indices to perform the swap. For the vector shown above, the index `[1 2 3 4 5 6]` is rearranged to form a new index `[4 5 6 1 2 3]`. The function then uses this index vector to reposition the elements. For a multidimensional array, `fftshift` must construct an index vector for each dimension. A comma-separated list makes this task much simpler.

Here is the `fftshift` function:

```
function y = fftshift(x)
```

```

numDims = ndims(x);
idx = cell(1, numDims);

for k = 1:numDims
    m = size(x, k);
    p = ceil(m/2);
    idx{k} = [p+1:m 1:p];
end

y = x(idx{:});

```

The function stores the index vectors in cell array `idx`. Building this cell array is relatively simple. For each of the N dimensions, determine the size of that dimension and find the integer index nearest the midpoint. Then, construct a vector that swaps the two halves of that dimension.

By using a cell array to store the index vectors and a comma-separated list for the indexing operation, `fftshift` shifts arrays of any dimension using just a single operation: `y = x(idx{:})`. If you were to use explicit indexing, you would need to write one `if` statement for each dimension you want the function to handle:

```

if ndims(x) == 1
    y = x(index1);
else if ndims(x) == 2
    y = x(index1, index2);
end

```

Another way to handle this without a comma-separated list would be to loop over each dimension, converting one dimension at a time and moving data each time. With a comma-separated list, you move the data just once. A comma-separated list makes it very easy to generalize the swapping operation to an arbitrary number of dimensions.

Alternatives to the eval Function

In this section...
“Why Avoid the eval Function?” on page 2-94
“Variables with Sequential Names” on page 2-94
“Files with Sequential Names” on page 2-95
“Function Names in Variables” on page 2-96
“Field Names in Variables” on page 2-97
“Error Handling” on page 2-97

Why Avoid the eval Function?

Although the `eval` function is very powerful and flexible, it not always the best solution to a programming problem. Code that calls `eval` is often less efficient and more difficult to read and debug than code that uses other functions or language constructs. For example:

- MATLAB compiles code the first time you run it to enhance performance for future runs. However, because code in an `eval` statement can change at run time, it is not compiled.
- Code within an `eval` statement can unexpectedly create or assign to a variable already in the current workspace, overwriting existing data.
- Concatenating strings within an `eval` statement is often difficult to read. Other language constructs can simplify the syntax in your code.

For many common uses of `eval`, there are preferred alternate approaches, as shown in the following examples.

Variables with Sequential Names

A frequent use of the `eval` function is to create sets of variables such as `A1`, `A2`, . . . , `An`, but this approach does not use the array processing power of MATLAB and is not recommended. The preferred method is to store related data in a single array. If the data sets are of different types or sizes, use a structure or cell array.

For example, create a cell array that contains 10 elements, where each element is a numeric array:

```
numArrays = 10;
A = cell(numArrays,1);
for n = 1:numArrays
    A{n} = magic(n);
end
```

Access the data in the cell array by indexing with curly braces. For example, display the fifth element of A:

```
A{5}

ans =
    17    24     1     8    15
    23     5     7    14    16
     4     6    13    20    22
    10    12    19    21     3
    11    18    25     2     9
```

The assignment statement `A{n} = magic(n)` is more elegant and efficient than this call to `eval`:

```
eval(['A', int2str(n), ' = magic(n)']) % Not recommended
```

For more information, see:

- “Create a Cell Array” on page 8-3
- “Create a Structure Array” on page 7-2

Files with Sequential Names

Related data files often have a common root name with an integer index, such as `myfile1.mat` through `myfileN.mat`. A common (but not recommended) use of the `eval` function is to construct and pass each file name to a function using command syntax, such as

```
eval(['save myfile',int2str(n),'.mat']) % Not recommended
```

The best practice is to use function syntax, which allows you to pass variables as inputs. For example:

```
currentFile = 'myfile1.mat';  
save(currentFile)
```

You can construct file names within a loop using the `sprintf` function (which is usually more efficient than `int2str`), and then call the `save` function without `eval`. This code creates 10 files in the current folder:

```
numFiles = 10;  
for n = 1:numFiles  
    randomData = rand(n);  
    currentFile = sprintf('myfile%d.mat',n);  
    save(currentFile,'randomData')  
end
```

For more information, see:

- “Command vs. Function Syntax” on page 1-11
- “Process a Sequence of Files”

Function Names in Variables

A common use of `eval` is to execute a function when the name of the function is in a variable string. There are two ways to evaluate functions from variables that are more efficient than using `eval`:

- Create function handles with the `@` symbol or with the `str2func` function. For example, run a function from a list stored in a cell array:

```
examples = {@odedemo,@sunspots,@fitdemo};  
n = input('Select an example (1, 2, or 3): ');  
examples{n}()
```

- Use the `feval` function. For example, call a plot function (such as `plot`, `bar`, or `pie`) with data that you specify at run time:

```
plotFunction = input('Specify a plotting function: ','s');  
data = input('Enter data to plot: ');  
feval(plotFunction,data)
```

Field Names in Variables

Access data in a structure with a variable field name by enclosing the expression for the field in parentheses. For example:

```
myData.height = [67, 72, 58];
myData.weight = [140, 205, 90];

fieldName = input('Select data (height or weight): ', 's');
dataToUse = myData.(fieldName);
```

If you enter `weight` at the input prompt, then you can find the minimum `weight` value with the following command.

```
min(dataToUse)
```

```
ans =
     90
```

For an additional example, see “Generate Field Names from Variables” on page 7-11.

Error Handling

The preferred method for error handling in MATLAB is to use a `try/catch` statement. For example:

```
try
    B = A;
catch exception
    disp('A is undefined')
end
```

If your workspace does not contain variable `A`, then this code returns:

```
A is undefined
```

Previous versions of the documentation for the `eval` function include the syntax `eval(expression, catch_expr)`. If evaluating the `expression` input returns an error, then `eval` evaluates `catch_expr`. However, an explicit `try/catch` is significantly clearer than an implicit catch in an `eval` statement. Using the implicit catch is not recommended.

Shell Escape Functions

It is sometimes useful to access your own C or Fortran programs using *shell escape functions*. Shell escape functions use the shell escape command `!` to make external stand-alone programs act like new MATLAB functions. A shell escape function

- 1** Saves the appropriate variables on disk.
- 2** Runs an external program (which reads the data file, processes the data, and writes the results back out to disk).
- 3** Loads the processed file back into the workspace.

For example, look at the code for `garfield.m`, below. This function uses an external function, `gareqn`, to find the solution to Garfield's equation.

```
function y = garfield(a,b,q,r)
save gardata a b q r
!gareqn
load gardata
```

This file

- 1** Saves the input arguments `a`, `b`, `q`, and `r` to a MAT-file in the workspace using the `save` command.
- 2** Uses the shell escape operator to access a C or Fortran program called `gareqn` that uses the workspace variables to perform its computation. `gareqn` writes its results to the `gardata` MAT-file.
- 3** Loads the `gardata` MAT-file described in “Writing Custom Applications to Read and Write MAT-Files” to obtain the results.

Symbol Reference

In this section...
“Asterisk — *” on page 2-99
“At — @” on page 2-100
“Colon — :” on page 2-101
“Comma — ,” on page 2-102
“Curly Braces — { }” on page 2-103
“Dot — .” on page 2-103
“Dot-Dot — ..” on page 2-104
“Dot-Dot-Dot (Ellipsis) — ...” on page 2-104
“Dot-Parentheses — .()” on page 2-105
“Exclamation Point — !” on page 2-106
“Parentheses — ()” on page 2-106
“Percent — %” on page 2-107
“Percent-Brace — %{ %}” on page 2-107
“Plus — +” on page 2-108
“Semicolon — ;” on page 2-108
“Single Quotes — ’ ” on page 2-109
“Space Character” on page 2-109
“Slash and Backslash — / \” on page 2-110
“Square Brackets — []” on page 2-110
“Tilde — ~” on page 2-111

Asterisk — *

An asterisk in a filename specification is used as a wildcard specifier, as described below.

Filename Wildcard

Wildcards are generally used in file operations that act on multiple files or folders. They usually appear in the string containing the file or folder specification. MATLAB matches all characters in the name exactly except for the wildcard character *, which can match any one or more characters.

To locate all files with names that start with 'january_' and have a mat file extension, use

```
dir('january_*.mat')
```

You can also use wildcards with the `who` and `whos` functions. To get information on all variables with names starting with 'image' and ending with 'Offset', use

```
whos image*Offset
```

At — @

The @ sign signifies either a function handle constructor or a folder that supports a MATLAB class.

Function Handle Constructor

The @ operator forms a handle to either the named function that follows the @ sign, or to the anonymous function that follows the @ sign.

Function Handles in General. Function handles are commonly used in passing functions as arguments to other functions. Construct a function handle by preceding the function name with an @ sign:

```
fhandle = @myfun
```

For more information, see `function_handle`.

Handles to Anonymous Functions. Anonymous functions give you a quick means of creating simple functions without having to create your function in a file each time. You can construct an anonymous function and a handle to that function using the syntax

```
fhandle = @(arglist) body
```

where `body` defines the body of the function and `arglist` is the list of arguments you can pass to the function.

See “Anonymous Functions” on page 15-23 for more information.

Class Folder Designator

An @ sign can indicate the name of a class folder, such as

```
\@myclass\get.m
```

See the documentation on “Options for Class Folders” for more information.

Colon — :

The colon operator generates a sequence of numbers that you can use in creating or indexing into arrays. See “Generating a Numeric Sequence” for more information on using the colon operator.

Numeric Sequence Range

Generate a sequential series of regularly spaced numbers from `first` to `last` using the syntax `first:last`. For an incremental sequence from 6 to 17, use

```
N = 6:17
```

Numeric Sequence Step

Generate a sequential series of numbers, each number separated by a `step` value, using the syntax `first:step:last`. For a sequence from 2 through 38, stepping by 4 between each entry, use

```
N = 2:4:38
```

Indexing Range Specifier

Index into multiple rows or columns of a matrix using the colon operator to specify a range of indices:

```
B = A(7, 1:5);           % Read columns 1-5 of row 7.  
B = A(4:2:8, 1:5);     % Read columns 1-5 of rows 4, 6, and 8.  
B = A(:, 1:5);        % Read columns 1-5 of all rows.
```

Conversion to Column Vector

Convert a matrix or array to a column vector using the colon operator as a single index:

```
A = rand(3,4);  
B = A(:);
```

Preserving Array Shape on Assignment

Using the colon operator on the left side of an assignment statement, you can assign new values to array elements without changing the shape of the array:

```
A = rand(3,4);  
A(:) = 1:12;
```

Comma — ,

A comma is used to separate the following types of elements.

Row Element Separator

When constructing an array, use a comma to separate elements that belong in the same row:

```
A = [5.92, 8.13, 3.53]
```

Array Index Separator

When indexing into an array, use a comma to separate the indices into each dimension:

```
X = A(2, 7, 4)
```


Function Input and Output Separator

When calling a function, use a comma to separate output and input arguments:

```
function [data, text] = xlsread(file, sheet, range, mode)
```

Command or Statement Separator

To enter more than one MATLAB command or statement on the same line, separate each command or statement with a comma:

```
for k = 1:10, sum(A(k)), end
```

Curly Braces — { }

Use curly braces to construct or get the contents of cell arrays.

Cell Array Constructor

To construct a cell array, enclose all elements of the array in curly braces:

```
C = {[2.6 4.7 3.9], rand(8)*6, 'C. Coolidge'}
```

Cell Array Indexing

Index to a specific cell array element by enclosing all indices in curly braces:

```
A = C{4,7,2}
```

For more information, see “Cell Arrays”

Dot — .

The single dot operator has the following different uses in MATLAB.

Decimal Point

MATLAB uses a period to separate the integral and fractional parts of a number.

Structure Field Definition

Add fields to a MATLAB structure by following the structure name with a dot and then a field name:

```
funds(5,2).bondtype = 'Corporate';
```

For more information, see “Structures”

Object Method Specifier

Specify the properties of an instance of a MATLAB class using the object name followed by a dot, and then the property name:

```
val = asset.current_value
```

Dot-Dot — ..

Two dots in sequence refer to the parent of the current folder.

Parent Folder

Specify the folder immediately above your current folder using two dots. For example, to go up two levels in the folder tree and down into the `test` folder, use

```
cd ..\..\test
```

Dot-Dot-Dot (Ellipsis) — ...

A series of three consecutive periods (`...`) is the line continuation operator in MATLAB. This is often referred to as an *ellipsis*, but it should be noted that the line continuation operator is a three-character operator and is different from the single-character ellipsis represented in ASCII by the hexadecimal number 2026.

Line Continuation

Continue any MATLAB command or expression by placing an ellipsis at the end of the line to be continued:

```
sprintf('The current value of %s is %d', ...  
       vname, value)
```

Entering Long Strings. You cannot use an ellipsis within single quotes to continue a string to the next line:

```
string = 'This is not allowed and will generate an ...
        error in MATLAB.'
```

To enter a string that extends beyond a single line, piece together shorter strings using either the concatenation operator ([]) or the `sprintf` function.

Here are two examples:

```
quote1 = [
    'Tiger, tiger, burning bright in the forests of the night,' ...
    'what immortal hand or eye could frame thy fearful symmetry?'];
quote2 = sprintf('%s%s%s', ...
    'In Xanadu did Kubla Khan a stately pleasure-dome decree,', ...
    'where Alph, the sacred river, ran ', ...
    'through caverns measureless to man down to a sunless sea.');
```

Defining Arrays. MATLAB interprets the ellipsis as a space character. For statements that define arrays or cell arrays within [] or { } operators, a space character separates array elements. For example,

```
not_valid = [1 2 zeros...
(1,3)]
```

is equivalent to

```
not_valid = [1 2 zeros (1,3)]
```

which returns an error. Place the ellipses so that the interpreted statement is valid, such as

```
valid = [1 2 ...
        zeros(1,3)]
```

Dot-Parentheses — .()

Use dot-parentheses to specify the name of a dynamic structure field.

Dynamic Structure Fields

Sometimes it is useful to reference structures with field names that can vary. For example, the referenced field might be passed as an argument to a function. Dynamic field names specify a variable name for a structure field.

The variable `fundtype` shown here is a dynamic field name:

```
type = funds(5,2).(fundtype);
```

See “Generate Field Names from Variables” on page 7-11 for more information.

Exclamation Point – !

The exclamation point precedes operating system commands that you want to execute from within MATLAB.

Shell Escape

The exclamation point initiates a shell escape function. Such a function is to be performed directly by the operating system:

```
!rmdir oldtests
```

See “Shell Escape Functions” on page 2-98 for more information.

Parentheses – ()

Parentheses are used mostly for indexing into elements of an array or for specifying arguments passed to a called function. Parenthesis also control the order of operations, and can group a vector visually (such as `x = (1:10)`) without calling a concatenation function.

Array Indexing

When parentheses appear to the right of a variable name, they are indices into the array stored in that variable:

```
A(2, 7, 4)
```

Function Input Arguments

When parentheses follow a function name in a function declaration or call, the enclosed list contains input arguments used by the function:

```
function sendmail(to, subject, message, attachments)
```

Percent — %

The percent sign is most commonly used to indicate nonexecutable text within the body of a program. This text is normally used to include comments in your code. Two percent signs, `%%`, serve as a cell delimiter described in “Run Code Sections” on page 14-6. Some functions also interpret the percent sign as a conversion specifier.

Single Line Comments

Precede any one-line comments in your code with a percent sign. MATLAB does not execute anything that follows a percent sign (that is, unless the sign is quoted, `'%'`):

```
% The purpose of this routine is to compute  
% the value of ...
```

See “Add Comments to Programs” on page 14-4 for more information.

Conversion Specifiers

Some functions, like `sscanf` and `sprintf`, precede conversion specifiers with the percent sign:

```
sprintf('%s = %d', name, value)
```

Percent-Brace — %{ %}

The `%{` and `%}` symbols enclose a block of comments that extend beyond one line.

Block Comments

Enclose any multiline comments with percent followed by an opening or closing brace.

```
%{  
The purpose of this routine is to compute  
the value of ...  
%}
```

Note With the exception of whitespace characters, the %{ and %} operators must appear alone on the lines that immediately precede and follow the block of help text. Do not include any other text on these lines.

Plus — +

The + sign appears most frequently as an arithmetic operator, but is also used to designate the names of package folders. For more information, see “Packages Create Namespaces”.

Semicolon — ;

The semicolon can be used to construct arrays, suppress output from a MATLAB command, or to separate commands entered on the same line.

Array Row Separator

When used within square brackets to create a new array or concatenate existing arrays, the semicolon creates a new row in the array:

```
A = [5, 8; 3, 4]  
A =  
     5     8  
     3     4
```

Output Suppression

When placed at the end of a command, the semicolon tells MATLAB not to display any output from that command. In this example, MATLAB does not display the resulting 100-by-100 matrix:

```
A = ones(100, 100);
```

Command or Statement Separator

Like the comma operator, you can enter more than one MATLAB command on a line by separating each command with a semicolon. MATLAB suppresses output for those commands terminated with a semicolon, and displays the output for commands terminated with a comma.

In this example, assignments to variables **A** and **C** are terminated with a semicolon, and thus do not display. Because the assignment to **B** is comma-terminated, the output of this one command is displayed:

```
A = 12.5; B = 42.7, C = 1.25;  
B =  
    42.7000
```

Single Quotes – ' '

Single quotes are the constructor symbol for MATLAB character arrays.

Character and String Constructor

MATLAB constructs a character array from all characters enclosed in single quotes. If only one character is in quotes, then MATLAB constructs a 1-by-1 array:

```
S = 'Hello World'
```

For more information, see “Characters and Strings”

Space Character

The space character serves a purpose similar to the comma in that it can be used to separate row elements in an array constructor, or the values returned by a function.

Row Element Separator

You have the option of using either commas or spaces to delimit the row elements of an array when constructing the array. To create a 1-by-3 array, use

```
A = [5.92 8.13 3.53]
```

```
A =  
    5.9200    8.1300    3.5300
```

When indexing into an array, you must always use commas to reference each dimension of the array.

Function Output Separator

Spaces are allowed when specifying a list of values to be returned by a function. You can use spaces to separate return values in both function declarations and function calls:

```
function [data text] = xlsread(file, sheet, range, mode)
```

Slash and Backslash – / \

The slash (/) and backslash (\) characters separate the elements of a path or folder string. On Microsoft Windows-based systems, both slash and backslash have the same effect. On The Open Group UNIX-based systems, you must use slash only.

On a Windows system, you can use either backslash or slash:

```
dir([matlabroot '\toolbox\matlab\elmat\shiftdim.m'])  
dir([matlabroot '/toolbox/matlab/elmat/shiftdim.m'])
```

On a UNIX system, use only the forward slash:

```
dir([matlabroot '/toolbox/matlab/elmat/shiftdim.m'])
```

Square Brackets – []

Square brackets are used in array construction and concatenation, and also in declaring and capturing values returned by a function.

Array Constructor

To construct a matrix or array, enclose all elements of the array in square brackets:

```
A = [5.7, 9.8, 7.3; 9.2, 4.5, 6.4]
```


Concatenation

To combine two or more arrays into a new array through concatenation, enclose all array elements in square brackets:

```
A = [B, eye(6), diag([0:2:10])]
```

Function Declarations and Calls

When declaring or calling a function that returns more than one output, enclose each return value that you need in square brackets:

```
[data, text] = xlsread(file, sheet, range, mode)
```

Tilde — ~

The tilde character is used in comparing arrays for unequal values, finding the logical NOT of an array, and as a placeholder for an input or output argument you want to omit from a function call.

Not Equal to

To test for inequality values of elements in arrays `a` and `b` for inequality, use `a~=b`:

```
a = primes(29);    b = [2 4 6 7 11 13 20 22 23 29];
not_prime = b(a~=b)
not_prime =
     4     6    20    22
```

Logical NOT

To find those elements of an array that are zero, use:

```
a = [35 42 0 18 0 0 0 16 34 0];
~a
ans =
     0     0     1     0     1     1     1     0     0     1
```

Argument Placeholder

To have the `fileparts` function return its third output value and skip the first two, replace arguments one and two with a tilde character:

```
[~, ~, filenameExt] = fileparts(fileSpec);
```

See “Ignore Function Outputs” on page 1-7 in the MATLAB Programming documentation for more information.

Classes (Data Types)

- Chapter 3, “Overview of MATLAB Classes”
- Chapter 4, “Numeric Classes”
- Chapter 5, “The Logical Class”
- Chapter 6, “Characters and Strings”
- Chapter 7, “Structures”
- Chapter 8, “Cell Arrays”
- Chapter 9, “Function Handles”
- Chapter 10, “Map Containers”
- Chapter 11, “Combining Unlike Classes”
- Chapter 12, “Using Objects”
- Chapter 13, “Defining Your Own Classes”

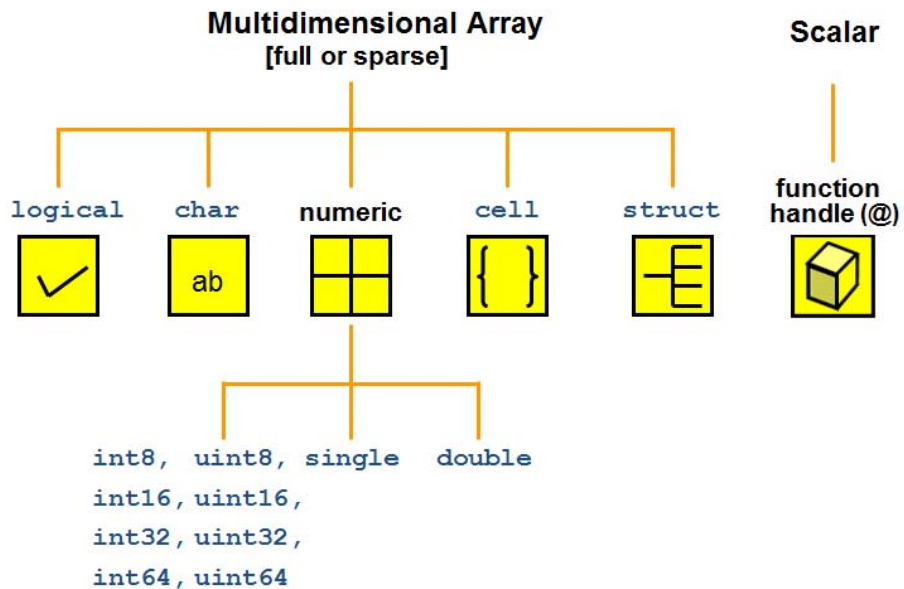
Overview of MATLAB Classes

Fundamental MATLAB Classes

There are many different data types, or *classes*, that you can work with in the MATLAB software. You can build matrices and arrays of floating-point and integer data, characters and strings, and logical `true` and `false` states. Function handles connect your code with any MATLAB function regardless of the current scope. Structures and cell arrays, provide a way to store dissimilar types of data in the same array.

There are 15 fundamental classes in MATLAB. Each of these classes is in the form of a matrix or array. With the exception of function handles, this matrix or array is a minimum of 0-by-0 in size and can grow to an n-dimensional array of any size. A function handle is always scalar (1-by-1).

All of the fundamental MATLAB classes are shown in the diagram below:



Numeric classes in the MATLAB software include signed and unsigned integers, and single- and double-precision floating-point numbers. By default, MATLAB stores all numeric values as double-precision floating

point. (You cannot change the default type and precision.) You can choose to store any number, or array of numbers, as integers or as single-precision. Integer and single-precision arrays offer more memory-efficient storage than double-precision.

All numeric types support basic array operations, such as subscripting, reshaping, and mathematical operations.

You can create two-dimensional `double` and `logical` matrices using one of two storage formats: `full` or `sparse`. For matrices with mostly zero-valued elements, a sparse matrix requires a fraction of the storage space required for an equivalent full matrix. Sparse matrices invoke methods especially tailored to solve sparse problems

These classes require different amounts of storage, the smallest being a `logical` value or 8-bit integer which requires only 1 byte. It is important to keep this minimum size in mind if you work on data in files that were written using a precision smaller than 8 bits.

The following table describes the fundamental classes in more detail.

Class Name	Documentation	Intended Use
<code>double</code> , <code>single</code>	Floating-Point Numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required for fractional numeric data. • Double and Single precision. • Use <code>realmin</code> and <code>realmax</code> to show range of values. • Two-dimensional arrays can be sparse. • Default numeric type in MATLAB.
<code>int8</code> , <code>uint8</code> , <code>int16</code> , <code>uint16</code> , <code>int32</code> ,	Integers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use for signed and unsigned whole numbers. • More efficient use of memory. • Use <code>intmin</code> and <code>intmax</code> to show range of values.

Class Name	Documentation	Intended Use
uint32, int64, uint64		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Choose from 4 sizes (8, 16, 32, and 64 bits).
char	“Characters and Strings”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Required for text.• Native or unicode.• Converts to/from numeric.• Use with regular expressions.• For multiple strings, use cell arrays.
logical	“Logical Operations”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use in relational conditions or to test state.• Can have one of two values: <code>true</code> or <code>false</code>.• Also useful in array indexing.• Two-dimensional arrays can be sparse.
function_handle	“Function Handles”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pointer to a function.• Enables passing a function to another function• Can also call functions outside usual scope.• Useful in Handle Graphics callbacks.• Save to MAT-file and restore later.

Class Name	Documentation	Intended Use
struct	“Structures”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fields store arrays of varying classes and sizes. • Access multiple fields/indices in single operation. • Field names identify contents. • Simple method of passing function arguments. • Use in comma-separated lists for efficiency. • More memory required for overhead
cell	“Cell Arrays”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cells store arrays of varying classes and sizes. • Allows freedom to package data as you want. • Manipulation of elements is similar to arrays. • Simple method of passing function arguments. • Use in comma-separated lists for efficiency. • More memory required for overhead

Concepts

- “Valid Combinations of Unlike Classes” on page 11-2

Numeric Classes

- “Overview of Numeric Classes” on page 4-2
- “Integers” on page 4-3
- “Floating-Point Numbers” on page 4-7
- “Complex Numbers” on page 4-18
- “Infinity and NaN” on page 4-20
- “Identifying Numeric Classes” on page 4-22
- “Display Format for Numeric Values” on page 4-23
- “Function Summary” on page 4-26

Overview of Numeric Classes

Numeric classes in the MATLAB software include signed and unsigned integers, and single- and double-precision floating-point numbers. By default, MATLAB stores all numeric values as double-precision floating point. (You cannot change the default type and precision.) You can choose to store any number, or array of numbers, as integers or as single-precision. Integer and single-precision arrays offer more memory-efficient storage than double-precision.

All numeric types support basic array operations, such as subscripting, reshaping, and mathematical operations.

Integers

In this section...

“Integer Classes” on page 4-3

“Creating Integer Data” on page 4-4

“Arithmetic Operations on Integer Classes” on page 4-5

“Largest and Smallest Values for Integer Classes” on page 4-6

“Integer Functions” on page 4-6

Integer Classes

MATLAB has four signed and four unsigned integer classes. Signed types enable you to work with negative integers as well as positive, but cannot represent as wide a range of numbers as the unsigned types because one bit is used to designate a positive or negative sign for the number. Unsigned types give you a wider range of numbers, but these numbers can only be zero or positive.

MATLAB supports 1-, 2-, 4-, and 8-byte storage for integer data. You can save memory and execution time for your programs if you use the smallest integer type that accommodates your data. For example, you do not need a 32-bit integer to store the value 100.

Here are the eight integer classes, the range of values you can store with each type, and the MATLAB conversion function required to create that type:

Class	Range of Values	Conversion Function
Signed 8-bit integer	-2^7 to 2^7-1	int8
Signed 16-bit integer	-2^{15} to $2^{15}-1$	int16
Signed 32-bit integer	-2^{31} to $2^{31}-1$	int32
Signed 64-bit integer	-2^{63} to $2^{63}-1$	int64
Unsigned 8-bit integer	0 to 2^8-1	uint8
Unsigned 16-bit integer	0 to $2^{16}-1$	uint16

Class	Range of Values	Conversion Function
Unsigned 32-bit integer	0 to $2^{32}-1$	uint32
Unsigned 64-bit integer	0 to $2^{64}-1$	uint64

Creating Integer Data

MATLAB stores numeric data as double-precision floating point (`double`) by default. To store data as an integer, you need to convert from `double` to the desired integer type. Use one of the conversion functions shown in the table above.

For example, to store 325 as a 16-bit signed integer assigned to variable `x`, type

```
x = int16(325);
```

If the number being converted to an integer has a fractional part, MATLAB rounds to the nearest integer. If the fractional part is exactly 0.5, then from the two equally nearby integers, MATLAB chooses the one for which the absolute value is larger in magnitude:

```
x = 325.499;          x = x + .001;

int16(x)              int16(x)
ans =                 ans =
    325                326
```

If you need to round a number using a rounding scheme other than the default, MATLAB provides four rounding functions: `round`, `fix`, `floor`, and `ceil`. The `fix` function enables you to override the default and round *towards zero* when there is a nonzero fractional part:

```
x = 325.9;

int16(fix(x))
ans =
    325
```

Arithmetic operations that involve both integers and floating-point always result in an integer data type. MATLAB rounds the result, when necessary,

according to the default rounding algorithm. The example below yields an exact answer of 1426.75 which MATLAB then rounds to the next highest integer:

```
int16(325) * 4.39
ans =
    1427
```

The integer conversion functions are also useful when converting other classes, such as strings, to integers:

```
str = 'Hello World';

int8(str)
ans =
    72  101  108  108  111  32  87  111  114  108  100
```

Arithmetic Operations on Integer Classes

MATLAB can perform integer arithmetic on the following types of data:

- Integers or integer arrays of the same integer data type. This yields a result that has the same data type as the operands:

```
x = uint32([132 347 528]) .* uint32(75);
class(x)
ans =
    uint32
```

- Integers or integer arrays and scalar double-precision floating-point numbers. This yields a result that has the same data type as the integer operands:

```
x = uint32([132 347 528]) .* 75.49;
class(x)
ans =
    uint32
```

For all binary operations in which one operand is an array of integer data type (except 64-bit integers) and the other is a scalar double, MATLAB computes the operation using elementwise double-precision arithmetic, and then converts the result back to the original integer data type. For binary

operations involving a 64-bit integer array and a scalar double, MATLAB computes the operation as if 80-bit extended-precision arithmetic were used, to prevent loss of precision.

For a list of the operations that support integer classes, see Nondouble Data Type Support in the arithmetic operators reference page.

Largest and Smallest Values for Integer Classes

For each integer data type, there is a largest and smallest number that you can represent with that type. The table shown under “Integers” on page 4-3 lists the largest and smallest values for each integer data type in the “Range of Values” column.

You can also obtain these values with the `intmax` and `intmin` functions:

```
intmax('int8')           intmin('int8')
ans =                    ans =
    127                   -128
```

If you convert a number that is larger than the maximum value of an integer data type to that type, MATLAB sets it to the maximum value. Similarly, if you convert a number that is smaller than the minimum value of the integer data type, MATLAB sets it to the minimum value. For example,

```
x = int8(300)           x = int8(-300)
x =                     x =
    127                   -128
```

Also, when the result of an arithmetic operation involving integers exceeds the maximum (or minimum) value of the data type, MATLAB sets it to the maximum (or minimum) value:

```
x = int8(100) * 3       x = int8(-100) * 3
x =                     x =
    127                   -128
```

Integer Functions

See Integer Functions on page 4-26 for a list of functions most commonly used with integers in MATLAB.

Floating-Point Numbers

In this section...

“Double-Precision Floating Point” on page 4-7

“Single-Precision Floating Point” on page 4-8

“Creating Floating-Point Data” on page 4-8

“Arithmetic Operations on Floating-Point Numbers” on page 4-10

“Largest and Smallest Values for Floating-Point Classes” on page 4-11

“Accuracy of Floating-Point Data” on page 4-12

“Avoiding Common Problems with Floating-Point Arithmetic” on page 4-14

“Floating-Point Functions” on page 4-16

“References” on page 4-16

MATLAB represents floating-point numbers in either double-precision or single-precision format. The default is double precision, but you can make any number single precision with a simple conversion function.

Double-Precision Floating Point

MATLAB constructs the double-precision (or `double`) data type according to IEEE® Standard 754 for double precision. Any value stored as a `double` requires 64 bits, formatted as shown in the table below:

Bits	Usage
63	Sign (0 = positive, 1 = negative)
62 to 52	Exponent, biased by 1023
51 to 0	Fraction <code>f</code> of the number <code>1.f</code>

Single-Precision Floating Point

MATLAB constructs the single-precision (or `single`) data type according to IEEE Standard 754 for single precision. Any value stored as a `single` requires 32 bits, formatted as shown in the table below:

Bits	Usage
31	Sign (0 = positive, 1 = negative)
30 to 23	Exponent, biased by 127
22 to 0	Fraction f of the number $1.f$

Because MATLAB stores numbers of type `single` using 32 bits, they require less memory than numbers of type `double`, which use 64 bits. However, because they are stored with fewer bits, numbers of type `single` are represented to less precision than numbers of type `double`.

Creating Floating-Point Data

Use double-precision to store values greater than approximately 3.4×10^{38} or less than approximately -3.4×10^{38} . For numbers that lie between these two limits, you can use either double- or single-precision, but single requires less memory.

Creating Double-Precision Data

Because the default numeric type for MATLAB is `double`, you can create a `double` with a simple assignment statement:

```
x = 25.783;
```

The `whos` function shows that MATLAB has created a 1-by-1 array of type `double` for the value you just stored in `x`:

```
whos x
  Name      Size      Bytes  Class
  x         1x1         8      double
```

Use `isfloat` if you just want to verify that `x` is a floating-point number. This function returns logical 1 (true) if the input is a floating-point number, and logical 0 (false) otherwise:

```
isfloat(x)
ans =
     1
```

You can convert other numeric data, characters or strings, and logical data to double precision using the MATLAB function, `double`. This example converts a signed integer to double-precision floating point:

```
y = int64(-589324077574);           % Create a 64-bit integer

x = double(y)                       % Convert to double
x =
    -5.8932e+11
```

Creating Single-Precision Data

Because MATLAB stores numeric data as a `double` by default, you need to use the `single` conversion function to create a single-precision number:

```
x = single(25.783);
```

The `whos` function returns the attributes of variable `x` in a structure. The `bytes` field of this structure shows that when `x` is stored as a single, it requires just 4 bytes compared with the 8 bytes to store it as a `double`:

```
xAttrib = whos('x');
xAttrib.bytes
ans =
     4
```

You can convert other numeric data, characters or strings, and logical data to single precision using the `single` function. This example converts a signed integer to single-precision floating point:

```
y = int64(-589324077574);           % Create a 64-bit integer

x = single(y)                       % Convert to single
```

```
x =  
-5.8932e+11
```

Arithmetic Operations on Floating-Point Numbers

This section describes which classes you can use in arithmetic operations with floating-point numbers.

Double-Precision Operations

You can perform basic arithmetic operations with `double` and any of the following other classes. When one or more operands is an integer (scalar or array), the `double` operand must be a scalar. The result is of type `double`, except where noted otherwise:

- `single` — The result is of type `single`
- `double`
- `int*` or `uint*` — The result has the same data type as the integer operand
- `char`
- `logical`

This example performs arithmetic on data of types `char` and `double`. The result is of type `double`:

```
c = 'uppercase' - 32;
```

```
class(c)  
ans =  
    double
```

```
char(c)  
ans =  
    UPPERCASE
```

Single-Precision Operations

You can perform basic arithmetic operations with `single` and any of the following other classes. The result is always `single`:

- single
- double
- char
- logical

In this example, 7.5 defaults to type double, and the result is of type single:

```
x = single([1.32 3.47 5.28]) .* 7.5;

class(x)
ans =
    single
```

Largest and Smallest Values for Floating-Point Classes

For the double and single classes, there is a largest and smallest number that you can represent with that type.

Largest and Smallest Double-Precision Values

The MATLAB functions `realmax` and `realmin` return the maximum and minimum values that you can represent with the double data type:

```
str = 'The range for double is:\n\t%g to %g and\n\t %g to %g';
sprintf(str, -realmax, -realmin, realmin, realmax)

ans =
The range for double is:
-1.79769e+308 to -2.22507e-308 and
 2.22507e-308 to 1.79769e+308
```

Numbers larger than `realmax` or smaller than `-realmax` are assigned the values of positive and negative infinity, respectively:

```
realmax + .0001e+308
ans =
    Inf

-realmax - .0001e+308
```

```
ans =  
    -Inf
```

Largest and Smallest Single-Precision Values

The MATLAB functions `realmax` and `realmin`, when called with the argument `'single'`, return the maximum and minimum values that you can represent with the `single` data type:

```
str = 'The range for single is:\n\t%g to %g and\n\t %g to %g';  
sprintf(str, -realmax('single'), -realmin('single'), ...  
        realmin('single'), realmax('single'))
```

```
ans =  
The range for single is:  
-3.40282e+38 to -1.17549e-38 and  
 1.17549e-38 to  3.40282e+38
```

Numbers larger than `realmax('single')` or smaller than `-realmax('single')` are assigned the values of positive and negative infinity, respectively:

```
realmax('single') + .0001e+038  
ans =  
    Inf  
  
-realmax('single') - .0001e+038  
ans =  
   -Inf
```

Accuracy of Floating-Point Data

If the result of a floating-point arithmetic computation is not as precise as you had expected, it is likely caused by the limitations of your computer's hardware. Probably, your result was a little less exact because the hardware had insufficient bits to represent the result with perfect accuracy; therefore, it truncated the resulting value.

Double-Precision Accuracy

Because there are only a finite number of double-precision numbers, you cannot represent all numbers in double-precision storage. On any computer, there is a small gap between each double-precision number and the next larger double-precision number. You can determine the size of this gap, which limits the precision of your results, using the `eps` function. For example, to find the distance between 5 and the next larger double-precision number, enter

```
format long

eps(5)
ans =
    8.881784197001252e-16
```

This tells you that there are no double-precision numbers between 5 and $5 + \text{eps}(5)$. If a double-precision computation returns the answer 5, the result is only accurate to within $\text{eps}(5)$.

The value of $\text{eps}(x)$ depends on x . This example shows that, as x gets larger, so does $\text{eps}(x)$:

```
eps(50)
ans =
    7.105427357601002e-15
```

If you enter `eps` with no input argument, MATLAB returns the value of $\text{eps}(1)$, the distance from 1 to the next larger double-precision number.

Single-Precision Accuracy

Similarly, there are gaps between any two single-precision numbers. If x has type `single`, $\text{eps}(x)$ returns the distance between x and the next larger single-precision number. For example,

```
x = single(5);
eps(x)

returns

ans =
    4.7684e-07
```

Note that this result is larger than `eps(5)`. Because there are fewer single-precision numbers than double-precision numbers, the gaps between the single-precision numbers are larger than the gaps between double-precision numbers. This means that results in single-precision arithmetic are less precise than in double-precision arithmetic.

For a number `x` of type `double`, `eps(single(x))` gives you an upper bound for the amount that `x` is rounded when you convert it from `double` to `single`. For example, when you convert the double-precision number `3.14` to `single`, it is rounded by

```
double(single(3.14) - 3.14)
ans =
    1.0490e-07
```

The amount that `3.14` is rounded is less than

```
eps(single(3.14))
ans =
    2.3842e-07
```

Avoiding Common Problems with Floating-Point Arithmetic

Almost all operations in MATLAB are performed in double-precision arithmetic conforming to the IEEE standard 754. Because computers only represent numbers to a finite precision (double precision calls for 52 mantissa bits), computations sometimes yield mathematically nonintuitive results. It is important to note that these results are not bugs in MATLAB.

Use the following examples to help you identify these cases:

Example 1 — Round-Off or What You Get Is Not What You Expect

The decimal number $4/3$ is not exactly representable as a binary fraction. For this reason, the following calculation does not give zero, but rather reveals the quantity `eps`.

```
e = 1 - 3*(4/3 - 1)
```



```
e =  
    2.2204e-16
```

Similarly, 0.1 is not exactly representable as a binary number. Thus, you get the following nonintuitive behavior:

```
a = 0.0;  
for i = 1:10  
    a = a + 0.1;  
end  
a == 1
```

```
ans =  
    0
```

Note that the order of operations can matter in the computation:

```
b = 1e-16 + 1 - 1e-16;  
c = 1e-16 - 1e-16 + 1;  
b == c
```

```
ans =  
    0
```

There are gaps between floating-point numbers. As the numbers get larger, so do the gaps, as evidenced by:

```
(2^53 + 1) - 2^53
```

```
ans =  
    0
```

Since π is not really π , it is not surprising that $\sin(\pi)$ is not exactly zero:

```
sin(pi)
```

```
ans =  
    1.224646799147353e-16
```

Example 2 – Catastrophic Cancellation

When subtractions are performed with nearly equal operands, sometimes cancellation can occur unexpectedly. The following is an example of a cancellation caused by swamping (loss of precision that makes the addition insignificant).

```
sqrt(1e-16 + 1) - 1
```

```
ans =  
    0
```

Some functions in MATLAB, such as `expm1` and `log1p`, may be used to compensate for the effects of catastrophic cancellation.

Example 3 – Floating-Point Operations and Linear Algebra

Round-off, cancellation, and other traits of floating-point arithmetic combine to produce startling computations when solving the problems of linear algebra. MATLAB warns that the following matrix `A` is ill-conditioned, and therefore the system $Ax = b$ may be sensitive to small perturbations:

```
A = diag([2 eps]);  
b = [2; eps];  
y = A\b;  
Warning: Matrix is close to singular or badly scaled.  
Results may be inaccurate. RCOND = 1.110223e-16.
```

These are only a few of the examples showing how IEEE floating-point arithmetic affects computations in MATLAB. Note that all computations performed in IEEE 754 arithmetic are affected, this includes applications written in C or FORTRAN, as well as MATLAB.

Floating-Point Functions

See [Floating-Point Functions](#) on page 4-27 for a list of functions most commonly used with floating-point numbers in MATLAB.

References

The following references provide more information about floating-point arithmetic.

References

- [1] Moler, Cleve, "Floating Points," *MATLAB News and Notes*, Fall, 1996. A PDF version is available on the MathWorks Web site at http://www.mathworks.com/company/newsletters/news_notes/pdf/Fall96Cleve.pdf
- [2] Moler, Cleve, *Numerical Computing with MATLAB*, S.I.A.M. A PDF version is available on the MathWorks Web site at <http://www.mathworks.com/moler/>.

Complex Numbers

In this section...

“Creating Complex Numbers” on page 4-18

“Complex Number Functions” on page 4-19

Creating Complex Numbers

Complex numbers consist of two separate parts: a real part and an imaginary part. The basic imaginary unit is equal to the square root of -1. This is represented in MATLAB by either of two letters: `i` or `j`.

The following statement shows one way of creating a complex value in MATLAB. The variable `x` is assigned a complex number with a real part of 2 and an imaginary part of 3:

```
x = 2 + 3i;
```

Another way to create a complex number is using the `complex` function. This function combines two numeric inputs into a complex output, making the first input real and the second imaginary:

```
x = rand(3) * 5;
y = rand(3) * -8;
```

```
z = complex(x, y)
```

```
z =
    4.7842 -1.0921i    0.8648 -1.5931i    1.2616 -2.2753i
    2.6130 -0.0941i    4.8987 -2.3898i    4.3787 -3.7538i
    4.4007 -7.1512i    1.3572 -5.2915i    3.6865 -0.5182i
```

You can separate a complex number into its real and imaginary parts using the `real` and `imag` functions:

```
zr = real(z)
zr =
    4.7842    0.8648    1.2616
    2.6130    4.8987    4.3787
    4.4007    1.3572    3.6865
```

```
zi = imag(z)
zi =
  -1.0921   -1.5931   -2.2753
  -0.0941   -2.3898   -3.7538
  -7.1512   -5.2915   -0.5182
```

Complex Number Functions

See Complex Number Functions on page 4-27 for a list of functions most commonly used with MATLAB complex numbers in MATLAB.

Infinity and NaN

In this section...

“Infinity” on page 4-20

“NaN” on page 4-20

“Infinity and NaN Functions” on page 4-21

Infinity

MATLAB represents infinity by the special value `inf`. Infinity results from operations like division by zero and overflow, which lead to results too large to represent as conventional floating-point values. MATLAB also provides a function called `inf` that returns the IEEE arithmetic representation for positive infinity as a `double` scalar value.

Several examples of statements that return positive or negative infinity in MATLAB are shown here.

<code>x = 1/0</code> <code>x =</code> <code>Inf</code>	<code>x = 1.e1000</code> <code>x =</code> <code>Inf</code>
<code>x = exp(1000)</code> <code>x =</code> <code>Inf</code>	<code>x = log(0)</code> <code>x =</code> <code>-Inf</code>

Use the `isinf` function to verify that `x` is positive or negative infinity:

```
x = log(0);
```

```
isinf(x)
ans =
     1
```

NaN

MATLAB represents values that are not real or complex numbers with a special value called NaN, which stands for Not a Number. Expressions like `0/0` and `inf/inf` result in NaN, as do any arithmetic operations involving a NaN:

```
x = 0/0
x =
    NaN
```

Use the `isnan` function to verify that the real part of `x` is NaN:

```
isnan(x)
ans =
     1
```

MATLAB also provides a function called `NaN` that returns the IEEE arithmetic representation for NaN as a `double` scalar value:

```
x = NaN;

whos x
      Name      Size      Bytes  Class
      x          1x1          8    double
```

Logical Operations on NaN

Because two NaNs are not equal to each other, logical operations involving NaN always return false, except for a test for inequality, (`NaN ~= NaN`):

```
NaN > NaN
ans =
     0
```

```
NaN ~= NaN
ans =
     1
```

Infinity and NaN Functions

See [Infinity and NaN Functions](#) on page 4-28 for a list of functions most commonly used with `inf` and `NaN` in MATLAB.

Identifying Numeric Classes

You can check the data type of a variable `x` using any of these commands.

Command	Operation
<code>whos x</code>	Display the data type of <code>x</code> .
<code>xType = class(x);</code>	Assign the data type of <code>x</code> to a variable.
<code>isnumeric(x)</code>	Determine if <code>x</code> is a numeric type.
<code>isa(x, 'integer')</code> <code>isa(x, 'uint64')</code> <code>isa(x, 'float')</code> <code>isa(x, 'double')</code> <code>isa(x, 'single')</code>	Determine if <code>x</code> is the specified numeric type. (Examples for any integer, unsigned 64-bit integer, any floating point, double precision, and single precision are shown here).
<code>isreal(x)</code>	Determine if <code>x</code> is real or complex.
<code>isnan(x)</code>	Determine if <code>x</code> is Not a Number (NaN).
<code>isinf(x)</code>	Determine if <code>x</code> is infinite.
<code>isfinite(x)</code>	Determine if <code>x</code> is finite.

Display Format for Numeric Values

In this section...

“Default Display” on page 4-23

“Display Format Examples” on page 4-23

“Setting Numeric Format in a Program” on page 4-24

Default Display

By default, MATLAB displays numeric output as 5-digit scaled, fixed-point values. You can change the way numeric values are displayed to any of the following:

- 5-digit scaled fixed point, floating point, or the best of the two
- 15-digit scaled fixed point, floating point, or the best of the two
- A ratio of small integers
- Hexadecimal (base 16)
- Bank notation

All available formats are listed on the format reference page.

To change the numeric display setting, use either the `format` function or the **Preferences** dialog box (accessible from the MATLAB **File** menu). The `format` function changes the display of numeric values for the duration of a single MATLAB session, while your Preferences settings remain active from one session to the next. These settings affect only how numbers are displayed, not how MATLAB computes or saves them.

Display Format Examples

Here are a few examples of the various formats and the output produced from the following two-element vector `x`, with components of different magnitudes.

Check the current format setting:

```
get(0, 'format')
```

```
ans =  
short
```

Set the value for x and display in 5-digit scaled fixed point:

```
x = [4/3 1.2345e-6]  
x =  
1.3333    0.0000
```

Set the format to 5-digit floating point:

```
format short e  
x  
x =  
1.3333e+00    1.2345e-06
```

Set the format to 15-digit scaled fixed point:

```
format long  
x  
x =  
1.333333333333333    0.000001234500000
```

Set the format to 'rational' for small integer ratio output:

```
format rational  
x  
x =  
4/3          1/810045
```

Set an integer value for x and display it in hexadecimal (base 16) format:

```
format hex  
x = uint32(876543210)  
x =  
343efcea
```

Setting Numeric Format in a Program

To temporarily change the numeric format inside a program, get the original format using the `get` function and save it in a variable. When you finish

working with the new format, you can restore the original format setting using the `set` function as shown here:

```
origFormat = get(0, 'format');  
format('rational');  
  
-- Work in rational format --  
  
set(0,'format', origFormat);
```

Function Summary

MATLAB provides these functions for working with numeric classes:

- Integer Functions on page 4-26
- Floating-Point Functions on page 4-27
- Complex Number Functions on page 4-27
- Infinity and NaN Functions on page 4-28
- Class Identification Functions on page 4-28
- Output Formatting Functions on page 4-28

Integer Functions

Function	Description
int8, int16, int32, int64	Convert to signed 1-, 2-, 4-, or 8-byte integer.
uint8, uint16, uint32, uint64	Convert to unsigned 1-, 2-, 4-, or 8-byte integer.
ceil	Round towards plus infinity to nearest integer
class	Return the data type of an object.
fix	Round towards zero to nearest integer
floor	Round towards minus infinity to nearest integer
isa	Determine if input value has the specified data type.
isinteger	Determine if input value is an integer array.
isnumeric	Determine if input value is a numeric array.
round	Round towards the nearest integer

Floating-Point Functions

Function	Description
double	Convert to double precision.
single	Convert to single precision.
class	Return the data type of an object.
isa	Determine if input value has the specified data type.
isfloat	Determine if input value is a floating-point array.
isnumeric	Determine if input value is a numeric array.
eps	Return the floating-point relative accuracy. This value is the tolerance MATLAB uses in its calculations.
realmax	Return the largest floating-point number your computer can represent.
realmin	Return the smallest floating-point number your computer can represent.

Complex Number Functions

Function	Description
complex	Construct complex data from real and imaginary components.
i or j	Return the imaginary unit used in constructing complex data.
real	Return the real part of a complex number.
imag	Return the imaginary part of a complex number.
isreal	Determine if a number is real or imaginary.

Infinity and NaN Functions

Function	Description
inf	Return the IEEE value for infinity.
isnan	Detect NaN elements of an array.
isinf	Detect infinite elements of an array.
isfinite	Detect finite elements of an array.
nan	Return the IEEE value for Not a Number.

Class Identification Functions

Function	Description
class	Return data type (or class).
isa	Determine if input value is of the specified data type.
isfloat	Determine if input value is a floating-point array.
isinteger	Determine if input value is an integer array.
isnumeric	Determine if input value is a numeric array.
isreal	Determine if input value is real.
whos	Display the data type of input.

Output Formatting Functions

Function	Description
format	Control display format for output.

The Logical Class

- “Overview of the Logical Class” on page 5-2
- “Identifying Logical Arrays” on page 5-4
- “Functions that Return a Logical Result” on page 5-6
- “Using Logical Arrays in Conditional Statements” on page 5-9
- “Using Logical Arrays in Indexing” on page 5-10

Overview of the Logical Class

The logical data type represents a logical true or false state using the numbers 1 and 0, respectively. Certain MATLAB functions and operators return logical true or false to indicate whether a certain condition was found to be true or not. For example, the statement `50>40` returns a logical true value.

Logical data does not have to be scalar; MATLAB supports arrays of logical values as well. For example, the following statement returns a vector of logicals indicating false for the first two elements and true for the last three:

```
[30 40 50 60 70] > 40
ans =
     0     0     1     1     1
```

This statement returns a 4-by-4 array of logical values:

```
x = magic(4) >= 9
x =
     1     0     0     1
     0     1     1     0
     1     0     0     1
     0     1     1     0
```

The MATLAB functions that have names beginning with `is` (e.g., `ischar`, `issparse`) also return a logical value or array:

```
a = [2.5 6.7 9.2 inf 4.8];
isfinite(a)
ans =
     1     1     1     0     1
```

Logical arrays can also be sparse as long as they have no more than two dimensions:

```
x = sparse(magic(20) > 395)
x =
 (1,1)      1
 (1,4)      1
```


(1,5)	1
(20,18)	1
(20,19)	1

Identifying Logical Arrays

In this section...

“Function Summary” on page 5-4

“Examples of Identifying Logical Arrays” on page 5-4

Function Summary

This table shows the commands you can use to determine whether or not an array `x` is logical. The last function listed, `cellfun`, operates on cell arrays.

Command	Operation
<code>whos(x)</code>	Display value and data type for <code>x</code> .
<code>islogical(x)</code>	Return true if array is logical.
<code>isa(x, 'logical')</code>	Return true if array is logical.
<code>class(x)</code>	Return string with data type name.
<code>cellfun('islogical', x)</code>	Check each cell array element for logical.

Examples of Identifying Logical Arrays

Create a 3-by-6 array of logicals and use the `whos` function to identify the size, byte count, and class (i.e., data type) of the array.

```
A = gallery('uniformdata',[3,6],0) > .5
```

```
A =
```

```

     1     0     0     0     1     0
     0     1     0     1     1     1
     1     1     1     1     0     1

```

```
whos A
```

```

Name          Size          Bytes  Class          Attributes

A              3x6              18  logical

```

Find the class of each of these expressions:

```
B = logical(-2.8); C = false; D = 50>40; E = isinteger(4.9);
```

```
whos B C D E
```

Name	Size	Bytes	Class	Attributes
B	1x1	1	logical	
C	1x1	1	logical	
D	1x1	1	logical	
E	1x1	1	logical	

Display the class of A:

```
A = gallery('uniformdata',[3,6],0) > .5;  
fprintf('A is a %s\n', class(A));
```

```
A is a logical
```

Create cell array C and use `islogical` to identify the logical elements:

```
C = {1, 0, true, false, pi, A};  
cellfun('islogical', C)  
ans =  
    0     0     1     1     0     1
```

Functions that Return a Logical Result

In this section...
“Overview” on page 5-6
“Examples of Functions that Return a Logical Result” on page 5-6

Overview

This table shows some of the MATLAB operations that return a logical true or false. Most mathematics operations are not supported on logical values.

Function	Operation
true, false	Setting value to true or false
logical	Numeric to logical conversion
& (and), (or), ~ (not), xor, any, all	Logical operations
&&,	Short-circuit AND and OR
== (eq), ~= (ne), < (lt), > (gt), <= (le), >= (ge)	Relational operations
All is* functions, cellfun	Test operations
strcmp, strncmp, strcmpi, strncmpi	String comparisons

Examples of Functions that Return a Logical Result

MATLAB functions that test the state of a variable or expression return a logical result:

```
A = isstrprop('abc123def', 'alpha')
A =
     1     1     1     0     0     0     1     1     1
```

Logical functions such as xor return a logical result:

```
xor([1 0 'ab' 2.4], [ 0 0 'ab', 0])
ans =
     1     0     0     1
```

Note however that the bitwise operators do not return a logical:

```
X = bitxor(3, 12);
whos X
  Name      Size      Bytes  Class  Attributes
  X         1x1         8      double
```

String comparison functions also return a logical:

```
S = 'D:\matlab\mfiles\test19.m';
strncmp(S, 'D:\matlab', 9)
ans =
     1
```

Note the difference between the elementwise and short-circuit logical operators. Short-circuit operators, such as `&&` and `||`, test only as much of the input expression as necessary. In the second part of this example, it makes no difference that `B` is undefined because the state of `A` alone determines that the expression is false:

```
A = 0;
A & B
Undefined function or variable 'B'.

A && B
ans =
     0
```

One way of implementing an infinite loop is to use the `while` function along with the logical constant `true`:

```
while true
a = []; b = [];
a = input('Enter username: ', 's');

    if ~isempty(a)
        b = input('Enter password: ', 's');
    end

    if ~isempty(b)
```

```
        disp 'Attempting to log in to account ...'  
        break  
    end  
end
```

Using Logical Arrays in Conditional Statements

Conditional statements are useful when you want to execute a block of code only when a certain condition is met. For example, the `sprintf` command shown below is valid only if `str` is a nonempty string:

```
str = input('Enter input string: ', 's');  
if ~isempty(str) && ischar(str)  
    sprintf('Input string is ''%s''', str)  
end
```

Now run the code:

```
Enter input string: Hello  
ans =  
    Input string is 'Hello'
```

Using Logical Arrays in Indexing

A logical matrix provides a different type of array indexing in MATLAB. While most indices are numeric, indicating a certain row or column number, logical indices are positional. That is, it is the *position* of each 1 in the logical matrix that determines which array element is being referred to.

See “Using Logicals in Array Indexing” for more information on this subject.

Characters and Strings

- “Creating Character Arrays” on page 6-2
- “Cell Arrays of Strings” on page 6-7
- “Formatting Strings” on page 6-10
- “String Comparisons” on page 6-25
- “Searching and Replacing” on page 6-28
- “Converting from Numeric to String” on page 6-30
- “Converting from String to Numeric” on page 6-32
- “Function Summary” on page 6-35

Creating Character Arrays

In this section...

“Creating a Character String” on page 6-2

“Creating a Rectangular Character Array” on page 6-3

“Identifying Characters in a String” on page 6-4

“Working with Space Characters” on page 6-5

“Expanding Character Arrays” on page 6-6

Creating a Character String

Create a string by enclosing a sequence of letters in single quotation marks, such as

```
myString = 'Hello, world';
```

If the text contains a single quotation mark, include two quotation marks within the string definition.

```
otherString = 'You''re right';
```

In the MATLAB computing environment, all variables are arrays, and strings are of type `char` (character arrays).

```
whos myString
```

Name	Size	Bytes	Class	Attributes
myString	1x12	24	char	

Functions such as `uint16` convert characters to their numeric codes:

```
str_numeric = uint16(str)
```

```
str_numeric =
    72  101  108  108  111
```

The `char` function converts the integer vector back to characters:

```
str_alpha = char([72 101 108 108 111])
```

```
str_alpha =
    Hello
```

Creating a Rectangular Character Array

You can join two or more strings together to create a new character array. This is called *concatenation* and is explained for numeric arrays in the section “Concatenating Matrices”. As with numeric arrays, you can combine character arrays vertically or horizontally to create a new character array.

Alternatively, combine strings into a cell array. Cell arrays are flexible containers that allow you to easily combine strings of varying length.

Combining Strings Vertically

To combine strings into a two-dimensional character array, use either of these methods:

- Apply the MATLAB concatenation operator, `[]`. Separate each row with a semicolon (`;`). Each row must contain the same number of characters. For example, combine three strings of equal length:

```
dev_title = ['Thomas R. Lee'; ...
            'Sr. Developer'; ...
            'SFTware Corp.'];
```

If the strings have different lengths, pad with space characters as needed. For example:

```
mgr_title = ['Harold A. Jorgensen      '; ...
            'Assistant Project Manager'; ...
            'SFTware Corp.              '];
```

- Call the `char` function. If the strings are different length, `char` pads the shorter strings with trailing blanks so that each row has the same number of characters. For example, combine three strings of different lengths:

```
mgr_title = char('Harold A. Jorgensen', ...
                'Assistant Project Manager', 'SFTware Corp.');
```

The `char` function creates a 3-by-25 character array `mgr_title`.

Combining Strings Horizontally

To combine strings into a single row vector, use either of these methods:

- Apply the MATLAB concatenation operator, `[]`. Separate the input strings with a comma or a space. This method preserves any trailing spaces in the input arrays. For example, combine several strings:

```
name = 'Thomas R. Lee';  
title = 'Sr. Developer';  
company = 'SFTware Corp.';  
  
full_name = [name ' ', ' title ', ' company]
```

MATLAB returns

```
full_name =  
    Thomas R. Lee, Sr. Developer, SFTware Corp.
```

- Call the string concatenation function, `strcat`. This method removes trailing spaces in the inputs. For example, combine strings to create a hypothetical email address:

```
name = 'myname  ';  
domain = 'mydomain  ';  
ext = 'com  ';  
  
address = strcat(name, '@', domain, '.', ext)
```

MATLAB returns

```
address =  
    myname@mydomain.com
```

Identifying Characters in a String

Use any of the following functions to identify a character or string, or certain characters in a string:

Function	Description
<code>ischar</code>	Determine whether the input is a character array.
<code>isletter</code>	Find all alphabetic letters in the input string.
<code>isspace</code>	Find all space characters in the input string.
<code>isstrprop</code>	Find all characters of a specific category.

```
str = 'Find the space characters in this string';
%           |   |   |           |   |   |
%           5   9   15           26 29   34

find(isspace(str))
ans =
     5     9    15    26    29    34
```

Working with Space Characters

The `blanks` function creates a string of space characters. The following example creates a string of 15 space characters:

```
s = blanks(15)
s =
```

To make the example more useful, append a `'|'` character to the beginning and end of the blank string so that you can see the output:

```
[ '|' s '|' ]           % Make result visible.
ans =
 |               |
```

Insert a few nonspace characters in the middle of the blank string:

```
s(6:10) = 'AAAAA';

[ '|' s '|' ]           % Make result visible.
ans =
 |     AAAAA     |
```

You can justify the positioning of these characters to the left or right using the `strjust` function:

```
sLeft = strjust(s, 'left');

['|' sLeft '|']          % Make result visible.
ans =
    |AAAAA              |

sRight = strjust(s, 'right');

['|' sRight '|']        % Make result visible.
ans =
    |              AAAAA|
```

Remove all trailing space characters with `deblank`:

```
sDeblank = deblank(s);

['|' sDeblank '|']      % Make result visible.
ans =
    |      AAAAA|
```

Remove all leading and trailing spaces with `strtrim`:

```
sTrim = strtrim(s);

['|' sTrim '|']         % Make result visible.
ans =
    |AAAAA|
```

Expanding Character Arrays

Generally, MathWorks does not recommend expanding the size of an existing character array by assigning additional characters to indices beyond the bounds of the array such that part of the array becomes padded with zeros.

Cell Arrays of Strings

In this section...

“Converting to a Cell Array of Strings” on page 6-7

“Functions for Cell Arrays of Strings” on page 6-8

Converting to a Cell Array of Strings

Creating strings in a regular MATLAB array requires that all strings in the array be of the same length. This often means that you have to pad blanks at the end of strings to equalize their length. However, another type of MATLAB array, the cell array, can hold different sizes and types of data in an array without padding. Cell arrays provide a more flexible way to store strings of varying length.

The `cellstr` function converts a character array into a cell array of strings. Consider this character array:

```
data = ['Allison Jones'; 'Development   '; 'Phoenix       '];
```

Each row of the matrix is padded so that all have equal length (in this case, 13 characters).

Now use `cellstr` to create a column vector of cells, each cell containing one of the strings from the `data` array:

```
celldata = cellstr(data)
celldata =
    'Allison Jones'
    'Development '
    'Phoenix '
```

Note that the `cellstr` function strips off the blanks that pad the rows of the input string matrix:

```
length(celldata{3})
ans =
    7
```

The `iscellstr` function determines if the input argument is a cell array of strings. It returns a logical 1 (`true`) in the case of `celldata`:

```
iscellstr(celldata)
ans =
     1
```

Use `char` to convert back to a standard padded character array:

```
strings = char(celldata)
strings =
    Allison Jones
    Development
    Phoenix
```

```
length(strings(3,:))
ans =
    13
```

For more information on cell arrays, see “Access Data in a Cell Array” on page 8-5.

Functions for Cell Arrays of Strings

This table describes the MATLAB functions for working with cell arrays.

Function	Description
<code>cellstr</code>	Convert a character array to a cell array of strings.
<code>char</code>	Convert a cell array of strings to a character array.
<code>deblank</code>	Remove trailing blanks from a string.
<code>iscellstr</code>	Return <code>true</code> for a cell array of strings.
<code>sort</code>	Sort elements in ascending or descending order.
<code>strcat</code>	Concatenate strings.
<code>strcmp</code>	Compare strings.

You can also use the following `set` functions with cell arrays of strings.

Function	Description
<code>intersect</code>	Set the intersection of two vectors.
<code>ismember</code>	Detect members of a set.
<code>setdiff</code>	Return the set difference of two vectors.
<code>setxor</code>	Set the exclusive OR of two vectors.
<code>union</code>	Set the union of two vectors.
<code>unique</code>	Set the unique elements of a vector.

Formatting Strings

In this section...
“Functions that Use Format Strings” on page 6-10
“The Format String” on page 6-11
“Input Value Arguments” on page 6-12
“The Formatting Operator” on page 6-13
“Constructing the Formatting Operator” on page 6-14
“Setting Field Width and Precision” on page 6-20
“Restrictions for Using Identifiers” on page 6-23

Functions that Use Format Strings

The following MATLAB functions offer the capability to compose a string that includes ordinary text and data formatted to your specification:

- `fprintf` — Write formatted data to an output string
- `fprintf` — Write formatted data to an output file or the Command Window
- `warning` — Display formatted data in a warning message
- `error` — Display formatted data in an error message and abort
- `assert` — Generate an error when a condition is violated
- `MException` — Capture error information

The syntax of each of these functions includes formatting operators similar to those used by the `printf` function in the C programming language. For example, `%s` tells MATLAB to interpret an input value as a string, and `%d` means to format an integer using decimal notation.

The general formatting syntax for these functions is

```
functionname(..., format_string, value1, value2, ..., valueN)
```

where the `format_string` argument expresses the basic content and formatting of the final output string, and the `value` arguments that follow supply data values to be inserted into the string.

Here is a sample `sprintf` statement, also showing the resulting output string:

```
sprintf('The price of %s on %d/%d/%d was $%.2f.', ...
        'bread', 7, 1, 2006, 2.49)
ans =
    The price of bread on 7/1/2006 was $2.49.
```

Note The examples in this section of the documentation use only the `sprintf` function to demonstrate how string formatting works. However, you can run the examples using the `fprintf`, `warning`, and `error` functions as well.

The Format String

The first input argument in the `sprintf` statement shown above is the `format_string`:

```
'The price of %s on %d/%d/%d was $%.2f.'
```

This argument can include ordinary text, formatting operators and, in some cases, special characters. The formatting operators for this particular string are: `%s`, `%d`, `%d`, `%d`, and `%.2f`.

Following the `format_string` argument are five additional input arguments, one for each of the formatting operators in the string:

```
'bread', 7, 1, 2006, 2.49
```

When MATLAB processes the format string, it replaces each operator with one of these input values.

Special Characters

Special characters are a part of the text in the string. But, because they cannot be entered as ordinary text, they require a unique character sequence to represent them. Use any of the following character sequences to insert special characters into the output string.

To Insert a . . .	Use . . .
Single quotation mark	' '
Percent character	%
Backslash	\\
Alarm	\a
Backspace	\b
Form feed	\f
New line	\n
Carriage return	\r
Horizontal tab	\t
Vertical tab	\v
Hexadecimal number, N	\xN
Octal number, N	\N

Input Value Arguments

In the syntax

```
functionname(..., format_string, value1, value2, ..., valueN)
```

The value arguments must immediately follow `format_string` in the argument list. In most instances, you supply one of these value arguments for each formatting operator used in the `format_string`. Scalars, vectors, and numeric and character arrays are valid value arguments. You cannot use cell arrays or structures.

If you include fewer formatting operators than there are values to insert, MATLAB reuses the operators on the additional values. This example shows two formatting operators and six values to insert into the string:

```
sprintf('%s = %d\n', 'A', 479, 'B', 352, 'C', 651)
ans =
    A = 479
    B = 352
    C = 651
```

You can also specify multiple value arguments as a vector or matrix. The `format_string` needs one `%s` operator for the entire matrix or vector:

```
mvec = [77 65 84 76 65 66];

sprintf('%s ', char(mvec))
ans =
    MATLAB
```

Sequential and Numbered Argument Specification

You can place value arguments in the argument list either sequentially (that is, in the same order in which their formatting operators appear in the string), or by identifier (adding a number to each operator that identifies which value argument to replace it with). By default, MATLAB uses sequential ordering.

To specify arguments by a numeric identifier, add a positive integer followed by a `$` sign immediately after the `%` sign in the operator. Numbered argument specification is explained in more detail under the topic “Value Identifiers” on page 6-20.

Ordered Sequentially	Ordered By Identifier
<pre>sprintf('%s %s %s', ... '1st', '2nd', '3rd') ans = 1st 2nd 3rd</pre>	<pre>sprintf('%3\$s %2\$s %1\$s', ... '1st', '2nd', '3rd') ans = 3rd 2nd 1st</pre>

The Formatting Operator

Formatting operators tell MATLAB how to format the numeric or character value arguments and where to insert them into the string. These operators control the notation, alignment, significant digits, field width, and other aspects of the output string.

A formatting operator begins with a `%` character, which may be followed by a series of one or more numbers, characters, or symbols, each playing a role in further defining the format of the insertion value. The final entry in this series is a single *conversion character* that MATLAB uses to define the notation

style for the inserted data. Conversion characters used in MATLAB are based on those used by the `printf` function in the C programming language.

Here is a simple example showing five formatting variations for a common value:

```
A = pi*100*ones(1,5);

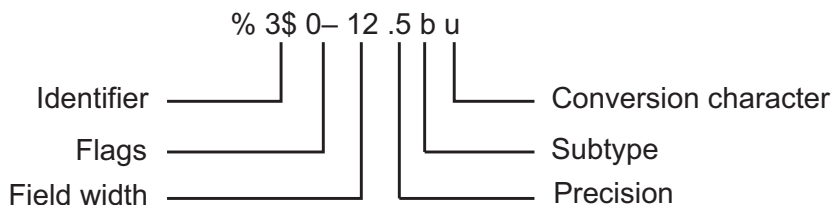
sprintf(' %f \n %.2f \n %+.2f \n %12.2f \n %012.2f \n', A)
ans =
    314.159265      % Display in fixed-point notation (%f)
    314.16         % Display 2 decimal digits (%.2f)
   +314.16        % Display + for positive numbers (%+.2f)
           314.16  % Set width to 12 characters (%12.2f)
000000314.16    % Replace leading spaces with 0 (%012.2f)
```

Constructing the Formatting Operator

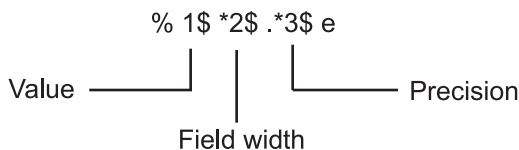
The fields that make up a formatting operator in MATLAB are as shown here, in the order they appear from right to left in the operator. The rightmost field, the conversion character, is required; the five to the left of that are optional. Each of these fields is explained in a section below:

- Conversion Character — Specifies the notation of the output.
- Subtype — Further specifies any nonstandard types.
- Precision — Sets the number of digits to display to the right of the decimal point, or the number of significant digits to display.
- Field Width — Sets the minimum number of digits to display.
- Flags — Controls the alignment, padding, and inclusion of plus or minus signs.
- Value Identifiers — Map formatting operators to value input arguments. Use the identifier field when value arguments are not in a sequential order in the argument list.

Here is an example of a formatting operator that uses all six fields. (Space characters are not allowed in the operator. They are shown here only to improve readability of the figure).



An alternate syntax, that enables you to supply values for the field width and precision fields from values in the argument list, is shown below. See the section “Specifying Field Width and Precision Outside the format String” on page 6-21 for information on when and how to use this syntax. (Again, space characters are shown only to improve readability of the figure.)



Each field of the formatting operator is described in the following sections. These fields are covered as they appear going from right to left in the formatting operator, starting with the Conversion Character and ending with the Identifier field.

Conversion Character

The conversion character specifies the notation of the output. It consists of a single character and appears last in the format specifier. It is the only required field of the format specifier other than the leading `%` character.

Specifier	Description
c	Single character
d	Decimal notation (signed)
e	Exponential notation (using a lowercase e as in 3.1415e+00)
E	Exponential notation (using an uppercase E as in 3.1415E+00)
f	Fixed-point notation

Specifier	Description
g	The more compact of %e or %f. (Insignificant zeros do not print.)
G	Same as %g, but using an uppercase E
o	Octal notation (unsigned)
s	String of characters
u	Decimal notation (unsigned)
x	Hexadecimal notation (using lowercase letters a–f)
X	Hexadecimal notation (using uppercase letters A–F)

This example uses conversion characters to display the number 46 in decimal, fixed-point, exponential, and hexadecimal formats:

```
A = 46*ones(1,4);  
  
sprintf('%d %f %e %X', A)  
ans =  
46 46.000000 4.600000e+01 2E
```

Subtype

The subtype field is a single alphabetic character that immediately precedes the conversion character. The following nonstandard subtype specifiers are supported for the conversion characters %o, %x, %X, and %u.

b	The underlying C data type is a double rather than an unsigned integer. For example, to print a double-precision value in hexadecimal, use a format like '%bx'.
t	The underlying C data type is a float rather than an unsigned integer.

To specify the number of bits for the conversion of an integer value (corresponding to conversion characters %d, %i, %u, %o, %x, or %X), use one of the following subtypes.

l	64-bit value.
h	16-bit value.

Precision

precision in a formatting operator is a nonnegative integer that immediately follows a period. For example, the specifier `%7.3f`, has a precision of 3. For the `%g` specifier, precision indicates the number of significant digits to display. For the `%f`, `%e`, and `%E` specifiers, precision indicates how many digits to display to the right of the decimal point.

Here are some examples of how the precision field affects different types of notation:

```
sprintf('%g  %.2g  %f  %.2f', pi*50*ones(1,4))
ans =
157.08  1.6e+02  157.079633  157.08
```

Precision is not usually used in format specifiers for strings (i.e., `%s`). If you do use it on a string and if the value `p` in the precision field is less than the number of characters in the string, MATLAB displays only `p` characters of the string and truncates the rest.

You can also supply the value for a precision field from outside of the format specifier. See the section “Specifying Field Width and Precision Outside the format String” on page 6-21 for more information on this.

For more information on the use of precision in formatting, see “Setting Field Width and Precision” on page 6-20.

Field Width

Field width in a formatting operator is a nonnegative integer that tells MATLAB the minimum number of digits or characters to use when formatting the corresponding input value. For example, the specifier `%7.3f`, has a width of 7.

Here are some examples of how the width field affects different types of notation:

```
sprintf('%e|%15e|%f|%15f|', pi*50*ones(1,4))
ans =
|1.570796e+02| 1.570796e+02|157.079633| 157.079633|
```

When used on a string, the `field width` can determine whether MATLAB pads the string with spaces. If `width` is less than or equal to the number of characters in the string, it has no effect.

```
sprintf('%30s', 'Pad left with spaces')
ans =
    Pad left with spaces
```

You can also supply a value for `field width` from outside of the format specifier. See the section “Specifying Field Width and Precision Outside the format String” on page 6-21 for more information on this.

For more information on the use of `field width` in formatting, see “Setting Field Width and Precision” on page 6-20.

Flags

You can control the output using any of these optional flags:

Character	Description	Example
A minus sign (-)	Left-justifies the converted argument in its field.	<code>%-5.2d</code>
A plus sign (+)	Always prints a sign character (+ or -).	<code>%+5.2d</code>
A space ()	Inserts a space before the value.	<code>% 5.2f</code>

Character	Description	Example
Zero (0)	Pads with zeros rather than spaces.	<code>%05.2f</code>
A pound sign (#)	Modifies selected numeric conversions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For <code>%o</code>, <code>%x</code>, or <code>%X</code>, print <code>0</code>, <code>0x</code>, or <code>0X</code> prefix. • For <code>%f</code>, <code>%e</code>, or <code>%E</code>, print decimal point even when precision is 0. • For <code>%g</code> or <code>%G</code>, do not remove trailing zeros or decimal point. 	<code>##5.0f</code>

Right- and left-justify the output. The default is to right-justify:

```
printf('right-justify: %12.2f\nleft-justify: %-12.2f', ...
      12.3, 12.3)
ans =
    right-justify:      12.30
    left-justify: 12.30
```

Display a + sign for positive numbers. The default is to omit the + sign:

```
printf('no sign: %12.2f\nsign: %+12.2f', ...
      12.3, 12.3)
ans =
    no sign:      12.30
    sign:      +12.30
```

Pad to the left with spaces or zeros. The default is to use space-padding:

```
printf('space-padded: %12.2f\nzero-padded: %012.2f', ...
      5.2, 5.2)
ans =
    space-padded:      5.20
```

zero-padded: 000000005.20

Note You can specify more than one flag in a formatting operator.

Value Identifiers

By default, MATLAB inserts data values from the argument list into the string in a sequential order. If you have a need to use the value arguments in a nonsequential order, you can override the default by using a numeric identifier in each format specifier. Specify nonsequential arguments with an integer immediately following the % sign, followed by a \$ sign.

Ordered Sequentially	Ordered By Identifier
<pre>fprintf('%s %s %s', ... '1st', '2nd', '3rd') ans = 1st 2nd 3rd</pre>	<pre>fprintf('%3\$s %2\$s %1\$s', ... '1st', '2nd', '3rd') ans = 3rd 2nd 1st</pre>

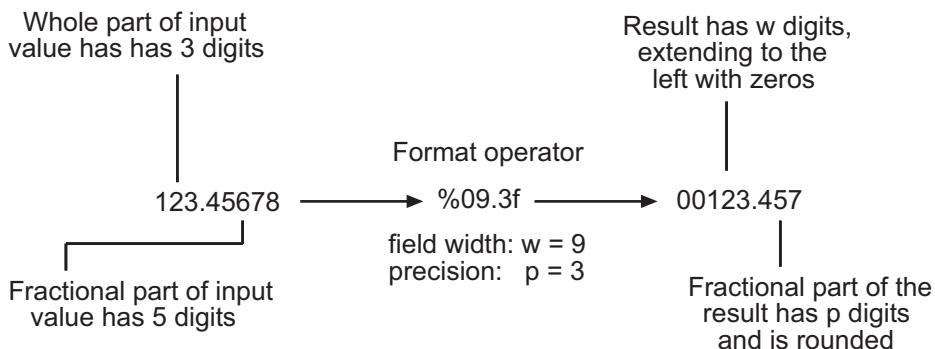
Setting Field Width and Precision

This section provides further information on the use of the field width and precision fields of the formatting operator:

- “Effect on the Output String” on page 6-20
- “Specifying Field Width and Precision Outside the format String” on page 6-21
- “Using Identifiers In the Width and Precision Fields” on page 6-22

Effect on the Output String

The figure below illustrates the way in which the field width and precision settings affect the output of the string formatting functions. In this figure, the zero following the % sign in the formatting operator means to add leading zeros to the output string rather than space characters:



General rules for formatting

- If precision is not specified, it defaults to 6.
- If precision (p) is less than the number of digits in the fractional part of the input value (f), then only p digits are shown to the right of the decimal point in the output, and that fractional value is rounded.
- If precision (p) is greater than the number of digits in the fractional part of the input value (f), then p digits are shown to the right of the decimal point in the output, and the fractional part is extended to the right with $p - f$ zeros.
- If field width is not specified, it defaults to $\text{precision} + 1 + \text{the number of digits in the whole part of the input value}$.
- If field width (w) is greater than $p+1$ plus the number of digits in the whole part of the input value (n), then the whole part of the output value is extended to the left with $w - (n+1+p)$ space characters or zeros, depending on whether or not the zero flag is set in the `Flags` field. The default is to extend the whole part of the output with space characters.

Specifying Field Width and Precision Outside the format String

To specify field width or precision using values from a sequential argument list, use an asterisk (*) in place of the field width or precision field of the formatting operator.

This example formats and displays three numbers. The formatting operator for the first, `%*f`, has an asterisk in the field width location of the formatting operator, specifying that just the field width, 15, is to be taken from the argument list. The second operator, `%. *f` puts the asterisk after the decimal point meaning, that it is the precision that is to take its value from the argument list. And the third operator, `%* . *f`, specifies both field width and precision in the argument list:

```
printf('%*f  %. *f  %* . *f', ...
      15, 123.45678, ...      % Width for 123.45678 is 15
      3, 16.42837, ...      % Precision for rand*20 is .3
      6, 4, pi)             % Width & Precision for pi is 6.4
ans =
    123.456780    16.428    3.1416
```

You can mix the two styles. For example, this statement gets the field width from the argument list and the precision from the format string:

```
printf('%* .2f', 5, 123.45678)
ans =
    123.46
```

Using Identifiers In the Width and Precision Fields

You can also derive field width and precision values from a nonsequential (i.e., numbered) argument list. Inside the formatting operator, specify field width and/or precision with an asterisk followed by an identifier number, followed by a \$ sign.

This example from the previous section shows how to obtain field width and precision from a sequential argument list:

```
printf('%*f  %. *f  %* . *f', ...
      15, 123.45678, ...
      3, 16.42837, ...
      6, 4, pi)

ans =
    123.456780    16.428    3.1416
```

Here is an example of how to do the same thing using numbered ordering. Field width for the first output value is 15, precision for the second value is 3, and field width and precision for the third value is 6 and 4, respectively. If you specify field width or precision with identifiers, then you must specify the value with an identifier as well:

```
sprintf('%1$*4$f %2$.*5$f %3$*6$.*7$f', ...
123.45678, 16.42837, pi, 15, 3, 6, 4)

ans =
    123.456780    16.428    3.1416
```

Restrictions for Using Identifiers

If any of the formatting operators in a string include an identifier field, then all of the operators in that string must do the same; you cannot use both sequential and nonsequential ordering in the same function call.

Valid Syntax	Invalid Syntax
<pre>sprintf('%d %d %d %d', ... 1, 2, 3, 4) ans = 1 2 3 4</pre>	<pre>sprintf('%d %3\$d %d %d', ... 1, 2, 3, 4) ans = 1</pre>

If your command provides more value arguments than there are formatting operators in the format string, MATLAB reuses the operators. However, MATLAB allows this only for commands that use sequential ordering. You cannot reuse formatting operators when making a function call with numbered ordering of the value arguments.

Valid Syntax	Invalid Syntax
<pre>sprintf('%d', 1, 2, 3, 4) ans = 1234</pre>	<pre>sprintf('%1\$d', 1, 2, 3, 4) ans = 1</pre>

Also, do not use identifiers when the value arguments are in the form of a vector or array:

Valid Syntax	Invalid Syntax
<pre>v = [1.4 2.7 3.1]; sprintf('%.4f %.4f %.4f', v) ans = 1.4000 2.7000 3.1000</pre>	<pre>v = [1.4 2.7 3.1]; sprintf('%3\$.4f %1\$.4f %2\$.4f', v) ans = Empty string: 1-by-0</pre>

String Comparisons

There are several ways to compare strings and substrings:

- You can compare two strings, or parts of two strings, for equality.
- You can compare individual characters in two strings for equality.
- You can categorize every element within a string, determining whether each element is a character or white space.

These functions work for both character arrays and cell arrays of strings.

Comparing Strings for Equality

You can use any of four functions to determine if two input strings are identical:

- `strcmp` determines if two strings are identical.
- `strncmp` determines if the first `n` characters of two strings are identical.
- `strcmpi` and `strncmpi` are the same as `strcmp` and `strncmp`, except that they ignore case.

Consider the two strings

```
str1 = 'hello';  
str2 = 'help';
```

Strings `str1` and `str2` are not identical, so invoking `strcmp` returns logical 0 (false). For example,

```
C = strcmp(str1,str2)  
C =  
    0
```

Note For C programmers, this is an important difference between the MATLAB `strcmp` and C `strcmp()` functions, where the latter returns 0 if the two strings are the same.

The first three characters of `str1` and `str2` are identical, so invoking `strncmp` with any value up to 3 returns 1:

```
C = strncmp(str1, str2, 2)
C =
    1
```

These functions work cell-by-cell on a cell array of strings. Consider the two cell arrays of strings

```
A = {'pizza'; 'chips'; 'candy'};
B = {'pizza'; 'chocolate'; 'pretzels'};
```

Now apply the string comparison functions:

```
strcmp(A,B)
ans =
    1
    0
    0
strncmp(A,B,1)
ans =
    1
    1
    0
```

Comparing for Equality Using Operators

You can use MATLAB relational operators on character arrays, as long as the arrays you are comparing have equal dimensions, or one is a scalar. For example, you can use the equality operator (`==`) to determine where the matching characters are in two strings:

```
A = 'fate';
B = 'cake';

A == B
ans =
    0    1    0    1
```

All of the relational operators (`>`, `>=`, `<`, `<=`, `==`, `~=`) compare the values of corresponding characters.

Categorizing Characters Within a String

There are three functions for categorizing characters inside a string:

- 1 `isletter` determines if a character is a letter.
- 2 `isspace` determines if a character is white space (blank, tab, or new line).
- 3 `isstrprop` checks characters in a string to see if they match a category you specify, such as
 - Alphabetic
 - Alphanumeric
 - Lowercase or uppercase
 - Decimal digits
 - Hexadecimal digits
 - Control characters
 - Graphic characters
 - Punctuation characters
 - Whitespace characters

For example, create a string named `mystring`:

```
mystring = 'Room 401';
```

`isletter` examines each character in the string, producing an output vector of the same length as `mystring`:

```
A = isletter(mystring)
A =
     1     1     1     1     0     0     0     0
```

The first four elements in `A` are logical 1 (true) because the first four characters of `mystring` are letters.

Searching and Replacing

MATLAB provides several functions for searching and replacing characters in a string. (MATLAB also supports search and replace operations using regular expressions. See Regular Expressions.)

Consider a string named `label`:

```
label = 'Sample 1, 10/28/95';
```

The `strrep` function performs the standard search-and-replace operation. Use `strrep` to change the date from '10/28' to '10/30':

```
newlabel = strrep(label, '28', '30')
newlabel =
    Sample 1, 10/30/95
```

`strfind` returns the starting position of a substring within a longer string. To find all occurrences of the string 'amp' inside `label`, use

```
position = strfind(label, 'amp')
position =
     2
```

The position within `label` where the only occurrence of 'amp' begins is the second character.

The `textscan` function parses a string to identify numbers or substrings. Describe each component of the string with conversion specifiers, such as %s for strings, %d for integers, or %f for floating-point numbers. Optionally, include any literal text to ignore.

For example, identify the sample number and date string from `label`:

```
parts = textscan(label, 'Sample %d, %s');
parts{:}

ans =
     1
ans =
    '10/28/95'
```

To parse strings in a cell array, use the `strtok` function. For example:

```
c = {'all in good time'; ...  
    'my dog has fleas'; ...  
    'leave no stone unturned'};  
first_words = strtok(c)
```

Converting from Numeric to String

In this section...
“Function Summary” on page 6-30
“Converting to a Character Equivalent” on page 6-31
“Converting to a String of Numbers” on page 6-31
“Converting to a Specific Radix” on page 6-31

Function Summary

The functions listed in this table provide a number of ways to convert numeric data to character strings.

Function	Description	Example
char	Convert a positive integer to an equivalent character. (Truncates any fractional parts.)	[72 105] → 'Hi'
int2str	Convert a positive or negative integer to a character type. (Rounds any fractional parts.)	[72 105] → '72 105'
num2str	Convert a numeric type to a character type of the specified precision and format.	[72 105] → '72/105/' (format set to %1d/)
mat2str	Convert a numeric type to a character type of the specified precision, returning a string MATLAB can evaluate.	[72 105] → '[72 105]'
dec2hex	Convert a positive integer to a character type of hexadecimal base.	[72 105] → '48 69'
dec2bin	Convert a positive integer to a character type of binary base.	[72 105] → '1001000 1101001'
dec2base	Convert a positive integer to a character type of any base from 2 through 36.	[72 105] → '110 151' (base set to 8)

Converting to a Character Equivalent

The `char` function converts integers to Unicode® character codes and returns a string composed of the equivalent characters:

```
x = [77 65 84 76 65 66];  
char(x)  
ans =  
    MATLAB
```

Converting to a String of Numbers

The `int2str`, `num2str`, and `mat2str` functions convert numeric values to strings where each character represents a separate digit of the input value. The `int2str` and `num2str` functions are often useful for labeling plots. For example, the following lines use `num2str` to prepare automated labels for the *x*-axis of a plot:

```
function plotlabel(x, y)  
plot(x, y)  
str1 = num2str(min(x));  
str2 = num2str(max(x));  
out = ['Value of f from ' str1 ' to ' str2];  
xlabel(out);
```

Converting to a Specific Radix

Another class of conversion functions changes numeric values into strings representing a decimal value in another base, such as binary or hexadecimal representation. This includes `dec2hex`, `dec2bin`, and `dec2base`.

Converting from String to Numeric

In this section...

“Function Summary” on page 6-32

“Converting from a Character Equivalent” on page 6-33

“Converting from a Numeric String” on page 6-33

“Converting from a Specific Radix” on page 6-34

Function Summary

The functions listed in this table provide a number of ways to convert character strings to numeric data.

Function	Description	Example
uintN (e.g., uint8)	Convert a character to an integer code that represents that character.	'Hi' → 72 105
str2num	Convert a character type to a numeric type.	'72 105' → [72 105]
str2double	Similar to str2num, but offers better performance and works with cell arrays of strings.	{'72' '105'} → [72 105]
hex2num	Convert a numeric type to a character type of specified precision, returning a string that MATLAB can evaluate.	'A' → '-1.4917e-154'
hex2dec	Convert a character type of hexadecimal base to a positive integer.	'A' → 10
bin2dec	Convert a positive integer to a character type of binary base.	'1010' → 10
base2dec	Convert a positive integer to a character type of any base from 2 through 36.	'12' → 10 (if base == 8)

Converting from a Character Equivalent

Character arrays store each character as a 16-bit numeric value. Use one of the integer conversion functions (e.g., `uint8`) or the `double` function to convert strings to their numeric values, and `char` to revert to character representation:

```
name = 'Thomas R. Lee';

name = double(name)
name =
    84  104  111  109  97  115  32  82  46  32  76  101  101

name = char(name)
name =
    Thomas R. Lee
```

Converting from a Numeric String

Use `str2num` to convert a character array to the numeric value represented by that string:

```
str = '37.294e-1';

val = str2num(str)
val =
    3.7294
```

The `str2double` function converts a cell array of strings to the double-precision values represented by the strings:

```
c = {'37.294e-1'; '-58.375'; '13.796'};

d = str2double(c)
d =
    3.7294
   -58.3750
    13.7960

whos
  Name      Size      Bytes  Class
  ----      -
  c         3x1         224   cell
```

d 3x1 24 double

Converting from a Specific Radix

To convert from a character representation of a nondecimal number to the value of that number, use one of these functions: `hex2num`, `hex2dec`, `bin2dec`, or `base2dec`.

The `hex2num` and `hex2dec` functions both take hexadecimal (base 16) inputs, but `hex2num` returns the IEEE double-precision floating-point number it represents, while `hex2dec` converts to a decimal integer.

Function Summary

MATLAB provides these functions for working with character arrays:

- Functions to Create Character Arrays on page 6-35
- Functions to Modify Character Arrays on page 6-35
- Functions to Read and Operate on Character Arrays on page 6-36
- Functions to Search or Compare Character Arrays on page 6-36
- Functions to Determine Class or Content on page 6-36
- Functions to Convert Between Numeric and String Classes on page 6-37
- Functions to Work with Cell Arrays of Strings as Sets on page 6-37

Functions to Create Character Arrays

Function	Description
'str'	Create the string specified between quotes.
blanks	Create a string of blanks.
sprintf	Write formatted data to a string.
strcat	Concatenate strings.
char	Concatenate strings vertically.

Functions to Modify Character Arrays

Function	Description
deblank	Remove trailing blanks.
lower	Make all letters lowercase.
sort	Sort elements in ascending or descending order.
strjust	Justify a string.
strrep	Replace one string with another.
strtrim	Remove leading and trailing white space.
upper	Make all letters uppercase.

Functions to Read and Operate on Character Arrays

Function	Description
eval	Execute a string with MATLAB expression.
sscanf	Read a string under format control.

Functions to Search or Compare Character Arrays

Function	Description
regexp	Match regular expression.
strcmp	Compare strings.
strcmpi	Compare strings, ignoring case.
strfind	Find one string within another.
strncmp	Compare the first N characters of strings.
strncmpi	Compare the first N characters, ignoring case.
strtok	Find a token in a string.
textscan	Read data from a string.

Functions to Determine Class or Content

Function	Description
iscellstr	Return true for a cell array of strings.
ischar	Return true for a character array.
isletter	Return true for letters of the alphabet.
isstrprop	Determine if a string is of the specified category.
isspace	Return true for white-space characters.

Functions to Convert Between Numeric and String Classes

Function	Description
char	Convert to a character or string.
cellstr	Convert a character array to a cell array of strings.
double	Convert a string to numeric codes.
int2str	Convert an integer to a string.
mat2str	Convert a matrix to a string you can run eval on.
num2str	Convert a number to a string.
str2num	Convert a string to a number.
str2double	Convert a string to a double-precision value.

Functions to Work with Cell Arrays of Strings as Sets

Function	Description
intersect	Set the intersection of two vectors.
ismember	Detect members of a set.
setdiff	Return the set difference of two vectors.
setxor	Set the exclusive OR of two vectors.
union	Set the union of two vectors.
unique	Set the unique elements of a vector.

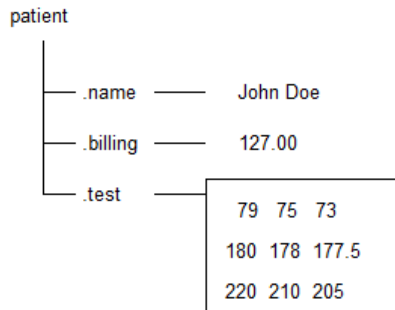
Structures

- “Create a Structure Array” on page 7-2
- “Access Data in a Structure Array” on page 7-6
- “Concatenate Structures” on page 7-9
- “Generate Field Names from Variables” on page 7-11
- “Access Data in Nested Structures” on page 7-12
- “Access Elements of a Nonscalar Struct Array” on page 7-14
- “Ways to Organize Data in Structure Arrays” on page 7-16
- “Memory Requirements for a Structure Array” on page 7-20

Create a Structure Array

This example shows how to create a structure array. A structure is a data type that groups related data using data containers called fields. Each field can contain data of any type or size.

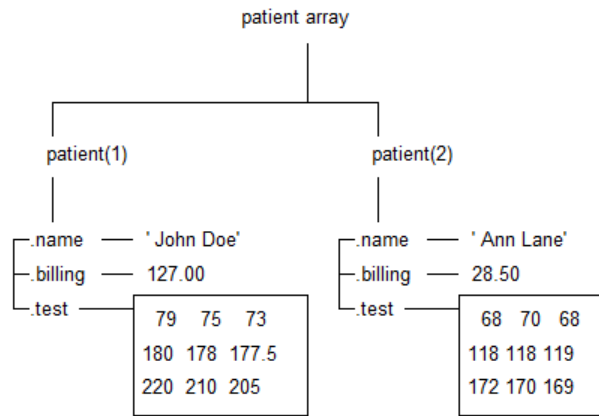
Store a patient record in a scalar structure with fields `name`, `billing`, and `test`.



```
patient.name = 'John Doe';
patient.billing = 127.00;
patient.test = [79, 75, 73; 180, 178, 177.5; 220, 210, 205];
patient
```

```
patient =
    name: 'John Doe'
  billing: 127
    test: [3x3 double]
```

Add records for other patients to the array by including subscripts after the array name.



```

patient(2).name = 'Ann Lane';
patient(2).billing = 28.50;
patient(2).test = [68, 70, 68; 118, 118, 119; 172, 170, 169];
patient

```

```

patient =

1x2 struct array with fields:
    name
    billing
    test

```

Each patient record in the array is a structure of class `struct`. An array of structures is often referred to as a struct array. Like other MATLAB arrays, a struct array can have any dimensions.

A struct array has the following properties:

- All structs in the array have the same number of fields.
- All structs have the same field names.

- Fields of the same name in different structs can contain different types or sizes of data.

Any unspecified fields for new structs in the array contain empty arrays.

```
patient(3).name = 'New Name';  
patient(3)
```

```
ans =
```

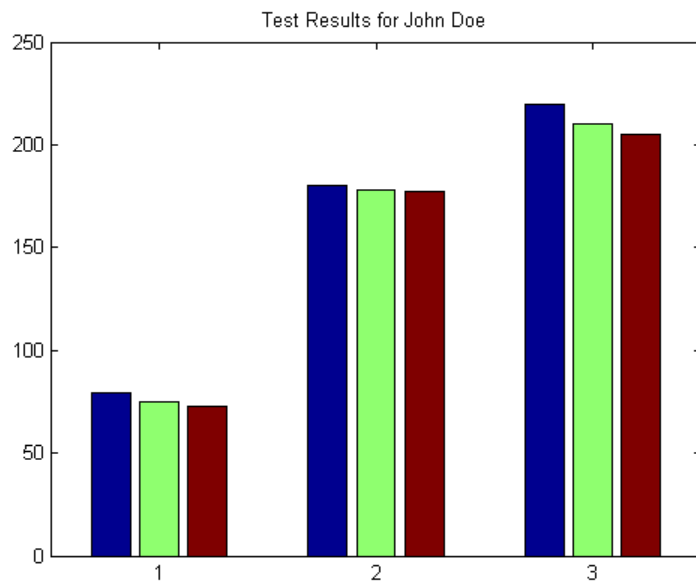
```
    name: 'New Name'  
  billing: []  
    test: []
```

Access data in the structure array to find how much the first patient owes, and to create a bar graph of his test results.

```
amount_due = patient(1).billing  
bar(patient(1).test)  
title(['Test Results for ', patient(1).name])
```

```
amount_due =
```

```
127
```



Access Data in a Structure Array

This example shows how to access the contents of a structure array. To run the code in this example, load several variables into a scalar (1-by-1) structure named `S`.

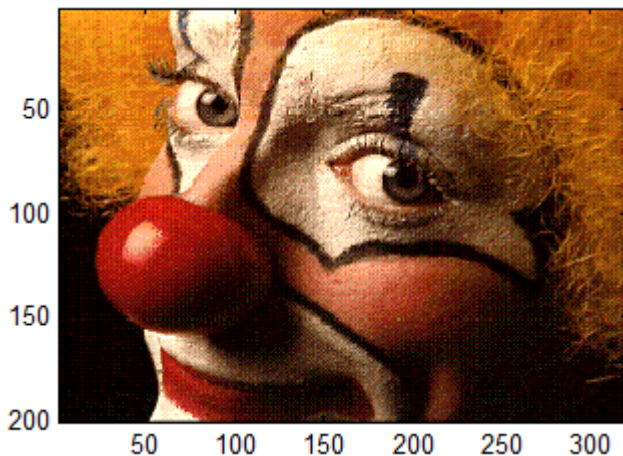
```
S = load('clown.mat')
```

The variables from the file (`X`, `caption`, and `map`) are now fields in the struct.

```
S =  
      X: [200x320 double]  
      map: [81x3 double]  
      caption: [2x1 char]
```

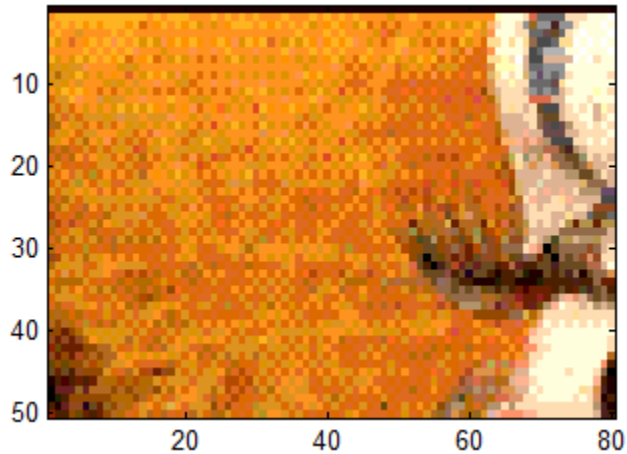
Access the data using dot notation of the form `structName.fieldName`. For example, pass the numeric data in field `X` to the `image` function:

```
image(S.X)  
colormap(S.map)
```



To access part of a field, add indices as appropriate for the size and type of data in the field. For example, pass the upper left corner of `X` to the `image` function:

```
upperLeft = S.X(1:50,1:80);  
image(upperLeft);
```



If a particular field contains a cell array, use curly braces to access the data, such as `S.cellField{1:50,1:80}`.

Data in Nonscalar Structure Arrays

Create a nonscalar array by loading data from the file `mandrill.mat` into a second element of array `S`:

```
S(2) = load('mandrill.mat')
```

Each element of a structure array must have the same fields. Both `clown.mat` and `mandrill.mat` contain variables `X`, `map`, and `caption`.

`S` is a 1-by-2 array.

```
S =
1x2 struct array with fields:
    X
    map
    caption
```

For nonscalar structures, the syntax for accessing a particular field is `structName(indices).fieldName`. Redisplay the clown image, specifying the index for the clown struct (1):

```
image(S(1).X)
colormap(S(1).map)
```

Add indices to select and redisplay the upper left corner of the field contents:

```
upperLeft = S(1).X(1:50,1:80);
image(upperLeft)
```

Note You can index into part of a field only when you refer to a single element of a structure array. MATLAB does not support statements such as `S(1:2).X(1:50,1:80)`, which attempt to index into a field for multiple elements of the structure.

Related Information

- “Access Data in Nested Structures” on page 7-12
- “Access Elements of a Nonscalar Struct Array” on page 7-14

Concatenate Structures

This example shows how to concatenate structure arrays using the `[]` operator. To concatenate structures, they must have the same set of fields, but the fields do not need to contain the same sizes or types of data.

Create scalar (1-by-1) structure arrays `struct1` and `struct2`, each with fields `a` and `b`:

```
struct1.a = 'first';  
struct1.b = [1,2,3];
```

```
struct2.a = 'second';  
struct2.b = rand(5);
```

Just as concatenating two scalar values such as `[1, 2]` creates a 1-by-2 numeric array, concatenating `struct1` and `struct2`,

```
combined = [struct1, struct2]
```

creates a 1-by-2 structure array:

```
combined =  
    1x2 struct array with fields:  
    a  
    b
```

When you want to access the contents of a particular field, specify the index of the structure in the array. For example, access field `a` of the first structure:

```
combined(1).a
```

This code returns

```
ans =  
    first
```

Concatenation also applies to nonscalar structure arrays. For example, create a 2-by-2 structure array named `new`:

```
new(1,1).a = 1;    new(1,1).b = 10;  
new(1,2).a = 2;    new(1,2).b = 20;
```

```
new(2,1).a = 3;    new(2,1).b = 30;  
new(2,2).a = 4;    new(2,2).b = 40;
```

Because the 1-by-2 structure `combined` and the 2-by-2 structure `new` both have two columns, you can concatenate them vertically with a semicolon separator:

```
larger = [combined; new]
```

This code returns a 3-by-2 structure array,

```
larger =  
    3x2 struct array with fields:  
        a  
        b
```

where, for example,

```
larger(2,1).a =  
    1
```

For related information, see:

- “Creating and Concatenating Matrices”
- “Access Data in a Structure Array” on page 7-6
- “Access Elements of a Nonscalar Struct Array” on page 7-14

Generate Field Names from Variables

This example shows how to derive a field name at run time from a variable or expression. The general syntax is

```
structName.(dynamicExpression)
```

where `dynamicExpression` is a variable or expression that returns a character or string. Field names that you reference with expressions are called *dynamic field names*.

For example, create a field name from the current date:

```
currentDate = datestr(now, 'mmdd');  
myStruct.(currentDate) = [1,2,3]
```

If the current date reported by your system is February 29, then this code assigns data to a field named `Feb29`:

```
myStruct =  
    Feb29: [1 2 3]
```

Field names, like variable names, must begin with a letter, can contain letters, digits, or underscore characters, and are case sensitive. To avoid potential conflicts, do not use the names of existing variables or functions as field names. For more information, see “Variable Names” on page 1-8.

Access Data in Nested Structures

This example shows how to index into a structure that is nested within another structure. The general syntax is

```
structName(indices).nestedStructName.(indices).fieldName(indices)
```

When a structure is scalar (1-by-1), you do not need to include the indices to refer to the single element. For example, create a scalar structure `s`, where field `n` is a nested scalar structure with fields `a`, `b`, and `c`:

```
s.n.a = ones(3);  
s.n.b = eye(4);  
s.n.c = magic(5);
```

Access the third row of field `b`:

```
third_row_b = s.n.b(3,:)
```

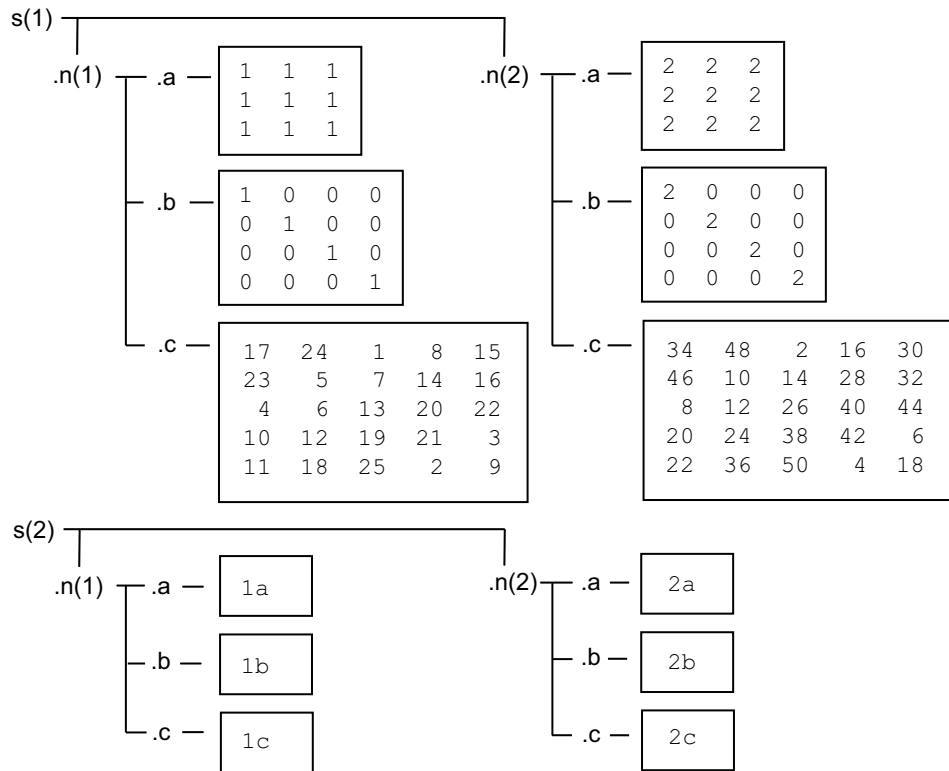
Variable `third_row_b` contains the third row of `eye(4)`.

```
third_row_b =  
    0     0     1     0
```

Expand `s` so that both `s` and `n` are nonscalar (1-by-2):

```
s(1).n(2).a = 2 * ones(3);  
s(1).n(2).b = 2 * eye(4);  
s(1).n(2).c = 2 * magic(5);  
  
s(2).n(1).a = '1a';    s(2).n(2).a = '2a';  
s(2).n(1).b = '1b';    s(2).n(2).b = '2b';  
s(2).n(1).c = '1c';    s(2).n(2).c = '2c';
```

Structure `s` now contains the data shown in the following figure.



Access part of the array in field b of the second element in n within the first element of s:

```
part_two_eye = s(1).n(2).b(1:2,1:2)
```

This returns the 2-by-2 upper left corner of $2 * \text{eye}(4)$:

```
part_two_eye =
     2     0
     0     2
```

Access Elements of a Nonscalar Struct Array

This example shows how to access and process data from multiple elements of a nonscalar structure array:

Create a 1-by-3 structure `s` with field `f`:

```
s(1).f = 1;  
s(2).f = 'two';  
s(3).f = 3 * ones(3);
```

Although each structure in the array must have the same number of fields and the same field names, the contents of the fields can be different types and sizes. When you refer to field `f` for multiple elements of the structure array, such as

```
s(1:3).f
```

or

```
s.f
```

MATLAB returns the data from the elements in a *comma-separated list*, which displays as follows:

```
ans =  
    1  
  
ans =  
    two  
  
ans =  
    3    3    3  
    3    3    3  
    3    3    3
```

You cannot assign the list to a single variable with the syntax `v = s.f` because the fields can contain different types of data. However, you can assign the list items to the same number of variables, such as

```
[v1, v2, v3] = s.f;
```

or assign to elements of a cell array, such as

```
c = {s.f};
```

If all of the fields contain the same type of data and can form a hyperrectangle, you can concatenate the list items. For example, create a structure `nums` with scalar numeric values in field `f`, and concatenate the data from the fields:

```
nums(1).f = 1;
nums(2).f = 2;
nums(3).f = 3;

allNums = [nums.f]
```

This code returns

```
allNums =
     1     2     3
```

If you want to process each element of an array with the same operation, use the `arrayfun` function. For example, count the number of elements in field `f` of each struct in array `s`:

```
numElements = arrayfun(@(x) numel(x.f), s)
```

The syntax `@(x)` creates an anonymous function. This code calls the `numel` function for each element of array `s`, such as `numel(s(1).f)`, and returns

```
numElements =
     1     3     9
```

For related information, see:

- “Comma-Separated Lists” on page 2-86
- “Anonymous Functions” on page 15-23

Ways to Organize Data in Structure Arrays

There are at least two ways you can organize data in a structure array: plane organization and element-by-element organization. The method that best fits your data depends on how you plan to access the data, and, for very large data sets, whether you have system memory constraints.

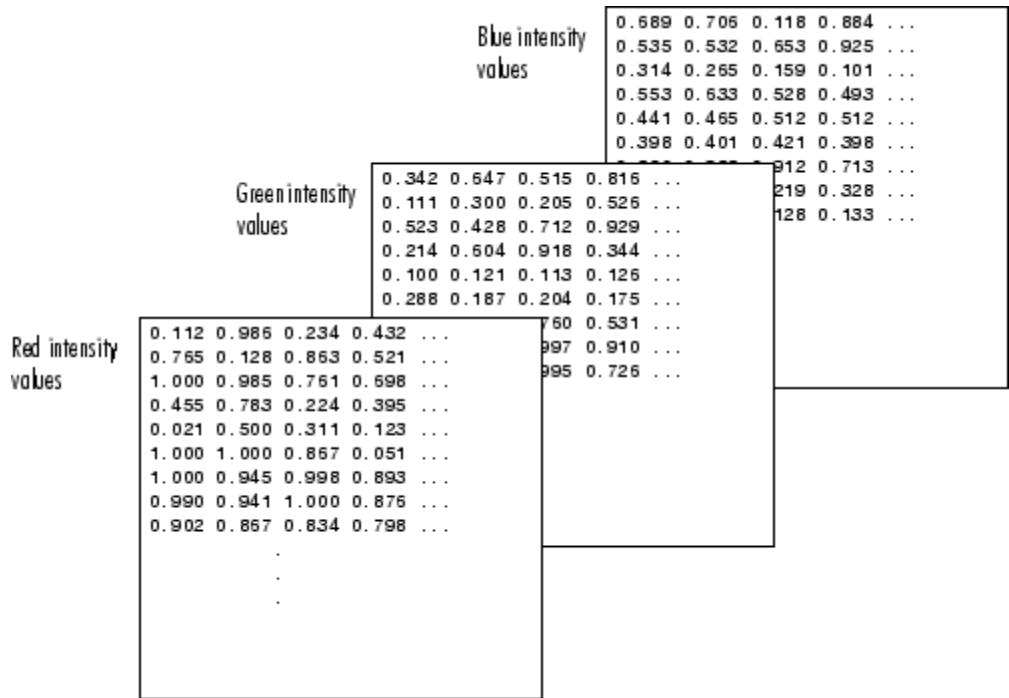
Plane organization allows easier access to all values within a field. Element-by-element organization allows easier access to all information related to a single element or record. The following sections include an example of each type of organization:

- “Plane Organization” on page 7-16
- “Element-by-Element Organization” on page 7-18

When you create a structure array, MATLAB stores information about each element and field in the array header. As a result, structures with more elements and fields require more memory than simpler structures that contain the same data. For more information on memory requirements for arrays, see “Memory Allocation” on page 24-2.

Plane Organization

Consider an RGB image with three arrays corresponding to color intensity values.



If you have arrays RED, GREEN, and BLUE in your workspace, then these commands create a scalar structure named `img` that uses plane organization:

```

img.red = RED;
img.green = GREEN;
img.blue = BLUE;

```

Plane organization allows you to easily extract entire image planes for display, filtering, or other processing. For example, multiply the red intensity values by 0.9:

```

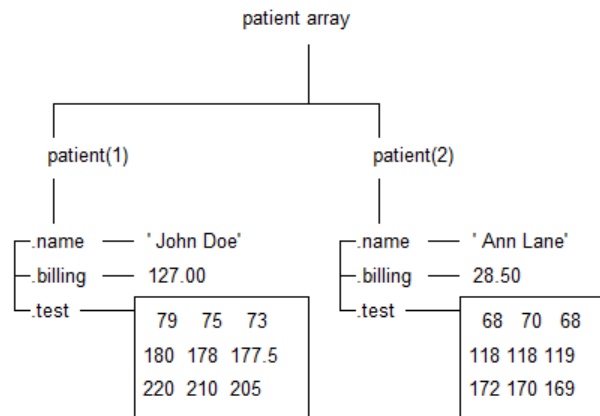
adjustedRed = .9 * img.red;

```

If you have multiple images, you can add them to the `img` structure, so that each element `img(1)`, ..., `img(n)` contains an entire image. For an example that adds elements to a structure, see the following section.

Element-by-Element Organization

Consider a database with patient information. Each record contains data for the patient's name, test results, and billing amount.



Additional patients correspond to new elements in the structure. For example, add an element for a second patient:

```

patient(2).name = 'Ann Lane';
patient(2).billing = 28.50;
patient(2).test = [68, 70, 68; 118, 118, 119; 172, 170, 169];
  
```

Element-by-element organization supports simple indexing to access data for a particular patient. For example, find the average of the first patient's test results, calculating by rows (dimension 2) rather than by columns:

```

aveResultsDoe = mean(patient(1).test,2)
  
```

This code returns

```

aveResultsDoe =
  
```


75.6667
178.5000
212.0000

For information on processing data from more than one element at a time, see “Access Data in a Structure Array” on page 7-6.

Memory Requirements for a Structure Array

Structure arrays do not require completely contiguous memory. However, each field requires contiguous memory, as does the header that MATLAB creates to describe the array. For very large arrays, incrementally increasing the number of fields or the number of elements in a field results in Out of Memory errors.

Allocate memory for the contents by assigning initial values with the `struct` function, such as

```
newStruct(1:25,1:50) = struct('a',ones(20),'b',zeros(30),'c',rand(40));
```

This code creates and populates a 25-by-50 structure array `S` with fields `a`, `b`, and `c`.

If you prefer not to assign initial values, you can initialize a structure array by assigning empty arrays to each field of the last element in the structure array, such as

```
newStruct(25,50).a = [];  
newStruct(25,50).b = [];  
newStruct(25,50).c = [];
```

or, equivalently,

```
newStruct(25,50) = struct('a',[],'b',[],'c',[]);
```

However, in this case, MATLAB only allocates memory for the header, and not for the contents of the array.

For more information, see:

- “Preallocating Memory”
- “Memory Allocation” on page 24-2

Cell Arrays

- “What Is a Cell Array?” on page 8-2
- “Create a Cell Array” on page 8-3
- “Access Data in a Cell Array” on page 8-5
- “Add Cells to a Cell Array” on page 8-8
- “Delete Data from a Cell Array” on page 8-9
- “Combine Cell Arrays” on page 8-10
- “Pass Contents of Cell Arrays to Functions” on page 8-11
- “Preallocate Memory for a Cell Array” on page 8-14
- “Cell vs. Struct Arrays” on page 8-15
- “Multilevel Indexing to Access Parts of Cells” on page 8-17

What Is a Cell Array?

A cell array is a data type with indexed data containers called cells. Each cell can contain any type of data. Cell arrays commonly contain lists of text strings, combinations of text and numbers from spreadsheets or text files, or numeric arrays of different sizes.

There are two ways to refer to the elements of a cell array. Enclose indices in smooth parentheses, (), to refer to sets of cells — for example, to define a subset of the array. Enclose indices in curly braces, {}, to refer to the text, numbers, or other data within individual cells.

For more information, see:

- “Create a Cell Array” on page 8-3
- “Access Data in a Cell Array” on page 8-5

Create a Cell Array

This example shows how to create a cell array using the `{}` operator or the `cell` function.

When you have data to put into a cell array, create the array using the cell array construction operator, `{}`:

```
myCell = {1, 2, 3;
          'text', rand(5,10,2), {11; 22; 33}}
```

Like all MATLAB arrays, cell arrays are rectangular, with the same number of cells in each row. `myCell` is a 2-by-3 cell array:

```
myCell =
    [ 1]    [          2]    [          3]
    'text'  [5x10x2 double]  {3x1 cell}
```

You also can use the `{}` operator to create an empty 0-by-0 cell array,

```
C = {}
```

If you plan to add values to a cell array over time or in a loop, you can create an empty *n*-dimensional array using the `cell` function:

```
emptyCell = cell(3,4,2)
```

`emptyCell` is a 3-by-4-by-2 cell array, where each cell contains an empty array, `[]`:

```
emptyCell(:,:,1) =
    []    []    []    []
    []    []    []    []
    []    []    []    []
```

```
emptyCell(:,:,2) =
    []    []    []    []
    []    []    []    []
    []    []    []    []
```

For more information, see:

- “Access Data in a Cell Array” on page 8-5
- “Multidimensional Cell Arrays”

Access Data in a Cell Array

This example shows how to read and write data to and from a cell array. To run the code in this example, create a 2-by-3 cell array of text and numeric data:

```
C = {'one', 'two', 'three';
     1, 2, 3};
```

There are two ways to refer to the elements of a cell array. Enclose indices in smooth parentheses, `()`, to refer to sets of cells—for example, to define a subset of the array. Enclose indices in curly braces, `{}`, to refer to the text, numbers, or other data within individual cells.

Cell Indexing with Smooth Parentheses, `()`

Cell array indices in smooth parentheses refer to sets of cells. For example, the command

```
upperLeft = C(1:2,1:2)
```

creates a 2-by-2 cell array:

```
upperLeft =
    'one'    'two'
    [ 1]    [ 2]
```

Update sets of cells by replacing them with the same number of cells. For example, the statement

```
C(1,1:3) = {'first','second','third'}
```

replaces the cells in the first row of `C` with an equivalent-sized (1-by-3) cell array:

```
C =
    'first'    'second'    'third'
    [ 1]    [ 2]    [ 3]
```

If cells in your array contain numeric data, you can convert the cells to a numeric array using the `cell2mat` function:

```
numericCells = C(2,1:3)
numericVector = cell2mat(numericCells)
```

numericCells is a 1-by-3 cell array, but numericVector is a 1-by-3 array of type double:

```
numericCells =
    [1]    [2]    [3]

numericVector =
     1     2     3
```

Content Indexing with Curly Braces, {}

Access the contents of cells—the numbers, text, or other data within the cells—by indexing with curly braces. For example, the command

```
last = C{2,3}
```

creates a numeric variable of type double, because the cell contains a double value:

```
last =
     3
```

Similarly, this command

```
C{2,3} = 300
```

replaces the contents of the last cell of C with a new, numeric value:

```
C =
    'first'    'second'    'third'
    [    1]    [    2]    [  300]
```

When you access the contents of multiple cells, such as

```
C{1:2,1:2}
```

MATLAB creates a *comma-separated list*. Because each cell can contain a different type of data, you cannot assign this list to a single variable. However, you can assign the list to the same number of variables as cells. MATLAB assigns to the variables in column order. For example,


```
[r1c1, r2c1, r1c2, r2c2] = C{1:2,1:2}
```

returns

```
r1c1 =  
    first
```

```
r2c1 =  
    1
```

```
r1c2 =  
    second
```

```
r2c2 =  
    2
```

If each cell contains the same type of data, you can create a single variable by applying the array concatenation operator, `[]`, to the comma-separated list. For example,

```
nums = [C{2, :}]
```

returns

```
nums =  
    1     2   300
```

For more information, see:

- “Multilevel Indexing to Access Parts of Cells” on page 8-17
- “Comma-Separated Lists” on page 2-86

Add Cells to a Cell Array

This example shows how to add cells to a cell array.

Create a 1-by-3 cell array:

```
C = {1, 2, 3};
```

Assign data to a cell outside the current dimensions:

```
C{4,4} = 44
```

MATLAB expands the cell array to a rectangle that includes the specified subscripts. Any intervening cells contain empty arrays:

```
C =  
    [1]    [2]    [3]    []  
    []    []    []    []  
    []    []    []    []  
    []    []    []   [44]
```

Add cells without specifying a value by assigning an empty array as the contents of a cell:

```
C{5,5} = []
```

C is now a 5-by-5 cell array:

```
C =  
    [1]    [2]    [3]    []    []  
    []    []    []    []    []  
    []    []    []    []    []  
    []    []    []   [44]    []  
    []    []    []    []    []
```

For related examples, see:

- “Access Data in a Cell Array” on page 8-5
- “Combine Cell Arrays” on page 8-10
- “Delete Data from a Cell Array” on page 8-9

Delete Data from a Cell Array

This example shows how to remove data from individual cells, and how to delete entire cells from a cell array. To run the code in this example, create a 3-by-3 cell array:

```
C = {1, 2, 3; 4, 5, 6; 7, 8, 9};
```

Delete the contents of a particular cell by assigning an empty array to the cell, using curly braces for content indexing, {}:

```
C{2,2} = []
```

This code returns

```
C =  
    [1]    [2]    [3]  
    [4]     []    [6]  
    [7]    [8]    [9]
```

Delete sets of cells using standard array indexing with smooth parentheses, (). For example, this command

```
C(2,:) = []
```

removes the second row of C:

```
C =  
    [1]    [2]    [3]  
    [7]    [8]    [9]
```

For related examples, see:

- “Add Cells to a Cell Array” on page 8-8
- “Access Data in a Cell Array” on page 8-5

Combine Cell Arrays

This example shows how to combine cell arrays by concatenation or nesting. To run the code in this example, create several cell arrays with the same number of columns:

```
C1 = {1, 2, 3};  
C2 = {'A', 'B', 'C'};  
C3 = {10, 20, 30};
```

Concatenate cell arrays with the array concatenation operator, `[]`. In this example, vertically concatenate the cell arrays by separating them with semicolons:

```
C4 = [C1; C2; C3]
```

C4 is a 3-by-3 cell array:

```
C4 =  
    [ 1]    [ 2]    [ 3]  
    'A'    'B'    'C'  
   [10]   [20]   [30]
```

Create a nested cell array with the cell array construction operator, `{}`:

```
C5 = {C1; C2; C3}
```

C5 is a 3-by-1 cell array, where each cell contains a cell array:

```
C5 =  
    {1x3 cell}  
    {1x3 cell}  
    {1x3 cell}
```

For more information, see “Concatenating Matrices”.

Pass Contents of Cell Arrays to Functions

These examples show several ways to pass data from a cell array to a MATLAB function that does not recognize cell arrays as inputs.

- Pass the contents of a single cell by indexing with curly braces, {}. Access part of an array within the cell by indexing further into the content (multilevel indexing).

This example creates a cell array that contains text and a 20-by-2 array of random numbers. Plot all of the data, and then plot only the first column of data.

```
randCell = {'Random Data', rand(20,2)};
plot(randCell{1,2})
title(randCell{1,1})
```

```
figure
plot(randCell{1,2}(:,1))
title('First Column of Data')
```

- Combine numeric data from multiple cells using the `cell2mat` function.

This example creates a 5-by-2 cell array that stores temperature data for three cities, and plots the temperatures for each city by date.

```
temperature(1,:) = {'01-Jan-2010', [45, 49, 0]};
temperature(2,:) = {'03-Apr-2010', [54, 68, 21]};
temperature(3,:) = {'20-Jun-2010', [72, 85, 53]};
temperature(4,:) = {'15-Sep-2010', [63, 81, 56]};
temperature(5,:) = {'31-Dec-2010', [38, 54, 18]};
```

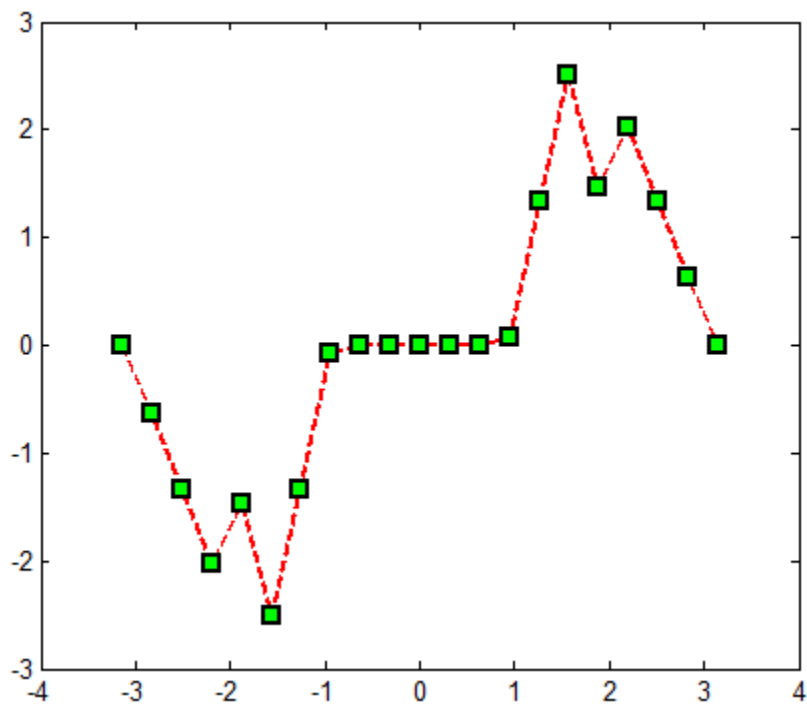
```
allTemps = cell2mat(temperature(:,2));
dates = datenum(temperature(:,1), 'dd-mmm-yyyy');
```

```
plot(dates, allTemps)
datetick('x', 'mmm')
```

- Pass the contents of multiple cells as a comma-separated list to functions that accept multiple inputs.

This example plots X against Y , and applies line styles from a 2-by-3 cell array C .

```
X = -pi:pi/10:pi;  
Y = tan(sin(X)) - sin(tan(X));  
  
C(:,1) = {'LineWidth'; 2};  
C(:,2) = {'MarkerEdgeColor'; 'k'};  
C(:,3) = {'MarkerFaceColor'; 'g'};  
  
plot(X, Y, '--rs', C{:})
```



For more information, see:

- “Access Data in a Cell Array” on page 8-5
- “Multilevel Indexing to Access Parts of Cells” on page 8-17

- “Comma-Separated Lists” on page 2-86

Preallocate Memory for a Cell Array

This example shows how to initialize and allocate memory for a cell array.

Cell arrays do not require completely contiguous memory. However, each cell requires contiguous memory, as does the cell array header that MATLAB creates to describe the array. For very large arrays, incrementally increasing the number of cells or the number of elements in a cell results in **Out of Memory** errors.

Initialize a cell array by calling the `cell` function, or by assigning to the last element. For example, these statements are equivalent:

```
C = cell(25,50);  
C{25,50} = [];
```

MATLAB creates the header for a 25-by-50 cell array. However, MATLAB does not allocate any memory for the contents of each cell.

For more information, see:

- “Preallocating Memory”
- “Memory Allocation” on page 24-2

Cell vs. Struct Arrays

This example compares cell and structure arrays, and shows how to store data in each type of array. Both cell and structure arrays allow you to store data of different types and sizes.

Structure Arrays

Structure arrays contain data in fields that you access by name.

For example, store patient records in a structure array.

```
patient(1).name = 'John Doe';  
patient(1).billing = 127.00;  
patient(1).test = [79, 75, 73; 180, 178, 177.5; 220, 210, 205];
```

```
patient(2).name = 'Ann Lane';  
patient(2).billing = 28.50;  
patient(2).test = [68, 70, 68; 118, 118, 119; 172, 170, 169];
```

Create a bar graph of the test results for each patient.

```
numPatients = numel(patient);  
for p = 1:numPatients  
    figure  
    bar(patient(p).test)  
    title(patient(p).name)  
end
```

Cell Arrays

Cell arrays contain data in cells that you access by numeric indexing. Common applications of cell arrays include storing lists of text strings and storing heterogeneous data from spreadsheets.

For example, store temperature data for three cities over time in a cell array.

```
temperature(1,:) = {'01-Jan-2010', [45, 49, 0]};  
temperature(2,:) = {'03-Apr-2010', [54, 68, 21]};  
temperature(3,:) = {'20-Jun-2010', [72, 85, 53]};  
temperature(4,:) = {'15-Sep-2010', [63, 81, 56]};
```

```
temperature(5,:) = {'31-Dec-2010', [38, 54, 18]};
```

Plot the temperatures for each city by date.

```
allTemps = cell2mat(temperature(:,2));  
dates = datenum(temperature(:,1), 'dd-mmm-yyyy');
```

```
plot(dates,allTemps)  
datetick('x','mmm')
```

Other Container Arrays

Struct and cell arrays are the most commonly used containers for storing heterogeneous data. If you have installed the Statistics Toolbox™, you can also use dataset arrays. Alternatively, use map containers, or create your own class.

See Also [containers.Map](#) |

Related Examples

- “Access Data in a Cell Array” on page 8-5
- “Access Data in a Structure Array” on page 7-6

Multilevel Indexing to Access Parts of Cells

This example explains techniques for accessing data in arrays stored within cells of cell arrays. To run the code in this example, create a sample cell array:

```
myNum = [1, 2, 3];
myCell = {'one', 'two'};
myStruct.Field1 = ones(3);
myStruct.Field2 = 5*ones(5);
```

```
C = {myNum, 100*myNum;
     myCell, myStruct};
```

Access the complete contents of a particular cell using curly braces, {}. For example,

```
C{1,2}
```

returns the numeric vector from that cell:

```
ans =
    100    200    300
```

Access part of the contents of a cell by appending indices, using syntax that matches the data type of the contents. For example:

- Enclose numeric indices in smooth parentheses. For example, `C{1,1}` returns the 1-by-3 numeric vector, `[1, 2, 3]`. Access the second element of that vector with the syntax

```
C{1,1}(1,2)
```

which returns

```
ans =
     2
```

- Enclose cell array indices in curly braces. For example, `C{2,1}` returns the cell array `{'one', 'two'}`. Access the contents of the second cell within that cell array with the syntax

```
C{2,1}{1,2}
```

which returns

```
ans =  
    two
```

- Refer to fields of a struct array with dot notation, and index into the array as described for numeric and cell arrays. For example, `C{2,2}` returns a structure array, where `Field2` contains a 5-by-5 numeric array of fives. Access the element in the fifth row and first column of that field with the syntax

```
C{2,2}.Field2(5,1)
```

which returns

```
ans =  
    5
```

You can nest any number of cell and structure arrays. For example, add nested cells and structures to `C`.

```
C{2,1}{2,2} = {pi, eps};  
C{2,2}.Field3 = struct('NestedField1', rand(3), ...  
                      'NestedField2', magic(4), ...  
                      'NestedField3', {'text'; 'more text'}) );
```

These assignment statements access parts of the new data:

```
copy_pi = C{2,1}{2,2}{1,1}  
  
part_magic = C{2,2}.Field3.NestedField2(1:2,1:2)  
  
nested_cell = C{2,2}.Field3.NestedField3{2,1}
```

MATLAB displays:

```
copy_pi =  
    3.1416  
  
part_magic =  
    16     2  
     5    11
```

```
nested_cell =  
    more text
```


Function Handles

- “What Is a Function Handle?” on page 9-2
- “Creating a Function Handle” on page 9-3
- “Calling a Function Using Its Handle” on page 9-7
- “Preserving Data from the Workspace” on page 9-10
- “Applications of Function Handles” on page 9-13
- “Saving and Loading Function Handles” on page 9-19
- “Advanced Operations on Function Handles” on page 9-20
- “Functions That Operate on Function Handles” on page 9-27

What Is a Function Handle?

A *function handle* is a callable association to a MATLAB function. It contains an association to that function that enables you to invoke the function regardless of where you call it from. This means that, even if you are outside the normal scope of a function, you can still call it if you use its handle.

With function handles, you can:

- Pass a function to another function
- Capture data values for later use by a function
- Call functions outside of their normal scope
- Save the handle in a MAT-file to be used in a later MATLAB session

See “Applications of Function Handles” on page 9-13 for an explanation of each of these applications.

Creating a Function Handle

In this section...

“Maximum Length of a Function Name” on page 9-4

“The Role of Scope, Precedence, and Overloading When Creating a Function Handle” on page 9-4

“Obtaining Permissions from Class Methods” on page 9-5

“Using Function Handles for Anonymous Functions” on page 9-6

“Arrays of Function Handles” on page 9-6

You construct a handle for a specific function by preceding the function name with an @ sign. The syntax is:

```
h = @functionname
```

where *h* is the variable to which the returned function handle is assigned.

Use only the function *name*, with no path information, after the @ sign. If there is more than one function with this name, MATLAB associates with the handle the one function source it would dispatch to if you were actually calling the function.

Create a handle *h* for a function `plot` that is on your MATLAB path:

```
h = @plot;
```

Once you create a handle for a function, you can invoke the function by means of the handle instead of using the function name. Because the handle contains the absolute path to its function, you can invoke the function from any location that MATLAB is able to reach, as long as the program file for the function still exists at this location. This means that functions in one file can call functions that are not on the MATLAB path, local functions in a separate file, or even functions that are private to another folder, and thus not normally accessible to that caller.

Maximum Length of a Function Name

Function names used in handles are unique up to N characters, where N is the number returned by the function `namelengthmax`. If the function name exceeds that length, MATLAB truncates the latter part of the name.

For function handles created for Sun™ Java constructors, the length of any segment of the package name or class name must not exceed `namelengthmax` characters. (The term *segment* refers to any portion of the name that lies before, between, or after a dot. For example, `java.lang.String` has three segments). The overall length of the string specifying the package and class has no limit.

The Role of Scope, Precedence, and Overloading When Creating a Function Handle

At the time you create a function handle, MATLAB must decide exactly which function it is to associate the handle to. In doing so, MATLAB uses the same rules used to determine which file to invoke when you make a function call. To make this determination, MATLAB considers the following:

- **Scope** — The function named must be on the MATLAB path at the time the handle is constructed.
- **Precedence** — MATLAB selects which function(s) to associate the handle with, according to the function precedence rules described under *Determining Which Function Gets Called*.
- **Overloading** — If additional files on the path overload the function for any of the fundamental MATLAB classes, such as `double` or `char`, then MATLAB associates the handle with these files, as well.

Program files that overload a function for classes other than the standard MATLAB classes are not associated with the function handle at the time it is constructed. Function handles do operate on these types of overloaded functions, but MATLAB determines which implementation to call at the time of evaluation in this case.

Obtaining Permissions from Class Methods

When creating a function handle inside a method of a class, the function is resolved using the permissions of that method. When MATLAB invokes the function handle, it does so using the permissions of the class. This gives MATLAB the same access as the location where the function handle was created, including access to private and protected methods accessible to that class.

Example

This example defines two methods. One, `updateObj`, defines a listener for an event called `Update`, and the other, `callbackfcn`, responds to this event whenever it should occur. The latter function is a private function and thus would not normally be within the scope of the `notify` function. However, because `@callbackfcn` is actually a function handle, it retains the permissions of the context that created the function handle:

```
classdef updateObj < handle
    events
        Update
    end

    methods
        function obj = updateObj(varargin)
            addlistener(obj, 'Update', @callbackfcn);
            notify(obj, 'Update');
        end
    end

    methods (Access = private)
        function obj = callbackfcn(obj, varargin)
            disp('Object Updated')
            disp(obj);
        end
    end
end
```

To run this function, invoke `updateObj` at the MATLAB command line.

Using Function Handles for Anonymous Functions

Function handles also serve as the means of invoking anonymous functions. An anonymous function is a one-line expression-based MATLAB function that does not require a program file.

For example, the statement

```
sqr = @(x) x.^2;
```

creates an anonymous function that computes the square of its input argument x . The `@` operator makes `sqr` a function handle, giving you a means of calling the function:

```
sqr(20)
ans =
    400
```

Like nested functions, a handle to an anonymous function also stores all data that will be needed to resolve the handle when calling the function. Shares same issues as nested functions do.

See the documentation on “Anonymous Functions” on page 15-23 for more information.

Arrays of Function Handles

To create an array of function handles, you must use a cell array:

```
trigFun = {@sin, @cos, @tan};
```

For example, to plot the cosine of the range $-\pi$ to π at 0.01 intervals, use

```
plot(trigFun{2}(-pi:0.01:pi))
```

Calling a Function Using Its Handle

In this section...

“Calling Syntax” on page 9-7

“Calling a Function with Multiple Outputs” on page 9-8

“Returning a Handle for Use Outside of a Function File” on page 9-8

“Example — Using Function Handles in Optimization” on page 9-9

Function handles can give you access to functions you might not be able to execute. For instance, with a handle you can call a function even if it is no longer on your MATLAB path. You can also call a local function from outside of the file that defines that function.

Calling Syntax

The syntax for calling a function using a function handle is the same as that used when calling the function directly. For example, if you call function `myFun` like this:

```
[out1, out2, ...] = myFun(in1, in2, ...);
```

then you would call it using a handle in the same way, but using the handle name instead:

```
fHandle = @myFun;
[out1, out2, ...] = fHandle(in1, in2, ...);
```

There is one small difference. If the function being called takes no input arguments, then you must call the function with empty parentheses placed after the handle name. If you use only the handle name, MATLAB just identifies the name of the function:

<pre>% This identifies the handle. fHandle = @computer; fHandle ans = @computer</pre>	<pre>% This invokes the function. fHandle = @computer; fHandle() ans = PCWIN</pre>
--	---

Calling a Function with Multiple Outputs

The example below returns multiple values from a call to an anonymous function. Create anonymous function `f` that locates the nonzero elements of an array, and returns the row, column, and value of each element in variables `row`, `col`, and `val`:

```
f = @(X)find(X);
```

Call the function on matrix `m` using the function handle `f`. Because the function uses the MATLAB `find` function which returns up to three outputs, you can specify from 0 to 3 outputs in the call:

```
m = [3 2 0; -5 0 7; 0 0 1]
m =
     3     2     0
    -5     0     7
     0     0     1
```

```
[row col val] = f(m);
```

```
val
val =
     3
    -5
     2
     7
     1
```

Returning a Handle for Use Outside of a Function File

As stated previously, you can use function handles to call a function that may otherwise be hidden or out of scope. This example function `getHandle` returns a function handle `fHandle` to a caller that is outside of the file:

```
function fHandle = getHandle
fHandle = @subFun;

function res = subFun(t1, t2, varargin);
...
```

Call `getHandle` to obtain a function handle with which to invoke the local function. You can now call the local function as you would any function that is in scope:

```
f1 = getHandle;  
result = f1(startTime, endTime, procedure);
```

Example — Using Function Handles in Optimization

Function handles can be particularly useful in optimization work. If you have the MathWorks Optimization Toolbox™ installed, click on any of the links below to find information and examples on this topic:

- “Passing Extra Parameters” — Calling objective or constraint functions that have parameters in addition to the independent variable.
- “Anonymous Function Objectives” — Use function handles in writing simple objective functions.
- “Nonlinear Curve Fitting with `lsqcurvefit`” — An example using `lsqcurvefit`, which takes two inputs for the objective.

Preserving Data from the Workspace

In this section...

“Preserving Data with Anonymous Functions” on page 9-10

“Preserving Data with Nested Functions” on page 9-11

Both anonymous functions and nested functions make use of variable data that is stored outside the body of the function itself. For example, the anonymous function shown here uses two variables: X and K . You pass the X variable into the anonymous function whenever you invoke the function. The value for K however is taken from the currently active workspace:

```
K = 200;  
fAnon = @(X)K * X;  
  
fAnon([2.54 1.43 0.68 1.90 1.02 2.13]);
```

What would happen if you tried to invoke this function after you cleared K from the workspace? Or if you saved the anonymous function to a `.mat` file and then loaded it into an entirely separate computing environment where K is not defined?

The answer is that MATLAB stores any values needed by an anonymous (or nested) function within the handle itself. It does this at the time you construct the handle. This does not include values from the argument list as these values get passed in whenever you call the function.

Preserving Data with Anonymous Functions

If you create an anonymous function at the MATLAB command window, that function has access to the workspace of your current MATLAB session. If you create the function inside of another function, then it has access to the outer function’s workspace. Either way, if your anonymous function depends upon variables from an outside workspace, then MATLAB stores the variables and their values within the function handle at the time the handle is created.

This example puts a 3-by-5 matrix into the base workspace, and then creates a function handle to an anonymous function that requires access to the matrix.

Create matrix A and anonymous function testAnon:

```
A = magic(5); A(4:5,:) = []
A =
    17    24     1     8    15
    23     5     7    14    16
     4     6    13    20    22
```

```
testAnon = @(x)x * A;           % Anonymous function
```

Call the anonymous function via its handle, passing in a multiplier value. This multiplies all elements by 5.2:

```
testAnon(5.2)
ans =
    88.4000   124.8000     5.2000    41.6000    78.0000
   119.6000    26.0000    36.4000    72.8000    83.2000
    20.8000    31.2000    67.6000   104.0000   114.4000
```

Clear variable A from the base workspace and verify that this action has no effect on the output of the anonymous function:

```
clear A

testAnon(5.2)
ans =
    88.4000   124.8000     5.2000    41.6000    78.0000
   119.6000    26.0000    36.4000    72.8000    83.2000
    20.8000    31.2000    67.6000   104.0000   114.4000
```

This works because the variable A and its value at the time the anonymous function is created is preserved within the function handle that also provides access to the anonymous function. See “Variables in the Expression” on page 15-24 for more information.

Preserving Data with Nested Functions

Nested functions are similar to anonymous functions in their ability to preserve workspace data needed by a function handle. In this case however, the workspace belongs to one of the functions inside of which the handle is being created. See “Sharing Variables Between Parent and Nested Functions”

on page 15-33 and “Using Handles to Store Function Parameters” on page 15-35 for more information on this subject.

This example shows a function `getHandles` that returns a handle to nested function `getApproxVal_V4`. The nested function uses two variables, `const` and `adjust`, from the workspace of the outer function. Calling `getHandles` creates a function handle to the nested function and also stores these two variables within that handle so that they will be available whenever the nested function is invoked:

```
function handle = getHandles(adjust)
const = 16.3;
handle = @getApproxVal_V4;

    function vOut = getApproxVal_V4(vectIn)
        vOut = ((vectIn+adjust)*const) + ((vectIn-adjust)*const);
    end
end
```

Call the `getHandles` function to obtain a handle to the nested function:

```
adjustVal = 0.023;
getApproxValue = getHandles(adjustVal);

getApproxValue([0.67 -0.09 1.01 0.33 -0.14 -0.23])
ans =
    21.8420    -2.9340    32.9260    10.7580    -4.5640    -7.4980
```

The documentation on “Examining a Function Handle” on page 9-20 explains how to see which variables are stored within a particular function handle. Another helpful resource is “Using Handles to Store Function Parameters” on page 15-35.

Loading a Saved Handle to a Nested Function

If you save a function handle to a nested function and, at some later date, modify the function and then reload the handle, you may observe unexpected behavior from the restored handle. when you invoke the function from the reloaded handle.

Applications of Function Handles

In this section...

“Example of Passing a Function Handle” on page 9-13

“Pass a Function to Another Function” on page 9-13

“Capture Data Values For Later Use By a Function” on page 9-15

“Call Functions Outside of Their Normal Scope” on page 9-18

“Save the Handle in a MAT-File for Use in a Later MATLAB Session” on page 9-18

Example of Passing a Function Handle

The following example creates a handle for a function supplied by MATLAB called `humps` and assigns it to the variable `h`. (The `humps` function returns a strong maxima near $x = 0.3$ and $x = 0.9$).

```
h = @humps;
```

After constructing the handle, you can pass it in the argument list of a call to some other function, as shown here. This example passes the function handle `h` that was just created as the first argument in a call to `fminbnd`. This function then minimizes over the interval `[0.3, 1]`.

```
x = fminbnd(h, 0.3, 1)
x =
    0.6370
```

Using a function handle enables you to pass different functions for `fminbnd` to use in determining its final result.

Pass a Function to Another Function

The ability to pass variables to a function enables you to run the function on different values. In the same way, you can pass function handles as input arguments to a function, thus allowing the called function to change the operations it runs on the input data.

Example 1 – Run quad on Varying Functions

Run the quadrature function on varying input functions:

```
a = 0; b = 5;

quad(@log, a, b)
ans =
    3.0472

quad(@sin, a, b)
ans =
    0.7163

quad(@humps, a, b)
ans =
    12.3566
```

Example 2 – Run quad on Anonymous Functions

Run quad on a MATLAB built-in function or an anonymous function:

```
n = quad(@log, 0, 3);

n = quad(@(x)x.^2, 0, 3);
```

Change the parameters of the function you pass to quad with a simple modification of the anonymous function that is associated with the function handle input:

```
a = 3.7;
z = quad(@(x)x.^a, 0, 3);
```

Example 3 – Compare quad Results on Different Functions

Compare the integral of the cosine function over the interval [a, b]:

```
a = 0; b = 10;
int1 = quad(@cos,a,b)

int1 =
```

```
-0.5440
```

with the integral over the same interval of the piecewise polynomial `pp` that approximates the cosine function by interpolating the computed values `x` and `y`:

```
x = a:b;  
y = cos(x);  
pp = spline(x,y);  
int2 = quad(@(x)ppval(pp,x), a, b)
```

```
int2 =  
-0.5485
```

Capture Data Values For Later Use By a Function

You can do more with a function handle than just create an association to a certain function. By using anonymous functions, you can also capture certain variables and their values from the function workspace and store them in the handle. These data values are stored in the handle at the time of its construction, and are contained within the handle for as long as it exists. Whenever you then invoke the function by means of its handle, MATLAB supplies the function with all variable inputs specified in the argument list of the function call, and also any constant inputs that were stored in the function handle at the time of its construction.

Storing some or all input data in a function handle enables you to reliably use the same set of data with that function regardless of where or when you invoke the handle. You can also interrupt your use of a function and resume it with the same data at a later time simply by saving the function handle to a MAT-file.

Example 1 – Constructing a Function Handle that Preserves Its Variables

Compare the following two ways of implementing a simple plotting function called `draw_plot`. The first case creates the function as one that you would call by name and that accepts seven inputs specifying coordinate and property information:

```
function draw_plot(x, y, lnSpec, lnWidth, mkEdge, mkFace, mkSize)
```

```
plot(x, y, lnSpec, ...
     'LineWidth', lnWidth, ...
     'MarkerEdgeColor', mkEdge, ...
     'MarkerFaceColor', mkFace, ...
     'MarkerSize', mkSize)
```

The second case implements `draw_plot` as an anonymous function to be called by a function handle, `h`. The `draw_plot` function has only two inputs now; the remaining five are specified only on a call to the handle constructor function, `get_plot_handle`:

```
function h = get_plot_handle(lnSpec, lnWidth, mkEdge, ...
                             mkFace, mkSize)
h = @draw_plot;
function draw_plot(x, y)
    plot(x, y, lnSpec, ...
         'LineWidth', lnWidth, ...
         'MarkerEdgeColor', mkEdge, ...
         'MarkerFaceColor', mkFace, ...
         'MarkerSize', mkSize)
end
end
```

Because these input values are required by the `draw_plot` function but are not made available in its argument list, MATLAB supplies them by storing them in the function handle for `draw_plot` at the time it is constructed. Construct the function handle `h`, also supplying the values to be stored in handle:

```
h = get_plot_handle('--rs', 2, 'k', 'g', 10);
```

Now call the function, specifying only the `x` and `y` inputs:

```
x = -pi:pi/10:pi;
y = tan(sin(x)) - sin(tan(x));
h(x, y) % Draw the plot
```

The later section on “Examining a Function Handle” on page 9-20 continues this example by showing how you can examine the contents of the function and workspace contents of this function handle.

Example 2 – Varying Data Values Stored in a Function Handle

Values stored within a handle to a nested function do not have to remain constant. The following function constructs and returns a function handle `h` to the anonymous function `addOne`. In addition to associating the handle with `addOne`, MATLAB also stores the initial value of `x` in the function handle:

```
function h = counter
x = 0;
h = @addOne;
    function y = addOne;
        x = x + 1;
        y = x;
    end
end
```

The `addOne` function that is associated with handle `h` increments variable `x` each time you call it. This modifies the value of the variable stored in the function handle:

```
h = counter;
h()
ans =
     1
h()
ans =
     2
```

Example 3 – You Cannot Vary Data in a Handle to an Anonymous Function

Unlike the example above, values stored within a handle to an anonymous function do remain constant. Construct a handle to an anonymous function that just returns the value of `x`, and initialize `x` to 300. The value of `x` within the function handle remains constant regardless of how you modify `x` external to the handle:

```
x = 300;
h = @( )x;

x = 50;
h()
```

```
ans =  
    300  
  
clear x  
h()  
ans =  
    300
```

Call Functions Outside of Their Normal Scope

By design, only functions within a program file are permitted to access local functions defined within that file. However, if, in this same file, you were to construct a function handle for one of the internal local functions, and then pass that handle to a variable that exists outside of the file, access to that local function would be essentially unlimited. By capturing the access to the local function in a function handle, and then making that handle available to functions external to the file (or to the command line), the example extends that scope. An example of this is shown in the preceding section, “Capture Data Values For Later Use By a Function” on page 9-15.

Private functions also have specific access rules that limit their availability with the MATLAB environment. But, as with local functions, MATLAB allows you to construct a handle for a private function. Therefore, you can call it by means of that handle from any location or even from the MATLAB command line, should it be necessary.

Save the Handle in a MAT-File for Use in a Later MATLAB Session

If you have one or more function handles that you would like to reuse in a later MATLAB session, you can store them in a MAT-file using the `save` function and then use `load` later on to restore them to your MATLAB workspace.

Saving and Loading Function Handles

You can save and load function handles in a MAT-file using the MATLAB `save` and `load` functions. If you load a function handle that you saved in an earlier MATLAB session, the following conditions could cause unexpected behavior:

- Any of the files that define the function have been moved, and thus no longer exist on the path stored in the handle.
- You load the function handle into an environment different from that in which it was saved. For example, the source for the function either does not exist or is located in a different folder than on the system on which the handle was saved.

In both of these cases, the function handle is now invalid because it is no longer associated with any existing function code. Although the handle is invalid, MATLAB still performs the load successfully and without displaying a warning. Attempting to invoke the handle, however, results in an error.

Invalid or Obsolete Function Handles

If you create a handle to a function that is not on the MATLAB path, or if you load a handle to a function that is no longer on the path, MATLAB catches the error only when the handle is invoked. You can assign an invalid handle and use it in such operations as `func2str`. MATLAB catches and reports an error only when you attempt to use it in a runtime operation.

Advanced Operations on Function Handles

In this section...

“Examining a Function Handle” on page 9-20

“Converting to and from a String” on page 9-21

“Comparing Function Handles” on page 9-23

Examining a Function Handle

Use the `functions` function to examine the contents of a function handle.

Caution MATLAB provides the `functions` function for querying and debugging purposes only. Because its behavior may change in subsequent releases, you should not rely upon it for programming purposes.

The following example is a continuation of an example in an earlier section of the Function Handles documentation. See Example 1 in the section “Capture Data Values For Later Use By a Function” on page 9-15 for the complete example.

Construct a function handle that contains both a function association, and data required by that function to execute. The following function constructs the function handle, `h`:

```
function h = get_plot_handle(lnSpec, lnWidth, mkEdge, ...
    mkFace, mkSize)
h = @draw_plot;
    function draw_plot(x, y)
        plot(x, y, lnSpec, ...
            'LineWidth', lnWidth, ...
            'MarkerEdgeColor', mkEdge, ...
            'MarkerFaceColor', mkFace, ...
            'MarkerSize', mkSize)
    end
end
```

Use functions to examine the contents of the returned handle:

```
f = functions(h)
f =
    function: 'get_plot_handle/draw_plot'
    type: 'nested'
    file: 'D:\matlab\work\get_plot_handle.m'
    workspace: {[1x1 struct]}
```

The call to `functions` returns a structure with four fields:

- **function** — Name of the function or local function to which the handle is associated. (Function names that follow a slash character (/) are implemented in the program code as local functions.)
- **type** — Type of function (e.g., simple, nested, anonymous)
- **file** — Filename and path to the file. (For built-in functions, this is the string 'MATLAB built-in function')
- **workspace** — Variables in the function workspace at the time the handle was constructed, along with their values

Examine the workspace variables that you saved in the function handle:

```
f.workspace{:}
ans =
    h: @get_plot_handle/draw_plot
    lnSpec: '--rs'
    lnWidth: 2
    mrkrEdge: 'k'
    mrkrFace: 'g'
    mrkrSize: 10
```

Converting to and from a String

Two functions, `str2func` and `func2str` enable you to convert between a string containing a function name and a function handle that is associated with that function name.

Converting a String to a Function Handle

Another means of creating a function handle is to convert a string that holds a function name to a handle for the named function. You can do this using the `str2func` function:

```
handle = str2func('functionname');
```

The example below takes the name of a function as the first argument. It compares part of the name to see if this is a polynomial function, converts the function string to a function handle if it is not, and then calls the function by means of its handle:

```
function run_function(funcname, arg1, arg2)
if strcmp(funcname, 'poly', 4)
    disp 'You cannot run polynomial functions on this data.'
    return
else
    h = str2func(funcname);
    h(arg1, arg2);
end
```

Note Nested functions are not accessible to `str2func`. To construct a function handle for a nested function, you must use the function handle constructor, `@`.

Converting a Function Handle to a String

You can also convert a function handle back into a string using the `func2str` function:

```
functionname = func2str(handle);
```

This example converts the function handle `h` to a string containing the function name, and then uses the function name in a message displayed to the user:

```
function call_h(h, arg1, arg2)
sprintf('Calling function %s ...\n', func2str(h))
h(arg1, arg2)
```

Comparing Function Handles

This section describes how MATLAB determines whether or not separate function handles are equal to each other:

- “Comparing Handles Constructed from a Named Function” on page 9-23
- “Comparing Handles to Anonymous Functions” on page 9-23
- “Comparing Handles to Nested Functions” on page 9-24
- “Comparing Handles Saved to a MAT-File” on page 9-25

Comparing Handles Constructed from a Named Function

MATLAB considers function handles that you construct from the same named function (e.g., `handle = @sin`) to be equal. The `isequal` function returns a value of `true` when comparing these types of handles:

```
func1 = @sin;
func2 = @sin;
isequal(func1, func2)
ans =
     1
```

If you save these handles to a MAT-file, and then load them back into the workspace later on, they are still equal.

Comparing Handles to Anonymous Functions

Unlike handles to named functions, any two function handles that represent the same anonymous function (i.e., handles to anonymous functions that contain the same text) are not equal. This is because MATLAB cannot guarantee that the frozen values of non-argument variables (such as `A`, below) are the same.

```
A = 5;
h1 = @(x)A * x.^2;
h2 = @(x)A * x.^2;

isequal(h1, h2)
ans =
     0
```

Note In general, MATLAB may underestimate the equality of function handles. That is, a test for equality may return `false` even when the functions happen to behave the same. But in cases where MATLAB does indicate equality, the functions are guaranteed to behave in an identical manner.

If you make a copy of an anonymous function handle, the copy and the original are equal:

```
h1 = @(x)A * x.^2;   h2 = h1;
isequal(h1, h2)
ans =
     1
```

Comparing Handles to Nested Functions

MATLAB considers function handles to the same nested function to be equal only if your code constructs these handles on the same call to the function containing the nested functions. Given this function that constructs two handles to the same nested function:

```
function [h1, h2] = test_eq(a, b, c)
h1 = @findZ;
h2 = @findZ;

    function z = findZ
        z = a.^3 + b.^2 + c';
    end
end
```

function handles constructed from the same nested function and on the same call to the parent function are considered equal:

```
[h1 h2] = test_eq(4, 19, -7);

isequal(h1, h2),
ans =
     1
```

while those constructed from different calls are not considered equal:

```
[q1 q2] = test_eq(3, -1, 2);  
  
isequal(h1, q1)  
ans =  
    0
```

Comparing Handles Saved to a MAT-File

If you save equivalent anonymous or nested function handles to separate MAT-files, and then load them back into the MATLAB workspace, they are no longer equal. This is because saving the function handle loses track of the original circumstances under which the function handle was created. Reloading it results in a function handle that compares as being unequal to the original function handle.

Create two equivalent anonymous function handles:

```
h1 = @(x) sin(x);  
h2 = h1;  
  
isequal(h1, h2)  
ans =  
    1
```

Save each to a different MAT-file:

```
save fname1 h1;  
save fname2 h2;
```

Clear the MATLAB workspace, and then load the function handles back into the workspace:

```
clear all  
load fname1  
load fname2
```

The function handles are no longer considered equal:

```
isequal(h1, h2)  
ans =
```

0

Note, however, that equal anonymous and nested function handles that you save to the same MAT-file are equal when loaded back into MATLAB.

Functions That Operate on Function Handles

MATLAB provides the following functions for working with function handles. See the reference pages for these functions for more information.

Function	Description
<code>functions</code>	Return information describing a function handle.
<code>func2str</code>	Construct a function name string from a function handle.
<code>str2func</code>	Construct a function handle from a function name string.
<code>save</code>	Save a function handle from the current workspace to a MAT-file.
<code>load</code>	Load a function handle from a MAT-file into the current workspace.
<code>isa</code>	Determine if a variable contains a function handle.
<code>isequal</code>	Determine if two function handles are handles to the same function.

Map Containers

- “Overview of the Map Data Structure” on page 10-2
- “Description of the Map Class” on page 10-4
- “Creating a Map Object” on page 10-6
- “Examining the Contents of the Map” on page 10-9
- “Reading and Writing Using a Key Index” on page 10-11
- “Modifying Keys and Values in the Map” on page 10-15
- “Mapping to Different Value Types” on page 10-18

Overview of the Map Data Structure

A *Map* is a type of fast key lookup data structure that offers a flexible means of indexing into its individual elements. Unlike most array data structures in the MATLAB software that only allow access to the elements by means of integer indices, the indices for a Map can be nearly any scalar numeric value or a character string.

Indices into the elements of a Map are called *keys*. These keys, along with the data *values* associated with them, are stored within the Map. Each entry of a Map contains exactly one unique key and its corresponding value. Indexing into the Map of rainfall statistics shown below with a string representing the month of August yields the value internally associated with that month, 37.3.

	KEYS	VALUES	
	Jan	327.2	
	Feb	368.2	
	Mar	197.6	
	Apr	178.4	
	May	100.0	
	Jun	69.9	
	Jul	32.3	
Aug →	Aug	37.3	→ 37.3
	Sep	19.0	
	Oct	37.0	
	Nov	73.2	
	Dec	110.9	
	Annual	1551.0	

Mean monthly rainfall statistics (mm)

Keys are not restricted to integers as they are with other arrays. Specifically, a key may be any of the following types:

- 1-by-N character array
- Scalar real double or single

- Signed or unsigned scalar integer

The values stored in a Map can be of any type. This includes arrays of numeric values, structures, cells, strings, objects, or other Maps.

Note A Map is most memory efficient when the data stored in it is a scalar number or a character array.

Description of the Map Class

In this section...

“Properties of the Map Class” on page 10-4

“Methods of the Map Class” on page 10-5

A Map is actually an object, or instance, of a MATLAB class called `Map`. It is also a handle object and, as such, it behaves like any other MATLAB handle object. This section gives a brief overview of the Map class. For more details, see the `containers.Map` reference page.

Properties of the Map Class

All objects of the Map class have three properties. You cannot write directly to any of these properties; you can change them only by means of the methods of the Map class.

Property	Description	Default
Count	Unsigned 64-bit integer that represents the total number of key/value pairs contained in the Map object.	0
KeyType	String that indicates the type of all keys contained in the Map object. <code>KeyType</code> can be any of the following: <code>double</code> , <code>single</code> , <code>char</code> , and signed or unsigned 32-bit or 64-bit integer. If you attempt to add keys of an unsupported type, <code>int8</code> for example, MATLAB makes them <code>double</code> .	<code>char</code>
ValueType	String that indicates the type of values contained in the Map object. If the values in a Map are all scalar numbers of the same type, <code>ValueType</code> is set to that type. If the values are all character arrays, <code>ValueType</code> is <code>'char'</code> . Otherwise, <code>ValueType</code> is <code>'any'</code> .	<code>any</code>

To examine one of these properties, follow the name of the Map object with a dot and then the property name. For example, to see what type of keys are used in Map `mapObj`, use

```
mapObj.KeyType
```

A Map is a handle object. As such, if you make a copy of the object, MATLAB does not create a new Map; it creates a new handle for the existing Map that you specify. If you alter the Map's contents in reference to this new handle, MATLAB applies the changes you make to the original Map as well. You can, however, delete the new handle without affecting the original Map.

Methods of the Map Class

The Map class implements the following methods. Their use is explained in the later sections of this documentation and also in the function reference pages.

Method	Description
<code>isKey</code>	Check if Map contains specified key
<code>keys</code>	Names of all keys in Map
<code>length</code>	Length of Map
<code>remove</code>	Remove key and its value from Map
<code>size</code>	Dimensions of Map
<code>values</code>	Values contained in Map

Creating a Map Object

In this section...

“Constructing an Empty Map Object” on page 10-6

“Constructing An Initialized Map Object” on page 10-7

“Combining Map Objects” on page 10-8

A Map is an object of the Map class. It is defined within a MATLAB package called `containers`. As with any class, you use its constructor function to create any new instances of it. You must include the package name when calling the constructor:

```
newMap = containers.Map(optional_keys_and_values)
```

Constructing an Empty Map Object

When you call the Map constructor with no input arguments, MATLAB constructs an empty Map object. When you do not end the command with a semicolon, MATLAB displays the following information about the object you have constructed:

```
newMap = containers.Map()
newMap =
  containers.Map handle
  Package: containers

  Properties:
    Count: 0
    KeyType: 'char'
    ValueType: 'any'
  Methods, Events, Superclasses
```

The properties of an empty Map object are set to their default values:

- `Count = 0`
- `KeyType = 'char'`
- `ValueType = 'any'`

Once you construct the empty Map object, you can use the `keys` and `values` methods to populate it. For a summary of MATLAB functions you can use with a Map object, see “Methods of the Map Class” on page 10-5

Constructing An Initialized Map Object

Most of the time, you will want to initialize the Map with at least some keys and values at the time you construct it. You can enter one or more sets of keys and values using the syntax shown here. The brace operators (`{}`) are not required if you enter only one key/value pair:

```
mapObj = containers.Map({key1, key2, ...}, {val1, val2, ...});
```

For those keys and values that are character strings, be sure that you specify them enclosed within single quotation marks. For example, when constructing a Map that has character string keys, use

```
mapObj = containers.Map(...
    {'keystr1', 'keystr2', ...}, {val1, val2, ...});
```

As an example of constructing an initialized Map object, create a new Map for the following key/value pairs taken from the monthly rainfall map shown earlier in this section.

KEYS	VALUES
Jan	327.2
Feb	368.2
Mar	197.6
Apr	178.4
May	100.0
Jun	69.9
Jul	32.3
Aug	37.3
Sep	19.0
Oct	37.0
Nov	73.2
Dec	110.9
Annual	1551.0

```
k = {'Jan', 'Feb', 'Mar', 'Apr', 'May', 'Jun', ...  
    'Jul', 'Aug', 'Sep', 'Oct', 'Nov', 'Dec', 'Annual'};  
  
v = {327.2, 368.2, 197.6, 178.4, 100.0, 69.9, ...  
    32.3, 37.3, 19.0, 37.0, 73.2, 110.9, 1551.0};  
  
rainfallMap = containers.Map(k, v)  
rainfallMap =  
    containers.Map handle  
    Package: containers  
  
Properties:  
    Count: 13  
    KeyType: 'char'  
    ValueType: 'double'  
    Methods, Events, Superclasses
```

The Count property is now set to the number of key/value pairs in the Map, 13, the KeyType is char, and the ValueType is double.

Combining Map Objects

You can combine Map objects vertically using concatenation. However, the result is not a vector of Maps, but rather a single Map object containing all key/value pairs of the contributing Maps. Horizontal vectors of Maps are not allowed. See “Building a Map with Concatenation” on page 10-13, below.

Examining the Contents of the Map

Each entry in a Map consists of two parts: a unique key and its corresponding value. To find all the keys in a Map, use the `keys` method. To find all of the values, use the `values` method.

Create a new Map called `tickets` that maps airline ticket numbers to the holders of those tickets. Construct the Map with four key/value pairs:

```
ticketMap = containers.Map(...
    {'2R175', 'B7398', 'A479GY', 'NZ1452'}, ...
    {'James Enright', 'Carl Haynes', 'Sarah Latham', ...
     'Bradley Reid'});
```

Use the `keys` method to display all keys in the Map. MATLAB lists keys of type `char` in alphabetical order, and keys of any numeric type in numerical order:

```
keys(ticketMap)
ans =
    '2R175'    'A479GY'    'B7398'    'NZ1452'
```

Next, display the values that are associated with those keys in the Map. The order of the values is determined by the order of the keys associated with them.

This table shows the keys listed in alphabetical order:

keys	values
2R175	James Enright
A479GY	Sarah Latham
B7398	Carl Haynes
NZ1452	Bradley Reid

The `values` method uses the same ordering of values:

```
values(ticketMap)
ans =
```

'James Enright' 'Sarah Latham' 'Carl Haynes' 'Bradley Reid'

Reading and Writing Using a Key Index

In this section...

“Reading From the Map” on page 10-11

“Adding Key/Value Pairs” on page 10-12

“Building a Map with Concatenation” on page 10-13

When reading from the Map, use the same keys that you have defined and associated with particular values. Writing new entries to the Map requires that you supply the values to store with a key for each one .

Note For a large Map, the keys and value methods use a lot of memory as their outputs are cell arrays.

Reading From the Map

After you have constructed and populated your Map, you can begin to use it to store and retrieve data. You use a Map in the same manner that you would an array, except that you are not restricted to using integer indices. The general syntax for looking up a value (`valueN`) for a given key (`keyN`) is shown here. If the key is a character string, enclose it in single quotation marks:

```
valueN = mapObj(keyN);
```

You can find any single value by indexing into the map with the appropriate key:

```
passenger = ticketMap('2R175')
passenger =
    James Enright
```

Find the person who holds ticket A479GY:

```
sprintf('    Would passenger %s please come to the desk?\n', ...
    ticketMap('A479GY'))
ans =
    Would passenger Sarah Latham please come to the desk?
```

To access the values of multiple keys, use the `values` method, specifying the keys in a cell array:

```
values(ticketMap, {'2R175', 'B7398'})
ans =
    'James Enright'    'Carl Haynes'
```

Map containers support scalar indexing only. You cannot use the colon operator to access a range of keys as you can with other MATLAB classes. For example, the following statements throw an error:

```
ticketMap('2R175':'B7398')
ticketMap(:)
```

Adding Key/Value Pairs

Unlike other array types, each entry in a Map consists of two items: the value and its key. When you write a new value to a Map, you must supply its key as well. This key must be consistent in type with any other keys in the Map.

Use the following syntax to insert additional elements into a Map:

```
existingMapObj(newKeyName) = newValue;
```

Add two more entries to the `ticketMap` used in the above examples, Verify that the Map now has five key/value pairs:

```
ticketMap('947F4') = 'Susan Spera';
ticketMap('417R93') = 'Patricia Hughes';
```

```
ticketMap.Count
ans =
    6
```

List all of the keys and values in Map `ticketMap`:

```
keys(ticketMap), values(ticketMap)
ans =
    '2R175'    '417R93'    '947F4'    'A479GY'    'B7398'    'NZ1452'
ans =
    Columns 1 through 3
```

```
'James Enright'   'Patricia Hughes'   'Susan Spera'
Columns 4 through 6
'Sarah Latham'   'Carl Haynes'   'Bradley Reid'
```

Building a Map with Concatenation

You can add key/value pairs to a Map in groups using concatenation. The concatenation of Map objects is different from other classes. Instead of building a vector of s, MATLAB returns a single Map containing the key/value pairs from each of the contributing Map objects.

Rules for the concatenation of Map objects are:

- Only vertical vectors of Map objects are allowed. You cannot create an m-by-n array or a horizontal vector of s. For this reason, `vertcat` is supported for Map objects, but not `horzcat`.
- All keys in each map being concatenated must be of the same class.
- You can combine Maps with different numbers of key/value pairs. The result is a single Map object containing key/value pairs from each of the contributing maps:

```
tMap1 = containers.Map({'2R175', 'B7398', 'A479GY'}, ...
    {'James Enright', 'Carl Haynes', 'Sarah Latham'});

tMap2 = containers.Map({'417R93', 'NZ1452', '947F4'}, ...
    {'Patricia Hughes', 'Bradley Reid', 'Susan Spera'});

% Concatenate the two maps:
ticketMap = [tMap1; tMap2];
```

The result of this concatenation is the same 6-element map that was constructed in the previous section:

```
ticketMap.Count
ans =
    6

keys(ticketMap), values(ticketMap)
ans =
    '2R175'   '417R93'   '947F4'   'A479GY'   'B7398'   'NZ1452'
```

```
ans =  
  Columns 1 through 3  
    'James Enright'    'Patricia Hughes'    'Susan Spera'  
  Columns 4 through 6  
    'Sarah Latham'    'Carl Haynes'    'Bradley Reid'
```

- Concatenation does not include duplicate keys or their values in the resulting Map object.

In the following example, both objects `m1` and `m2` use a key of 8. In Map `m1`, 8 is a key to value C; in `m2`, it is a key to value X:

```
m1 = containers.Map({1, 5, 8}, {'A', 'B', 'C'});  
m2 = containers.Map({8, 9, 6}, {'X', 'Y', 'Z'});
```

Combine `m1` and `m2` to form a new Map object, `m`:

```
m = [m1; m2];
```

The resulting Map object `m` has only five key/value pairs. The value C was dropped from the concatenation because its key was not unique:

```
keys(m), values(m)  
ans =  
    [1]    [5]    [6]    [8]    [9]  
ans =  
    'A'    'B'    'Z'    'X'    'Y'
```


Modifying Keys and Values in the Map

In this section...

“Removing Keys and Values from the Map” on page 10-15

“Modifying Values” on page 10-15

“Modifying Keys” on page 10-16

“Modifying a Copy of the Map” on page 10-16

Note Keep in mind that if you have more than one handle to a Map, modifying the handle also makes changes to the original Map. See “Modifying a Copy of the Map” on page 10-16, below.

Removing Keys and Values from the Map

Use the `remove` method to delete any entries from a Map. When calling this method, specify the Map object name and the key name to remove. MATLAB deletes the key and its associated value from the Map.

The syntax for the `remove` method is

```
remove(mapName, 'keyname');
```

Remove one entry (the specified key and its value) from the Map object:

```
remove(ticketMap, 'NZ1452');
values(ticketMap)
ans =
    Columns 1 through 3
    'James Enright'    'Patricia Hughes'    'Susan Spera'
    Columns 4 through 5
    'Sarah Latham'    'Carl Haynes'
```

Modifying Values

You can modify any value in a Map simply by overwriting the current value. The passenger holding ticket A479GY is identified as Sarah Latham:

```
ticketMap('A479GY')
ans =
    Sarah Latham
```

Change the passenger's first name to Anna Latham by overwriting the original value for the A479GY key:

```
ticketMap('A479GY') = 'Anna Latham';
```

Verify the change:

```
ticketMap('A479GY')
ans =
    'Anna Latham';
```

Modifying Keys

To modify an existing key while keeping the value the same, first remove both the key and its value from the Map. Then create a new entry, this time with the corrected key name.

Modify the ticket number belonging to passenger James Enright:

```
remove(ticketMap, '2R175');
ticketMap('2S185') = 'James Enright';

k = keys(ticketMap); v = values(ticketMap);
str1 = '    '%s'' has been assigned a new\n';
str2 = '    ticket number: %s.\n';

fprintf(str1, v{1})
fprintf(str2, k{1})

'James Enright' has been assigned a new
    ticket number: 2S185.
```

Modifying a Copy of the Map

Because `ticketMap` is a handle object, you need to be careful when making copies of the Map. Keep in mind that by copying a Map object, you are really

just creating another handle to the same object. Any changes you make to this handle are also applied to the original Map.

Make a copy of Map `ticketMap`. Write to this copy, and notice that the change is applied to the original Map object itself:

```
copiedMap = ticketMap;

copiedMap('AZ12345') = 'unidentified person';
ticketMap('AZ12345')
ans =
    unidentified person
```

Clean up:

```
remove(ticketMap, 'AZ12345');
clear copiedMap;
```

Mapping to Different Value Types

In this section...

“Mapping to a Structure Array” on page 10-18

“Mapping to a Cell Array” on page 10-19

It is fairly common to store other classes, such as structures or cell arrays, in a Map structure. However, Maps are most memory efficient when the data stored in them belongs to one of the basic MATLAB types such as double, char, integers, and logicals.

Mapping to a Structure Array

The following example maps airline seat numbers to structures that contain information on who occupies the seat. To start out, create the following structure array:

```
s1.ticketNum = '2S185'; s1.destination = 'Barbados';
s1.reserved = '06-May-2008'; s1.origin = 'La Guardia';
s2.ticketNum = '947F4'; s2.destination = 'St. John';
s2.reserved = '14-Apr-2008'; s2.origin = 'Oakland';
s3.ticketNum = 'A479GY'; s3.destination = 'St. Lucia';
s3.reserved = '28-Mar-2008'; s3.origin = 'JFK';
s4.ticketNum = 'B7398'; s4.destination = 'Granada';
s4.reserved = '30-Apr-2008'; s4.origin = 'JFK';
s5.ticketNum = 'NZ1452'; s5.destination = 'Aruba';
s5.reserved = '01-May-2008'; s5.origin = 'Denver';
```

Map five of the seats to one of these structures:

```
seatingMap = containers.Map( ...
    {'23F', '15C', '15B', '09C', '12D'}, ...
    {s5, s1, s3, s4, s2});
```

Using this Map object, find information about the passenger, who has reserved seat 09C:

```
seatingMap('09C')
ans =
```

```

        ticketNum: 'B7398'
    destination: 'Granada'
        reserved: '30-Apr-2008'
        origin: 'JFK'

```

```

seatingMap('15B').ticketNum
ans =
    A479GY

```

Using two Maps together, you can find out the name of the person who has reserved the seat:

```

passenger = ticketMap(seatingMap('15B').ticketNum)
passenger =
    Anna Latham

```

Mapping to a Cell Array

As with structures, you can also map to a cell array in a Map object. Continuing with the airline example of the previous sections, some of the passengers on the flight have “frequent flyer” accounts with the airline. Map the names of these passengers to records of the number of miles they have used and the number of miles they still have available:

```

accountMap = containers.Map( ...
    {'Susan Spera', 'Carl Haynes', 'Anna Latham'}, ...
    {{247.5, 56.1}, {0, 1342.9}, {24.6, 314.7}});

```

Use the Map to retrieve account information on the passengers:

```

name = 'Carl Haynes';
acct = accountMap(name);

fprintf('%s has used %.1f miles on his/her account,\n', ...
    name, acct{1})
fprintf(' and has %.1f miles remaining.\n', acct{2})

```

```

Carl Haynes has used 0.0 miles on his/her account,
    and has 1342.9 miles remaining.

```


Combining Unlike Classes

- “Valid Combinations of Unlike Classes” on page 11-2
- “Combining Unlike Integer Types” on page 11-3
- “Combining Integer and Noninteger Data” on page 11-6
- “Combining Cell Arrays with Non-Cell Arrays” on page 11-7
- “Empty Matrices” on page 11-8
- “Concatenation Examples” on page 11-9

Valid Combinations of Unlike Classes

Matrices and arrays can be composed of elements of most any MATLAB data type as long as all elements in the matrix are of the same type. If you do include elements of unlike classes when constructing a matrix, MATLAB converts some elements so that all elements of the resulting matrix are of the same type.

Data type conversion is done with respect to a preset precedence of classes. The following table shows the five classes you can concatenate with an unlike type without generating an error (that is, with the exception of character and logical).

TYPE	character	integer	single	double	logical
character	character	character	character	character	invalid
integer	character	integer	integer	integer	integer
single	character	integer	single	single	single
double	character	integer	single	double	double
logical	invalid	integer	single	double	logical

For example, concatenating a double and single matrix always yields a matrix of type single. MATLAB converts the double element to single to accomplish this.

Concepts

- “Combining Unlike Integer Types” on page 11-3
- “Combining Integer and Noninteger Data” on page 11-6
- “Combining Cell Arrays with Non-Cell Arrays” on page 11-7
- “Concatenation Examples” on page 11-9

Combining Unlike Integer Types

In this section...

“Overview” on page 11-3

“Example of Combining Unlike Integer Sizes” on page 11-4

“Example of Combining Signed with Unsigned” on page 11-4

Overview

If you combine different integer types in a matrix (e.g., signed with unsigned, or 8-bit integers with 16-bit integers), MATLAB returns a matrix in which all elements are of one common type. MATLAB sets all elements of the resulting matrix to the data type of the left-most element in the input matrix. For example, the result of the following concatenation is a vector of three 16-bit signed integers:

```
A = [int16(450) uint8(250) int32(1000000)]
```

MATLAB also displays a warning to inform you that the result may not be what you had expected:

```
A = [int16(450) uint8(250) int32(1000000)];  
Warning: Concatenation with dominant (left-most) integer class  
may overflow other operands on conversion to return class.
```

You can disable this warning by entering the following two commands directly after the operation that caused the warning. The first command retrieves the message identifier associated with the most recent warning issued by MATLAB. The second command uses this identifier to disable any further warnings of that type from being issued:

```
[msg, intcat_msgid] = lastwarn;  
warning('off', intcat_msgid);
```

To re-enable the warning so that it will now be displayed, use

```
warning('on', intcat_msgid);
```

You can use these commands to disable or enable the display of any MATLAB warning.

Example of Combining Unlike Integer Sizes

After disabling the integer concatenation warnings as shown above, concatenate the following two numbers once, and then switch their order. The return value depends on the order in which the integers are concatenated. The left-most type determines the data type for all elements in the vector:

```
A = [int16(5000) int8(50)]
A =
    5000    50
```

```
B = [int8(50) int16(5000)]
B =
    50   127
```

The first operation returns a vector of 16-bit integers. The second returns a vector of 8-bit integers. The element `int16(5000)` is set to 127, the maximum value for an 8-bit signed integer.

The same rules apply to vertical concatenation:

```
C = [int8(50); int16(5000)]
C =
    50
   127
```

Note You can find the maximum or minimum values for any MATLAB integer type using the `intmax` and `intmin` functions. For floating-point types, use `realmax` and `realmin`.

Example of Combining Signed with Unsigned

Now do the same exercise with signed and unsigned integers. Again, the left-most element determines the data type for all elements in the resulting matrix:

```
A = [int8(-100) uint8(100)]
A =
   -100    100
```

```
B = [uint8(100) int8(-100)]
B =
    100     0
```

The element `int8(-100)` is set to zero because it is no longer signed.

MATLAB evaluates each element *prior to* concatenating them into a combined array. In other words, the following statement evaluates to an 8-bit signed integer (equal to 50) and an 8-bit unsigned integer (unsigned -50 is set to zero) before the two elements are combined. Following the concatenation, the second element retains its zero value but takes on the unsigned `int8` type:

```
A = [int8(50), uint8(-50)]
A =
    50     0
```

Combining Integer and Noninteger Data

If you combine integers with `double`, `single`, or `logical` classes, all elements of the resulting matrix are given the data type of the left-most integer. For example, all elements of the following vector are set to `int32`:

```
A = [true pi int32(1000000) single(17.32) uint8(250)]
```

Combining Cell Arrays with Non-Cell Arrays

Combining a number of arrays in which one or more is a cell array returns a new cell array. Each of the original arrays occupies a cell in the new array:

```
A = [100, {uint8(200), 300}, 'MATLAB'];  
whos A
```

Name	Size	Bytes	Class	Attributes
A	1x4	477	cell	

Each element of the combined array maintains its original class:

```
fprintf('Classes: %s %s %s %s\n',...  
       class(A{1}),class(A{2}),class(A{3}),class(A{4}))
```

```
Classes: double uint8 double char
```

Empty Matrices

If you construct a matrix using empty matrix elements, the empty matrices are ignored in the resulting matrix:

```
A = [5.36; 7.01; []; 9.44]
```

```
A =
```

```
5.3600
```

```
7.0100
```

```
9.4400
```

Concatenation Examples

In this section...

“Combining Single and Double Types” on page 11-9

“Combining Integer and Double Types” on page 11-9

“Combining Character and Double Types” on page 11-10

“Combining Logical and Double Types” on page 11-10

Combining Single and Double Types

Combining `single` values with `double` values yields a `single` matrix. Note that 5.73×10^{300} is too big to be stored as a `single`, thus the conversion from `double` to `single` sets it to infinity. (The `class` function used in this example returns the data type for the input value).

```
x = [single(4.5) single(-2.8) pi 5.73*10^300]
x =
    4.5000    -2.8000    3.1416         Inf

class(x)           % Display the data type of x
ans =
    single
```

Combining Integer and Double Types

Combining integer values with `double` values yields an integer matrix. Note that the fractional part of `pi` is rounded to the nearest integer. (The `int8` function used in this example converts its numeric argument to an 8-bit integer).

```
x = [int8(21) int8(-22) int8(23) pi 45/6]
x =
    21    -22    23     3     7

class(x)
ans =
    int8
```

Combining Character and Double Types

Combining character values with double values yields a character matrix. MATLAB converts the double elements in this example to their character equivalents:

```
x = ['A' 'B' 'C' 68 69 70]
x =
  ABCDEF
```

```
class(x)
ans =
  char
```

Combining Logical and Double Types

Combining logical values with double values yields a double matrix. MATLAB converts the logical true and false elements in this example to double:

```
x = [true false false pi sqrt(7)]
x =
  1.0000         0         0   3.1416   2.6458
```

```
class(x)
ans =
  double
```


Using Objects

- “MATLAB Objects” on page 12-2
- “General Purpose Vs. Specialized Arrays” on page 12-5
- “Key Object Concepts” on page 12-8
- “Creating Objects” on page 12-11
- “Accessing Object Data” on page 12-14
- “Calling Object Methods” on page 12-16
- “Desktop Tools Are Object Aware” on page 12-19
- “Getting Information About Objects” on page 12-21
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MATLAB Objects

In this section...
“Getting Oriented” on page 12-2
“What Are Objects and Why Use Them?” on page 12-2
“Working with Objects” on page 12-3
“Objects In the MATLAB Language” on page 12-3
“Other Kinds of Objects Used by MATLAB” on page 12-4

Getting Oriented

This section provides information for people using objects. It does not provide a thorough treatment of object-oriented concepts, but instead focuses on what you need to know to use the objects provided with MATLAB.

If you are interested in object-oriented programming in the MATLAB language, see “Object-Oriented Programming”. For background information on objects, see object-oriented design.

What Are Objects and Why Use Them?

In the simplest sense, objects are special-purpose data structures that have a specific set of operations that you can perform on the data they contain.

You do not need to know how objects implement operations or store data. This fact makes objects modular and easy to pass within application programs. It also isolates your code from changes to the object’s design and implementation.

MATLAB uses objects because they are a convenient way to package data. Working with objects in MATLAB is like working with any variables and is often more convenient because objects are optimized for specific purposes. Think of an object as a neatly packaged collection of data that includes functions that operate on the data. The documentation for any particular object describes how to use it.

Objects are organized collections of data and functions that have been designed for specific purposes.

For example, an object might contain time series data that consists of value/time-sample pairs and associated information like units, sample uniformity, and so on. This object can have a set of specific operations designed to perform analysis, such as filtering, interpolating, and plotting.

Working with Objects

You can perform the common operations on objects like you can on any variable. For example, you can do the following things with objects:

- Create it and assign a variable name so you can reference it again
- Assign or reassign data to it (see “Accessing Object Data” on page 12-14)
- Operate on its data (see “Calling Object Methods” on page 12-16)
- Convert it to another class (if this operation is supported by the object’s class)
- Save it to a MAT-file so you can reload it later (see `save`)
- Copy it (see “Copying Objects” on page 12-26)
- Clear it from the workspace (`clear`)

Any object can have restrictions on how you create it, access its data, or what operations you can perform on it. Refer to the documentation for the particular MATLAB object for a description of what you can do with that object.

Objects In the MATLAB Language

The MATLAB language uses many specialized objects. For example, `MException` objects capture information when errors occur, `timer` objects execute code at a certain time interval, the `serial` object enables you to communicate with devices connected to your computer’s serial port, and so on. MATLAB toolboxes often define objects to manage data and analyses performed by the toolbox.

Objects provide specific functionality that is not necessarily available from general purpose language components.

Other Kinds of Objects Used by MATLAB

The MATLAB language enables you to use objects that are defined other in languages. The following objects are different from the MATLAB objects described in this documentation. See the individual sections referenced below for information on using these objects.

- Handle Graphics® objects create graphs and GUIs. These objects provide a `set/get` interface to property values. You cannot subclass graphics objects. See “Graphics Objects” for more information.
- Sun Java classes enable you to access the capabilities of Java classes from MATLAB programs. See “Java Libraries” for more information.
- Microsoft COM objects enable you to integrate these software components into your application. See “COM Objects” for more information.
- Microsoft .NET objects enable you to integrate .NET assemblies into your application. See “.NET Libraries” for more information.
- User-defined MATLAB objects created prior to Version 7.6 used different syntax for class definition (no `classdef` block) and exhibit other differences. See “Compatibility with Previous Versions ” for more information.

General Purpose Vs. Specialized Arrays

In this section...

“How They Differ” on page 12-5

“Using General-Purpose Data Structures” on page 12-5

“Using Specialized Objects” on page 12-6

How They Differ

The MATLAB language uses both general-purpose and specialized arrays. For example, numeric, `struct`, and `cell` arrays provide general-purpose data storage. You typically extract data from the array and pass this data to functions (for example, to perform mathematical analysis). Then, you store the result in general-purpose arrays.

When using a specialized object, you typically pass data to a function that creates the object. Once created, you use specially defined functions to operate on the data. These functions are unique to the object and are designed specifically for the type and structure of the data contained by the object.

Using General-Purpose Data Structures

A commonly used general-purpose data structure references data via fieldnames. For example, these statements create a MATLAB struct (a MATLAB structure array):

```
s.Data = rand(10,1);  
s.Time = .01:.01:.1;  
s.Name = 'Data1';  
s.Units = 'seconds';
```

The structure `s` contains two arrays of numbers. However, `s` is a generic type in the sense that MATLAB does not define special functions to operate on the data in this particular structure. For example, while `s` contains two fields that would be useful to plot, `Data` and `Time`, you cannot pass `s` to the `plot` function:

```
plot(s)  
Error using plot
```

Not enough input arguments.

While `s` has enough information to create a plot of Data versus Time, `plot` cannot access this data because structures like `s` can contain any values in its fields and the fields can have any name. Just because one field is named Data does not force you to assign data to that field.

To plot the data in `s`, you have to extract the data from the fields, pass them as numeric arrays in the desired order to the plot function, add a title, labels, and so on:

```
plot(s.Time,s.Data)
title(['Time Series Plot: ' s.Name])
xlabel(['Time (' s.Units ')'])
ylabel(s.Name)
```

You could create a function to perform these steps for you. Other programs using the structure `s` would need to create their own functions or access the one you created.

Using Specialized Objects

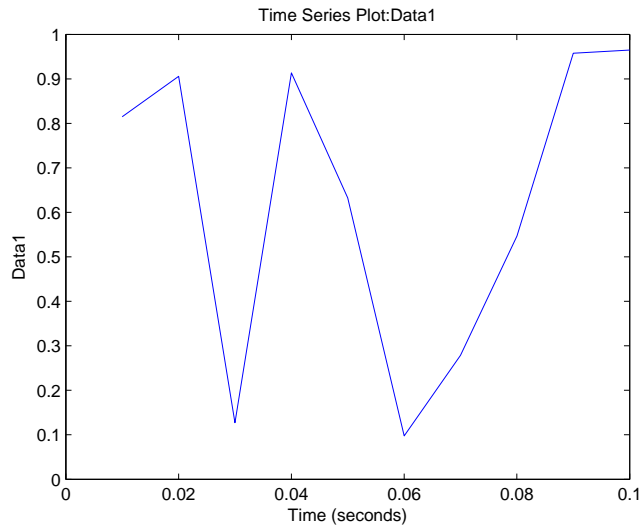
Compare the array `s` above to an object that you have designed specifically to contain and manipulate time series data. For example, the following statement creates a MATLAB `timeseries` object. It is initialized to store the same data as the structure `s` above:

```
tsobj = timeseries(rand(10,1),.01:.01:.1,'Name','Data1');
```

The function that creates the object `tsobj`, accepts sample data, sample times, a property name/property value pair (`Name/Data1`), and uses a default value of `Units` (which is seconds).

The designer of this object created a special version of the `plot` function that works directly with this object. For example:

```
plot(tsobj)
```



Notice how the object's `plot` function creates a graph that is plotted and labeled with the data from the `tsobj` object. As a user of this object, you do not need write your own code to produce this graph. The class design specifies the standard way to present graphs of `timeseries` data and all clients of this object use the same code for plotting.

See "Time Series Objects" for more on using MATLAB `timeseries` objects.

Key Object Concepts

In this section...
“Basic Concepts” on page 12-8
“Classes Describe How to Create Objects” on page 12-8
“Properties Contain Data” on page 12-9
“Methods Implement Operations” on page 12-9
“Events are Notices Broadcast to Listening Objects” on page 12-10

Basic Concepts

There are some basic concepts that are fundamental to objects. Objects represent something in the real world, like an error condition or the set of data you collected in a product test. Objects enable you to do something useful, like provide an error report or analyze and present the results of tests.

There are basic components that MATLAB uses to realize the design of an object. These components include:

- Classes
- Properties
- Methods
- Events

Classes Describe How to Create Objects

A *class* defines a set of similar objects. It is a description from which MATLAB creates a particular instance of the class, and it is the instance (that is, the object) that contains actual data. Therefore, while there is a `timeseries` class, you work with `timeseries` objects.

Classes are defined in code files — either as separate `.m` files or built-in to the MATLAB executable. Objects are specific representations of a class that you access through workspace variables.

Properties Contain Data

Objects store data in *properties*. Consider a `timeseries` object as an example. `timeseries` object properties contain time series data, corresponding time values, and related information, such as units, events, data quality, and interpolation method. MATLAB objects enable you to access property data directly (see “Accessing Object Data” on page 12-14 for information on property syntax).

Properties are sometimes called fields in other programming languages and are similar to the fields of MATLAB structures. Properties have descriptive names, such as `Data` and `DataInfo`, in the case of `timeseries` objects, and can contain any kind of MATLAB data, including other objects.

An object, then, is a container for a predefined set of data. Unlike a cell array or structure, you cannot add new properties or delete defined properties from an object. Doing so would compromise the object’s intended purpose and violate the class design.

The class design can restrict the values you can assign to a property. For example, a `Length` property might restrict possible values to positive integers or might be read only and determine its own value when queried.

Methods Implement Operations

Class *methods* are functions designed to work with objects of a particular class. Methods enable the class designer to implement specific operations that are optimized for the data contained in the object. You do not have to extract the data from the object, modify its format, and pass it to a general-purpose MATLAB function because the class defines methods with an awareness of the object’s structure.

Methods can define operations that are unique to a particular class of object, such as adding a data sample to an existing set of time series data, or can *overload* common operations in a way that makes sense for the particular object. For example, `timeseries` objects have an `addsample` method to add a new data sample to an existing `timeseries` object. Also, `timeseries` overloads the MATLAB `plot` function to work with `timeseries` objects.

MATLAB software determines which overloaded version of a method to call based on the class of the object passed as an argument. If you execute a MATLAB statement like:

```
tsobjnew = tsobj1 + tsobj2;
```

where `tsobj1` and `tsobj2` are `timeseries` objects, MATLAB calls the `timeseries` version of the `+` operation (if defined) and returns a new `timeseries` object.

Because the `timeseries` class defines the operation, you can add a `timeseries` object to a scalar number:

```
tsobjnew = tsobj1 + 4;
```

The class definition determines what happens when you add a scalar double to a `timeseries` object (the scalar is added to each `Data` value).

Methods make working with objects convenient for the user, but also provide advantages to the class designer. Methods hide implementation details from users—you do not need to create your own functions to access and manipulate data, as you would when using general-purpose data structures like `structs` and cell arrays. This provides the flexibility to change the internal design of an object without affecting object clients (i.e., application programs that use the objects).

Events are Notices Broadcast to Listening Objects

Classes can define names for specific actions and trigger the broadcast of notices when those actions occur. Listeners respond to the broadcast of an event notice by executing a predefined function.

For example, objects can listen for the change of the value of a property and execute a function when that change occurs. If an object defines an event for which you can define a listening object, the object's documentation describes that event. See "Events" for information on how class designers use events.

Creating Objects

In this section...

“Class Constructor” on page 12-11

“When to Use Package Names” on page 12-11

Class Constructor

Usually, you create an object by calling a function designed for the purpose of creating that specific class of object. For example, the following code creates a `timeseries` object and assigns it to the variable `tsobj`:

```
load count.dat % Load some data
tsobj = timeseries(count(:,1),1:24, 'Name', 'Data1');
```

The `timeseries` constructor creates an object and initializes its data with the values specified as arguments. Classes that create objects define a special method whose purpose is to create objects of the class. This method has the same name as the class and is called the *class constructor*.

However, in some cases, you might create objects by calling other functions or even using a GUI. For example, a `try-catch` block can return an `MException` object that contains information about a specific error condition. In this case, you do not explicitly create the object, rather it is returned by the `catch` statement (see “Accessing Object Data” on page 12-14 for an example).

When to Use Package Names

A package is a container that provides a logical grouping for class and function definitions. The class and function names within a given package must be unique, but can be reused in other packages. Packages are folders that begin with the `+` character.

If a package folder contains a class definition, then you must use the package name when calling the class constructor. For example, this statement creates a `Map` object, whose class definition file is in a folder in the `containers` package:

```
mapobj = containers.Map({'rose', 'bicycle'}, {'flower', 'machine'});
```

You need to use the package name to refer to:

- Class constructors (e.g., `containers.Map`), which you call to create an object
- Static methods (methods that do not require an object of the class as an argument)
- Package functions (functions defined in the package)

However, because MATLAB uses the class of an object to determine which ordinary method to call, you do not need to use the package name in conjunction with object references. For example, suppose you have the following folder structure:

```
pathfolder/+packagename/@ClassName/ClassName.m
pathfolder/+packagename/@ClassName/staticMethodName.m
pathfolder/+packagename/functionName.m
```

In the following examples, `obj` is the object you are creating.

```
% Create object of ClassName
obj = packagename.ClassName(...);

% Call methodName
obj.methodName(...);

% Set or get the value of property PropertyName
obj.PropertyName = x;
x = obj.PropertyName;

% Call static method staticMethodName
packagename.ClassName.staticMethodName(...);

% Call package function functionName
packagename.functionName(...)
```

If a package folder contains a class definition file, then consider the package name as part of the class name. Wherever you need to use the class name, include the package name. For example, `containers.Map` is the full class name of the `Map` class.

See the object's user documentation for the syntax you need to use to create objects.

See “Organizing Classes in Folders” and “Packages Create Namespaces” for more information on the use of packages.

See “Importing Classes” for information on importing packages into functions.

Accessing Object Data

In this section...

“Listing Public Properties” on page 12-14

“Getting Property Values” on page 12-14

“Setting Property Values” on page 12-15

Listing Public Properties

Note Always use the correct case when referring to properties by name.

Display the names of all public object properties using the `properties` function with the object’s class name or with an actual object. For example:

```
>> properties('MException')
```

```
Properties for class MException:
```

```
    identifier  
    message  
    cause  
    stack
```

Getting Property Values

After creating an object, you can access the values of its properties:

```
try  
    a = rand(4);  
    a(17) = 7;  
catch me % catch creates an MException object named me  
    disp(['Current error identifier: ' me.identifier])  
end  
Current error identifier: MATLAB:indexed_matrix_cannot_be_resized
```

Access the data in properties using dot notation:

```
object.PropertyName
```

For example, you can access the `message` property of the `MException` object, `me`, with this syntax:

```
me.message
ans =
    In an assignment A(I) = B, a matrix A cannot be resized.
```

See “Capture Information About Exceptions” on page 21-5 for more information on using `MException` objects.

Setting Property Values

Objects often restrict what values you can assign to them. For example, the following `timeseries` object has 10 data values, each corresponding to a sample time:

```
tsobj = timeseries(rand(10,1),1:10,'Name','Random Sample');
```

Now suppose you attempt to set the `Data` property to a three-element vector:

```
tsobj.Data = [1 2 3];
Error using timeseries.utreshape (line 864)
Size of the data array is incompatible with the time vector.
...
```

The `timeseries` class design ensures that the number of data samples matches the number of time samples. This illustrates one of the advantages a specialized object has over a general purpose-data structure like a MATLAB `struct`.

Calling Object Methods

In this section...

“What Operations Can You Perform” on page 12-16

“Method Syntax” on page 12-16

“Class of Objects Returned by Methods” on page 12-18

What Operations Can You Perform

Methods define an object’s behavior. Consequently, classes implement methods that an object user is unlikely to call directly. The user documentation for the object you are using describes the operations you can perform on any particular object.

You can list the methods defined by a class with the `methods` or `methodsview` functions:

```
methods('timeseries')
```

Methods for class timeseries:

<code>addevent</code>	<code>gettsbetweenevents</code>	<code>set</code>
<code>addsample</code>	<code>horzcat</code>	<code>setabstime</code>
<code>createTstoolNode</code>	<code>idealfilter</code>	<code>setinterpmethod</code>
<code>ctranspose</code>	<code>init</code>	<code>setprop</code>
<code>...</code>		

Method Syntax

Call an object’s method using dot notation:

```
returnValue = object.methodName(args,...)
```

You also can call a method using function syntax, passing the object as the first (left-most) argument.

```
returnValue = methodName(object,args,...)
```


For example, MException objects have a `getReport` method that returns information about the error.

```
try
    surf
catch me
    disp(me.getReport)
end
```

```
Error using ==> surf at (line 50)
Not enough input arguments.
```

Dot and function notation are usually equivalent. That is, both of the following statements return the MException report:

```
rpt = getReport(me); % Call getReport using function notation
rpt = me.getReport; % Call getReport using dot notation
```

Calling the Correct Method

It is possible for the function syntax to call an unexpected method if there is more than one object in the argument list. Suppose there are two classes, `ClassA` and `ClassB`, that define a method called `addData`. Suppose further that `ClassA` is defined as being inferior to `ClassB` in precedence (something that the class designer can do in the class definition). In this situation, given `objA` is of `ClassA` and `objB` is of `ClassB`, the following two statements call different methods:

```
addData(objA,objB) % Calls objB.addData
objA.addData(objB) % Calls objA.addData
```

If `ClassA` and `ClassB` had equal precedence, then the left-most argument determines which method MATLAB calls (i.e., `objA.addData` in both statements).

It is unlikely that you will encounter this particular scenario, however, if you are calling a method that accepts more than one object as arguments, using dot notation removes any ambiguity about which object's method MATLAB calls.

Class of Objects Returned by Methods

While methods sometimes return objects of the same class, this is not always the case. For example, the `MException` object's `getReport` returns a character string:

```
try
  surf
catch me
  rpt = me.getReport;
end
```

```
whos
  Name          Size          Bytes  Class          Attributes

  me            1x1            1118  MException
  rpt           1x126          252   char
```

Methods can return any type of value and properties can contain any type of value. However, class constructor methods always return an object or array of objects of the same type as the class.

Desktop Tools Are Object Aware

In this section...

“Tab Completion Works with Objects” on page 12-19

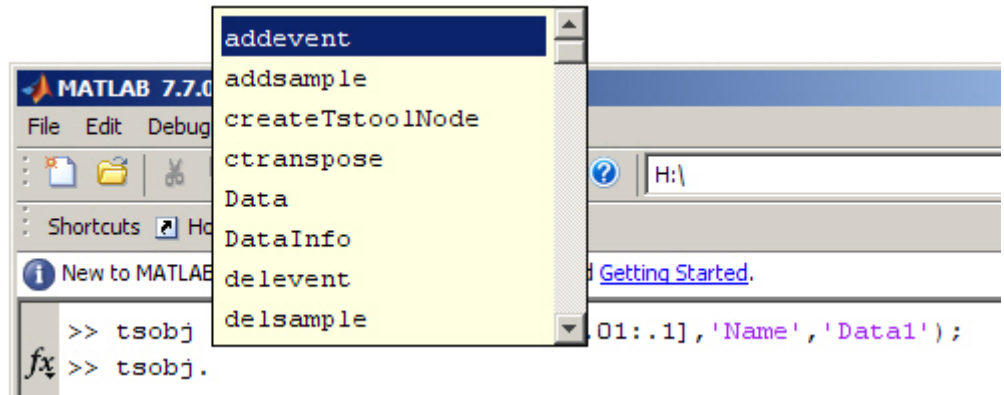
“Editing Objects with the Variable Editor” on page 12-19

Tab Completion Works with Objects

MATLAB tab completion works with objects. For example, if you enter an object name followed by a dot:

```
tsobj.
```

and then press the tab key, MATLAB pops up a selection box with a list of properties and methods:



The more letters you complete after the dot, the more specific is the list. See “Tab Completion” for more information.

Editing Objects with the Variable Editor

You can use the MATLAB Variable Editor to edit object properties. To open an object in the Variable Editor, you can double-click the object name in the Workspace browser or use the `openvar` command:

```
tsobj = timeseries(rand(10,1),.01:.01:.1,'Name','Data1');  
openvar tsobj
```

See for more information.

Getting Information About Objects

In this section...

“The Class of Workspace Variables” on page 12-21

“Information About Class Members” on page 12-23

“Logical Tests for Objects” on page 12-23

“Displaying Objects” on page 12-24

“Getting Help for MATLAB Objects” on page 12-25

The Class of Workspace Variables

All workspace variables are of a specific class. For example, consider the following variable created in your workspace:

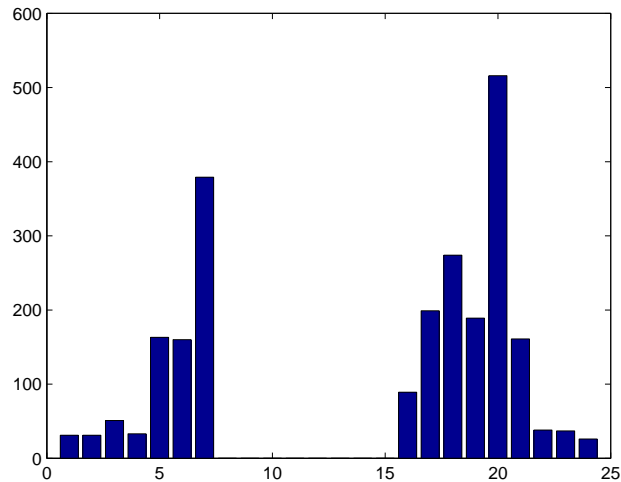
```
load count.dat % Load some data
tsoj = timeseries(count(:,1),1:24,'Name','Data1');
whos
```

Name	Size	Bytes	Class	Attributes
count	24x3	576	double	
tsoj	1x1	1261	timeseries	

The `whos` command lists information about your workspace variables. Notice that the variable loaded from the `count.dat` file (`count`) is an array of doubles. You know, therefore, that you can perform indexing and arithmetic operations on this array. For example:

```
newcount = sum(count,2);
newcount(8:15) = NaN;
bar(newcount)
```

Indexed assignment and the `bar` function work with inputs of class `double`.



However, the `timeseries` class does not define a `bar` method for `timeseries` objects. The `timeseries` class defines a `plot` method for graphing because the class design specified a line plot as the best way to represent time series data.

Extracting Data From Object Properties

Suppose you have a `timeseries` object and you want to work directly with the numeric values of the `timeseries` data. You can extract data from the object properties and assign these values to an array. For example

```
load count.dat
tsoj = timeseries(sum(count,2),1:24, 'Name', 'DataSum');
d = tsoj.Data;
t = tsoj.Time;
n = tsoj.Name;
d(8:15) = NaN;
bar(t,d); title(n)
```

Testing for the Class of an Object

Suppose you create a function that operates on more than one class of object. If you have a `timeseries` object, you call the `timeseries` plot method, but

if the object is of class `double`, you can call the `bar` function (which isn't supported by `timeseries` objects). You could use `isa` as in the following code to make this determination:

```
obj = tsobj.Data; % Define an input variable
function myPlotter(obj)
    if isa(obj, 'timeseries')
        plot(obj)
    elseif isa(obj, 'double')
        bar(obj)
    end
end
```

Information About Class Members

These functions provide information about the object.

Function	Purpose
<code>class</code>	Return class of object
<code>events</code>	List of event names defined by the class
<code>methods</code>	List of methods implemented by the class
<code>methodsview</code>	Information on class methods in separate window
<code>properties</code>	List of class property names

Logical Tests for Objects

In functions, you might need conditional statements to determine the status of an object before performing certain actions. For example, you might perform different actions based on the class of an object (see “Testing for the Class of an Object” on page 12-22). The following functions provide logical tests for objects:

Function	Purpose
<code>isa</code>	Determine whether argument belongs to a particular class. True for object's class and all of object's superclasses.
<code>isequal</code>	Determine if two objects are equal.
<code>isobject</code>	Determine whether the input is a MATLAB object.

Testing for Object Equality

`isequal` finds two objects to be equal if all the following conditions are met:

- Both objects are of the same class
- Both objects are of the same size
- All corresponding property values are equal

`isequal` tests the value of every array element in every property and every property of every object contained in the objects being tested. As contained objects are tested for equality, MATLAB calls each object's own version of `isequal` (if such versions exist).

If objects contain large amounts of data stored in other objects, then testing for equality can be a time-consuming process.

Identifying MATLAB Objects

The `isobject` function returns `true` only for MATLAB objects. For Sun Java objects, use `isjava`. For Handle Graphics objects, use `ishandle`.

Note `ishandle` returns `false` for MATLAB handle objects. See “Testing for Handle or Value Class” on page 12-31 for more information.

Displaying Objects

When you issue commands that return objects and do not terminate those commands with a semicolon, or when you pass an object to the `disp` function, MATLAB displays information about the object. For example:


```
hobj = containers.Map({'Red Sox', 'Yankees'},
{'Boston', 'New York'})
hobj =
  containers.Map handle
  Package: containers

  Properties:
    Count: 2
    KeyType: 'char'
    ValueType: 'char'
  Methods, Events, Superclasses
```

This information includes links (shown in blue) to documentation on the object's class and superclasses, and lists of methods, events, and superclasses. Properties and their current values are also listed.

Some classes (`timeseries`, for example) redefine how they display objects to provide more useful information for this particular class.

Getting Help for MATLAB Objects

You can get documentation for MATLAB objects using the `doc` command with the class name. To see the reference pages for the objects used in this chapter, use the following commands:

```
doc timeseries
doc MException
doc containers.Map % Include the package name
```

Copying Objects

In this section...

“Two Copy Behaviors” on page 12-26

“Value Object Copy Behavior” on page 12-26

“Handle Object Copy Behavior” on page 12-27

“Testing for Handle or Value Class” on page 12-31

Two Copy Behaviors

There are two fundamental kinds of MATLAB classes—handles and values.

Value classes create objects that behave like ordinary MATLAB variables with respect to copy operations. Copies are independent values. Operations that you perform on one object do not affect copies of that object.

Handle classes create objects that behave as references. This is because a handle, and all copies of this handle, refer to the same underlying object. When you create a handle object, you can copy the handle, but not the data referenced by the object’s properties. Any operations you perform on a handle object are visible from all handles that reference that object.

Value Object Copy Behavior

MATLAB numeric variables are of value objects. For example, when you copy `a` to the variable `b`, both variables are independent of each other. Changing the value of `a` does not change the value of `b`:

```
a = 8;  
b = a;
```

Now reassign `a` and `b` is unchanged:

```
a = 6;  
b  
b =  
    8
```

Clearing a does not affect b:

```
clear a
b
b =
    8
```

Value Object Properties

The copy behavior of values stored as properties in value objects is the same. For example, suppose vobj1 is a value object with property a:

```
vobj1.a = 8; % Property is set to a value
```

If you copy vobj1 to vobj2, and then change the value of vobj1 property a, you can see that the value of the copied object's property vobj2.a is unaffected:

```
vobj2 =vobj1;
vobj1.a = 5;

vobj2.a
ans =
    8
```

Handle Object Copy Behavior

Here is a handle class called HdClass that defines a property called Data.

```
classdef HdClass < handle
    properties
        Data
    end
    methods
        function obj = HdClass(val)
            if nargin > 0
                obj.Data = val;
            end
        end
    end
end
```

Create an object of this class with the following statement:

```
hobj1 = HdClass(8)
```

Because this statement is not terminated with a semicolon, MATLAB displays information about the object:

```
hobj1 =  
  
HdClass handle  
  
Properties:  
  Data: 8  
  
Methods, Events, Superclasses
```

The variable `hobj1` is a handle that references the object created. Copying `hobj1` to `hobj2` results in another handle (the variable `hobj2`) referring to the same object:

```
hobj2 = hobj1  
hobj2 =  
  
HdClass handle  
  
Properties:  
  Data: 8  
  
Methods, Events, Superclasses
```

Because handle objects reference the data contained in their properties, copying an object copies the handle to a new variable name, but the properties still refer to the same data. For example, given that `hobj1` is a handle object with property `Data`:

```
hobj1.Data  
  
ans =  
  
      8
```

Change the value of `hobj1`'s `Data` property and the value of the copied object's `Data` property also changes:

```
hobj1.Data = 5;
```

```
hobj2.Data
```

```
ans =
```

```
5
```

Because `hobj2` and `hobj1` are handles to the same object, changing the copy, `hobj2`, also changes the data you access through handle `hobj1`:

```
hobj2.Data = 17;
```

```
hobj1.Data
```

```
ans =
```

```
17
```

Copy Method for Handle Classes

Handle classes can derive copy functionality from the `matlab.mixin.Copyable` class. Class designers can investigate the use of this class in their class design.

Reassigning Handle Variables

Reassigning a handle variable produces the same result as reassigning any MATLAB variable. When you create a new object and assign it to `hobj1`:

```
hobj1 = HdClass(3.14);
```

`hobj1` references the new object, not the same object referenced previously (and still referenced by `hobj2`).

Clearing Handle Variables

When you clear a handle from the workspace, MATLAB removes the variable, but does not removed the object referenced by the handle. Therefore, given `hobj1` and `hobj2`, which both reference the same object, you can clear either handle without affecting the object:

```
hobj1.Data = 2^8;
```

```
clear hobj1
hobj2
hobj2 =

    HdClass handle
```

```
Properties:
    Data: 256
```

[Methods](#), [Events](#), [Superclasses](#)

If you clear both `hobj1` and `hobj2`, then there are no references to the object and MATLAB deletes the object and frees the memory used by that object.

Deleting Handle Objects

To remove an object referenced by any number of handles, use `delete`. Given `hobj1` and `hobj2`, which both reference the same object, if you delete either handle, MATLAB deletes the object:

```
hobj1 = HdClass(8);
hobj2 = hobj1;
delete(hobj1)
hobj2
```

```
hobj2 =
```

```
deleted HdClass handle
```

[Methods](#), [Events](#), [Superclasses](#)

See “Destroying Objects” on page 12-33 for more information about object lifecycle.

Modifying Objects

When you pass an object to a function, MATLAB follows *pass by value* semantics. This means that MATLAB passes a copy of the object to the function. If you modify the object in the function, MATLAB modifies only the copy of the object. The differences in copy behavior between handle and value classes are important in such cases:

- Value class — The function must return the modified copy of the object to the caller.
- Handle class — The copy refers to the same data as the original object. Therefore, the function does not need to return the modified copy.

See “Passing Objects to Functions” for more information.

More Information About Handle and Value Classes

For information about handle and value classes for class designers, see “Handle Classes” in the Object-Oriented Programming documentation.

Testing for Handle or Value Class

If you are writing MATLAB programs that copy objects, you might need to determine if any given object is a handle or a value. To determine if an object is a handle object, use the `isa` function:

```
isa(obj, 'handle')
```

For example, the `containers.Map` class creates a handle object:

```
hobj = containers.Map({'Red Sox', 'Yankees'}, {'Boston', 'New York'});  
isa(hobj, 'handle')
```

```
ans =
```

```
1
```

`hobj` is also a `containers.Map` object:

```
isa(hobj, 'containers.Map')
```

```
ans =
```

```
1
```

If you query the class of `hobj`, you see that it is a `containers.Map` object:

```
class(hobj)
```

```
ans =
```

```
containers.Map
```

The `class` function returns the specific class of an object, whereas `isa` returns `true` for any of the object's superclasses as well. This behavior is consistent with the object-oriented concept that an object is a member of all its superclasses. Therefore, it is true that a `containers.Map` object is a `handle` object and a `containers.Map` object.

There is no equivalent test for value classes because there is no value base class. If an object is a value object, `isa(object, 'handle')` returns `false` (i.e., logical 0).

See “Map Containers” for more information on the `containers.Map` class.

Destroying Objects

In this section...

“Object Lifecycle” on page 12-33

“Difference Between clear and delete” on page 12-33

Object Lifecycle

An object’s lifecycle ends when:

- You reassign a new value to that variable.
- The object is no longer used in a function.
- Function execution ends.

MATLAB handle classes have a special method called `delete` that MATLAB calls when a handle object lifecycle ends.

Calling `delete` on an object explicitly makes all copies of a handle object invalid because it destroys the data associated with the object and frees memory used by deleted objects. MATLAB calls `delete` automatically so it is not necessary for you to do so. Classes can redefine the handle class `delete` method to perform other cleanup operations, like closing files or saving data.

Deleting a handle object renders all copies invalid:

```
hobj1 = HdClass(8);  
hobj2 = hobj1;  
delete(hobj1)  
hobj2.Data  
Invalid or deleted object.
```

Difference Between clear and delete

The handle class `delete` method removes the handle object, but does not clear the variable name. The `clear` function removes a variable name, but does not remove the values to which the variable refers. For example, if you have two variables that refer to the same handle object, you can clear either one without affecting the actual object:

```
hobj = containers.Map({'Red Sox', 'Yankees'}, {'Boston', 'New York'});
hobj_copy = hobj;
clear hobj
city = hobj_copy('Red Sox')

city =

Boston
```

If you call `clear` on all handle variables that refer to the same handle object, then you have lost access to the object and MATLAB destroys the object. That is, when there are no references to an object, the object ceases to exist.

On value objects, you can call `clear` to remove the variable. However, MATLAB does not automatically call a value class `delete` method, if one exists, when you clear the variable.

Defining Your Own Classes

All MATLAB data types are implemented as object-oriented classes. You can add data types of your own to your MATLAB environment by creating additional classes. These user-defined classes define the structure of your new data type, and the functions, or *methods*, that you write for each class define the behavior for that data type.

These methods can also define the way various MATLAB operators, including arithmetic operations, subscript referencing, and concatenation, apply to the new data types. For example, a class called `polynomial` might redefine the addition operator (+) so that it correctly performs the operation of addition on polynomials.

With MATLAB classes you can

- Create methods that overload existing MATLAB functionality
- Restrict the operations that are allowed on an object of a class
- Enforce common behavior among related classes by inheriting from the same parent class
- Significantly increase the reuse of your code

For more information, see “Classes in the MATLAB Language”.

Scripts and Functions

- Chapter 14, “Scripts”
- Chapter 15, “Function Basics”
- Chapter 16, “Function Arguments”
- Chapter 17, “Debugging MATLAB Code”
- Chapter 18, “Presenting MATLAB Code”
- Chapter 19, “Coding and Productivity Tips”
- Chapter 20, “Programming Utilities”


Scripts

- “Create Scripts” on page 14-2
- “Add Comments to Programs” on page 14-4
- “Run Code Sections” on page 14-6
- “Scripts vs. Functions” on page 14-16

Create Scripts

Scripts are the simplest kind of program file because they have no input or output arguments. They are useful for automating series of MATLAB commands, such as computations that you have to perform repeatedly from the command line or series of commands you have to reference.

You can open a new script in the following ways:

- Highlight commands from the Command History, right-click, and select **Create Script**.
- Click the **New Script**  button on the **Home** tab.
- Use the `edit` function.

This code opens the file *file_name*:


```
edit file_name
```

If *file_name* is unspecified, MATLAB opens a new file called `Untitled`.

For example, suppose you save this code that generates random numbers between 0 and 100 as a script called `numGenerator.m`:

```
columns = 10000;  
rows = 1;  
bins = columns/100;  
  
rng(now);  
list = 100*rand(rows,columns);  
hist(list,bins)
```

You can run the code in `numGenerator.m` using either of these methods:

- Type the script name `numGenerator` on the command line and press **Enter**
- Click the **Run**  button on the **Editor** tab

When execution completes, the variables (`columns`, `rows`, `bins` and `list`) remain in the MATLAB workspace. To see a listing of variables, enter `whos` at the command prompt. Scripts share the base workspace with your interactive MATLAB session and with other scripts.

Concepts

- “Base and Function Workspaces” on page 15-9

Add Comments to Programs

This topic explains how and why to add comments to your program files.

When you write code, it is a good practice to add comments that describe the code. Comments allow others to understand your code, and can refresh your memory when you return to it later. Add comments to MATLAB code using the percent (%) symbol.

Comment lines can appear anywhere in a program file, and you can append comments to the end of a line of code. For example,

```
% Add up all the vector elements.  
y = sum(x)           % Use the sum function.
```

Comments are also useful for program development and testing—comment out any code that does not need to run. To comment out multiple lines of code, you can use the block comment operators, %{ and %}:

```
a = magic(3);  
%{  
sum(a)  
diag(a)  
sum(diag(a))  
%}  
sum(diag(fliplr(a)))
```


The %{ and %} operators must appear alone on the lines that immediately precede and follow the block of help text. Do not include any other text on these lines.

To comment out part of a statement that spans multiple lines, use an ellipsis (...) instead of a percent sign. For example,

```
header = ['Last Name, ', ...  
         'First Name, ', ...  
         ... 'Middle Initial, ', ...  
         'Title']
```

The MATLAB Editor includes tools and context menu items to help you add, remove, or change the format of comments for MATLAB, Java, and C/C++ code. For example, if you paste lengthy text onto a comment line, such as

```
% This is a program that has a comment that is a little more than 75 columns wide.  
disp('Hello, world')
```

and then press the  button next to **Comment** on the **Editor** tab, the Editor wraps the comment:

```
% This is a program that has a comment that is a little more than 75  
% columns wide.  
disp('Hello, world')
```

By default, as you type comments in the Editor, the text wraps when it reaches a column width of 75. To change the column where the comment text wraps, or to disable automatic comment wrapping, adjust the **Editor/Debugger Language** preference settings labeled **Comment formatting**.

The Editor does not wrap comments with:

- Code section titles (comments that begin with %%)
- Long contiguous strings, such as URLs
- Bulleted list items (text that begins with * or #) onto the preceding line
- “Add Help for Your Program” on page 15-5
- “Editor/Debugger Preferences”

Related Examples

Concepts

Run Code Sections

In this section...

“Divide Your File into Code Sections” on page 14-6

“Evaluate Code Sections” on page 14-7

“Navigate Among Code Sections in a File” on page 14-8

“Example of Evaluating Code Sections” on page 14-9


“Change the Appearance of Code Sections” on page 14-12


“Use Code Sections with Control Statements and Functions” on page 14-13

Divide Your File into Code Sections

MATLAB files often consist of many commands. You typically focus efforts on a single part of your program at a time, working with the code in chunks. Similarly, when explaining your files to others, often you describe your program in chunks. To facilitate these processes, use *code sections*, also known as code cells or cell mode. A code section contains contiguous lines of code that you want to evaluate as a group in a MATLAB script, beginning with two comment characters (%%).

To define code section boundaries explicitly, insert section breaks using these methods:

- On the **Editor** tab, in the **Edit** section, in the Comment button group, click .
- Enter two percent signs (%%) at the start of the line where you want to begin the new code section.




The text on the same line as %% is called the *section title* . Including section titles is optional, however, it improves the readability of the file and appears as a heading if you publish your code.

Evaluate Code Sections

As you develop a MATLAB file, you can use the Editor section features to evaluate the file section-by-section. This method helps you to experiment with, debug, and fine-tune your program. You can navigate among sections, and evaluate each section individually. To evaluate a section, it must contain all the values it requires, or the values must exist in the MATLAB workspace.

The section evaluation features run the section code currently highlighted in yellow. MATLAB does not automatically save your file when evaluating individual code sections. The file does not have to be on your search path.

This table provides instructions on evaluating code sections.

Operation	Instructions
Run the code in the current section.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place the cursor in the code section. On the Editor tab, in the Run section, click  Run Section.
Run the code in the current section, and then move to the next section.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place the cursor in the code section. On the Editor tab, in the Run section, click  Run and Advance.
Run all the code in the file.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type the saved script name in the Command Window. On the Editor tab, in the Run section, click  Run.

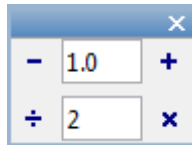
Note You cannot debug when running individual code sections. MATLAB ignores any breakpoints.

Increment Values in Code Sections

You can increment numbers within a section, rerunning that section after every change. This helps you fine-tune and experiment with your code.

To increment or decrement a number in a section:

- 1 Highlight or place your cursor next to the number.
- 2 Right-click to open the context menu.
- 3 Select **Increment Value and Run Section**. A small dialog box appears.





- 4 Input appropriate values in the $-/+$ text box or \div/\times text box.
- 5 Click the $+$, $-$, \times , or \div button to add to, subtract from, multiply, or divide the selected number in your section.

MATLAB runs the section after every click.

Note MATLAB software does not automatically save changes you make to the numbers in your script.

Navigate Among Code Sections in a File

You can navigate among sections in a file without evaluating the code within those sections. This facilitates jumping quickly from section to section within a file. You might do this, for example, to find specific code in a large file.

Operation	Instructions
Move to the next section.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the Editor tab, in the Run section, click .
Move to the previous section.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press Ctrl + Up arrow.
Move to a specific section.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the Editor tab, in the Navigate section, use the  Go To to move the cursor to a selected section.

Example of Evaluating Code Sections

This example defines two code sections in a file called `sine_wave.m` and then increments a parameter to adjust the created plot. To open this file in your Editor, run the following command, and then save the file to a local folder:

```
edit(fullfile(matlabroot, 'help', 'techdoc', 'matlab_env', ...
'examples', 'sine_wave.m'))
```

After the file is open in your Editor:

- 1 Insert a section break and the following title on the first line of the file.


```
%% Calculate and Plot Sine Wave
```

- 2 Insert a blank line and a second section break after `plot(x,y)`. Add a section title, `Modify Plot Properties`, so that the entire file contains this code:

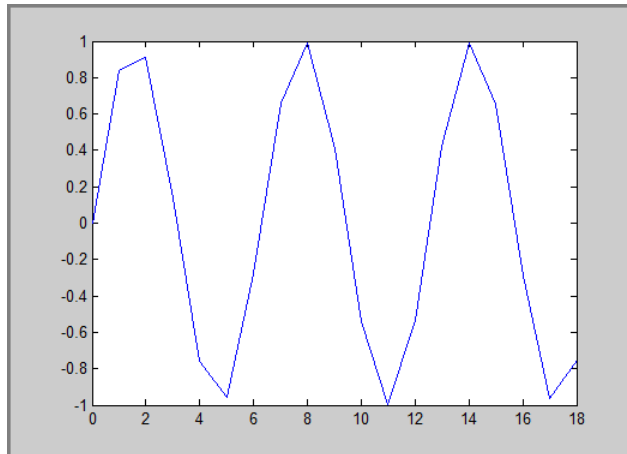
```
%% Calculate and Plot Sine Wave
% Define the range for x.
% Calculate and plot y = sin(x).
x = 0:1:6*pi;
y = sin(x);
plot(x,y)

%% Modify Plot Properties
title('Sine Wave', 'FontWeight', 'bold')
xlabel('x')
```

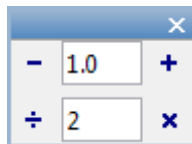
```
ylabel('sin(x)')
set(gca, 'Color', 'w')
set(gcf, 'MenuBar', 'none')
```

- 3 Save the file.
- 4 Place your cursor in the section titled Calculate and Plot Sine Wave. On the **Editor** tab, in the **Run** section, click  **Run Section**.


A figure displaying a course plot of $\sin(x)$ appears.



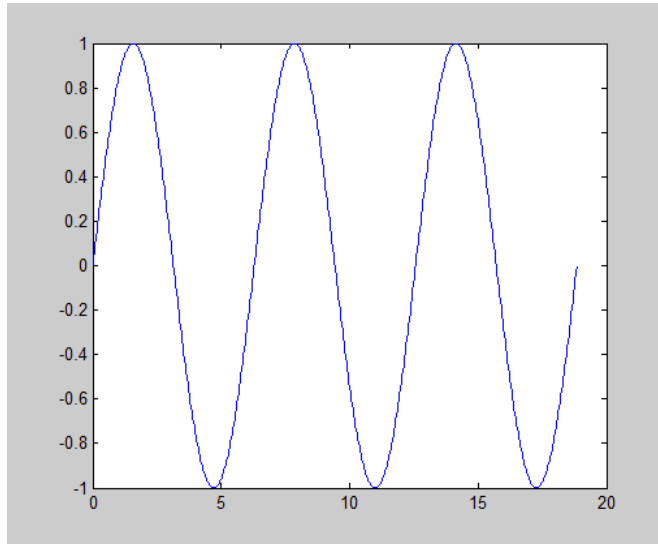
- 5 Smooth the sine plot.
 - a Highlight 1 in the statement: `x = 0:1:6*pi; .`
 - b Right-click and select **Increment Value and Run Section**. A small dialog box appears.



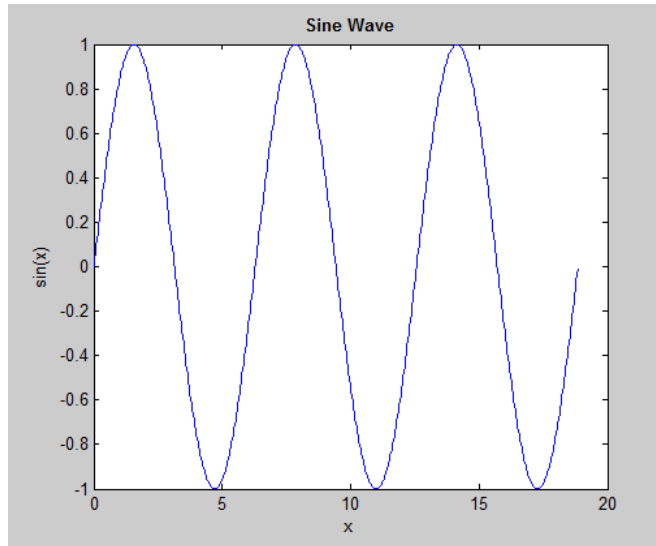
- c Type 2 in the \div / \times text box.

- d** Click the  button several times.

The sine plot becomes smoother after each subsequent click.



- e** Close the Figure and save the file.
- 6** Run the entire `sine_wave.m` file. A smooth sine plot with titles appears in a new Figure.



Change the Appearance of Code Sections

You can change how code sections appear within the MATLAB Editor. MATLAB highlights code sections in yellow, by default, and divides them with horizontal lines. When the cursor is positioned in any line within a section, the Editor highlights the entire section.

To change how code sections appear:

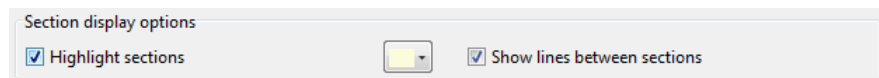
- 1 On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.

The Preference dialog box appears.

- 2 In the left pane, select **Colors > Programming Tools**.

3

Under **Section display options**, select the appearance of your code sections.



You can choose whether to highlight the sections, the color of the highlighting, and whether dividing lines appear between code sections.

Use Code Sections with Control Statements and Functions

Unexpected results can appear when using code sections within control statements and functions because MATLAB automatically inserts section breaks that do not appear in the Editor unless *you* insert section breaks explicitly. This is especially true when nested code is involved. Nested code occurs wherever you place a control statement or function within the scope of another control statement or function.

MATLAB automatically defines section boundaries in a code block, according to this criteria:

- MATLAB inserts a section break at the top and bottom of a file, creating a code section that encompasses the entire file. However, the Editor does not highlight the resulting section, which encloses the entire file, unless you add one or more explicit code sections to the file.
- If you define a section break within a control flow statement (such as an `if` or `while` statement), MATLAB automatically inserts section breaks at the lines containing the start and end of the statement.
- If you define a section break within a function, MATLAB inserts section breaks at the function declaration and at the function end statement. If you do not end the function with an `end` statement, MATLAB behaves as if the end of the function occurs immediately before the start of the next function.

If an automatic break occurs on the same line as a break you insert, they collapse into one section break.

Nested Code Section Breaks

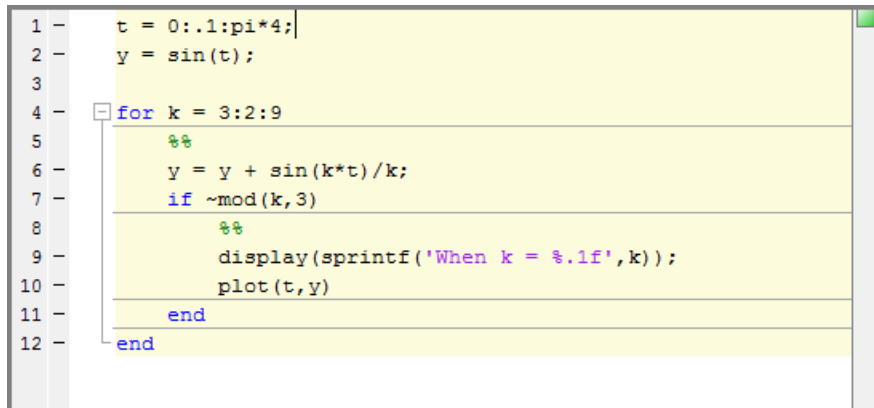
The following code illustrates the concept of nested code sections:

```
t = 0:.1:pi*4;  
y = sin(t);  
  
for k = 3:2:9  
    %%
```

```
y = y + sin(k*t)/k;
if ~mod(k,3)
    %%
    display(sprintf('When k = %.1f',k));
    plot(t,y)
end
end
```

If you copy and paste this code into a MATLAB Editor, you see that the two section breaks create three nested levels:

- **At the outermost level of nesting**, one section spans the entire file.

A screenshot of the MATLAB Editor interface. The code is displayed in a yellow background with a light gray border. The code is as follows:

```
1 - t = 0:.1:pi*4;
2 - y = sin(t);
3
4 - for k = 3:2:9
5     %%
6     y = y + sin(k*t)/k;
7     if ~mod(k,3)
8         %%
9         display(sprintf('When k = %.1f',k));
10        plot(t,y)
11    end
12 end
```

The code is formatted with line numbers on the left. The 'for' loop is highlighted with a blue box, and the 'if' statement is highlighted with a yellow box. The '%%' comments are highlighted with a green box. The 'end' statements are highlighted with a blue box.

MATLAB only defines section in a code block if you specify section breaks *at the same level* within the code block. Therefore, MATLAB considers the cursor to be within the section that encompasses the entire file.

- **At the second-level of nesting**, a section exists within the for loop.

```
1 - t = 0:.1:pi*4;
2 - y = sin(t);
3
4 - for k = 3:2:9
5     %%
6     y = y + sin(k*t)/k;
7     if ~mod(k,3)
8         %%
9         display(sprintf('When k = %.1f',k));
10        plot(t,y)
11    end
12 end
```

- **At the third-level of nesting**, one section exists within the if statement.

```
1 - t = 0:.1:pi*4;
2 - y = sin(t);
3
4 - for k = 3:2:9
5     %%
6     y = y + sin(k*t)/k;
7     if ~mod(k,3)
8         %%
9         display(sprintf('When k = %.1f',k));
10        plot(t,y)
11    end
12 end
```

Concepts

- “Scripts vs. Functions” on page 14-16

Scripts vs. Functions

This topic discusses the differences between scripts and functions, and shows how to convert a script to a function.

Program files can be *scripts* that simply execute a series of MATLAB statements, or they can be *functions* that also accept input arguments and produce output. Both scripts and functions contain MATLAB code, and both are stored in text files with a `.m` extension. However, functions are more flexible and more easily extensible.

For example, create a script in a file named `triarea.m` that computes the area of a triangle:

```
b = 5;  
h = 3;  
a = 0.5*(b.* h)
```

After you save the file, you can call the script from the command line:

```
triarea  
  
a =  
    7.5000
```

To calculate the area of another triangle using the same script, you could update the values of `b` and `h` in the script and rerun it. Each time you run it, the script stores the result in a variable named `a` that is in the base workspace.

However, instead of manually updating the script each time, you can make your program more flexible by converting it to a function. Replace the statements that assign values to `b` and `h` with a function declaration statement. The declaration includes the `function` keyword, the names of input and output arguments, and the name of the function.

```
function a = triarea(b,h)  
a = 0.5*(b.* h);
```

After you save the file, you can call the function with different base and height values from the command line without modifying the script:

```
a1 = triarea(1,5)
a2 = triarea(2,10)
a3 = triarea(3,6)
```

```
a1 =
    2.5000
a2 =
    10
a3 =
     9
```

Functions have their own workspace, separate from the base workspace. Therefore, none of the calls to the function `triarea` overwrite the value of `a` in the base workspace. Instead, the function assigns the results to variables `a1`, `a2`, and `a3`.

Related Examples

- “Create Scripts” on page 14-2
- “Create Functions in Files” on page 15-2

Concepts

- “Base and Function Workspaces” on page 15-9

Function Basics

- “Create Functions in Files” on page 15-2
- “Add Help for Your Program” on page 15-5
- “Run Functions in the Editor” on page 15-7
- “Base and Function Workspaces” on page 15-9
- “Share Data Between Workspaces” on page 15-10
- “Check Variable Scope in Editor” on page 15-15
- “Types of Functions” on page 15-19
- “Anonymous Functions” on page 15-23
- “Local Functions” on page 15-30
- “Nested Functions” on page 15-32
- “Variables in Nested and Anonymous Functions” on page 15-39
- “Private Functions” on page 15-41
- “Function Precedence Order” on page 15-43

Create Functions in Files

This example shows how to create a function in a program file.

Write a Function

Open a file in a text editor. Within the file, declare the function and add program statements:

```
function f = fact(n)
f = prod(1:n);
```

Function `fact` accepts a single input argument `n`, and returns the factorial of `n` in output argument `f`.

The definition statement is the first executable line of any function. Function definitions are not valid at the command line or within a script. Each function definition includes these elements.

function keyword (required)	Use lowercase characters for the keyword.
Output arguments (optional)	<p>If your function returns more than one output, enclose the output names in square brackets, such as</p> <pre>function [one,two,three] = myfunction(x)</pre> <p>If there is no output, either omit it,</p> <pre>function myfunction(x)</pre> <p>or use empty square brackets:</p> <pre>function [] = myfunction(x)</pre>

Function name (required)	<p>Valid function names follow the same rules as variable names. They must start with a letter, and can contain letters, digits, or underscores.</p> <hr/> <p>Note To avoid confusion, use the same name for both the file and the first function within the file. MATLAB associates your program with the <i>file</i> name, not the function name.</p> <hr/>
Input arguments (optional)	<p>If your function accepts any inputs, enclose their names in parentheses after the function name. Separate inputs with commas, such as</p> <pre>function y = myfunction(one,two,three)</pre> <p>If there are no inputs, you can omit the parentheses.</p>

Tip When you define a function with multiple input or output arguments, list any required arguments first. This allows you to call your function without specifying optional arguments.

The body of a function can include valid MATLAB expressions, control flow statements, comments, blank lines, and nested functions. Any variables that you create within a function are stored within a workspace specific to that function, which is separate from the base workspace.

Functions end with either an end statement, the end of the file, or the definition line for another function, whichever comes first. The end statement is required only when a function in the file contains a nested function (a function completely contained within its parent).

Program files can contain multiple functions. The first function is the main function, and is the function that MATLAB associates with the file name. Subsequent functions that are not nested are called *local* functions. They are only available to other functions within the same file.

Save the File

Save the file (in this example, `fact.m`), either in the current folder or in a folder on the MATLAB search path. MATLAB looks for programs in these specific locations.

Call the Function

From the command line, call the new `fact` function to calculate $5!$, using the same syntax rules that apply to calling functions installed with MATLAB:

```
x = 5;  
y = fact(x);
```

The variables that you pass to the function do not need to have the same names as the arguments in the function definition line.

See Also

[function](#) | [edit](#) | [clear](#) | [what](#) | [which](#)

Related Examples

- “Making Files and Folders Accessible to MATLAB”
- “Add Help for Your Program” on page 15-5
- “Support Variable Number of Inputs” on page 16-4

Concepts

- “Base and Function Workspaces” on page 15-9
- “Local Functions” on page 15-30
- “Nested Functions” on page 15-32
- “Debugging Process and Features” on page 17-2

Add Help for Your Program

This example shows how to provide help for the programs you write. Help text appears in the Command Window when you use the `help` function.

Create help text by inserting comments at the beginning of your program. If your program includes a function, position the help text immediately below the function definition line (the line with the function keyword).

For example, create a function in a file named `addme.m` that includes help text:

```
function c = addme(a,b)
% ADDME Add two values together.
% C = ADDME(A) adds A to itself.
% C = ADDME(A,B) adds A and B together.
%
% See also SUM, PLUS.

switch nargin
    case 2
        c = a + b;
    case 1
        c = a + a;
    otherwise
        c = 0;
end
```

When you type `help addme` at the command line, the help text displays in the Command Window:

```
addme Add two values together.
C = addme(A) adds A to itself.
C = addme(A,B) adds A and B together.

See also sum, plus.
```

The first help text line, often called the H1 line, typically includes the program name and a brief description. The Current Folder browser and the `help` and `lookfor` functions use the H1 line to display information about the program.

Create `See` also links by including function names at the end of your help text on a line that begins with `% See also`. If the function exists on the search path or in the current folder, the `help` command displays each of these function names as a hyperlink to its help. Otherwise, `help` prints the function names as they appear in the help text.

You can include hyperlinks (in the form of URLs) to Web sites in your help text. Create hyperlinks by including an HTML `<a>` anchor element. Within the anchor, use a `matlab:` statement to execute a web command. For example:

```
% For more information, see <a href="matlab:  
% web('http://www.mathworks.com')">the MathWorks Web site</a>.
```

End your help text with a blank line (without a `%`). The help system ignores any comment lines that appear after the help text block.

See Also

`help` | `lookfor`

Related Examples

- “Add Comments to Programs” on page 14-4
- “Create Help Summary Files (Contents.m)” on page 25-11
- “Check Which Programs Have Help” on page 25-8
- “Display Custom Documentation” on page 25-14

Run Functions in the Editor

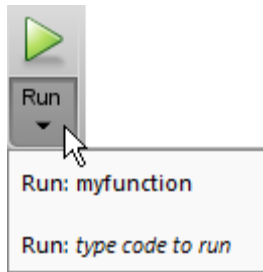
This example shows how to run a function that requires some initial setup, such as input argument values, while working in the Editor.

- 1 Create a function in a program file named `myfunction.m`.

```
function y = myfunction(x)
y = x.^2 + x;
```

This function requires input `x`.

- 2 View the commands available for running the function by clicking **Run** on the **Editor** tab. The command at the top of the list is the command that the Editor uses by default when you click the **Run** icon.



- 3 Replace the text *type code to run* with an expression that allows you to run the function.

```
y = myfunction(1:10)
```

You can enter multiple commands on the same line, such as

```
x = 1:10; y = myfunction(x)
```

For more complicated, multiline commands, create a separate script file, and then run the script.

Note Run commands use the base workspace. Any variables that you define in a run command can overwrite variables in the base workspace that have the same name.

- 4** Run the function by clicking **Run** or a specific run command from the drop-down list. For `myfunction.m`, and an input of `1:10`, this result appears in the Command Window:

```
y =  
    2     6    12    20    30    42    56    72    90   110
```

When you select a run command from the list, it becomes the default for the **Run** button.

To edit or delete an existing run command, select the command, right-click, and then select **Edit** or **Delete**.

Base and Function Workspaces

This topic explains the differences between the base workspace and function workspaces, including workspaces for local functions, nested functions, and scripts.

The *base workspace* stores variables that you create at the command line. This includes any variables that scripts create, assuming that you run the script from the command line or from the Editor. Variables in the base workspace exist until you clear them or end your MATLAB session.

Functions do not use the base workspace. Every function has its own *function workspace*. Each function workspace is separate from the base workspace and all other workspaces to protect the integrity of the data. Even local functions in a common file have their own workspaces. Variables specific to a function workspace are called *local* variables. Typically, local variables do not remain in memory from one function call to the next.

When you call a script from a function, the script uses the function workspace.

Like local functions, nested functions have their own workspaces. However, these workspaces are unique in two significant ways:

- Nested functions can access and modify variables in the workspaces of the functions that contain them.
 - All of the variables in nested functions or the functions that contain them must be explicitly defined. That is, you cannot call a function or script that assigns values to variables unless those variables already exist in the function workspace.
- Related Examples**
- “Share Data Between Workspaces” on page 15-10
- Concepts**
- “Nested Functions” on page 15-32

Share Data Between Workspaces

In this section...

“Introduction” on page 15-10

“Best Practice: Passing Arguments” on page 15-10

“Nested Functions” on page 15-11

“Persistent Variables” on page 15-12

“Global Variables” on page 15-12

“Evaluating in Another Workspace” on page 15-13

Introduction

This topic shows how to share variables between workspaces or allow them to persist between function executions.

In most cases, variables created within a function are *local* variables known only within that function. Local variables are not available at the command line or to any other function. However, there are several ways to share data between functions or workspaces.

Best Practice: Passing Arguments

The most secure way to extend the scope of a function variable is to use function input and output arguments, which allow you to pass values of variables.

For example, create two functions, `update1` and `update2`, that share and modify an input value. `update2` can be a local function in the file `update1.m`, or can be a function in its own file, `update2.m`.

```
function y1 = update1(x1)
    y1 = 1 + update2(x1);
```

```
function y2 = update2(x2)
    y2 = 2 * x2;
```

Call the `update1` function from the command line and assign to variable `Y` in the base workspace:

```
X = [1,2,3];
Y = update1(X)
```

```
Y =
     3     5     7
```

Nested Functions

A nested function has access to the workspaces of all functions in which it is nested. So, for example, a nested function can use a variable (in this case, `x`) that is defined in its parent function:

```
function primaryFx
    x = 1;
    nestedFx;

    function nestedFx
        x = x + 1;
    end
end
```

When parent functions do not use a given variable, the variable remains local to the nested function. For example, in this version of `primaryFx`, the two nested functions have their own versions of `x` that cannot interact with each other.

```
function primaryFx
    nestedFx1;
    nestedFx2;

    function nestedFx1
        x = 1;
    end

    function nestedFx2
        x = 2;
    end
end
```

For more information, see “Nested Functions” on page 15-32.

Persistent Variables

When you declare a variable within a function as persistent, the variable retains its value from one function call to the next. Other local variables retain their value only during the current execution of a function. Persistent variables are equivalent to static variables in other programming languages.

Declare variables using the `persistent` keyword before you use them. MATLAB initializes persistent variables to an empty matrix, `[]`.

For example, define a function in a file named `findSum.m` that initializes a sum to 0, and then adds to the value on each iteration.

```
function findSum(inputvalue)
persistent SUM_X

if isempty(SUM_X)
    SUM_X = 0;
end
SUM_X = SUM_X + inputvalue;
```

When you call the function, the value of `SUM_X` persists between subsequent executions.

These operations clear the persistent variables for a function:

- `clear all`
- `clear functionname`
- Editing the function file

To prevent clearing persistent variables, lock the function file using `mlock`.

Global Variables

Global variables are variables that you can access from functions or from the command line. They have their own workspace, which is separate from the base and function workspaces.

However, global variables carry notable risks. For example:

- Any function can access and update a global variable. Other functions that use the variable might return unexpected results.
- If you unintentionally give a “new” global variable the same name as an existing global variable, one function can overwrite the values expected by another. This error is difficult to diagnose.

Use global variables sparingly, if at all.

If you use global variables, declare them using the `global` keyword before you access them within any particular location (function or command line). For example, create a function in a file called `falling.m`:

```
function h = falling(t)
    global GRAVITY
    h = 1/2*GRAVITY*t.^2;
```

Then, enter these commands at the prompt:

```
global GRAVITY
GRAVITY = 32;
y = falling((0:.1:5)');
```

The two global statements make the value assigned to `GRAVITY` at the command prompt available inside the function. However, as a more robust alternative, redefine the function to accept the value as an input:

```
function h = falling(t,gravity)
    h = 1/2*gravity*t.^2;
```

Then, enter these commands at the prompt:

```
GRAVITY = 32;
y = falling((0:.1:5)',GRAVITY);
```

Evaluating in Another Workspace

The `evalin` and `assignin` functions allow you to evaluate commands or variable names from strings and specify whether to use the current or base workspace.

Like global variables, these functions carry risks of overwriting existing data. Use them sparingly.

`evalin` and `assignin` are sometimes useful for callback functions in graphical user interfaces to evaluate against the base workspace. For example, create a list box of variable names from the base workspace:

```
function listBox
figure;
lb = uicontrol('Style','listbox','Position',[10 10 100 100],...
              'Callback',@update_listBox);
update_listBox(lb)

function update_listBox(src,~)
vars = evalin('base','who');
set(src,'String',vars)
```

For other programming applications, consider argument passing and the techniques described in “Alternatives to the `eval` Function” on page 2-94.

Concepts

- “Base and Function Workspaces” on page 15-9

Check Variable Scope in Editor

In this section...

“Use Automatic Function and Variable Highlighting” on page 15-15

“Example of Using Automatic Function and Variable Highlighting” on page 15-16


Scoping issues can be the source of some coding problems. For instance, if you are unaware that nested functions share a particular variable, the results of running your code might not be as you expect. Similarly, mistakes in usage of local, global, and persistent variables can cause unexpected results.

The Code Analyzer does not always indicate scoping issues because sharing a variable across functions is not an error—it may be your intent. Use MATLAB function and variable highlighting features to identify when and where your code uses functions and variables. If you have an active Internet connection, you can watch the Variable and Function Highlighting video for an overview of the major features.

For conceptual information on nested functions and the various types of MATLAB variables, see “Sharing Variables Between Parent and Nested Functions” on page 15-33 and “Share Data Between Workspaces” on page 15-10.

Use Automatic Function and Variable Highlighting

By default, the Editor indicates functions, local variables, and variables with shared scope in various shades of blue. Variables with shared scope include: global variables, persistent variables, and variables within nested functions. (For more information, see “Nested Functions” on page 15-11.)

To enable and disable highlighting or to change the colors, click  **Preferences** and select **Colors > Programming tools**.

By default, the Editor:

- Highlights all instances of a given function or local variable in sky blue when you place the cursor within a function or variable name. For instance:

`collatz`

- Displays a variable with shared scope in teal blue, regardless of the cursor location. For instance:

`x`

Example of Using Automatic Function and Variable Highlighting

Consider the code for a function rowsum:

```
function rowTotals = rowsum
% Add the values in each row and
% store them in a new array

x = ones(2,10);
[n, m] = size(x);
rowTotals = zeros(1,n);
for i = 1:n
    rowTotals(i) = addToSum;
end

function colsum = addToSum
    colsum = 0;
    thisrow = x(i,:);
    for i = 1:m
        colsum = colsum + thisrow(i);
    end
end

end
```

When you run this code, instead of returning the sum of the values in each row and displaying:

```
ans =


    10    10
```

MATLAB displays:

ans =

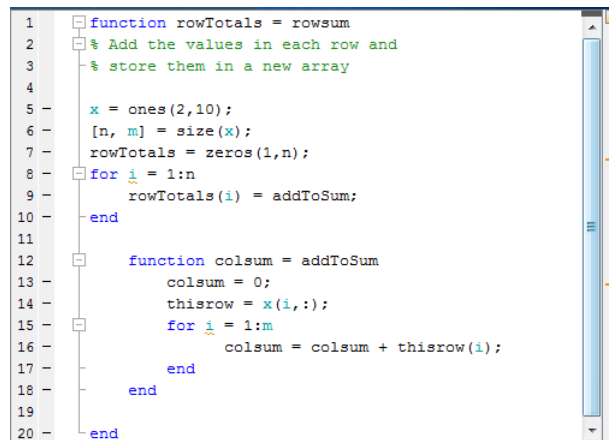
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 10

Examine the code by following these steps:

- 1 On the **Home** tab in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences** and select **Colors > Programming tools**. Ensure that **Automatically highlight** and **Variables with shared scope** are selected.
- 2 Copy the rowsum code into the Editor.

Notice the variable **i** appears in teal blue, which indicates **i** is not a local variable. Both the rowTotals function and the addToSum functions set and use the variable **i**.

The variable **n**, at line 6 appears in black, indicating that it does not span multiple functions.



```

1  function rowTotals = rowsum
2  % Add the values in each row and
3  % store them in a new array
4
5  x = ones(2,10);
6  [n, m] = size(x);
7  rowTotals = zeros(1,n);
8  for i = 1:n
9      rowTotals(i) = addToSum;
10 end
11
12 function colsum = addToSum
13     colsum = 0;
14     thisrow = x(i,:);
15     for i = 1:m
16         colsum = colsum + thisrow(i);
17     end
18 end
19
20 end

```

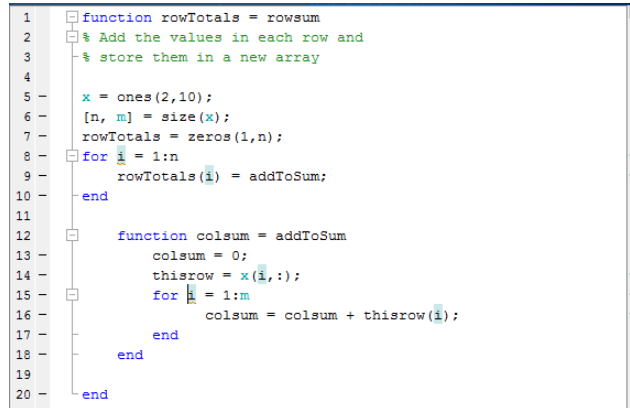
- 3 Hover the mouse pointer over an instance of variable **i**.

A tooltip appears: The scope of variable 'i' spans multiple functions.

- 4 Click the tooltip link for information about variables whose scope span multiple functions.

5 Click an instance of `i`.

Every reference to `i` highlights in sky blue and markers appear in the indicator bar on the right side of the Editor.



```
1  function rowTotals = rowsum
2  % Add the values in each row and
3  % store them in a new array
4
5  x = ones(2,10);
6  [n, m] = size(x);
7  rowTotals = zeros(1,n);
8  for i = 1:n
9      rowTotals(i) = addToSum;
10 end
11
12     function colsum = addToSum
13     colsum = 0;
14     thisrow = x(i,:);
15     for j = 1:m
16         colsum = colsum + thisrow(j);
17     end
18 end
19
20 end
```

6 Hover over one of the indicator bar markers.

A tooltip appears and displays the name of the function or variable and the line of code represented by the marker.

7 Click a marker to navigate to the line indicated in tooltip for that marker.

This is particularly useful when your file contains more code than you can view at one time in the Editor.

Fix the code by changing the instance of `i` at line 15 to `y`.

You can see similar highlighting effects when you click on a function reference. For instance, click on `addToSum`.

Types of Functions

In this section...

“Local and Nested Functions in a File” on page 15-19

“Private Functions in a Subfolder” on page 15-20

“Anonymous Functions Without a File” on page 15-21

Local and Nested Functions in a File

Program files can contain multiple functions: the main function and any combination of local or nested functions. Local and nested functions are useful for dividing programs into smaller tasks, making it easier to read and maintain your code.

Local functions are subroutines that are available to any other functions within the same file. They can appear in the file in any order after the main function in the file. Local functions are the most common way to break up programmatic tasks.

For example, create a single program file named `myfunction.m` that contains a main function, `myfunction`, and two local functions, `squareMe` and `doubleMe`:

```
function b = myfunction(a)
    b = squareMe(a) + doubleMe(a);
end
function y = squareMe(x)
    y = x.^2;
end
function y = doubleMe(x)
    y = x.*2;
end
```

You can call the main function from the command line or another program file, although the local functions are only available to `myfunction`:

```
myfunction(pi)

ans =
    16.1528
```

Nested functions are completely contained within another function. The primary difference between nested functions and local functions is that nested functions can use variables defined in parent functions without explicitly passing those variables as arguments.

Nested functions are useful when subroutines share data, such as GUI applications that pass data between components. For example, create a function that allows you to set a value between 0 and 1 using either a slider or an editable text box. If you use nested functions for the callbacks, the slider and text box can share the value and each other's handles without explicitly passing them:

```
function myslider
value = 0;
f = figure;
s = uicontrol(f,'Style','slider','Callback',@slider);
e = uicontrol(f,'Style','edit','Callback',@edittext,...
             'Position',[100,20,100,20]);

    function slider(obj,~)
        value = get(obj,'Value');
        set(e,'String',num2str(value));
    end
    function edittext(obj,~)
        value = str2double(get(obj,'String'));
        set(s,'Value',value);
    end

end
```

For more information, see:

- “Local Functions” on page 15-30
- “Nested Functions” on page 15-32

Private Functions in a Subfolder

Like local or nested functions, private functions are accessible only to functions in a specific location. However, private functions are not in the same file as the functions that can call them. Instead, they are in a subfolder

named `private`. Private functions are available only to functions in the folder immediately above the `private` folder. Use private functions to separate code into different files, or to share code between multiple, related functions.

For more information, see “Private Functions” on page 15-41.

Anonymous Functions Without a File

Anonymous functions allow you to define a function without creating a program file, as long as the function consists of a single statement. A common application of anonymous functions is to define a mathematical expression, and then evaluate that expression over a range of values using a MATLAB *function function*—a function that accepts a function handle as an input.

For example, this statement creates a function handle named `s` for an anonymous function:

```
s = @(x) sin(1./x);
```

This function has a single input, `x`. The `@` operator creates the function handle.

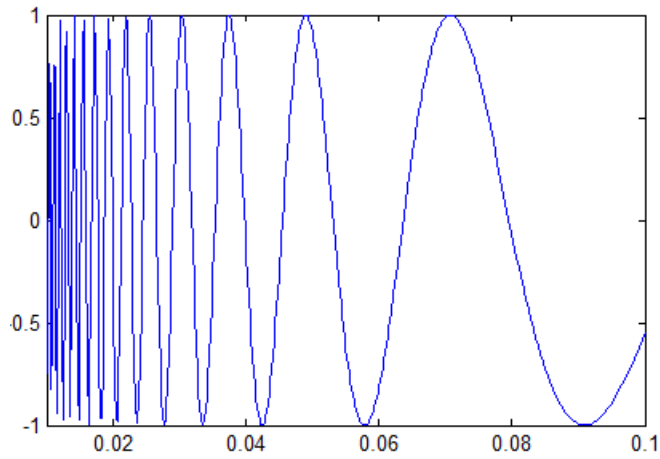
You can use the function handle to evaluate the function for particular values, such as

```
y = s(pi)
```

```
y =  
    0.3130
```

Or, you can pass the function handle to a function that evaluates over a range of values, such as `fplot`:

```
range = [0.01,0.1];  
fplot(s,range)
```



For more information, see “Anonymous Functions” on page 15-23.

Anonymous Functions

In this section...

“What Are Anonymous Functions?” on page 15-23

“Variables in the Expression” on page 15-24

“Multiple Anonymous Functions” on page 15-25

“Functions with No Inputs” on page 15-26

“Functions with Multiple Inputs or Outputs” on page 15-26

“Arrays of Anonymous Functions” on page 15-28

What Are Anonymous Functions?

An anonymous function is a function that is *not* stored in a program file, but is associated with a variable whose data type is `function_handle`. Anonymous functions can accept inputs and return outputs, just as standard functions do. However, they can contain only a single executable statement.

For example, create a handle to an anonymous function that finds the square of a number:

```
sqr = @(x) x.^2;
```

Variable `sqr` is a function handle. The `@` operator creates the handle, and the parentheses `()` immediately after the `@` operator include the function input arguments. This anonymous function accepts a single input `x`, and implicitly returns a single output, an array the same size as `x` that contains the squared values.

Find the square of a particular value (5) by passing the value to the function handle, just as you would pass an input argument to a standard function.

```
a = sqr(5)
```

```
a =  
    25
```

Many MATLAB functions accept function handles as inputs so that you can evaluate functions over a range of values. You can create handles either for anonymous functions or for functions in program files. The benefit of using anonymous functions is that you do not have to edit and maintain a file for a function that requires only a brief definition.

For example, find the integral of the `sqr` function from 0 to 1 by passing the function handle to the `quad` function:

```
q = quad(sqr,0,1);
```

You do not need to create a variable in the workspace to store an anonymous function. Instead, you can create a temporary function handle within an expression, such as this call to the `quad` function:

```
q = quad(@(x) x.^2,0,1);
```

Variables in the Expression

Function handles can store not only an expression, but also variables that the expression requires for evaluation.

For example, create a function handle to an anonymous function that requires coefficients `a`, `b`, and `c`.

```
a = 1.3;  
b = .2;  
c = 30;  
parabola = @(x) a*x.^2 + b*x + c;
```

Because `a`, `b`, and `c` are available at the time you create `parabola`, the function handle includes those values. The values persist within the function handle even if you clear the variables:

```
clear a b c  
x = 1;  
y = parabola(x)  
  
y =  
    31.5000
```


To supply different values for the coefficients, you must create a new function handle:

```
a = -3.9;
b = 52;
c = 0;
parabola = @(x) a*x.^2 + b*x + c;

x = 1;
y = parabola(1)

y =
    48.1000
```

You can save function handles and their associated values in a MAT-file and load them in a subsequent MATLAB session using the `save` and `load` functions, such as

```
save myfile.mat parabola
```

Multiple Anonymous Functions

The expression in an anonymous function can include another anonymous function. This is useful for passing different parameters to a function that you are evaluating over a range of values. For example, you can solve the equation

$$g(c) = \int_0^1 (x^2 + cx + 1) dx$$

for varying values of c by combining two anonymous functions:

```
g = @(c) (quad(@(x) (x.^2 + c*x + 1),0,1));
```

Here is how to derive this statement:

- 1 Write the integrand as an anonymous function,

```
@(x) (x.^2 + c*x + 1)
```

- 2 Evaluate the function from zero to one by passing the function handle to `quad`,

```
quad(@(x) (x.^2 + c*x + 1),0,1)
```

- 3** Supply the value for *c* by constructing an anonymous function for the entire equation,

```
g = @(c) (quad(@(x) (x.^2 + c*x + 1),0,1));
```

The final function allows you to solve the equation for any value of *c*. For example:

```
g(2)
```

```
ans =  
    2.3333
```

Functions with No Inputs

If your function does not require any inputs, use empty parentheses when you define and call the anonymous function. For example:

```
t = @() datestr(now);  
d = t()
```

```
d =  
26-Jan-2012 15:11:47
```

Omitting the parentheses in the assignment statement creates another function handle, and does not execute the function:

```
d = t
```

```
d =  
    @() datestr(now)
```

Functions with Multiple Inputs or Outputs

Anonymous functions require that you explicitly specify the input arguments as you would for a standard function, separating multiple inputs with commas. For example, this function accepts two inputs, *x* and *y*:

```
myfunction = @(x,y) (x^2 + y^2 + x*y);
```

```
x = 1;
```

```
y = 10;  
z = myfunction(x,y)
```

```
z =  
    111
```

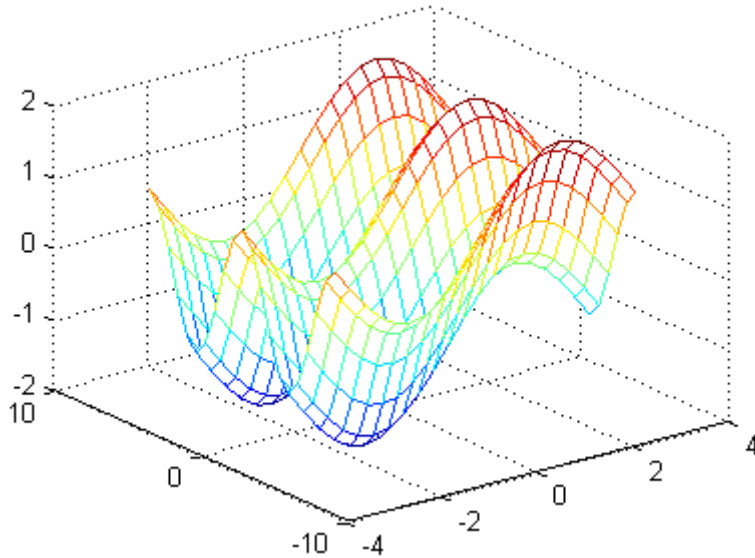
However, you do not explicitly define output arguments when you create an anonymous function. If the expression in the function returns multiple outputs, then you can request them when you call the function. Enclose multiple output variables in square brackets.

For example, the `ndgrid` function can return as many outputs as the number of input vectors. This anonymous function that calls `ndgrid` can also return multiple outputs:

```
c = 10;  
mygrid = @(x,y) ndgrid((-x:x/c:x),(-y:y/c:y));  
[x,y] = mygrid(pi,2*pi);
```

You can use the output from `mygrid` to create a mesh or surface plot:

```
z = sin(x) + cos(y);  
mesh(x,y,z)
```



Arrays of Anonymous Functions

Although most MATLAB fundamental data types support multidimensional arrays, function handles must be scalars (single elements). However, you can store multiple function handles using a cell array or structure array. The most common approach is to use a cell array, such as

```
f = {@(x)x.^2;
     @(y)y+10;
     @(x,y)x.^2+y+10};
```

When you create the cell array, keep in mind that MATLAB interprets spaces as column separators. Either omit spaces from expressions, as shown in the previous code, or enclose expressions in parentheses, such as

```
f = {@(x) (x.^2);
     @(y) (y + 10);
     @(x,y) (x.^2 + y + 10)};
```

Access the contents of a cell using curly braces. For example, `f{1}` returns the first function handle. To execute the function, pass input values in parentheses after the curly braces:

```
x = 1;  
y = 10;  
  
f{1}(x)  
f{2}(y)  
f{3}(x,y)  
  
ans =  
    1  
  
ans =  
    20  
  
ans =  
    21
```

Concepts

- “Creating a Function Handle” on page 9-3

Local Functions

This topic explains the term *local function*, and shows how to create and use local functions.

MATLAB program files can contain code for more than one function. The first function in the file (the main function) is visible to functions in other files, or you can call it from the command line. Additional functions within the file are called local functions. Local functions are only visible to other functions in the same file. They are equivalent to subroutines in other programming languages, and are sometimes called subfunctions.

Local functions can occur in any order, as long as the main function appears first. Each function begins with its own function definition line.

For example, create a program file named `mystats.m` that contains a main function, `mystats`, and two local functions, `mymean` and `mymedian`.

```
function [avg, med] = mystats(x)
n = length(x);
avg = mymean(x,n);
med = mymedian(x,n);
end

function a = mymean(v,n)
% MYMEAN Example of a local function.

a = sum(v)/n;
end

function m = mymedian(v,n)
% MYMEDIAN Another example of a local function.

w = sort(v);
if rem(n,2) == 1
    m = w((n + 1)/2);
else
    m = (w(n/2) + w(n/2 + 1))/2;
end
end
```

The local functions `mymean` and `mymedian` calculate the average and median of the input list. The main function `mystats` determines the length of the list `n` and passes it to the local functions.

Although you cannot call a local function from the command line or from functions in other files, you can access its help using the `help` function. Specify names of both the main function and the local function, separating them with a `>` character:

```
help mystats>mymean
```

```
mymean Example of a local function.
```

Local functions in the current file have precedence over functions in other files. That is, when you call a function within a program file, MATLAB checks whether the function is a local function before looking for other main functions. This allows you to create an alternate version of a particular function while retaining the original in another file.

All functions, including local functions, have their own workspaces that are separate from the base workspace. Local functions cannot access variables used by other functions unless you pass them as arguments. In contrast, *nested* functions (functions completely contained within another function) can access variables used by the functions that contain them.

Concepts

- “Nested Functions” on page 15-32
- “Function Precedence Order” on page 15-43

Nested Functions

In this section...

“What Are Nested Functions?” on page 15-32

“Requirements for Nested Functions” on page 15-33

“Sharing Variables Between Parent and Nested Functions” on page 15-33

“Using Handles to Store Function Parameters” on page 15-35

“Visibility of Nested Functions” on page 15-37

What Are Nested Functions?

A nested function is a function that is completely contained within a parent function. Any function in a program file can include a nested function.

For example, this function named `parent` contains a nested function named `nestedfx`:

```
function parent
disp('This is the parent function')
nestedfx

    function nestedfx
        disp('This is the nested function')
    end

end
```

The primary difference between nested functions and other types of functions is that they can access and modify variables that are defined in their parent functions. As a result:

- Nested functions can use variables that are not explicitly passed as input arguments.
- In a parent function, you can create a handle to a nested function that contains the data necessary to run the nested function.

Requirements for Nested Functions

- Typically, functions do not require an end statement. However, to nest any function in a program file, *all* functions in that file must use an end statement.
- You cannot define a nested function inside any of the MATLAB program control statements, such as `if/elseif/else`, `switch/case`, `for`, `while`, or `try/catch`.
- You must call a nested function either directly by name (without using `feval`), or using a function handle that you created using the `@` operator (and not `str2func`).
- All of the variables in nested functions or the functions that contain them must be explicitly defined. That is, you cannot call a function or script that assigns values to variables unless those variables already exist in the function workspace. (For more information, see “Variables in Nested and Anonymous Functions” on page 15-39.)

Sharing Variables Between Parent and Nested Functions

In general, variables in one function workspace are not available to other functions. However, nested functions can access and modify variables in the workspaces of the functions that contain them.

This means that both a nested function and a function that contains it can modify the same variable without passing that variable as an argument. For example, in each of these functions, `main1` and `main2`, both the main function and the nested function can access variable `x`:

```
function main1
x = 5;
nestfun1;

    function nestfun1
        x = x + 1;
    end

end

function main2
    nestfun2;

        function nestfun2
            x = 5;
        end

        x = x + 1;
    end
```

When parent functions do not use a given variable, the variable remains local to the nested function. For example, in this function named `main`, the two nested functions have their own versions of `x` that cannot interact with each other:

```
function main
    nestedfun1;
    nestedfun2;

    function nestedfun1
        x = 1;
    end

    function nestedfun2
        x = 2;
    end
end
```

Functions that return output arguments have variables for the outputs in their workspace. However, parent functions only have variables for the output of nested functions if they explicitly request them. For example, this function `parentfun` does *not* have variable `y` in its workspace:

```
function parentfun
x = 5;
nestfun;

    function y = nestfun
        y = x + 1;
```

```
        end  
  
    end
```

If you modify the code as follows, variable `z` is in the workspace of `parentfun`:

```
function parentfun  
    x = 5;  
    z = nestfun;  
  
        function y = nestfun  
            y = x + 1;  
        end  
  
end
```

Using Handles to Store Function Parameters

Nested functions can use variables from three sources:

- Input arguments
- Variables defined within the nested function
- Variables defined in a parent function, also called *externally scoped* variables

When you create a function handle for a nested function, that handle stores not only the name of the function, but also the values of externally scoped variables.

For example, create a function in a file named `makeParabola.m`. This function accepts several polynomial coefficients, and returns a handle to a nested function that calculates the value of that polynomial.

```
function p = makeParabola(a,b,c)  
    p = @parabola;  
  
        function y = parabola(x)  
            y = a*x.^2 + b*x + c;  
        end
```

```
end
```

The `makeParabola` function returns a handle to the parabola function that includes values for coefficients `a`, `b`, and `c`.

At the command line, call the `makeParabola` function with coefficient values of 1.3, .2, and 30. Use the returned function handle `p` to evaluate the polynomial at a particular point:

```
p = makeParabola(1.3, .2, 30);
```

```
X = 25;
```

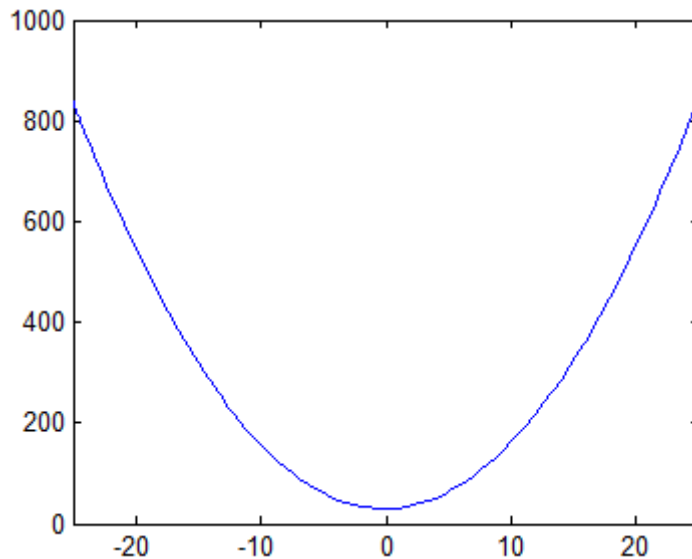
```
Y = p(X)
```

```
Y =
```

```
847.5000
```

Many MATLAB functions accept function handle inputs to evaluate functions over a range of values. For example, plot the parabolic equation from -25 to +25:

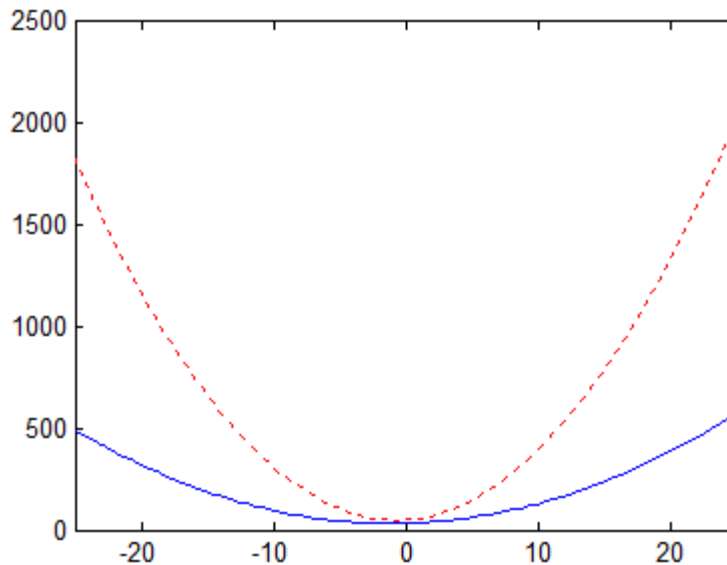
```
fplot(p, [-25, 25])
```



You can create multiple handles to the parabola function that each use different polynomial coefficients:

```
firstp = makeParabola(0.8,1.6,32);  
secondp = makeParabola(3,4,50);  
range = [-25,25];
```

```
figure  
hold on  
fplot(firstp,range)  
fplot(secondp,range,'r:')  
hold off
```



Visibility of Nested Functions

Every function has a certain *scope*, that is, a set of other functions to which it is visible. A nested function is available:

- From the level immediately above it. (In the following code, function A can call B or D, but not C or E.)

- From a function nested at the same level within the same parent function. (Function B can call D, and D can call B.)
- From a function at any lower level. (Function C can call B or D, but not E.)

```
function A(x, y)           % Main function
B(x,y);
D(y);

    function B(x,y)       % Nested in A
C(x);
D(y);

        function C(x)    % Nested in B
D(x);
end
end

function D(x)             % Nested in A
E(x);

    function E(x)       % Nested in D
disp(x)
end
end
end
```

The easiest way to extend the scope of a nested function is to create a function handle and return it as an output argument, as shown in “Using Handles to Store Function Parameters” on page 15-35. Only functions that can call a nested function can create a handle to it.

Concepts

- “Variables in Nested and Anonymous Functions” on page 15-39
- “Calling a Function Using Its Handle” on page 9-7
- “Argument Checking in Nested Functions” on page 16-11

Variables in Nested and Anonymous Functions

The scoping rules for nested and anonymous functions require that all variables used within the function be present in the text of the code.

If you attempt to dynamically add a variable to the workspace of an anonymous function, a nested function, or a function that contains a nested function, then MATLAB issues an error of the form

Attempt to add *variable* to a static workspace.

This table describes typical operations that attempt dynamic assignment, and the recommended ways to avoid it.

Type of Operation	Best Practice to Avoid Dynamic Assignment
load	Specify the variable name as an input to the load function. Or, assign the output from the load function to a structure array.
eval, evalin, or assignin	If possible, avoid using these functions altogether. See “Alternatives to the eval Function” on page 2-94.
Calling a MATLAB script that creates a variable	Convert the script to a function and pass the variable using arguments. This approach also clarifies the code.
Assigning to a variable in the MATLAB debugger	Create a global variable for temporary use in debugging, such as <pre>K>> global X; K>> X = myvalue;</pre>

Another way to avoid dynamic assignment is to explicitly declare the variable within the function. For example, suppose a script named `makeX.m` assigns a value to variable `X`. A function that calls `makeX` and explicitly declares `X` avoids the dynamic assignment error because `X` is in the function workspace. A common way to declare a variable is to initialize its value to an empty array:

```
function noerror
X = [];
nestedfx

    function nestedfx
        makeX
    end
end
```

Concepts

- “Base and Function Workspaces” on page 15-9

Private Functions

This topic explains the term *private function*, and shows how to create and use private functions.

Private functions are useful when you want to limit the scope of a function. You designate a function as private by storing it in a subfolder with the name `private`. Then, the function is available only to functions in the folder immediately above the `private` subfolder, or to scripts called by the functions that reside in the parent folder.

For example, within a folder that is on the MATLAB search path, create a subfolder named `private`. Do not add `private` to the path. Within the `private` folder, create a function in a file named `findme.m`:

```
function findme
% FINDME An example of a private function.

disp('You found the private function.')
```

Change to the folder that contains the `private` folder and create a file named `visible.m`.

```
function visible
findme
```

Change your current folder to any location and call the `visible` function.

```
visible

You found the private function.
```

Although you cannot call the private function from the command line or from functions outside the parent of the `private` folder, you can access its help:

```
help private/findme

    findme An example of a private function.
```

Private functions have precedence over standard functions, so MATLAB finds a private function named `test.m` before a nonprivate program file named

`test.m`. This allows you to create an alternate version of a particular function while retaining the original in another folder.

Concepts

- “Function Precedence Order” on page 15-43

Function Precedence Order

This topic explains how MATLAB determines which function to call when multiple functions in the current scope have the same name. The current scope includes the current file, an optional private subfolder relative to the currently running function, the current folder, and the MATLAB path.

MATLAB uses this precedence order:

1 Variables

Before assuming that a name matches a function, MATLAB checks for a variable with that name in the current workspace.

Note If you create a variable with the same name as a function, MATLAB cannot run that function until you clear the variable from memory.

2 Nested functions within the current function

3 Local functions within the current file

4 Private functions

Private functions are functions in a subfolder named `private` that is immediately below the folder of the currently running file.

5 Overloaded methods

Overloading refers to intentionally reusing the same name. Overloaded methods typically implement similar functionality for different data types or classes. MATLAB checks the classes of the input arguments to determine which method to use.

6 Class constructors in @ folders

MATLAB uses class constructors to create a variety of objects (such as `timeseries` or `audioplayer`), and you can define your own classes using object-oriented programming. For example, if you create a class folder `@polynom` and a constructor function `@polynom/polynom.m`, the constructor

takes precedence over other functions named `polynom.m` anywhere on the path.

7 Functions in the current folder

8 Functions elsewhere on the path, in order of appearance

When determining the precedence of functions within the same folder, MATLAB considers the file type, in this order:

1 Built-in function

2 MEX-function

3 Simulink® model, with file types in this order:

a SLX file

b MDL file

4 P-file (that is, an encoded program file with a `.p` extension)

5 Program file with a `.m` extension

For example, if MATLAB finds a `.m` file and a P-file with the same name in the same folder, it uses the P-file. Because P-files are not automatically regenerated, make sure that you regenerate the P-file whenever you edit the program file.

To determine the function MATLAB calls for a particular input, include the function name and the input in a call to the `which` function. For example, determine the location of the `max` method that MATLAB calls for `double` and `int8` values:

```
testval = 10;  
which max(testval)
```

```
built-in (matlabroot\toolbox\matlab\datafun\@double\max)  
% double method
```

```
testval = int8(10);  
which max(testval)
```

```
built-in (matlabroot\toolbox\matlab\datafun\@int8\max)  
% int8 method
```

For more information, see:

- “What Is the Search Path?”
- Variables
- “Types of Functions” on page 15-19
- “Overloading Functions for Your Class”

Function Arguments

- “Find Number of Function Arguments” on page 16-2
- “Support Variable Number of Inputs” on page 16-4
- “Support Variable Number of Outputs” on page 16-6
- “Validate Number of Function Arguments” on page 16-8
- “Argument Checking in Nested Functions” on page 16-11
- “Ignore Function Inputs” on page 16-13
- “Check Function Inputs with `validateattributes`” on page 16-14
- “Parse Function Inputs” on page 16-17
- “Input Parser Validation Functions” on page 16-22

Find Number of Function Arguments

This example shows how to determine how many input or output arguments your function receives using `nargin` and `nargout`.

Input Arguments

Create a function in a file named `addme.m` that accepts up to two inputs. Identify the number of inputs with `nargin`.

```
function c = addme(a,b)

switch nargin
    case 2
        c = a + b;
    case 1
        c = a + a;
    otherwise
        c = 0;
end
```

Call `addme` with one, two, or zero input arguments.

```
addme(42)
```

```
ans =
    84
```

```
addme(2,4000)
```

```
ans =
    4002
```

```
addme
```

```
ans =
     0
```

Output Arguments

Create a new function in a file named `addme2.m` that can return one or two outputs (a result and its absolute value). Identify the number of requested outputs with `nargout`.

```
function [result,absResult] = addme2(a,b)

switch nargin
    case 2
        result = a + b;
    case 1
        result = a + a;
    otherwise
        result = 0;
end

if nargin > 1
    absResult = abs(result);
end
```

Call `addme2` with one or two output arguments.

```
value = addme2(11,-22)
```

```
value =
    -11
```

```
[value,absValue] = addme2(11,-22)
```

```
value =
    -11
```

```
absValue =
     11
```

Functions return outputs in the order they are declared in the function definition.

See Also

`nargin` | `narginchk` | `nargout` | `nargoutchk`

Support Variable Number of Inputs

This example shows how to define a function that accepts a variable number of input arguments using `varargin`. The `varargin` argument is a cell array that contains the function inputs, where each input is in its own cell.

Create a function in a file named `plotWithTitle.m` that accepts a variable number of paired (x,y) inputs for the `plot` function and an optional title. If the function receives an odd number of inputs, it assumes that the last input is a title.

```
function plotWithTitle(varargin)
if rem(nargin,2) ~= 0
    myTitle = varargin{nargin};
    numPlotInputs = nargin - 1;
else
    myTitle = 'Default Title';
    numPlotInputs = nargin;
end

plot(varargin{1:numPlotInputs})
title(myTitle)
```

Because `varargin` is a cell array, you access the contents of each cell using curly braces, `{}`. The syntax `varargin{1:numPlotInputs}` creates a comma-separated list of inputs to the `plot` function.

Call `plotWithTitle` with two sets of (x,y) inputs and a title.

```
x = [1:.1:10]; y1 = sin(x); y2 = cos(x);
plotWithTitle(x,y1,x,y2,'Sine and Cosine')
```

You can use `varargin` alone in an input argument list, or at the end of the list of inputs, such as

```
function myfunction(a,b,varargin)
```

In this case, `varargin{1}` corresponds to the third input passed to the function, and `nargin` returns `length(varargin) + 2`.

See Also

`nargin` | `varargin`

**Related
Examples**

- “Access Data in a Cell Array” on page 8-5

Concepts

- “Argument Checking in Nested Functions” on page 16-11
- “Comma-Separated Lists” on page 2-86

Support Variable Number of Outputs

This example shows how to define a function that returns a variable number of output arguments using `varargout`. Output `varargout` is a cell array that contains the function outputs, where each output is in its own cell.

Create a function in a file named `magicfill.m` that assigns a magic square to each requested output.

```
function varargout = magicfill
    nOutputs = nargin;
    varargout = cell(1,nOutputs);

    for k = 1:nOutputs;
        varargout{k} = magic(k);
    end
```

Indexing with curly braces `{}` updates the contents of a cell.

Call `magicfill` and request three outputs.

```
[first,second,third] = magicfill
```

```
first =
     1

second =
     1     3
     4     2

third =
     8     1     6
     3     5     7
     4     9     2
```

MATLAB assigns values to the outputs according to their order in the `varargout` array. For example, `first == varargout{1}`.

You can use `varargout` alone in an output argument list, or at the end of the list of outputs, such as

```
function [x,y,varargout] = myfunction(a,b)
```

In this case, `varargout{1}` corresponds to the third output that the function returns, and `nargout` returns `length(varargout) + 2`.

See Also

`nargout` | `varargout`

Related Examples

- “Access Data in a Cell Array” on page 8-5

Concepts

- “Argument Checking in Nested Functions” on page 16-11

Validate Number of Function Arguments

This example shows how to check whether your custom function receives a valid number of input or output arguments. MATLAB performs some argument checks automatically. For other cases, you can use `narginchk` or `nargoutchk`.

Automatic Argument Checks

MATLAB checks whether your function receives more arguments than expected when it can determine the number from the function definition. For example, this function accepts up to two outputs and three inputs:

```
function [x,y] = myFunction(a,b,c)
```

If you pass too many inputs to `myFunction`, MATLAB issues an error. You do not need to call `narginchk` to check for this case.

```
[X,Y] = myFunction(1,2,3,4)
```

```
Error using myFunction
Too many input arguments.
```

Use the `narginchk` and `nargoutchk` functions to verify that your function receives:

- A minimum number of required arguments.
- No more than a maximum number of arguments, when your function uses `varargin` or `varargout`.

Input Checks with `narginchk`

Define a function in a file named `testValues.m` that requires at least two inputs. The first input is a threshold value to compare against the other inputs.

```
function testValues(threshold,varargin)
minInputs = 2;
maxInputs = Inf;
narginchk(minInputs,maxInputs)
```

```

for k = 1:(nargin-1)
    if (varargin{k} > threshold)
        fprintf('Test value %d exceeds %d\n',k,threshold);
    end
end

```

Call `testValues` with too few inputs.

```
testValues(10)
```

```
Error using testValues (line 4)
Not enough input arguments.
```

Call `testValues` with enough inputs.

```
testValues(10,1,11,111)
```

```
Test value 2 exceeds 10
Test value 3 exceeds 10
```

Output Checks with `nargoutchk`

Define a function in a file named `mysize.m` that returns the dimensions of the input array in a vector (from the `size` function), and optionally returns scalar values corresponding to the sizes of each dimension. Use `nargoutchk` to verify that the number of requested individual sizes does not exceed the number of available dimensions.

```

function [sizeVector,varargout] = mysize(x)
minOutputs = 0;
maxOutputs = ndims(x) + 1;
nargoutchk(minOutputs,maxOutputs)

sizeVector = size(x);

varargout = cell(1,nargout-1);
for k = 1:length(varargout)
    varargout{k} = sizeVector(k);
end

```

Call `mysize` with a valid number of outputs.

```
A = rand(3,4,2);  
[fullsize,nrows,ncols,npages] = mysize(A)
```

```
fullsize =  
    3     4     2
```

```
nrows =  
    3
```

```
ncols =  
    4
```

```
npages =  
    2
```

Call `mysize` with too many outputs.

```
A = 1;  
[fullsize,nrows,ncols,npages] = mysize(A)
```

```
Error using mysize (line 4)  
Too many output arguments.
```

See Also

[narginchk](#) | [nargoutchk](#)

Related Examples

- “Support Variable Number of Inputs” on page 16-4
- “Support Variable Number of Outputs” on page 16-6

Argument Checking in Nested Functions

This topic explains special considerations for using `varargin`, `varargout`, `nargin`, and `nargout` with nested functions.

`varargin` and `varargout` allow you to create functions that accept variable numbers of input or output arguments. Although `varargin` and `varargout` look like function names, they refer to variables, not functions. This is significant because nested functions share the workspaces of the functions that contain them.

If you do not use `varargin` or `varargout` in the declaration of a nested function, then `varargin` or `varargout` within the nested function refers to the arguments of an outer function.

For example, create a function in a file named `showArgs.m` that uses `varargin` and has two nested functions, one that uses `varargin` and one that does not.

```
function showArgs(varargin)
    nested1(3,4)
    nested2(5,6,7)

    function nested1(a,b)
        disp('nested1: Contents of varargin{1}')
        disp(varargin{1})
    end

    function nested2(varargin)
        disp('nested2: Contents of varargin{1}')
        disp(varargin{1})
    end

end
```

Call the function and compare the contents of `varargin{1}` in the two nested functions.

```
showArgs(0,1,2)

nested1: Contents of varargin{1}
```

```
0
```

```
nested2: Contents of varargin{1}
5
```

On the other hand, `nargin` and `nargout` are functions. Within any function, including nested functions, calls to `nargin` or `nargout` return the number of arguments for that function. If a nested function requires the value of `nargin` or `nargout` from an outer function, pass the value to the nested function.

For example, create a function in a file named `showNumArgs.m` that passes the number of input arguments from the primary (parent) function to a nested function.

```
function showNumArgs(varargin)

disp(['Number of inputs to showNumArgs: ',int2str(nargin)]);
nestedFx(nargin,2,3,4)

    function nestedFx(n,varargin)
        disp(['Number of inputs to nestedFx: ',int2str(nargin)]);
        disp(['Number of inputs to its parent: ',int2str(n)]);
    end

end
```

Call `showNumArgs` and compare the output of `nargin` in the parent and nested functions.

```
showNumArgs(0,1)
```

```
Number of inputs to showNumArgs: 2
Number of inputs to nestedFx: 4
Number of inputs to its parent: 2
```

See Also

`nargin` | `nargout` | `varargin` | `varargout`

Ignore Function Inputs

This example shows how to ignore inputs in your function definition using the tilde (~) operator.

Use this operator when your function must accept a predefined set of inputs, but your function does not use all of the inputs. Common applications include defining callback functions, as shown here, or deriving a class from a superclass.

Define a callback for a push button in a file named `colorButton.m` that does not use the `eventdata` input. Ignore the input with a tilde.

```
function colorButton
figure;
uicontrol('Style','pushbutton','String','Click me','Callback',@btnCallback)

function btnCallback(h,~)
set(h,'BackgroundColor',rand(3,1))
```

The function declaration for `btnCallback` is essentially the same as

```
function btnCallback(h,eventdata)
```

However, using the tilde prevents the addition of `eventdata` to the function workspace and makes it clearer that the function does not use `eventdata`.

You can ignore any number of function inputs, in any position in the argument list. Separate consecutive tildes with a comma, such as

```
myfunction(myinput,~,~)
```

Check Function Inputs with `validateattributes`

This example shows how to verify that the inputs to your function conform to a set of requirements using the `validateattributes` function.

`validateattributes` requires that you pass the variable to check and the supported data types for that variable. Optionally, pass a set of attributes that describe the valid dimensions or values.

Check Data Type and Other Attributes

Define a function in a file named `checkme.m` that accepts up to three inputs: `a`, `b`, and `c`. Check whether:

- `a` is a two-dimensional array of positive double-precision values.
- `b` contains 100 numeric values in an array with 10 columns.
- `c` is a nonempty character string or cell array.

```
function checkme(a,b,c)

validateattributes(a,{'double'},{'positive','2d'})
validateattributes(b,{'numeric'},{'numel',100,'ncols',10})
validateattributes(c,{'char','cell'},{'nonempty'})

disp('All inputs are ok.')
```

The curly braces `{}` indicate that the set of data types and the set of additional attributes are in cell arrays. Cell arrays allow you to store combinations of text and numeric data, or text strings of different lengths, in a single variable.

Call `checkme` with valid inputs.

```
checkme(pi,rand(5,10,2),'text')
```

```
All inputs are ok.
```

The scalar value `pi` is two-dimensional because `size(pi) = [1,1]`.

Call `checkme` with invalid inputs. The `validateattributes` function issues an error for the first input that fails validation, and `checkme` stops processing.

```
checkme(-4)
```

```
Error using checkme (line 3)  
Expected input to be positive.
```

```
checkme(pi,rand(3,4,2))
```

```
Error using checkme (line 4)  
Expected input to be an array with number of elements equal to 100.
```

```
checkme(pi,rand(5,10,2),struct)
```

```
Error using checkme (line 5)  
Expected input to be one of these types:
```

```
char, cell
```

```
Instead its type was struct.
```

The default error messages use the generic term `input` to refer to the argument that failed validation. When you use the default error message, the only way to determine which input failed is to view the specified line of code in `checkme`.

Add Input Name and Position to Errors

Define a function in a file named `checkdetails.m` that performs the same validation as `checkme`, but adds details about the input name and position to the error messages.

```
function checkdetails(a,b,c)  
  
validateattributes(a,{'double'},{'positive','2d'},'', 'First',1)  
validateattributes(b,{'numeric'},{'numel',100,'ncols',10},'', 'Second',2)  
validateattributes(c,{'char'},{'nonempty'},'', 'Third',3)  
  
disp('All inputs are ok.')
```

The empty string '' for the fourth input to `validateattributes` is a placeholder for an optional function name string. You do not need to specify a function name because it already appears in the error message. Specify the function name when you want to include it in the error identifier for additional error handling.

Call `checkdetails` with invalid inputs.

```
checkdetails(-4)
```

```
Error using checkdetails (line 3)  
Expected input number 1, First, to be positive.
```

```
checkdetails(pi,rand(3,4,2))
```

```
Error using checkdetails (line 4)  
Expected input number 2, Second, to be an array with  
number of elements equal to 100.
```

See Also

`validateattributes` | `validatestring`

Parse Function Inputs

This example shows how to define required and optional inputs, assign defaults to optional inputs, and validate all inputs to a custom function using the Input Parser.

The Input Parser provides a consistent way to validate and assign defaults to inputs, improving the robustness and maintainability of your code. To validate the inputs, you can take advantage of existing MATLAB functions or write your own validation routines.

Step 1. Define your function.

Create a function in a file named `printPhoto.m`. The `printPhoto` function has one required input for the file name, and optional inputs for the finish (glossy or matte), color space (RGB or CMYK), width, and height.

```
function printPhoto(filename,varargin)
```

In your function declaration statement, specify required inputs first. Use `varargin` to support optional inputs.

Step 2. Create an InputParser object.

Within your function, call `inputParser` to create a parser object.

```
p = inputParser;
```

Step 3. Add inputs to the scheme.

Add inputs to the parsing scheme in your function using `addRequired`, `addOptional`, or `addParamValue`. For optional inputs, specify default values.

For each input, you can specify a handle to a validation function that checks the input and returns a scalar logical (`true` or `false`) or errors. The validation function can be an existing MATLAB function (such as `ischar` or `isnumeric`) or a function that you create (such as an anonymous function or a local function).

In the `printPhoto` function, `filename` is a required input. Define `finish` and `color` as optional input strings, and `width` and `height` as optional parameter value pairs.

```
defaultFinish = 'glossy';
validFinishes = {'glossy','matte'};
checkFinish = @(x) any(validatestring(x,validFinishes));

defaultColor = 'RGB';
validColors = {'RGB','CMYK'};
checkColor = @(x) any(validatestring(x,validColors));

defaultWidth = 6;
defaultHeight = 4;

addRequired(p,'filename',@ischar);
addOptional(p,'finish',defaultFinish,checkFinish);
addOptional(p,'color',defaultColor,checkColor);
addParamValue(p,'width',defaultWidth,@isnumeric);
addParamValue(p,'height',defaultHeight,@isnumeric);
```

Inputs that you add with `addRequired` or `addOptional` are *positional* arguments. When you call a function with positional inputs, specify those values in the order they are added to the parsing scheme.

Inputs added with `addParamValue` are not positional, so you can pass values for `height` before or after values for `width`. However, parameter value inputs require that you pass the input name ('`height`' or '`width`') along with the value of the input.

If your function accepts optional input strings and parameter name and value pairs, specify validation functions for the optional input strings. Otherwise, the Input Parser interprets the optional strings as parameter names. For example, the `checkFinish` validation function ensures that `printPhoto` interprets 'glossy' as a value for `finish` and not as an invalid parameter name.

Step 4. Set properties to adjust parsing (optional).

By default, the Input Parser makes assumptions about case sensitivity, function names, structure array inputs, and whether to allow additional parameter names and values that are not in the scheme. Properties allow you to explicitly define the behavior. Set properties using dot notation, similar to assigning values to a structure array.

Allow `printPhoto` to accept additional parameter value inputs that do not match the input scheme by setting the `KeepUnmatched` property of the Input Parser.

```
p.KeepUnmatched = true;
```

If `KeepUnmatched` is `false` (default), the Input Parser issues an error when inputs do not match the scheme.

Step 5. Parse the inputs.

Within your function, call the `parse` method. Pass the values of all of the function inputs.

```
parse(p,filename,varargin{:});
```

Step 6. Use the inputs in your function.

Access parsed inputs using these properties of the `inputParser` object:

- `Results` — Structure array with names and values of all inputs in the scheme.
- `Unmatched` — Structure array with parameter names and values that are passed to the function, but are not in the scheme (when `KeepUnmatched` is `true`).
- `UsingDefaults` — Cell array with names of optional inputs that are assigned their default values because they are not passed to the function.

Within the `printPhoto` function, display the values for some of the inputs:

```
disp(['File name: ',p.Results.filename])  
disp(['Finish: ', p.Results.finish])  
  
if ~isempty(fieldnames(p.Unmatched))
```

```
        disp('Extra inputs:')
        disp(p.Unmatched)
    end
    if ~isempty(p.UsingDefaults)
        disp('Using defaults: ')
        disp(p.UsingDefaults)
    end
end
```

Step 7. Call your function.

The Input Parser expects to receive inputs as follows:

- Required inputs first, in the order they are added to the parsing scheme with `addRequired`.
- Optional positional inputs in the order they are added to the scheme with `addOptional`.
- Positional inputs before parameter name and value pair inputs.
- Parameter names and values in the form `Name1,Value1,...,NameN,ValueN`.

Pass several combinations of inputs to `printPhoto`, some valid and some invalid:

```
printPhoto('myfile.jpg')

File name: myfile.jpg
Finish: glossy
Using defaults:
    'finish'    'color'    'width'    'height'

printPhoto(100)

Error using printPhoto (line 23)
Argument 'filename' failed validation ischar.

printPhoto('myfile.jpg','satin')

Error using printPhoto (line 23)
Argument 'finish' failed validation with error:
Expected input to match one of these strings:
```

```
glossy, matte
```

The input, 'satin', did not match any of the valid strings.

```
printPhoto('myfile.jpg','height',10,'width',8)
```

```
File name: myfile.jpg
Finish: glossy
Using defaults:
    'finish'    'color'
```

To pass a value for the n th positional input, either specify values for the previous $(n - 1)$ inputs or pass the input as a parameter name and value pair. For example, these function calls assign the same values to `finish` (default 'glossy') and `color`:

```
printPhoto('myfile.gif','glossy','CMYK'); % positional
printPhoto('myfile.gif','color','CMYK'); % name and value
```

See Also

`inputParser` | `varargin`

Concepts

- “Input Parser Validation Functions” on page 16-22

Input Parser Validation Functions

This topic shows ways to define validation functions that you pass to the Input Parser to check custom function inputs.

The Input Parser methods `addRequired`, `addOptional`, and `addParamValue` each accept an optional handle to a validation function. Designate function handles with an at (`@`) symbol.

Validation functions must accept a single input argument, and they must either return a scalar logical value (`true` or `false`) or error. If the validation function returns `false`, the Input Parser issues an error and your function stops processing.

There are several ways to define validation functions:

- Use an existing MATLAB function such as `ischar` or `isnumeric`. For example, check that a required input named `num` is numeric:

```
p = inputParser;  
checknum = @isnumeric;  
addRequired(p, 'num', checknum);  
  
parse(p, 'text');
```

```
Argument 'num' failed validation isnumeric.
```

- Create an anonymous function. For example, check that input `num` is a numeric scalar greater than zero:

```
p = inputParser;  
checknum = @(x) isnumeric(x) && isscalar(x) && (x > 0);  
addRequired(p, 'num', checknum);  
  
parse(p, rand(3));
```

```
Argument 'num' failed validation @(x)isnumeric(x)&&isscalar(x)&&(x>0).
```

- Define your own function, typically a local function in the same file as your primary function. For example, in a file named `usenum.m`, define a local

function named `checknum` that issues custom error messages when the input `num` to `usenum` is not a numeric scalar greater than zero:

```
function usenum(num)
    p = inputParser;
    addRequired(p, 'num', @checknum);
    parse(p, num);

function TF = checknum(x)
    TF = false;
    if ~isscalar(x)
        error('Input is not scalar');
    elseif ~isnumeric(x)
        error('Input is not numeric');
    elseif (x <= 0)
        error('Input must be > 0');
    else
        TF = true;
    end
```

Call the function with an invalid input:

```
usenum(-1)
```

```
Error using usenum (line 4)
Argument 'num' failed validation with error:
Input must be > 0
```

See Also

[inputParser](#) | [function_handle](#) | [is*](#) | [validateattributes](#)

Related Examples

- “Parse Function Inputs” on page 16-17

Concepts

- “Anonymous Functions” on page 15-23

Debugging MATLAB Code

Debugging Process and Features

In this section...

“Ways to Debug MATLAB Files” on page 17-2
“Preparing for Debugging” on page 17-2
“Set Breakpoints” on page 17-5
“Run a File with Breakpoints” on page 17-8
“Step Through a File” on page 17-10
“Examine Values” on page 17-11
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“Breakpoints in Anonymous Functions” on page 17-26
“Breakpoints in Methods That Overload Functions” on page 17-27
“Error Breakpoints” on page 17-28

Ways to Debug MATLAB Files

You can debug MATLAB files using the Editor, which is a graphical user interface, as well as by using debugging functions from the Command Window. You can use both methods interchangeably. These topics and the example describe both methods.

Preparing for Debugging

Do the following to prepare for debugging:

- 1** Open the file — To use the Editor for debugging, open it with the file to run.
- 2** Save changes — If you are editing the file, save the changes before you begin debugging. If you try to run a file with unsaved changes from within the Editor, the file is automatically saved before it runs. If you run a file with unsaved changes from the Command Window, MATLAB software runs the saved version of the file. Therefore, you do not see the results of your changes.

- 3 Add the files to a folder on the search path or put them in the current folder. Be sure the file you run and any files it calls are in folders that are on the search path. If all required files are in the same folder, you can instead make that folder the current folder.

Debugging Example – The Collatz Problem

The debugging process and features are best described using an example. To prepare to use the example, create two files, `collatz.m` and `collatzplot.m`, that produce data for the Collatz problem.

For any given positive integer, n , the Collatz function produces a sequence of numbers that always resolves to 1. If n is even, divide it by 2 to get the next integer in the sequence. If n is odd, multiply it by 3 and add 1 to get the next integer in the sequence. Repeat the steps until the next integer is 1. The number of integers in the sequence varies, depending on the starting value, n .

The Collatz problem is to prove that the `collatz` function resolves to 1 for all positive integers. The files for this example are useful for studying the Collatz problem. The file `collatz.m` generates the sequence of integers for any given n . The file `collatzplot.m` calculates the number of integers in the sequence for all integers from 1 through m , and plots the results. The plot shows patterns that you can study further.

Following are the results when n is 1, 2, or 3.

n	Sequence	Number of Integers in the Sequence
1	1	1
2	2 1	2
3	3 10 5 16 8 4 2 1	8

Files for the Collatz Problem. Following are the two files you use for the debugging example. To create these files on your system, open two new files. Select and copy the following code from the Help browser and paste it into the files. Save and name the files `collatz.m` and `collatzplot.m`. Save them to your current folder or add the folder where you save them to the search path. One of the files has an embedded error to illustrate the debugging features.

Open the files by issuing the following commands, and then saving each file to a local folder:

```
open(fullfile(matlabroot, 'help', 'techdoc', 'matlab_env', ...  
    'examples', 'collatz.m'))
```

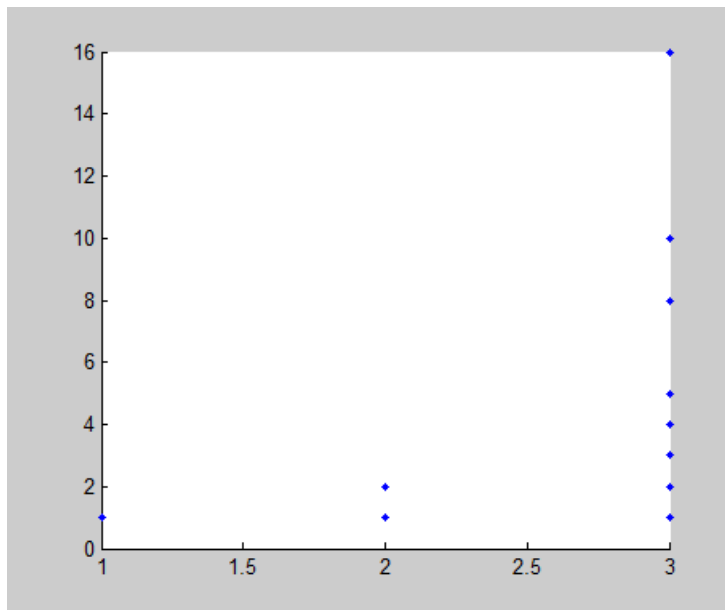
```
open(fullfile(matlabroot, 'help', 'techdoc', 'matlab_env', ...  
    'examples', 'collatzplot.m'))
```

Trial Run for the Example. Open the file `collatzplot.m`. Make sure that the current folder is the folder in which you saved `collatzplot`.

Try out `collatzplot` to see if it works correctly. Use a simple input value, for example, 3, and compare the results to those shown in the preceding table. Typing

```
collatzplot(3)
```

produces the plot shown in the following figure.



The plot for $n = 1$ appears to be correct—for 1, the Collatz series is 1, and contains one integer. But for $n = 2$ and $n = 3$, it is wrong. There should be only one value plotted for each integer, the number of integers in the sequence, which the preceding table shows to be 2 (for $n = 2$) and 8 (for $n = 3$). Instead, multiple values are plotted. Use MATLAB debugging features to isolate the problem.

Set Breakpoints

Set breakpoints to pause execution of the MATLAB file so you can examine values where you think the problem can be. You can set breakpoints using the Editor, using functions in the Command Window, or both.

There are three basic types of breakpoints you can set in MATLAB files:

- A standard breakpoint, which stops at a specified line in a file. For details, see “Set Standard Breakpoints” on page 17-7.
- A conditional breakpoint, which stops at a specified line in a file only under specified conditions. For details, see “Conditional Breakpoints” on page 17-24.
- An error breakpoint that stops in any file when it produces the specified type of warning, error, or NaN or infinite value. For details, see “Error Breakpoints” on page 17-28.

You can disable standard and conditional breakpoints so that MATLAB temporarily ignores them, or you can remove them. For details, see “Disable and Clear Breakpoints” on page 17-18. Breakpoints do not persist after you exit the MATLAB session.

You can only set valid standard and conditional breakpoints at executable lines in saved files that are in the current folder or in folders on the search path. When you add or remove a breakpoint in a file that is not in a folder on the search path or in the current folder, a dialog box appears. This dialog box presents options that allow you to add or remove the breakpoint. You can either change the current folder to the folder containing the file, or you can add the folder containing the file to the search path.

Do not set a breakpoint at a `for` statement if you want to examine values at increments in the loop. For example, in


```
for n = 1:10
    m = n+1;
end
```

MATLAB executes the `for` statement only once, which is efficient. Therefore, when you set a breakpoint at the `for` statement and step through the file, you only stop at the `for` statement once. Instead place the breakpoint at the next line, `m=n+1` to stop at each pass through the loop.

You cannot set breakpoints while MATLAB is busy, for example, running a file, unless that file is paused at a breakpoint.

Set Standard Breakpoints

To set a standard breakpoint using the Editor:

- 1 If you have changed the file, save it.
- 2 Either:
 - Click in the breakpoint alley at an executable line where you want to set the breakpoint. The *breakpoint alley* is the narrow column on the left side of the Editor, to the right of the line number.
 - Position the cursor in an executable line. On the **Editor** tab, in the **Breakpoints** section, click  **Breakpoints**, and then select **Set/Clear**.

Executable lines are preceded by a - (dash). If you attempt to set breakpoints at lines that are not executable, such as comments or blank lines, MATLAB sets it at the next executable line.

Set Breakpoints for the Example. It is unclear whether the problem in the example is in `collatzplot` or `collatz`. To start, follow these steps:

- 1 In `collatzplot.m`, click the dash in the breakpoint alley at line 9 to set a breakpoint.

This breakpoint enables you to step into `collatz` to see if the problem is there.

- 2 Set additional breakpoints at lines 10 and 11.

These breakpoints stop the program so you can examine the interim results.

```

1  function collatzplot(m)
2  % Plot length of sequence for Collatz problem
3  % Prepare figure
4  -  clf
5  -  set(gca,'XScale','linear')
6  -  %
7  % Determine and plot sequence and sequence length
8  -  for N = 1:m
9  ●  plot_seq = collatz(N);
10 ●  seq_length(N) = length(plot_seq);
11 ●  line(N,plot_seq,'Marker','.', 'MarkerSize',9, 'Color','b')
12 -  drawnow
13 -  end
14 % This M-file has an intentional error at line 10 to demonstrate
15 % The plot_seq variable should be seq_length(N).

```

Valid (Red) and Invalid (Gray) Breakpoints. Red breakpoints indicate valid standard breakpoints.

Breakpoints are gray for either of these reasons:

- There are unsaved changes in the file. Save the file to make breakpoints valid. The gray breakpoints become red, indicating they are now valid. Any gray breakpoints that you entered at invalid breakpoint lines automatically move to the next valid breakpoint line with a successful file save.
- There is a syntax error in the file. When you set a breakpoint, an error message appears indicating where the syntax error is. Fix the syntax error and save the file to make breakpoints valid.

Function Alternative for Setting Breakpoints

To set a breakpoint using the debugging functions, use `dbstop`. For the example, type:

```

dbstop in collatzplot at 9
dbstop in collatzplot at 10
dbstop in collatzplot at 11

```

Run a File with Breakpoints

After setting breakpoints, run the file from the Command Window or the Editor.

Run the Example

For the example, run `collatzplot` for the simple input value, 3, by typing the following in the Command Window:

```
collatzplot(3)
```

The example, `collatzplot`, requires an input argument and therefore runs only from the Command Window or from the input value(s) specified on the **Run** ▾ drop-down list on the **Editor** tab.

Results of Running a File Containing Breakpoints



Running the file results in the following:

- The prompt in the Command Window changes to

```
K>>
```

indicating that MATLAB is in debug mode.

- The program pauses at the first breakpoint. This means that line will be executed when you continue. The pause is indicated in the Editor by the green arrow just to the right of the breakpoint. In the example, the pause is at line 9 of `collatzplot`, as shown here:

```
9   | | plot_seq = collatz(N);
```

The line at which you are paused displays in the Command Window. For the example:

```
9 plot_seq = collatz(N);
```

- The function the **Function Call Stack** field displays on the **Editor** tab changes to reflect the current function (sometimes referred to as the caller or calling workspace). The call stack includes local functions as well as called functions. If you use debugging functions from the Command Window, use `dbstack` to view the current call stack.
- If the file you are running is not in the current folder or a folder on the search path, you are prompted to either add the folder to the path or change the current folder.




In debug mode, you can set breakpoints, step through programs, examine variables, and run other functions.

MATLAB software could become nonresponsive if it stops at a breakpoint while displaying a modal dialog box or figure that your file creates. In that event, press **Ctrl+C** to go to the MATLAB prompt.





Step Through a File



While debugging, you can step through a MATLAB file, pausing at points where you want to examine values.

Use any of the following methods:


- Click  **Step**,  **Step In**,  **Step Out** in **Editor** tab.
- Use the `dbstep` or `dbcont` function

Details about these debugging buttons appear in the following table.


Toolbar Button	Debug Menu Item	Description	Function Alternative
	Run to Cursor	Continue execution of file until the line where the cursor is positioned. Also available on the context menu.	None
	Step	Execute the current line of the file.	<code>dbstep</code>
	Step In	Execute the current line of the file and, if the line is a call to another function, step into that function.	<code>dbstep in</code>
	Continue	Resume execution of file until completion or until another breakpoint is encountered.	<code>dbcont</code>


Toolbar Button	Debug Menu Item	Description	Function Alternative
	Step Out	After stepping in, run the rest of the called function or local function, leave the called function, and pause.	dbstep out
	Quit Debugging	Exit debug mode.	dbquit out

Continue Running in the Example

In the example, `collatzplot` is paused at line 9. Because the problem results are correct for $N/n = 1$, continue running until $N/n = 2$. Click  **Continue** three times to move through the breakpoints at lines 9, 10, and 11. Now the program is again paused at the breakpoint at line 9.

Step into the Called Function in the Example

Now that `collatzplot` is paused at line 9 during the second iteration, click  **Step In** or type `dbstep in` in the Command Window to step into `collatz` and walk through that file. Stepping into line 9 of `collatzplot` goes to line 9 of `collatz`. If `collatz` is not open in the Editor, it automatically opens if you have selected **Automatically open files when MATLAB reaches a breakpoint** in the Preference dialog box.

The pause indicator at line 9 of `collatzplot` changes to a hollow arrow , indicating that MATLAB control is now in a local function called from the main program. The call stack shows that the current function is now `collatz`.

In the called function, `collatz` in the example, you can do the same things you can do in the main (calling) function—set breakpoints, run, step through, and examine values.

Examine Values

While the program is paused, you can view the value of any variable currently in the workspace. Examine values when you want to see whether a line of code has produced the expected result or not. If the result is as expected,

continue running or step to the next line. If the result is not as you expect, then that line, or a previous line, contains an error. Use the following methods to examine values:

- “Select the Workspace” on page 17-12
- “View Values as Data Tips in the Editor” on page 17-13
- “View Values in the Command Window” on page 17-13
- “View Values in the Workspace Browser and Variable Editor” on page 17-14
- “Evaluate a Selection” on page 17-15
- “Examine Values in the Example” on page 17-15
- “Problems Viewing Variable Values from the Parent Workspace” on page 17-16

Many of these methods are used in “Examine Values in the Example” on page 17-15.

Select the Workspace

Variables assigned through the Command Window and created using scripts are considered to be in the base workspace. Variables created in a function belong to their own function workspace. To examine a variable, you must first select its workspace. When you run a program, the current workspace is shown in the **Function Call Stack** field. To examine values that are part of another workspace for a currently running function or for the base workspace, first select that workspace from the list in the **Function Call Stack** field.


If you use debugging functions from the Command Window:

- To display the call stack, use `dbstack`.
- To change to a different workspace, use `dbup` and `dbdown`.
- To list the variables in the current workspace, use `who` or `whos`.

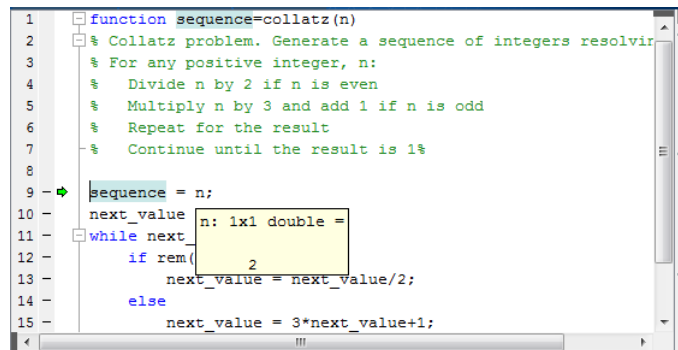
Workspace in the Example. At line 9 of `collatzplot`, you stepped in, and the current line is 9 in `collatz`. The **Function Call Stack** field shows that `collatz` is the current workspace.

View Values as Data Tips in the Editor

To view the current value of a variable in the Editor, first enable datatips, then use the mouse to display a datatip:

- 1 On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**, and select **Editor/Debugger > Display**.
- 2 Select **Enable datatips in edit mode** under **General display options**.
- 3 In the Editor, position the mouse pointer to the left of a variable.

The variable's current value appears in a data tip. The data tip stays in view until you move the pointer. If you have trouble getting the data tip to appear, click in the line containing the variable, and then move the pointer next to the variable.



```

1  function sequence=collatz(n)
2  % Collatz problem. Generate a sequence of integers resolving
3  % For any positive integer, n:
4  %   Divide n by 2 if n is even
5  %   Multiply n by 3 and add 1 if n is odd
6  %   Repeat for the result
7  %   Continue until the result is 1%
8
9  sequence = n;
10 next_value
11 while next
12     if rem(
13         next_value = next_value/2;
14     else
15         next_value = 3*next_value+1;

```

The screenshot shows a MATLAB Editor window with a code editor. A data tip is displayed over the variable 'n' on line 9. The data tip shows 'n: 1x1 double ='. The code is a function 'sequence=collatz(n)' that generates a sequence of integers for the Collatz problem. The data tip is triggered by hovering over the variable 'n' in the assignment 'sequence = n;'.

View Values in the Command Window

You can examine values while in debug mode at the `K>>` prompt. To see the variables currently in the workspace, use `who`. Type a variable name in the Command Window and it displays the variable's current value. For the example, to see the value of `n`, type

```
n
```

The Command Window displays the expected result

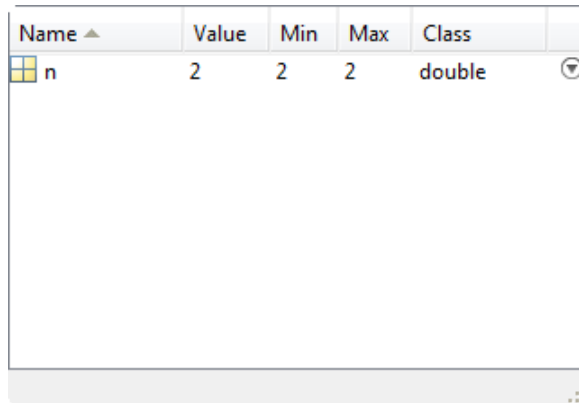
```
n =
```


2

and displays the debug prompt, `K>>`.

View Values in the Workspace Browser and Variable Editor

You can view the value of variables in the **Value** column of the Workspace browser. The Workspace browser displays all variables in the current workspace. To change to another workspace and view its variables, use **Function Call Stack** drop-down list on the **Editor** tab, in the **Debug** section.



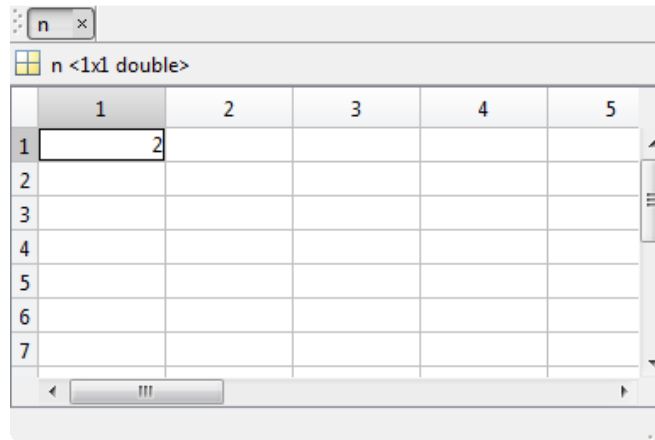
Name ▲	Value	Min	Max	Class	
 n	2	2	2	double	▼

The **Value** column does not show all details for all variables. To see details, double-click a variable in the Workspace browser. The Variable Editor opens, displaying the content for that variable. You can open the Variable Editor directly for a variable using `openvar`.

To see the value of `n` in the Variable Editor for the example, type

```
openvar n
```

and the Variable Editor opens, showing that `n = 1` as expected.



The image shows a MATLAB Command Window titled 'n'. Below the title bar, it displays 'n <1x1 double>'. The window contains a table with 5 columns and 7 rows. The first row has the value '2' in the first column. The other cells are empty. The table is as follows:

	1	2	3	4	5
1	2				
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

Evaluate a Selection

Select a variable or equation in a MATLAB file in the Editor. Right-click and select **Evaluate Selection** from the context menu (for a single-button mouse, press **Ctrl+click**). The Command Window displays the value of the variable or equation. You cannot evaluate a selection while MATLAB is busy, for example, running a file.

Examine Values in the Example

Step from line 9 through line 13 in `collatz`. Step again, and the pause indicator jumps to line 17, just after the `if` loop, as expected. Step again, to line 18, check the value of `sequence` in line 17 and see that the array is

```
2 1
```

as expected for $n = 2$. Step again, which moves the pause indicator from line 18 to line 11. At line 11, step again. Because `next_value` is now 1, the `while` loop ends. The pause indicator is at line 11 and appears as a green down arrow \blacktriangledown . This indicates that processing in the called function is complete and program control will return to the calling program. Step again from line 11 in `collatz` and execution is now paused at line 9 in `collatzplot`.

Note that instead of stepping through `collatz`, the called function, as was just done in this example, you can step out from a called function back to the calling function, which automatically runs the rest of the called function and

returns to the next line in the calling function. To step out, use the Step Out button or type `dbstep out` in the Command Window.

In `collatzplot`, step again to advance to line 10, and then to line 11. The variable `seq_length` in line 10 is a vector with the elements:

```
1 2
```

which is correct.

Finally, step again to advance to line 12. Examining the values in line 11, `N = 2` as expected, but the second variable, `plot_seq`, has two values, where only one value is expected. While the value for `plot_seq` is as expected:

```
2 1
```

it is the incorrect variable for plotting. Instead, `seq_length(N)` should be plotted.

Problems Viewing Variable Values from the Parent Workspace

Sometimes, if you set a breakpoint in a function, and then attempt to view the value of a variable in the parent workspace using the `dbup` command, the value of the variable is currently under construction. Therefore, the value is not available. This is true whether you view the value by specifying the `dbup` command in the Command Window or by using the **Function Call Stack** field on the **Editor** tab.

In such cases, MATLAB returns the following message, where *x* is the variable for which you are trying to examine the value:

```
K>> x  
Reference to a called function result under construction x.
```

For example, suppose you have code such as the following:

```
x = collatz(x);
```

MATLAB detects that the evaluation of `collatz(x)` replaces the input variable, *x*. To optimize memory use, MATLAB overwrites the memory that *x* currently occupies to hold a new value for *x*. When you request the value

of x , and it is under construction, its value is not available, and MATLAB displays the error message.

Correct Problems and End Debugging

The following are some of the ways to correct problems and end the debugging session:

- “Change Values and Check Results” on page 17-17
- “End Debugging” on page 17-17
- “Disable and Clear Breakpoints” on page 17-18
- “Save Breakpoints” on page 17-20
- “Correct Problems in a MATLAB File” on page 17-20
- “Complete the Example” on page 17-21
- “Run Parts in MATLAB Files That Have Unsaved Changes” on page 17-23

“Complete the Example” on page 17-21 uses many of these features.

Change Values and Check Results


While debugging, you can change the value of a variable in the current workspace to see if the new value produces expected results. While the program is paused, assign a new value to the variable in the Command Window, Workspace browser, or Variable Editor. Then continue running or stepping through the program. If the new value does not produce the expected results, the program has a different problem.

End Debugging

After identifying a problem, end the debugging session. You must end a debugging session if you want to change and save a file to correct a problem, or if you want to run other functions in MATLAB.

Note Quit debug mode before editing a file. If you edit a file while in debug mode, you can get unexpected results when you run the file. If you do edit a file while in debug mode, breakpoints turn gray, indicating that results might not be reliable. See “Valid (Red) and Invalid (Gray) Breakpoints” on page 17-8 for details.

If you attempt to save an edited file while in debug mode, a dialog box opens allowing you to exit debug mode and save the file.

To end debugging, click  **Quit Debugging**, or use the function `dbquit`.


After quitting debugging, pause indicators in the Editor display no longer appear, and the normal prompt `>>` appears in the Command Window instead of the debugging prompt, `K>>`. You can no longer access the call stack.

Disable and Clear Breakpoints


Disable a breakpoint to ignore it temporarily. Clear a breakpoint to remove it.

Disable and Enable Breakpoints. You can disable selected breakpoints so the program temporarily ignores them and runs uninterrupted, for example, after you think you identified and corrected a problem. This is especially useful for conditional breakpoints—see “Conditional Breakpoints” on page 17-24.

To disable a breakpoint, do one of the following:

- Right-click the breakpoint icon, and select **Disable Breakpoint** from the context menu.
- Place your cursor anywhere in a breakpoint line. Click  **Breakpoints**, and select **Enable/Disable** from the drop-down list.

To disable a conditional breakpoint, use either of the methods in the preceding list. An **X** appears through the breakpoint icon as shown here.


```
9  plot_seq = collatz(N);
```


When you run `dbstatus`, the resulting message for a disabled breakpoint is

```
Breakpoint on line 9 has conditional expression 'false'.
```

After disabling a breakpoint, you can re-enable it to make it active again or you can clear it.


To re-enable a breakpoint, do either of the following:

- Right-click the breakpoint icon and select **Enable Breakpoint** from the context menu.
- Place your cursor anywhere in a breakpoint line. Click  **Breakpoints**, and select **Enable/Disable** from the drop-down list.

The X no longer appears on the breakpoint icon and program execution will pause at that line.


Clear (Remove) Breakpoints. All breakpoints remain in a file until you clear (remove) them or until they are cleared automatically. Clear a breakpoint after determining that a line of code is not causing a problem.

To clear a breakpoint in the Editor:

- Right-click the breakpoint icon and select **Clear Breakpoint** from the context menu.
- Place your cursor anywhere in a breakpoint line. Click  **Breakpoints**, and select **Set/Clear** from the drop-down list.
- Use the `dbclear in file at lineno` command in the Command Window. For the example, clear the breakpoint at line 9 in `collatzplot` by typing:

```
dbclear in collatzplot at 9
```

To clear all breakpoints in all files:

- Place your cursor anywhere in a breakpoint line. Click  **Breakpoints**, and select **Clear All** from the drop-down list.
- Use `dbclear all` in the Command Window.

For the example, clear all of the breakpoints in `collatzplot` by typing:

```
dbclear all in collatzplot
```

Breakpoints clear automatically when you:

- End the MATLAB session.
- Clear the file using `clear name` or `clear all`.

Note When `clear name` or `clear all` is in a statement in a file that you are debugging, it clears the breakpoints.

Save Breakpoints

You can use the `s=dbstatus` syntax and then save `s` to save the current breakpoints to a MAT-file. At a later time, you can load `s` and restore the breakpoints using `dbstop(s)`. For more information, including an example, see the `dbstatus` reference page.

Correct Problems in a MATLAB File

To correct a problem in a MATLAB file:

- 1 Quit debugging.


Do not modify a file while MATLAB is in debug mode. If you do, breakpoints turn gray, indicating that results might not be reliable. See “Valid (Red) and Invalid (Gray) Breakpoints” on page 17-8 for details.

- 2 Modify the file.
- 3 Save the file.

- 4 Set, disable, or clear breakpoints, as appropriate.
- 5 Run the file again to be sure that it produces the expected results.

Complete the Example

To correct the problem in the example:

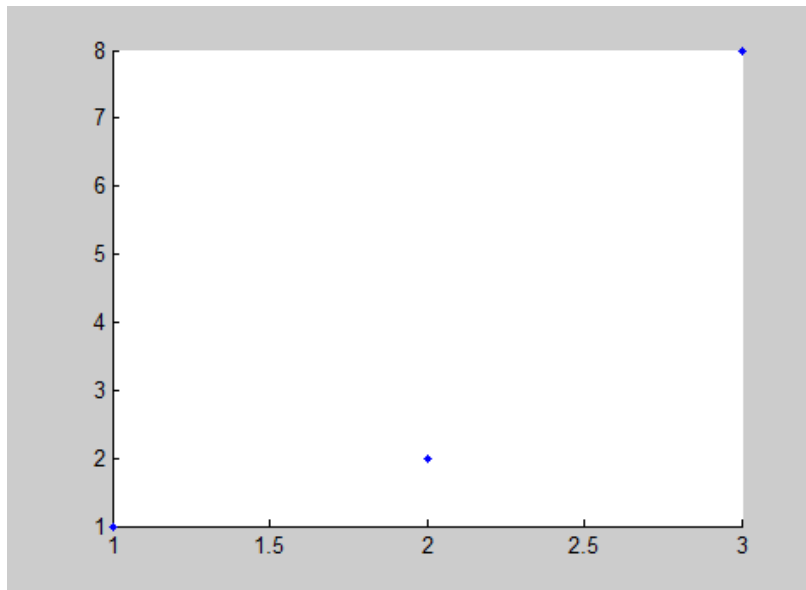
- 1 End the debugging session. One way to do this is to click  **Quit Debugging**
- 2 In `collatzplot.m` line 11, change the string `plot_seq` to `seq_length(N)` and save the file.
- 3 Clear the breakpoints in `collatzplot.m`. One way to do this is by typing

```
dbclear all in collatzplot
```


in the Command Window.
- 4 Run `collatzplot` for `m = 3` by typing

```
collatzplot(3)
```


in the Command Window.
- 5 Verify the result. The figure shows that the length of the Collatz series is 1 when $n = 1$, 2 when $n = 2$, and 8 when $n = 3$, as expected.



- 6** Test the function for a slightly larger value of m , such as 6, to be sure that the results are still accurate. To make it easier to verify `collatzplot` for $m = 6$ as well as the results for `collatz`, add this line at the end of `collatz.m`

```
sequence
```

which displays the series in the Command Window. The results for when $n = 6$ are

```
sequence =
```

```
6     3    10     5    16     8     4     2     1
```

Then run `collatzplot` for $m = 6$ by typing

```
collatzplot(6)
```

- 7** To make debugging easier, you ran `collatzplot` for a small value of m . Now that you know it works correctly, run `collatzplot` for a larger value to produce more interesting results. Before doing so, you consider disabling

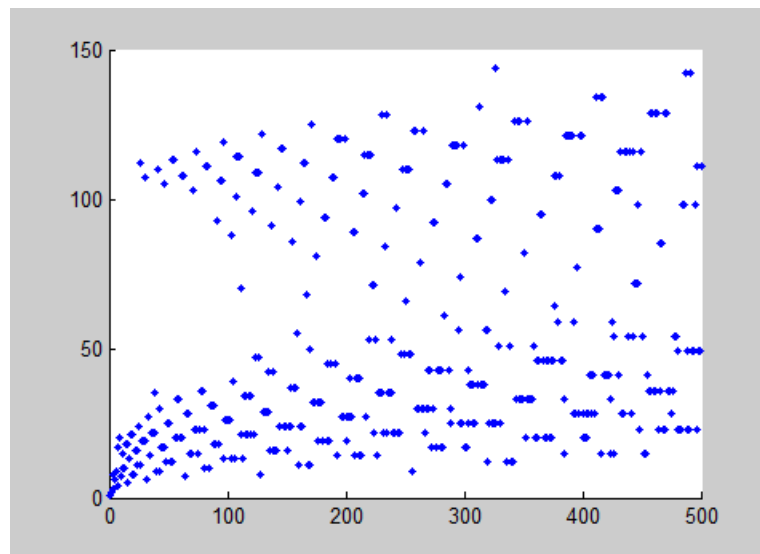
output for the line you just added in step 6, line 19 of `collatz.m`, by adding a semicolon to the end of the line so it appears as

```
sequence;
```

Then run

```
collatzplot(500)
```

The following figure shows the lengths of the Collatz series for $n = 1$ through $n = 500$.



Run Parts in MATLAB Files That Have Unsaved Changes

It is a good practice to modify a MATLAB file after you quit debugging, and then save the modification and run the file. Otherwise, you might get unexpected results. However, there are situations where you want to experiment during debugging. Perhaps you want to modify a part of the file that has not yet run, and then run the remainder of the file without saving the change. Follow these steps:

- 1 While stopped at a breakpoint, modify a part of the file that has not yet run.

Breakpoints turn gray, indicating they are invalid.

- 2 Select all of the code after the breakpoint, right-click, and then select **Evaluate Selection** from the context menu.

You can also use code sections to do this.


Conditional Breakpoints

Set conditional breakpoints to cause MATLAB to stop at a specified line in a file only when the specified condition is met. One particularly good use for conditional breakpoints is when you want to examine results after a certain number of iterations in a loop. For example, set a breakpoint at line 10 in `collatzplot`, specifying that MATLAB stop only if `N` is greater than or equal to 2. This section covers the following topics:

- “Set Conditional Breakpoints” on page 17-24
- “Modify, Disable, or Clear Conditional Breakpoints” on page 17-25
- “Function Alternatives for Manipulating Conditional Breakpoints” on page 17-25

Set Conditional Breakpoints

To set a conditional breakpoint:

- 1 Click in the line where you want to set the conditional breakpoint.
- 2 Click  **Breakpoints** on the **Editor** tab, and select **Set Condition**. If a standard breakpoint exists at that line, use this same method to make it conditional.

The MATLAB Editor conditional breakpoint dialog box opens.

- 3 Type a condition in the dialog box, where a condition is any valid MATLAB expression that returns a logical scalar value. Click **OK**. As noted in the dialog box, the condition is evaluated before running the line. For the example, at line 9 in `collatzplot`, enter the following as the condition:

```
N>=2
```

A yellow breakpoint icon (indicating the breakpoint is conditional) appears in the breakpoint alley at that line.

When you run the file, MATLAB software enters debug mode and pauses at the line only when the condition is met. In the `collatzplot` example, MATLAB runs through the `for` loop once and pauses on the second iteration at line 9 when `N` is 2. If you continue executing, MATLAB pauses again at line 9 on the third iteration when `N` is 3.

Modify, Disable, or Clear Conditional Breakpoints

The following table describes how to adjust conditional breakpoints.

To	Do This
Modify a condition for a breakpoint in the current line.	Right-click the conditional breakpoint icon, and then from the context menu, select Set/Modify Condition .
Disable a conditional breakpoint.	Click the associated conditional breakpoint icon.
Clear a conditional breakpoint.	Double-click the associated conditional breakpoint icon.

Function Alternatives for Manipulating Conditional Breakpoints

The following table lists the functions available for adjusting conditional breakpoints from the Command Window.

To	Use This Function
Set a conditional breakpoint.	<code>dbstop</code>
Clear a conditional breakpoint.	<code>dbclear</code>
View a list of currently set breakpoints, including the conditional expression for each conditional breakpoint.	<code>dbstatus</code>

Breakpoints in Anonymous Functions

You can set multiple breakpoints in a line of MATLAB code that contains anonymous functions. You can do both of the following:

- Set a breakpoint for the line itself (MATLAB software pauses at the start of the line).
- Set a breakpoint for each anonymous function in that line.

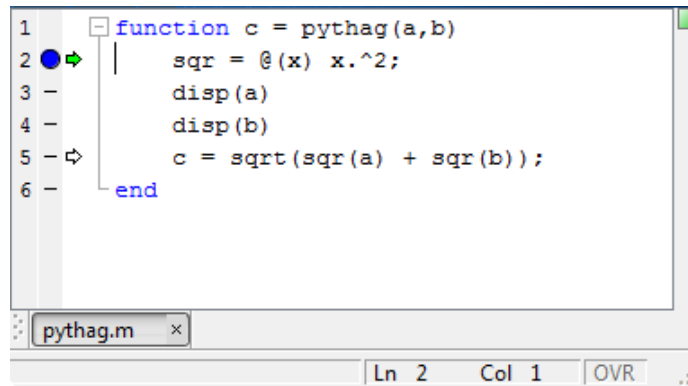
When you add a breakpoint to a line containing an anonymous function, the Editor asks where in the line you want to add the breakpoint. If there is more than one breakpoint in a line, the breakpoint icon is blue, regardless of the status of any of the breakpoints on the line.

To display information in a tooltip about all breakpoints on a line, position the pointer on the blue icon.

To perform a breakpoint action for a line that can contain multiple breakpoints, such as **Clear Breakpoint**, right-click the breakpoint alley at that line, and then select the action.

When you set a breakpoint in an anonymous function, MATLAB pauses when the anonymous function is called.

The following illustration shows the Editor when you set a breakpoint in the anonymous function `sqr` in line 2, and then run the file. When you run the file, MATLAB pauses each time that the anonymous function `sqr` executes. The green arrow shows where the code defines `sqr`. The white arrow, on line 5, indicates where the code calls `sqr`.



```

1 function c = pythag(a,b)
2   |   sqr = @(x) x.^2;
3   |   disp(a)
4   |   disp(b)
5   |   c = sqrt(sqr(a) + sqr(b));
6   |   end

```

pythag.m x

Ln 2 Col 1 OVR

Breakpoints in Methods That Overload Functions

MATLAB functions often call other MATLAB functions and methods to perform their operations. If you set a breakpoint in a class method, and then run a MATLAB function that results in calling that method, execution stops at the breakpoint. This behavior can be confusing if you are unaware that the MATLAB function calls the method containing the breakpoint.

For instance, suppose you do the following:

- 1 Define a class named `MyClass` that overloads the MATLAB `size` function.
- 2 Create an instance of `MyClass`.
- 3 Insert breakpoints within the `MyClass` `size` method.
- 4 Call `whos`.

When you call the `whos` function, it calls the `size` function to obtain size information about the variables in the workspace. Under the preceding circumstances, because `MyClass` overloads the `size` function, `whos` calls the `MyClass` `size` method instead of the default `size` function to determine the size of the `MyClass` object. Execution stops at the breakpoint you set in the `size` method. You can enable the MATLAB function to execute to completion by either stepping or continuing through the method. To prevent this behavior from recurring, remove the breakpoints.


Error Breakpoints

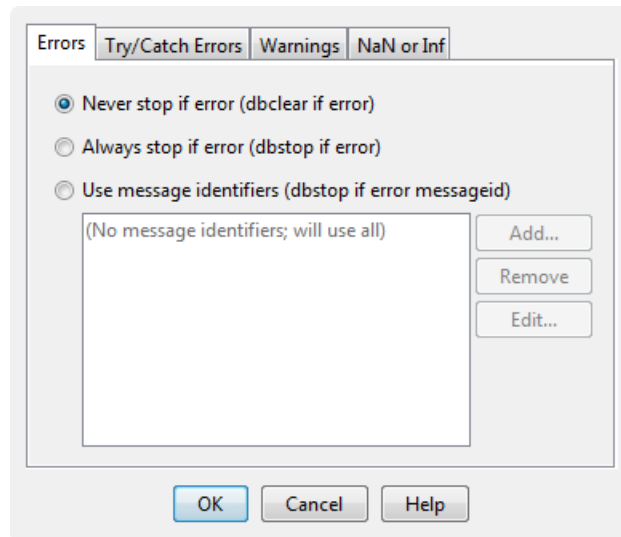
Set error breakpoints to stop program execution and enter debug mode when MATLAB encounters a problem. Unlike standard and conditional breakpoints, you do not set these breakpoints at a specific line in a specific file. Rather, once set, MATLAB stops at any line in any file when the error condition specified by using the error breakpoint occurs. MATLAB then enters debug mode and opens the file containing the error, with the pause indicator at the line containing the error. Files open only when you select **Automatically open file when MATLAB reaches a breakpoint** under **Editor/Debugger** in the Preferences dialog box. Error breakpoints remain in effect until you clear them or until you end the MATLAB session. This section covers the following topics:

- “Set and Clear Error Breakpoints” on page 17-28
- “Error Breakpoint Types and Options” on page 17-29
- “Examples of Setting Warning and Error Breakpoints” on page 17-30
- “Function Alternative for Manipulating Error Breakpoints” on page 17-32

Set and Clear Error Breakpoints

To set error breakpoints:

- 1 On the Editor tab, in the Breakpoints section, click  **Breakpoints**.
- 2 Select:
 - **Stop on Errors** to stop on all errors.
 - **Stop on Warnings** to stop on all warnings.
 - **More Error and Warning Handling Options** for additional options. This opens the Stop if Errors/Warnings for All Files dialog box



To clear error breakpoints, select the **Never stop if ...** option for all appropriate tabs, and then click **OK**.

Error Breakpoint Types and Options

As the tabs in the Stop if Errors/Warnings for All Files dialog box suggest, there are four basic types of error breakpoints you can set:

- **Errors**

When an error occurs, execution stops, unless the error is in a `try...catch` block. MATLAB enters debug mode and opens the file to the line in the `try` portion of the block that produced the error. You cannot resume execution.

- **Try/Catch Errors**

When an error occurs in a `try...catch` block, execution pauses. MATLAB enters debug mode and opens the file to the line that produced the error. You can resume execution or use debugging features.

- **Warnings**

When a warning occurs, MATLAB pauses, enters debug mode, and opens the file, paused at the line that produced the warning. You can resume execution or use debugging features.

- **NaN or Inf**

When an operator, function call, or scalar assignment produces a NaN (not-a-number) or Inf (infinite) value, MATLAB pauses, enters debug mode, and opens the file. MATLAB pauses immediately after the line that encountered the value. You can resume execution or use debugging features.

Select options for these error breakpoints:

- Click **Never stop...** on a tab to clear that type of breakpoint.
- Click **Always stop...** on a tab to set that type of breakpoint.
- Select **Use message identifiers...** on a tab to limit each type of error breakpoint (except NaN or Inf). Execution stops only for the error you specify by the corresponding message identifier.

This option is not available for the **NaN or Inf** type of error breakpoint. You can add multiple message identifiers, and edit or remove them.

Examples of Setting Warning and Error Breakpoints

Pausing Executing for Warnings. To pause execution when MATLAB produces a warning:

- 1 Click the **Warnings** tab.
- 2 Click **Always stop if warning**, and then click **OK**.

Now, when you run a file and MATLAB produces a warning, execution pauses and MATLAB enters debug mode. The file opens in the Editor at the line that produced the warning.

Set Breakpoints for a Specific Error. To stop execution for a specific error add a message identifier:

- 1 Click the **Errors, Try/Catch Errors, or Warnings** tab.
- 2 Click **Use Message Identifiers**.
- 3 Click **Add**.
- 4 In the resulting Add Message Identifier dialog box, type the message identifier of the error for which you want to stop. The identifier is of the form `component:message` (for example, `MATLAB:narginchk:notEnoughInputs`). Then click **OK**.

The message identifier you specified appears in the Stop if Errors/Warnings for All Files dialog box.

- 5 Click **OK**.

Obtain Error Message Identifiers. To obtain an error message identifier generated by a MATLAB function, run the function to produce the error, and then call `MException.last`. For example:

```
surf
MException.last
```

The Command Window displays the `MException` object, including the error message identifier in the `identifier` field. For this example, it displays:

```
ans =

MException

Properties:
  identifier: 'MATLAB:narginchk:notEnoughInputs'
  message: 'Not enough input arguments.'
  cause: {}
  stack: [1x1 struct]
```

Methods

Obtain Warning Message Identifiers. To obtain a warning message identifier generated by a MATLAB function, run the function to produce the warning. Then, run:

```
[m,id] = lastwarn
```

MATLAB returns the last warning identifier to `id`. An example of a warning message identifier is `MATLAB:concatenation:integerInteraction`.

Function Alternative for Manipulating Error Breakpoints

The function equivalent for each option in the Stop if Errors/Warnings for All Files dialog box, appears to the right of each option. For example, the function equivalent for **Always stop if error** is `dbstop if error`. Use these functions in the Command Window as listed in the following table.

To	Use This Function
Set error breakpoints.	<code>dbstop</code>
Clear error breakpoints.	<code>dbc clear</code>
View a list of currently set breakpoints, including the condition and message identifier for each error breakpoint.	<code>dbstatus</code>

Presenting MATLAB Code

MATLAB software enables you to present your MATLAB code in various ways. You can share your code and results with others, even if they do not have MATLAB software. You can save MATLAB output in various formats, including HTML, XML, and LaTeX. If Microsoft Word or Microsoft PowerPoint® applications are on your Microsoft Windows system, you can publish to their formats as well.

- “Options for Presenting Your Code” on page 18-2
- “Publish MATLAB Code” on page 18-4
- “Publishing Markup” on page 18-11
- “Specify Output Preferences for Publishing” on page 18-31
- “Create a MATLAB Notebook with Microsoft Word” on page 18-46

Options for Presenting Your Code

MATLAB provides options for presenting your code to others.

Method	Description	Output Formats	Details
Command line help	Use comments at the start of a MATLAB file to display help comments when you type <code>help file_name</code> in the Command Window.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASCII text 	“Add Help for Your Program” on page 15-5
Publish	Use comments with basic markup to publish a document that includes text, bulleted or numbered lists, MATLAB code, and code results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • XML • HTML • LaTeX • Microsoft Word (.doc/.docx) • Microsoft PowerPoint (ppt) • PDF 	“Publish MATLAB Code” on page 18-4 Publishing MATLAB Code from the Editor video
Help Browser Topics	Create HTML and XML files to provide your own MATLAB help topics for viewing from the MATLAB Help browser or the Web.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HTML 	“Display Custom Documentation” on page 25-14
Notebook	Use Microsoft Word to create electronic or printed records of MATLAB sessions for class notes, textbooks or technical reports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Microsoft Word (.doc/.docx) 	“Create a MATLAB Notebook with Microsoft Word” on page 18-46

Method	Description	Output Formats	Details
	You must have Microsoft Word software installed.		
MATLAB Report Generator™	Use MATLAB Report Generator to build complex reports. You must have MATLAB Report Generator software installed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RTF• PDF• Word• HTML• XML	MATLAB Report Generator

Publish MATLAB Code

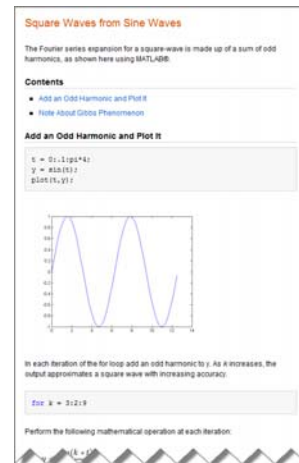
This example shows you how to convert a MATLAB file into a polished HTML document. You can also publish to Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. MATLAB allows you to control many of the output, figure, and code settings.

Publishing allows you to present to and collaborate with others who might not be familiar with MATLAB. By simply adding comments, you can insert markup text to improve the appearance of your MATLAB code. The following figures show the drastic difference between two published outputs.

Published MATLAB Code without Markup



Published MATLAB Code with Markup



To publish a MATLAB file:

- 1 Open the file you want to publish.

This example examines `fourier_demo.m`, which you can access by running the following code.

```
edit(fullfile(matlabroot,'help','techdoc','matlab_env',...
'examples','fourier_demo.m'))
```

To edit `fourier_demo.m` on your system, save the file to a folder for which you have write permission. You also can copy and paste the following code into an Editor.

```
t = 0:.1:pi*4;
y = sin(t);
plot(t,y);

% In each iteration of the for loop add an odd
% harmonic to y. As "k" increases, the output
% approximates a square wave with increasing accuracy.

for k = 3:2:9
    % Perform the following mathematical operation
    % at each iteration:
    y = y + sin(k*t)/k;
    % Display every other plot:
    if mod(k,4)==1
        display(sprintf('When k = %.1f',k));
        display('Then the plot is:');
        cla
        plot(t,y)
    end
end

% Even though the approximations are constantly
% improving, they will never be exact because of the
% Gibbs phenomenon, or ringing.
```

2 Insert a document title and introductory text at the beginning of the file.

```
%% Square Waves from Sine Waves
% The Fourier series expansion for a square-wave is
% made up of a sum of odd harmonics, as shown here
% using MATLAB(R).
```

A document title is merely a title that appears on the same line as the start of a code section.

You can begin code sections in your MATLAB code by inserting two percent signs (%%). Code sections allow you to organize your MATLAB file, execute only certain sections of code, and insert commentary using text markup features. Comments must be before any executable code in the code section to be formatted nicely.

- 3** Add two code sections with titles. This divides the file into distinguishable topics.

a Insert %% Add an Odd Harmonic and Plot It immediately after the document title and introductory text of step 2 on page 18-5.

b Insert %% Note About Gibbs Phenomenon after the for loop.

```
%% Note About Gibbs Phenomenon
% Even though the approximations are constantly
% improving, they will never be exact because of the
% Gibbs phenomenon, or ringing.
```

- 4** Add two code sections without titles. Code sections divide the file into topics and set where results appear. All output publishes at the end of its respective section.

a Insert %% after the call to `updatePlot(t,y)`.

```
plot(t,y);

%%
% In each iteration of the for loop add an odd
```

b Insert %% in the for loop. This forces MATLAB to publish the results of every iteration.

```
for k = 3:2:9
    %%
    % Perform the following mathematical operation
    % at each iteration:
```

Note Markup only works in a code section, that is after %%.

- 5 Add a LaTeX equation after the comments in the for loop. LaTeX equations are not executed by MATLAB, but give the reader more information about any mathematical relations used in your code.

```
% Perform the following mathematical operation
% at each iteration:
%
% $$ y = y + \frac{\sin(k*t)}{k} $$
%
% Display every other plot:
```

You can insert an inline LaTeX expression by surrounding text with a single dollar sign (\$).

- 6 Replace `k` with `_k_`. Surrounding a variable with `_` makes it appear italicized, a common convention when referring to variables.

```
% In each iteration of the for loop add an odd
% harmonic to y. As _k_ increases, the output
% approximates a square wave with increasing accuracy.
```

Similarly, you can make text bold or monospaced by surrounding it with `*` or `|`, respectively.

- 7 Click the **Publish** button on the **Publish** tab and the following figure should appear in a MATLAB Web Browser.

By default, MATLAB publishes all code to HTML and code-generated images in a `html` subfolder within the folder containing the source file.

Square Waves from Sine Waves

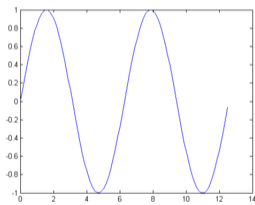
The Fourier series expansion for a square-wave is made up of a sum of odd harmonics, as shown here using MATLAB®.

Contents

- Add an Odd Harmonic and Plot It
- Note About Gibbs Phenomenon

Add an Odd Harmonic and Plot It

```
t = 0:.1:pi*4;
y = sin(t);
plot(t,y);
```



In each iteration of the for loop add an odd harmonic to y. As k increases, the output approximates a square wave with increasing accuracy.

```
for k = 3:2:9
```

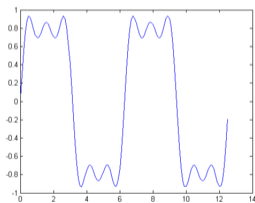
Perform the following mathematical operation at each iteration:

$$y = y + \frac{\sin(k*t)}{k}$$

Display every other plot

```
y = y + sin(k*t)/k;
if mod(k,4)==1
    display(sprintf('When k = %.1f',k));
    display('Then the plot is:');
    cla
    plot(t,y)
end
```

When k = 5.0
Then the plot is:



When k = 9.0
Then the plot is:

You can directly access the modified file that produced the preceding output by running this code.

```
edit(fullfile(matlabroot, 'help', 'techdoc', 'matlab_env', ...  
'examples', 'fourier_demo2.m'))
```

To edit `fourier_demo2.m` on your system, save the file to a folder to which you have write permission. You also can copy and paste the following code into an Editor.

```
%% Square Waves from Sine Waves  
% The Fourier series expansion for a square-wave is  
% made up of a sum of odd harmonics, as shown here  
% using MATLAB(R).  
  
%% Add an Odd Harmonic and Plot It  
t = 0:.1:pi*4;  
y = sin(t);  
plot(t,y);  
  
%%  
% In each iteration of the for loop add an odd  
% harmonic to y. As _k_ increases, the output  
% approximates a square wave with increasing accuracy.  
  
for k = 3:2:9  
    %%  
    % Perform the following mathematical operation  
    % at each iteration:  
    %  
    %  $y = y + \frac{\sin(k*t)}{k}$   
    %  
    % Display every other plot:  
    %  
    y = y + sin(k*t)/k;  
    if mod(k,4)==1  
        display(sprintf('When k = %.1f',k));  
        display('Then the plot is:');  
        cla  
        plot(t,y)
```

```
        end
    end
```

```
%% Note About Gibbs Phenomenon
% Even though the approximations are constantly
% improving, they will never be exact because of the
% Gibbs phenomenon, or ringing.
```

See Also `publish`

Concepts

- “Publishing Markup” on page 18-11
- “Specify Output Preferences for Publishing” on page 18-31

Publishing Markup

In this section...
“Markup Overview” on page 18-11
“Sections and Section Titles” on page 18-14
“Text Formatting” on page 18-16
“Bulleted and Numbered Lists” on page 18-17
“Text and Code Blocks” on page 18-17
“External Graphics” on page 18-19
“Image Snapshot” on page 18-21
“LaTeX Equations” on page 18-22
“Hyperlinks” on page 18-24
“HTML Markup” on page 18-27
“LaTeX Markup” on page 18-28

Markup Overview

This section describes how to mark up your MATLAB files so that the code appears polished when publishing. You can single-source your MATLAB code with documentation that describes its purpose.

You insert markup three different ways:

- Use the formatting buttons and drop-down menus on the **Publish** tab to format the file. This method automatically inserts the text markup for you.
- Select markup from the **Insert Text Markup** list in the right click menu.
- Type the markup directly in the comments.

The following table provides a summary of the text markup options. Refer to this table if you are not using the MATLAB Editor, or if you do not want to use the **Publish** tab to apply the markup.

Note When working with markup:

- Spaces following the comment symbols (%) often determine the format of the texts that follows.
- Starting new markup often requires preceding blank comment lines, as shown in examples.
- Markup only works inside a code section.

Result in Output	Example of Corresponding File Markup
“Sections and Section Titles” on page 18-14	<pre> %% SECTION TITLE % DESCRIPTIVE TEXT %%% SECTION TITLE WITHOUT SECTION BREAK % DESCRIPTIVE TEXT </pre>
“Text Formatting” on page 18-16	<pre> % _ITALIC TEXT_ % *BOLD TEXT* % MONOSPACED TEXT % Trademarks: % TEXT(TM) % TEXT(R) </pre>

Result in Output	Example of Corresponding File Markup
“Bulleted and Numbered Lists” on page 18-17	<pre> %% Bulleted List % % * BULLETED ITEM 1 % * BULLETED ITEM 2 % %% Numbered List % % # NUMBERED ITEM 1 % # NUMBERED ITEM 2 %</pre>
“Text and Code Blocks” on page 18-17	<pre> %% % % PREFORMATTED % TEXT % %% MATLAB(R) Code % % for i = 1:10 % disp x % end %</pre>
“External Graphics” on page 18-19	<pre> % % <<FILENAME.PNG>> %</pre>
“Image Snapshot” on page 18-21	<pre> snapnow;</pre>
“LaTeX Equations” on page	
“Hyperlinks” on page 18-24	<pre> % <http://www.mathworks.com MathWorks></pre>
	<pre> %% Block Equation %% \$matlab:FUNCTION_DISPLAYED_TEXT> %% \$\\$e \{ \pi i \} + i = 0\$\$</pre>

Result in Output	Example of Corresponding File Markup
“HTML Markup” on page 18-27	<pre data-bbox="563 321 972 538"> % % <html> % <table border=1><tr> % <td>one</td> % <td>two</td></tr></table> % </html> %</pre>
“LaTeX Markup” on page 18-28	<pre data-bbox="563 586 972 868"> % % <latex> % \begin{tabular}{ r r} % \hline \$n\$&\$n!\$\\ % \\hline 1&1\\ 2&2\\ 3&6\\ % \\hline % \end{tabular} % </latex> %</pre>

Sections and Section Titles

Code sections allow you to organize, add comments, and execute portions of your code. Code sections begin with double percent signs (%%) followed by an optional section title. The section title displays as a top-level heading (h1 in HTML), using a larger, bold font.

Note You can add comments in the lines immediately following the title. However, if you want an overall document title, you cannot add any MATLAB code before the start of the next section (a line starting with %%).

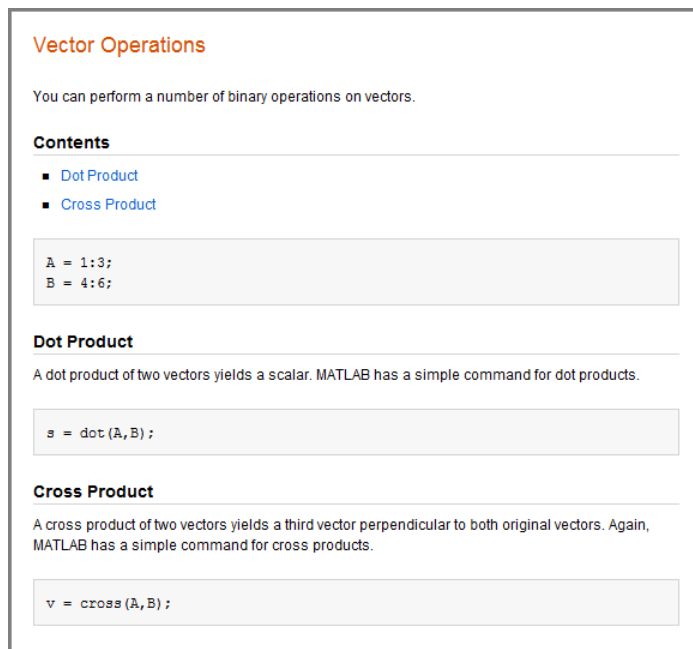
For instance, the following code produces a polished result when published.

```

%% Vector Operations
% You can perform a number of binary operations on vectors.
%%
A = 1:3;
```

```
B = 4:6;
%% Dot Product
% A dot product of two vectors yields a scalar.
% MATLAB has a simple command for dot products.
s = dot(A,B);
%% Cross Product
% A cross product of two vectors yields a third
% vector perpendicular to both original vectors.
% Again, MATLAB has a simple command for cross products.
v = cross(A,B);
```

By saving the code in an Editor and clicking the **Publish** button on the **Publish** tab, MATLAB produces the output as shown in the following figure. Notice that MATLAB automatically inserts a Contents menu from the section titles in the MATLAB file.



The screenshot shows the published output of the MATLAB code. It features a title 'Vector Operations' in orange, followed by a brief introduction. A 'Contents' section lists 'Dot Product' and 'Cross Product' as clickable links. Below this, the code is displayed in three separate sections: first, the initial variable definitions; then, the dot product calculation; and finally, the cross product calculation. Each code block is enclosed in a light gray box.

```
Vector Operations
```

You can perform a number of binary operations on vectors.

Contents

- [Dot Product](#)
- [Cross Product](#)

```
A = 1:3;
B = 4:6;
```

Dot Product

A dot product of two vectors yields a scalar. MATLAB has a simple command for dot products.

```
s = dot(A,B);
```

Cross Product

A cross product of two vectors yields a third vector perpendicular to both original vectors. Again, MATLAB has a simple command for cross products.

```
v = cross(A,B);
```

Text Formatting

You can mark selected strings in the MATLAB comments so that they display in italic, bold, or monospaced text when you publish the file. Simply surround the text with `_`, `*`, or `|` for italic, bold, or monospaced text, respectively.

For instance, the following lines display each of the text formatting syntaxes if published.

```
%% Calculate and Plot Sine Wave  
% _Define_ the *range* for |x|
```

Calculate and Plot Sine Wave

Define the range for x

Trademark Symbols

If the comments in your MATLAB file include trademarked terms, you can include text to produce a trademark symbol (™) or registered trademark symbol (®) in the output.

For example, suppose you enter lines in a file as shown below.

```
%% Basic Matrix Operations in MATLAB(R)  
% This is a demonstration of some aspects of MATLAB(R)  
% software and the Neural Network Toolbox(TM) software.
```

If you publish the file to HTML, it appears in the MATLAB Web browser.

Basic Matrix Operations in MATLAB®

This is a demonstration of some aspects of MATLAB® software and the Neural Network Toolbox™ software.

Bulleted and Numbered Lists

MATLAB allows bulleted and numbered lists in the comments. You can use the following syntax to produce bulleted and numbered lists.

```
%% Two Lists
%
% * ITEM1
% * ITEM2
%
% # ITEM1
% # ITEM2
%
```

Publishing the example code produces the following output.



Text and Code Blocks

Preformatted Text

Preformatted text appears in monospace font, maintains white space, and does not wrap long lines. Two spaces must appear between the comment symbol and the text of the first line of the preformatted text.

Publishing the following code produces a preformatted paragraph.

```
%%
% Many people find monospaced texts easier to read:
%
```

```
% A dot product of two vectors yields a scalar.  
% MATLAB has a simple command for dot products.
```

Many people find monospaced texts easier to read:

```
A dot product of two vectors yields a scalar.  
MATLAB has a simple command for dot products.
```

Syntax Highlighted Sample Code

Executable code appears with syntax highlighting in published documents. You can also highlight *sample code*. Sample code is code that appears within comments.

To indicate sample code, you must put three spaces between the comment symbol and the start of the first line of code. For example, clicking the **Code** button on the **Publish** tab puts the following code in your Editor.

```
%%  
% Teach your computer to count to ten.  
%  
%   for i = 1:10  
%       disp(x)  
%   end
```

Publishing this code to HTML produces output in the MATLAB Web browser.

Teach your computer to count to ten

```
for i = 1:10  
    disp(x)  
end
```


External Graphics

You can insert text markup to publish an image that the MATLAB code does not generate. By default, MATLAB already includes code-generated graphics.

You can insert a generic image called `FILENAME.PNG` into your published output:

```
%%  
%  
% <<FILENAME.PNG>>  
%
```

MATLAB requires `FILENAME.PNG` be a relative path from the output location to your external image or a fully qualified URL. It is a good practice to save your image in the same folder that MATLAB publishes its output. For example, MATLAB publishes HTML documents to a subfolder `html`. Save your image file in the same subfolder. You can change the output folder by changing the publish configuration settings.

External Graphics Example Using `surf(peaks)`

This example shows how to insert `surfpeaks.jpg` into a MATLAB file for publishing.

To create the `surfpeaks.jpg`, run the following code in the Command Window.

```
saveas(surf(peaks), 'surfpeaks.jpg');
```

To produce an HTML file containing `surfpeaks.jpg` from a MATLAB file:

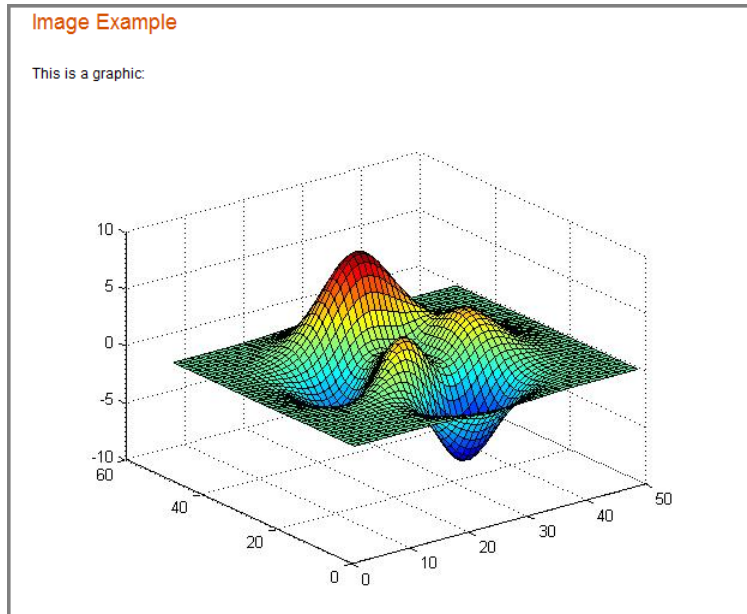
- 1 Create a subfolder called `html` in your current folder.
- 2 Create `surfpeaks.jpg` by running this code in the Command Window.

```
saveas(surf(peaks), 'html/surfpeaks.jpg');
```

- 3 Publish this MATLAB code to HTML.

```
%% Image Example  
% This is a graphic:
```

```
%
% <<surfpeaks.jpg>>
%
```



Valid Image Types for Output File Formats

The type of images you can include when you publish depends on the output type of that document as indicated in this table. For greatest compatibility, MathWorks recommends using the default image format for each output type.

Output File Format	Default Image Format	Types of Images You Can Include
doc	png	Any format that your installed version of Microsoft Office supports.
html	png	All formats publish successfully. Ensure that the tools you use to view and process the output files can display the output format you specify.

Output File Format	Default Image Format	Types of Images You Can Include
latex	png or epsc2	All formats publish successfully. Ensure that the tools you use to view and process the output files can display the output format you specify.
pdf	bmp	bmp and jpg.
ppt	png	Any format that your installed version of Microsoft Office supports.
xml	png	All formats publish successfully. Ensure that the tools you use to view and process the output files can display the output format you specify.

Image Snapshot

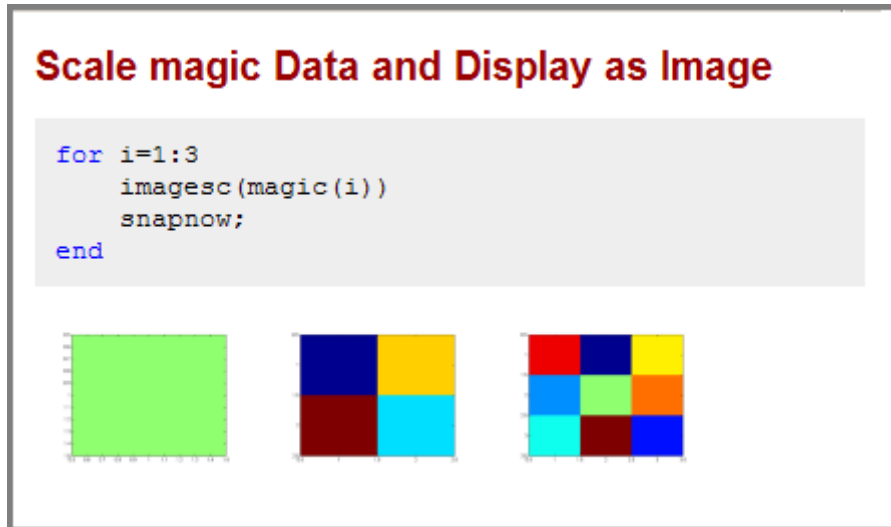
You can insert code that captures a snapshot of your MATLAB output. This is useful, for example, if you have a `for` loop that modifies a figure that you want to capture after each iteration.

For example, the following code runs a `for` loop three times and produces output after every iteration. The `snapnow` command captures all three images produced by the code.

```
%% Scale magic Data and Display as Image

for i=1:3
    imagesc(magic(i))
    snapnow;
end
```

If you publish the file to HTML, it resembles the following figure. By default, the images in the HTML are larger than shown in the figure. To resize images generated by MATLAB code, use the **Max image width** and **Max image height** fields in the **Publish settings** pane, as described in “Specify Output Preferences for Publishing” on page 18-31.



LaTeX Equations

Inline LaTeX Expression

MATLAB allows you to include an inline LaTeX expression in any code that you intend to publish. To insert an inline expression, surround your LaTeX markup with dollar sign characters (\$).

Note All publishing output types support LaTeX expressions, except Microsoft PowerPoint.

This code contains a LaTeX expression:

```

%% LaTeX Inline Expression Example
%
% This is an equation:  $x^2+e^{\pi i}$ . It is
% inline with the text.

```

If you publish the sample text markup to HTML, the output appears:

LaTeX Inline Expression Example

This is an equation: $x^2 + e^{\pi i}$. It is inline with the text.

LaTeX Display Equation

MATLAB allows you to insert LaTeX symbols in blocks offset from the main comment text. Two dollar sign characters (\$\$) on each side of your equation denotes a block LaTeX equation.

This code is a sample text markup.

```
%% LaTeX Equation Example
%
% This is an equation:
%
% $$e^{\pi i} + 1 = 0$$
%
% It is not in line with the text.
```

If you publish to HTML, the expression appears as shown here.

LaTeX Equation Example

This is an equation:

$$e^{\pi i} + 1 = 0$$

It is not in line with the text.

Hyperlinks

Static Hyperlinks

You can insert static hyperlinks within a MATLAB comment, and then publish the file to HTML, XML or Microsoft Word. When specifying a static hyperlink to a Web location, you must include a complete URL within the code. This is useful when you want to point the reader to a Web location. You can display or hide the URL in the published text. Consider excluding the URL, when you are confident that readers are viewing your output online and can click the hyperlink.

Enclose URLs and any replacement text in angled brackets.

```
%%  
% For more information, see our Web site:  
% <http://www.mathworks.com MathWorks>
```

Publishing the code to HTML produces the following output.

For more information, see our Web site: [MathWorks](http://www.mathworks.com)

Eliminating the text `MathWorks` after the URL produces the following modified output.

For more information, see our Web site: <http://www.mathworks.com>

Note If your code produces hyperlinked text in the MATLAB Command Window, the output shows the HTML code rather than the hyperlink.

Dynamic Hyperlinks

You can insert dynamic hyperlinks, which MATLAB evaluates at the time a reader clicks that link. Dynamic hyperlinks allow you to point the reader to MATLAB code or documentation, or allow the reader to run code. You implement these links using `matlab:` syntax.

Note Dynamic links only work when viewing HTML in the MATLAB Web browser.

Diverse uses of dynamic links include:

- “Dynamic Link to Run Code” on page 18-25
- “Dynamic Link to a File” on page 18-26
- “Dynamic Link to a MATLAB Function Reference Page” on page 18-27

Dynamic Link to Run Code. You can specify a dynamic hyperlink to run code when a user clicks the hyperlink. For example, the following `matlab:` syntax creates hyperlinks in the output, which when clicked either enable or disable recycling:

```
%% Recycling Preference
% Click the preference you want:
%
% <matlab:recycle('off') Disable recycling>
%
% <matlab:recycle('on') Enable recycling>
```

When you publish the file to HTML, the results resemble the following.

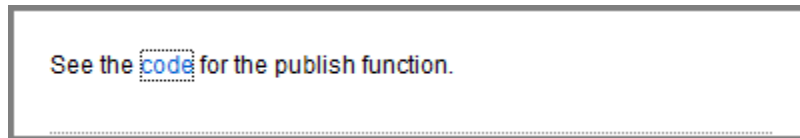


When you click one of the hyperlinks, MATLAB sets the `recycle` command accordingly. After clicking a hyperlink, run `recycle` in the Command Window to confirm the setting is as you expect.

Dynamic Link to a File. You can specify a link to a file that you know is in your readers' `matlabroot`. You do not need to know where each reader installed MATLAB. For example, link to the function code for `publish`.

```
%%  
% See the  
% <matlab:edit(fullfile(matlabroot,'toolbox','matlab','codetools','publish.m')) code>  
% for the publish function.
```

Next, publish the file to HTML.

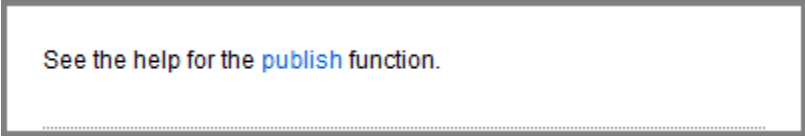


When you click the `code` link, the MATLAB Editor opens and displays the code for the `publish` function. On the reader's system, MATLAB issues the command (although the command does not appear in the reader's Command Window).

Dynamic Link to a MATLAB Function Reference Page. You can specify a link to a MATLAB function reference page using `matlab:` syntax. For example, suppose your readers have MATLAB installed and running. Provide a link to the `publish` reference page:

```
%%  
% See the help for the <matlab:doc('publish') publish> function.
```

Publish the file to HTML.



See the help for the [publish](#) function.

When you click the `publish` hyperlink, the MATLAB help browser opens and displays the reference page for the `publish` function. On the reader's system, MATLAB issues the command, although the command does not appear in their Command Window.

HTML Markup

You can insert HTML markup into your MATLAB file. You must type HTML markup; no button on the **Publish** tab generates it.

Note When you insert text markup for HTML code, the HTML code publishes only when the specified output file format is HTML.

The following code includes HTML tagging.

```
%% HTML Markup Example  
% This is a table:  
%  
% <html>  
% <table border=1><tr><td>one</td><td>two</td></tr>  
% <tr><td>three</td><td>four</td></tr></table>  
% </html>  
%
```

If you publish the code to HTML, MATLAB creates a single-row table with two columns. The table contains the values one, two, three, and four.



LaTeX Markup

You can insert LaTeX markup into your MATLAB file. Any LaTeX markup must be typed; no button on the **Publish** tab generates it.

Note When you insert text markup for LaTeX code, that code publishes only when the specified output file format is LaTeX.

The following code is an example of LaTeX markup.

```
%% LaTeX Markup Example
% This is a table:
%
% <latex>
% \begin{tabular}{|c|c|} \hline
% $n$ & $n!$ \\ \hline
% 1 & 1 \\
% 2 & 2 \\
% 3 & 6 \\ \hline
% \end{tabular}
% </latex>
```

If you publish the file to LaTeX, then the Editor opens a new .tex file containing the LaTeX markup.

```
% This LaTeX was auto-generated from an M-file by MATLAB.  
% To make changes,  
% update the M-file and republish this document.
```

```
\documentclass{article}  
\usepackage{graphicx}  
\usepackage{color}  
  
\sloppy  
\definecolor{lightgray}{gray}{0.5}  
\setlength{\parindent}{0pt}
```

```
\begin{document}
```

```
\section*{LaTeX Markup Example}
```

```
\begin{par}  
This is a table:  
\end{par} \vspace{1em}  
\begin{par}
```

```
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|} \hline  
$n$ & $n!$ \\ \hline  
1 & 1 \\ \hline  
2 & 2 \\ \hline  
3 & 6 \\ \hline  
\end{tabular}
```

```
\end{par} \vspace{1em}
```

```
\end{document}
```

MATLAB includes any additional markup necessary to compile this file with a LaTeX program.

Concepts

- “Publish MATLAB Code” on page 18-4
- “Specify Output Preferences for Publishing” on page 18-31

Specify Output Preferences for Publishing

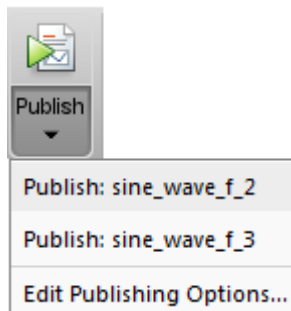
In this section...

- “Edit Publishing Options” on page 18-31
- “Specify Output File” on page 18-32
- “Run Code During Publishing” on page 18-33
- “Manipulate Graphics in Publishing Output” on page 18-36
- “Save a Publish Setting” on page 18-40
- “Manage a Publish Configuration” on page 18-42

Edit Publishing Options

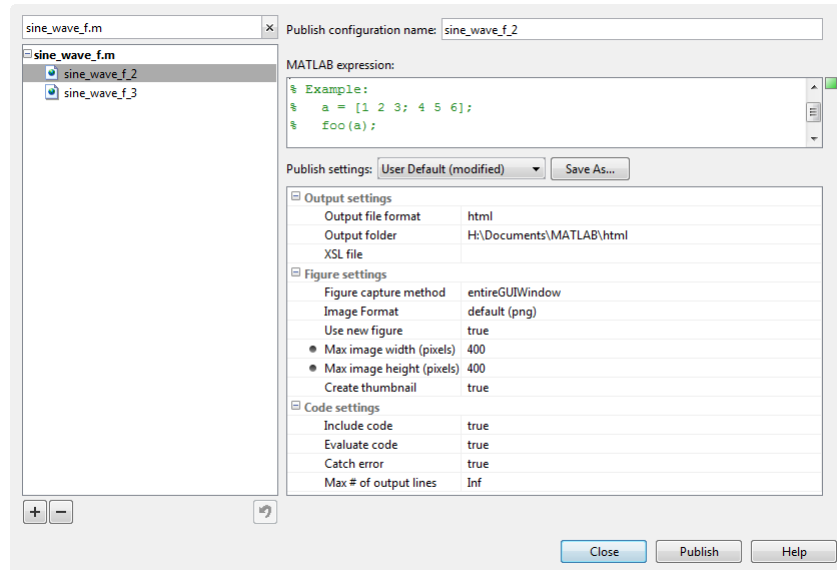
Use the default publishing preferences if your code requires no input arguments and you want to publish to HTML. However, if your code requires input arguments, or if you want to specify output settings, code execution, or figure formats, then specify a custom configuration.

- 1 Locate the **Publish** tab and click the **Publish** button arrow ↕.



- 2 Select **Edit Publishing Options**.

The Edit Configurations dialog box opens. Specify output preferences.



The **MATLAB expression** pane specifies the code that executes during publishing. The **Publish settings** pane contains output, figure, and code execution options. Together, they make what MATLAB refers to as a *publish configuration*. MATLAB associates each publish configuration with an `.m` file. The name of the publish configuration appears in the top left pane.

Specify Output File

You specify the output format and location on the **Publish settings** pane.

MATLAB publishes to these formats.

Format	Notes
html	Publishes to an HTML document. You can use an Extensible Stylesheet Language (XSL) file.
xml	Publishes to XML document. You can use an Extensible Stylesheet Language (XSL) file.

Format	Notes
latex	Publishes to LaTeX document. Does <i>not</i> preserve syntax highlighting. You can use an Extensible Stylesheet Language (XSL) file.
doc	Publishes to a Microsoft Word document, if your system is a PC. Does <i>not</i> preserve syntax highlighting.
ppt	Publishes to a Microsoft PowerPoint document, if your system is a PC. Does <i>not</i> preserve syntax highlighting.
pdf	Publishes to a PDF document.

Note XSL files allow you more control over the appearance of the output document. For more details, see <http://docbook.sourceforge.net/release/xsl/current/doc/>.

Run Code During Publishing

- “Specifying Code” on page 18-33
- “Evaluating Code” on page 18-34
- “Including Code” on page 18-35
- “Catching Errors” on page 18-35
- “Limiting the Amount of Output” on page 18-35

Specifying Code

By default, MATLAB executes the `.m` file that you are publishing. However, you can specify any valid MATLAB code in the **MATLAB expression** pane. For example, if you want to publish a function that requires input, then you should run the command `function(input)`. Additional code, whose output you want to publish, should appear after the functions call. If you clear the **MATLAB expression** area, then MATLAB publishes the file without evaluating any code.

Note Publish configurations use the base MATLAB workspace. Therefore, a variable in the **MATLAB expression** pane overwrites the value for an existing variable in the base workspace.

Evaluating Code

Another way to affect what MATLAB executes during publishing is to set the **Evaluate code** option in the **Publish setting** pane. This option indicates whether MATLAB evaluates the code in the `.m` file that is publishing. If set to `true`, MATLAB executes the code and includes the results in the output document.

Because MATLAB does not evaluate the code nor include code results when you set the **Evaluate code** option to `false`, there can be invalid code in the file. Therefore, consider first running the file with this option set to `true`.

For example, suppose you include comment text, `Label the plot`, in a file, but forget to preface it with the comment character. If you publish the document to HTML, and set the **Evaluate code** option to `true`, the output includes an error.

```
Modify Plot Properties

Label the plot
title('Sine Wave', 'FontWeight','bold')
xlabel('x')
ylabel('sin(x)')
set(gca, 'Color', 'w')
set(gcf, 'MenuBar', 'none')

??? Undefined function or method 'Label' for input arguments of type 'char'.
Error in ==> sine_wave2 at 12
Label the plot
```

Use the `false` option to publish the file that contains the publish function. Otherwise, MATLAB attempts to publish the file recursively.

Including Code

You can specify whether to display MATLAB code in the final output. If you set the **Include code** option to true, then MATLAB includes the code in the published output document. If set to false, MATLAB excludes the code from all output file formats, except HTML.

If the output file format is HTML, MATLAB inserts the code as an HTML comment that is not visible in the Web browser. If you want to extract the code from the output HTML file, use the MATLAB `grabcode` function.

For example, suppose you publish

`H:/my_matlabfiles/my_mfiles/sine_wave.m` to HTML using a publish configuration with the **Include code** option set to false. If you share the output with colleagues, they can view it in a Web browser. To see the MATLAB code that generated the output, they can issue the following command from the folder containing `sine_wave.html`:

```
grabcode('sine_wave.html')
```

MATLAB opens the file that created `sine_wave.html` in the Editor.

Catching Errors

You can catch and publish any errors that occur during publishing. Setting the **Catch error** option to true includes any error messages in the output document. If you set **Catch error** to false, MATLAB terminates the publish operation if an error occurs during code evaluation. However, this option has no effect if you set the **Evaluate code** property to false.

Limiting the Amount of Output

You can limit the number of lines of code output that is included in the output document by specifying the **Max # of output lines** option in the **Publish settings** pane. Setting this option is useful if a smaller, representative sample of the code output suffices.

For example, the following loop generates 100 lines in a published output unless **Max # of output lines** is set to a lower value.

```
for n = 1:100
    disp(x)
```

```
end;
```

Manipulate Graphics in Publishing Output

- “Choosing an Image Format” on page 18-36
- “Setting an Image Size” on page 18-37
- “Capturing Figures” on page 18-37
- “Specifying a Custom Figure Window” on page 18-38
- “Creating a Thumbnail” on page 18-40

Choosing an Image Format

When publishing, you can choose the image format that MATLAB uses to store any graphics generated during code execution. The available image formats in the drop-down list depend on the setting of the **Figure capture method** option. For greatest compatibility, select the default as specified in this table.

Output File Format	Default Image Format	Types of Images You Can Include
doc	png	Any format that your installed version of Microsoft Office supports.
html	png	All formats publish successfully. Ensure that the tools you use to view and process the output files can display the output format you specify.
latex	png or epsc2	All formats publish successfully. Ensure that the tools you use to view and process the output files can display the output format you specify.
pdf	bmp	bmp and jpg.

Output File Format	Default Image Format	Types of Images You Can Include
ppt	png	Any format that your installed version of Microsoft Office supports.
xml	png	All formats publish successfully. Ensure that the tools you use to view and process the output files can display the output format you specify.

Setting an Image Size

You set the size of MATLAB generated images in the **Publish settings** pane on the Edit Configurations dialog window. You specify the image size in pixels to restrict the width and height of images in the output. The pixel values act as a maximum size value because MATLAB maintains an image's aspect ratio. MATLAB ignores the size setting for the following cases:

- When working with external graphics as described in “External Graphics” on page 18-19
- When using vector formats, such as .eps
- When publishing to .pdf

Capturing Figures

You can capture different aspects of the Figure window by setting the **Figure capture method** option. This option determines the window decorations (title bar, toolbar, menu bar, and window border) and plot backgrounds for the Figure window.

This table summarizes the effects of the various Figure capture methods.

Use This Figure Capture Method	To Get Figure Captures with These Appearance Details	
	Window Decorations	Plot Backgrounds
<code>entireGUIWindow</code>	Included for dialog boxes; Excluded for figures	Set to white for figures; matches the screen for dialog boxes
<code>print</code>	Excluded for dialog boxes and figures	Set to white
<code>getframe</code>	Excluded for dialog boxes and figures	Matches the screen plot background
<code>entireFigureWindow</code>	Included for dialog boxes and figures	Matches the screen plot background

Note Typically, MATLAB figures have the `HandleVisibility` property set to on. Dialog boxes are figures with the `HandleVisibility` property set to off or callback. If your results are different from the results listed in the preceding table, the `HandleVisibility` property of your figures or dialog boxes might be atypical. For more information, see “HandleVisibility Property”.

Specifying a Custom Figure Window

MATLAB allows you to specify custom appearance for figures it creates. If the **Use new figure** option in the **Publish settings** pane is set to true, then in the published output, MATLAB uses a Figure window at the default size and with a white background. If the **Use new figure** option is set to false, then MATLAB uses the properties from an open Figure window to determine the appearance of code-generated figures. This preference does not apply to figures included using the syntax in “External Graphics” on page 18-19.

Use the following code as a template to produce Figure windows that meet your needs.

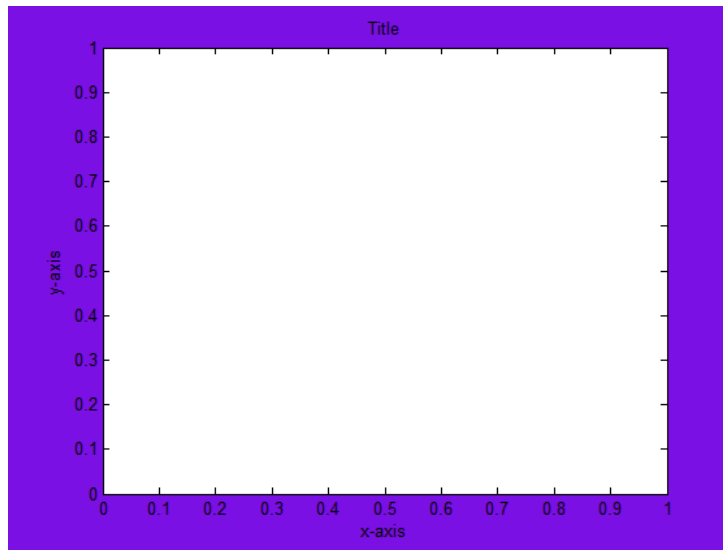
```
% Create figure
figure1 = figure('Name', 'purple_background', ...
'Color', [0.4784 0.06275 0.8941]);
```

```
colormap('hsv');

% Create subplot
subplot(1,1,1,'Parent',figure1);
box('on');

% Create axis labels
xlabel('x-axis');
ylabel({'y-axis'})

% Create title
title({'Title'});
```



By publishing your file with this window open and the **Use new figure** option set to `false`, any code-generated figure takes the properties of the open Figure window.

Note You must set the **Figure capture method** option to `entireFigureWindow` for the final published figure to display all the properties of the open Figure window.

Creating a Thumbnail

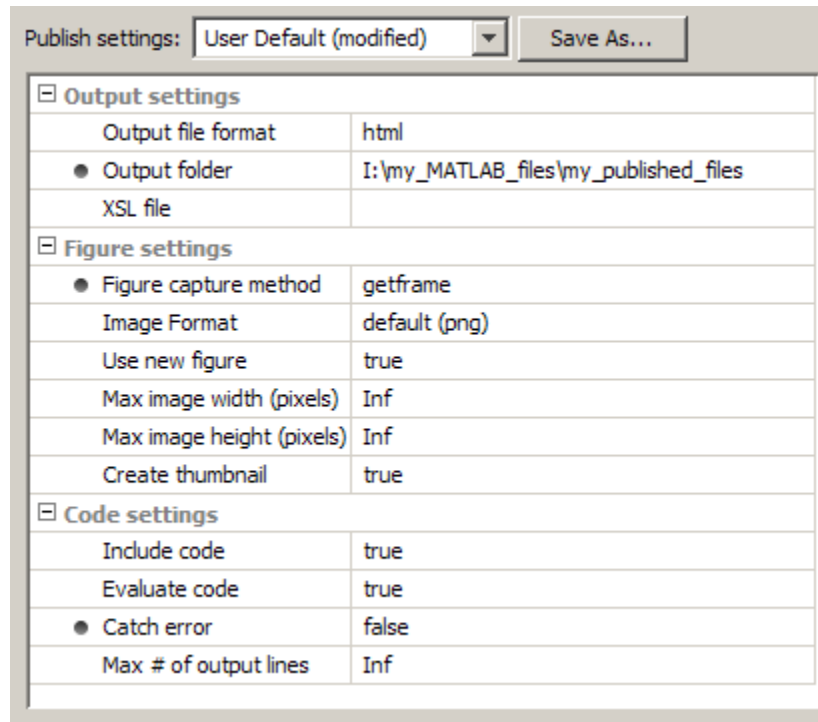
You can save the first code-generated graphic as a thumbnail image. You can use this thumbnail to represent your file on HTML pages. To create a thumbnail, follow these steps:

- 1** On the **Publish** tab, click the Publish button drop-down arrow ▾ and select **Edit Publishing Options**. The Edit Configurations dialog box opens.
- 2** Set the **Image Format** option to a bitmap format, such as .png or .jpg. MATLAB creates thumbnail images in bitmap formats.
- 3** Set the **Create thumbnail** option to true.

MATLAB saves the thumbnail image in the folder specified by the **Output folder** option in the **Publish settings** pane.

Save a Publish Setting

You can save your publish settings, which allows you to easily reproduce output. It can be useful to save your commonly used publish settings.



When the **Publish settings** options are set, you can follow these steps to save the settings:

- 1 Click **Save As** when the options are set in the manner you want.

The **Save Publish Settings As** dialog box opens and displays the names of all the currently defined publish settings. By default the following publish settings install with MATLAB:

- Factory Default

You cannot overwrite the Factory Default and can restore them by selecting Factory Default from the **Publish settings** list.

- User Default

Initially, User Default settings are identical to the Factory Default settings. You can overwrite the User Default settings.

- 2 In the **Settings Name** field, enter a meaningful name for the settings. Then click **Save**.

You can now use the publish settings with other MATLAB files.

You also can overwrite the publishing properties saved under an existing name. Select the name from the **Publish settings** list, and then click **Overwrite**.

Manage a Publish Configuration

- “Running an Existing Publish Configuration” on page 18-42
- “Creating Multiple Publish Configurations for a File” on page 18-43
- “Reassociating and Renaming Publish Configurations” on page 18-44
- “Using Publish Configurations across Different Systems” on page 18-44

Together, the code in the **MATLAB expression** pane and the settings in the **Publish settings** pane make a publish configuration that is associated with one file. These configurations provide a simple way to refer to publish preferences for individual files.

To create a publish configuration, click the **Publish** button drop-down arrow ▾ on the **Publish** tab, and select **Edit Publishing Options**. The Edit Configurations dialog box opens, containing the default publish preferences. In the **Publish configuration name** field, type a name for the publish configuration, or accept the default name. The publish configuration saves automatically.

Running an Existing Publish Configuration

After saving a publish configuration, you can run it without opening the Edit Configurations dialog box:

- 1 Click the **Publish** button drop-down arrow ▾. If you position your mouse pointer on a publish configuration name, MATLAB displays a tooltip showing the MATLAB expression associated with the specific configuration.

- 2 Select a configuration name to use for the publish configuration. MATLAB publishes the file using the code and publish settings associated with the configuration.

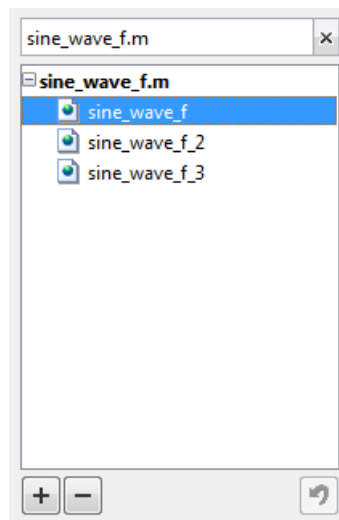
Creating Multiple Publish Configurations for a File

You can create multiple publish configurations for a given file. You might do this to publish the file with different values for input arguments, with different publish setting property values, or both. Create a named configuration for each purpose, all associated with the same file. Later you can run whichever particular publish configuration you want.

Use the following steps as a guide to create new publish configurations.

- 1 Open a file in your Editor.
- 2 Click on the **Publish** button drop-down arrow, and select **Edit Publishing Options**. The Edit Configurations dialog box opens.
- 3 Click the **Add** button **+** located on the left pane.

A new name appears on the configurations list, *filename_n*, where the value of *n* depends on the existing configuration names.




- 4 If you modify settings in the **MATLAB expression** or **Publish setting** pane, MATLAB automatically saves the changes.

Reassociating and Renaming Publish Configurations

Each publish configuration is associated with a specific file. If you move or rename a file, redefine its association. If you delete a file, consider deleting the associated configurations, or associating them with a different file.

When MATLAB cannot associate a configuration with a file, the Edit Configurations dialog box displays the file name in red and a **File Not Found** message. To reassociate a configuration with another file, perform the following steps.

- 1 Click the Clear search button  on the left pane of the Edit Configurations dialog box.
- 2 Select the file for which you want to reassociate publish configurations.
- 3 In the right pane of the Edit Configurations dialog box, click **Choose...** In the Open dialog box, navigate to and select the file with which you want to reassociate the configurations.

You can rename the configurations at any time by selecting a configuration from the list in the left pane. In the right pane, edit the value for the **Publish configuration name**.

Note To run correctly after a file name change, you might need to change the code statements in the **MATLAB expression** pane. For example, change a function call to reflect the new file name for that function.

Using Publish Configurations across Different Systems

Each time you create or save a publish configurations using the Edit Configurations dialog box, the Editor updates the `publish_configurations.m` file in your preferences folder. (This is the folder that MATLAB returns when you run the MATLAB `prefdir` function.)

Although you can port this file from the preferences folder on one system to another, only one `publish_configurations.m` file can exist on a system. Therefore, only move the file to another system if you have not created any publish configurations on the second system. In addition, because the `publish_configurations.m` file might contain references to file paths, be sure that the specified files and paths exist on the second system.

MathWorks recommends that you not update `publish_configurations.m` in the MATLAB Editor or a text editor. Changes that you make using tools other than the Edit Configurations dialog box might be overwritten later.

Concepts

- “Publish MATLAB Code” on page 18-4
- “Publishing Markup” on page 18-11

Create a MATLAB Notebook with Microsoft Word

In this section...

“Getting Started with MATLAB Notebooks” on page 18-46

“Creating and Evaluating Cells in a MATLAB Notebook” on page 18-48

“Formatting a MATLAB Notebook” on page 18-54

“Tips for Using MATLAB Notebooks” on page 18-57

“Configuring the MATLAB Notebook Software” on page 18-58

Getting Started with MATLAB Notebooks

You can use the `notebook` function to open Microsoft Word and record MATLAB sessions to supplement class notes, textbooks, or technical reports. After executing the `notebook` function, you run MATLAB commands directly from Word itself. This Word document is known as a MATLAB Notebook. As an alternative, consider using the `MATLAB publish` function.

Using the `notebook` command, you create a Microsoft Word document. You then can type text, input cells (MATLAB commands), and output cells (results of MATLAB commands) directly into this document. You can format the input in the same manner as any Microsoft Word document. You can think of this document as a record of an interactive MATLAB session annotated with text, or as a document embedded with live MATLAB commands and output.

Note The `notebook` command is available only on Windows systems that have Microsoft Word installed.

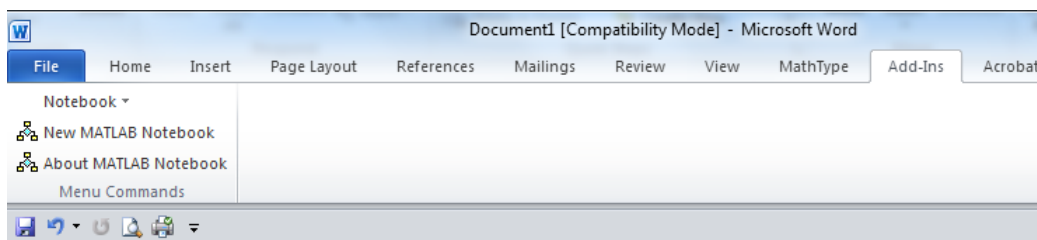
Creating or Opening a MATLAB Notebook

If you are running the `notebook` command for the first time since you installed a new version of MATLAB, follow the instructions in “Configuring the MATLAB Notebook Software” on page 18-58. Otherwise, you can create a new or open an existing notebook:

- To open a new notebook, execute the `notebook` function in the MATLAB Command Window.

The `notebook` command starts Word on your system and creates a MATLAB Notebook, called Document1. If a dialog box appears asking you to enable or disable macros, choose to enable macros.


Word adds the **Notebook** menu to the Word **Add-Ins** tab, as shown in the following figure.



Microsoft product screen shot reprinted with permission from Microsoft Corporation.

- To open an existing notebook, execute `notebook file_name` in the MATLAB Command Window, where `file_name` is the name of an existing MATLAB notebook.

Converting a Word Document to a MATLAB Notebook. To convert a Word document to a MATLAB Notebook, insert the document into a notebook file:

- 1 Create a MATLAB Notebook.
- 2 From the **Insert** tab, in the **Text** group, click the arrow next to  **Object**.
- 3 Select **Text from File**. The Insert File dialog box opens.
- 4 Navigate and select the Word file that you want to convert in the Insert File dialog box.

Running Commands in a MATLAB Notebook

You enter MATLAB commands in a notebook the same way you enter text in any other Word document. For example, you can enter the following text

in a Word document. The example uses text in Courier Font, but you can use any font:

Here is a sample MATLAB Notebook.

```
a = magic(3)
```

Execute a single command by pressing **Ctrl+Enter** on the line containing the MATLAB command. Execute a series of MATLAB commands using these steps:

- 1** Highlight the commands you want to execute.
- 2** Click the Notebook drop-down list on the **Add-Ins** tab.
- 3** Select **Evaluate Cell**.

MATLAB displays the results in the Word document below the original command or series of commands.

Note A good way to experiment with MATLAB Notebook is to open a sample notebook, *Readme.doc*. You can find this file in the *matlabroot/notebook/pc* folder.

Creating and Evaluating Cells in a MATLAB Notebook

- “Creating Input Cells” on page 18-48
- “Evaluating Input Cells” on page 18-50
- “Undefining Cells” on page 18-52
- “Defining Calc Zones” on page 18-53

Creating Input Cells

Input cells allow you to break up your code into manageable pieces and execute them independently. To define a MATLAB command in a Word document as an input cell:

- 1 Type the command into the MATLAB Notebook as text. For example,

This is a sample MATLAB Notebook.

```
a = magic(3)
```

- 2 Position the cursor anywhere in the command, and then select **Define Input Cell** from the Notebook drop-down list. If the command is embedded in a line of text, use the mouse to select it. The characters appear within *cell markers* ([]). Cell markers are bold, gray brackets. They differ from the brackets used to enclose matrices by their size and weight.

```
[a = magic(3)]
```

Creating Autoinit Input Cells. Autoinit cells are identical to input cells with additional characteristics:

- Autoinit cells evaluate when MATLAB Notebook opens.
- Commands in autoinit cells display in dark blue characters.

To create an autoinit cell, highlight the text, and then select **Define AutoInit Cell** from the Notebook drop-down list.

Creating Cell Groups. You can collect several input cells into a single input cell, called a *cell group*. All the output from a cell group appears in a single output cell immediately after the group. Cell groups are useful when you need several MATLAB commands to execute in sequence. For instance, defining labels and tick marks in a plot requires multiple commands:

```
x = -pi:0.1:pi;
plot(x,cos(x))
title('Sample Plot')
xlabel('x')
ylabel('cos(x)')
set(gca,'XTick',-pi:pi:pi)
set(gca,'XTickLabel',{'-pi','0','pi'})
```

To create a cell group:

- 1 Use the mouse to select the input cells that are to make up the group.

2 Select **Group Cells** from the Notebook drop-down list.

A single pair of cell markers now surrounds the new cell group.

```
[x = -pi:0.1:pi;  
plot(x,cos(x))  
title('Sample Plot')  
xlabel('x')  
ylabel('cos(x)')  
set(gca,'XTick',-pi:pi:pi)  
set(gca,'XTickLabel',{'-pi','0','pi'})]
```

When working with cell groups, you should note several behaviors:

- A cell group cannot contain output cells. If the selection includes output cells, they are deleted.
- A cell group cannot contain text. If the selection includes text, the text appears after the cell group, unless it precedes the first input cell in the selection.
- If you select part or all of an output cell, the cell group includes the respective input cell.
- If the first line of a cell group is an autoinit cell, then the entire group is an autoinit cell.

Evaluating Input Cells

After you define a MATLAB command as an input cell, you can evaluate it in your MATLAB Notebook using these steps:

- 1** Highlight or place your cursor in the input cell you want to evaluate.
- 2** Select **Evaluate Cell** in the Notebook drop-down list, or press **Ctrl+Enter**.

The notebook evaluates and displays the results in an output cell immediately following the input cell. If there is already an output cell, its contents update wherever the output cell appears in the notebook. For example:

This is a sample MATLAB Notebook.

```
[a = magic(3) ]
```



```
[a =  
    8    1    6  
    3    5    7  
    4    9    2 ]
```

To evaluate more than one MATLAB command contained in different, but contiguous input cells:

- 1 Select a range of cells that includes the input cells you want to evaluate. You can include text that surrounds input cells in your selection.
- 2 Select **Evaluate Cell** in the Notebook drop-down list or press **Ctrl+Enter**.

Note Text or numeric output always displays first, regardless of the order of the commands in the group.

When each input cell evaluates, new output cells appear or existing ones are replaced. Any error messages appear in red, by default.

Evaluating Cell Groups. Evaluate a cell group the same way you evaluate an input cell (because a cell group is an input cell):

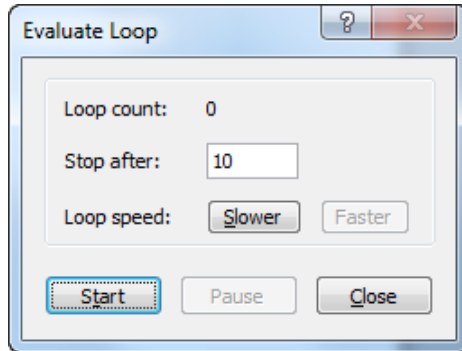
- 1 Position the cursor anywhere in the cell or in its output cell.
- 2 Select **Evaluate Cell** in the Notebook drop-down list or press **Ctrl+Enter**.

When MATLAB evaluates a cell group, the output for all commands in the group appears in a single output cell. By default, the output cell appears immediately after the cell group the first time the cell group is evaluated. If you evaluate a cell group that has an existing output cell, the results appear in that output cell, wherever it is located in the MATLAB Notebook.

Using a Loop to Evaluate Input Cells Repeatedly. MATLAB allows you to evaluate a sequence of MATLAB commands repeatedly, using these steps:

- 1 Highlight the input cells, including any text or output cells located between them.

- 2 Select **Evaluate Loop** in the Notebook drop-down list. The **Evaluate Loop** dialog box appears.



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- 3 Enter the number of times you want to evaluate the selected commands in the **Stop After** field, then click **Start**. The button changes to **Stop**. Command evaluation begins, and the number of completed iterations appears in the **Loop Count** field.

You can increase or decrease the delay at the end of each iteration by clicking **Slower** or **Faster**.

Evaluating an Entire MATLAB Notebook. To evaluate an entire MATLAB Notebook, select **Evaluate MATLAB Notebook** in the Notebook drop-down list. Evaluation begins at the top of the notebook, regardless of the cursor position and includes each input cell in the file. As it evaluates the file, Word inserts new output cells or replaces existing output cells.

If you want to stop evaluation if an error occurs, set the **Stop evaluating on error** check box on the Notebook Options dialog box.

Undefining Cells

You can always convert cells back to normal text. To convert a cell (input, output, or a cell group) to text:

- 1 Highlight the input cell or position the cursor in the input cell.
- 2 Select **Undefine Cells** from the Notebook drop-down list.

When the cell converts to text, the cell contents reformat according to the Microsoft Word Normal style.

Note

- Converting input cells to text also converts their output cells.
- If the output cell is graphical, the cell markers disappear and the graphic dissociates from its input cell, but the contents of the graphic remain.

Defining Calc Zones

You can partition a MATLAB Notebook into self-contained sections, called *calc zones*. A calc zone is a contiguous block of text, input cells, and output cells. Section breaks appear before and after the section, defining the calc zone. The section break indicators include bold, gray brackets to distinguish them from standard Word section breaks.

You can use calc zones to prepare problem sets, making each problem a calc zone that you can test separately. A notebook can contain any number of calc zones.

Note Calc zones do not affect the scope of the variables in a notebook. Variables defined in one calc zone are accessible to all calc zones.

Creating a Calc Zone.

- 1 Select the input cells and text you want to include in the calc zone.
- 2 Select **Define Calc Zone** under the Notebook drop-down list.

A calc zone cannot begin or end in a cell.

Evaluating a Calc Zone.

- 1 Position the cursor anywhere in the calc zone.
- 2 Select **Evaluate Calc Zone** from the Notebook drop-down list or press **Alt+Enter**.

By default, the output cell appears immediately after the calc zone the first time you evaluate the calc zone. If you evaluate a calc zone with an existing output cell, the results appear in the output cell wherever it is located in the MATLAB Notebook.

Formatting a MATLAB Notebook

- “Modifying Styles in the MATLAB Notebook Template” on page 18-54
- “Controlling the Format of Numeric Output” on page 18-55
- “Controlling Graphic Output” on page 18-55

Modifying Styles in the MATLAB Notebook Template

You can control the appearance of the text in your MATLAB Notebook by modifying the predefined styles in the notebook template, `m-book.dot`. These styles control the appearance of text and cells.

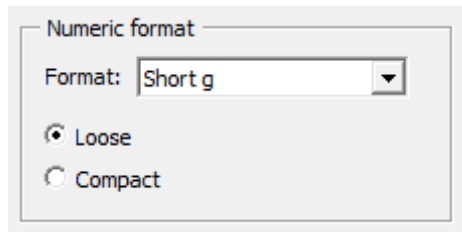
This table describes MATLAB Notebook default styles. For general information about using styles in Word documents, see the Word documentation.

Style	Font	Size	Weight	Color
Normal	Times New Roman®	10 points	N/A	Black
AutoInit	Courier New	10 points	Bold	Dark blue
Error	Courier New	10 points	Bold	Red
Input	Courier New	10 points	Bold	Dark green
Output	Courier New	10 points	N/A	Blue

When you change a style, Word applies the change to all characters in the notebook that use that style and gives you the option to change the template. Be cautious about changing the template. If you choose to apply the changes to the template, you affect all new notebooks that you create using the template. See the Word documentation for more information.

Controlling the Format of Numeric Output

To change how numeric output displays, select **Notebook Options** from the Notebook drop-down list. The Notebook Options dialog box opens, containing the **Numeric format** pane.



Microsoft product screen shot reprinted with permission from Microsoft Corporation.

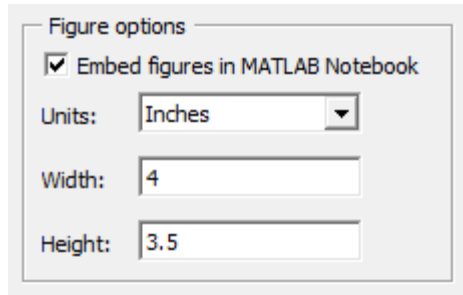
You can select a format from the **Format** list. Format choices correspond to the same options available with the MATLAB format command

The **Loose** and **Compact** settings control whether a blank line appears between the input and output cells. To suppress this blank line select **Compact**.

Controlling Graphic Output

MATLAB allows you to embed graphics, suppress graphic output and adjust the graphic size.

By default, MATLAB embeds graphic output in a Notebook. To display graphic output in a separate figure window, click **Notebook Options** from the Notebook drop-down list. The Notebook Options dialog box opens, containing the **Figure options** pane.



Microsoft product screen shot reprinted with permission from Microsoft Corporation.

From this pane, you can choose whether to embed figures in the MATLAB Notebook. You can adjust the height and width of the figure in inches, centimeters, or points.

Note Embedded figures do not include Handle Graphics objects generated by the `uicontrol` and `uimenu` functions.

To prevent an input cell from producing a figure, select **Toggle Graph Output for Cell** from the Notebook drop-down list. The string (no graph) appears after the input cell and the input cell does not produce a graph if evaluated. To undo the figure suppression, select **Toggle Graph Output for Cell** again or delete the text (no graph).

Note **Toggle Graph Output for Cell** overrides the **Embed figures in MATLAB Notebook** option, if that option is set.

Tips for Using MATLAB Notebooks

Protecting the Integrity of Your Workspace in MATLAB Notebooks

If you work on more than one MATLAB Notebook in a single word-processing session, notice that

- Each notebook uses the same MATLAB executable.
- All notebooks share the same workspace. If you use the same variable names in more than one notebook, data used in one notebook can be affected by another notebook.

Note You can protect the integrity of your workspace by specifying the `clear` command as the first autoinit cell in the notebook.

Ensuring Data Consistency in MATLAB Notebooks

You can think of a MATLAB Notebook as a sequential record of a MATLAB session. When executed in sequential order, the notebook accurately reflects the relationships among the commands.

If, however, you edit input cells or output cells as you refine your notebook, it can contain inconsistent data. Input cells that depend on the contents or the results of other cells do not automatically recalculate when you make a change.

When working in a notebook, consider selecting **Evaluate MATLAB Notebook** periodically to ensure that your notebook data is consistent. You can also use calc zones to isolate related commands in a section of the notebook, and then use **Evaluate Calc Zone** to execute only those input cells contained in the calc zone.

Debugging and MATLAB Notebooks

Do not use debugging functions or the Editor while evaluating cells within a MATLAB Notebook. Instead, use this procedure:

- 1 Complete debugging files from within MATLAB.
- 2 Clear all the breakpoints.
- 3 Access the file using notebook.

If you debug while evaluating a notebook, you can experience problems with MATLAB.

Configuring the MATLAB Notebook Software

After you install MATLAB Notebook software, but before you begin using it, specify that Word can use macros, and then configure the `notebook` command. The notebook function installs as part of the MATLAB installation process on Microsoft Windows platforms. For more information, see the MATLAB installation documentation.

Note Word explicitly asks whether you want to enable macros. If it does not, refer to the Word help. You can search topics relating to macros, such as “enable or disable macros”.

To configure MATLAB Notebook software, type the following in the MATLAB Command Window:

```
notebook -setup
```

MATLAB configures the Notebook software and issues these messages in the Command Window:

```
Welcome to the utility for setting up the MATLAB Notebook  
for interfacing MATLAB to Microsoft Word
```

```
Setup complete
```

When MATLAB configures the software, it:

- 1 Accesses the Microsoft Windows system registry to locate Microsoft Word and the Word templates folder. It also identifies the version of Word.

2 Copies the `m-book.dot` template to the Word templates folder.

The MATLAB Notebook software supports Word versions 2002, 2003, 2007, and 2010.

After you configure the software, typing `notebook` in the MATLAB Command Window starts Microsoft Word and creates a new MATLAB Notebook.

If you suspect a problem with the current configuration, you can explicitly reconfigure the software by typing:

```
notebook -setup
```

Concepts

- “Options for Presenting Your Code” on page 18-2
- “Publish MATLAB Code” on page 18-4

Coding and Productivity Tips


- “Open and Save Files” on page 19-2
- “Check Code for Errors and Warnings” on page 19-7
- “Improve Code Readability” on page 19-23
- “Find and Replace Text in Files” on page 19-30
- “Go To Location in File” on page 19-35
- “Display Two Parts of a File Simultaneously” on page 19-42
- “Add Reminders to Files” on page 19-45
- “Colors in the MATLAB Editor” on page 19-49
- “Code Contains %#ok — What Does That Mean?” on page 19-51
- “MATLAB Code Analyzer Report” on page 19-52
- “Change Default Editor” on page 19-56



Open and Save Files

In this section...
<p>“Open Existing Files” on page 19-2</p> <p>“Save Files” on page 19-4</p>

Open Existing Files

To open an existing file or files in the Editor, choose the option that achieves your goals, as described in this table.

Goal	Steps	Additional Information
<p>Open with associated tool</p> <p>Open a file using the appropriate MATLAB tool for the file type.</p>	<p>On the Editor (or Home) tab, in the File section, click </p>	<p>For example, this option opens a file with a <code>.m</code> extension in the Editor and loads a MAT-file into the Workspace browser.</p>
<p>Open as text file</p> <p>Open a file in the Editor as a text file, even if the file type is associated with another application or tool.</p>	<p>On the Editor tab, in the File section, click Open ▾, and select Open as Text.</p>	<p>This is useful, for example, if you have imported a tab-delimited data file (<code>.dat</code>) into the workspace and you find you want to add a data point. Open the file as text in the Editor, make your addition, and then save the file.</p>

Goal	Steps	Additional Information
<p>Open function from within file</p> <p>Open a local function or function file from within a file in the Editor.</p>	<p>Position the cursor on the name within the open file, and then right-click and select Open <i>file-name</i> from the context menu.</p>	<p>You also can use this method to open a variable or Simulink model.</p> <p>For details, see “Open a File or Variable from Within a File” on page 19-40.</p>
<p>Reopen file</p> <p>Reopen a recently used file.</p>	<p>At the bottom of the Open ▾ drop-down list, select a file under Recent Files.</p>	<p>To change the number of files on the list, click  Preferences, and then select Editor/Debugger. Under Most recently used file list, change the value for Number of entries.</p>
<p>Reopen files at startup</p> <p>At startup, automatically open the files that were open when the previous MATLAB session ended.</p>	<p>On the Home tab, in the Environment section, click  Preferences and select Editor/Debugger. Then, select On restart reopen files from previous MATLAB session.</p>	<p>None.</p>
<p>Open file displaying in another tool</p> <p>Open a file name displaying in another MATLAB desktop tool or Microsoft tool.</p>	<p>Drag the file from the other tool into the Editor.</p>	<p>For example, drag files from the Current Folder browser or from Windows Explorer.</p>
<p>Open file using a function</p>	<p>Use the edit or open function.</p>	<p>For example, type the following to open <code>collatz.m</code>:</p> <pre>edit collatz.m</pre> <p>If <code>collatz.m</code> is not on the search path or in the current</p>


Goal	Steps	Additional Information
		folder, use the relative or absolute path for the file.

For special considerations on the Macintosh platform, see “Navigating Within the MATLAB Root Folder on Macintosh Platforms”.

Save Files

After you modify a file in the Editor, an asterisk (*) follows the file name. This asterisk indicates that there are unsaved changes to the file.

You can perform four different types of save operations, which have various effects, as described in this table.

Save Option	Steps
Save file to disk and keep file open in the Editor.	On the Editor tab, in the File section, click  .
Rename file, save it to disk, and make it the active Editor document. Original file remains unchanged on disk.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 On the Editor tab, in the File section, click Save ▾ and select Save As. 2 Specify a new name, type, or both for the file, and then click Save.
Save file to disk under new name. Original file remains open and unsaved.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 On the Editor tab, in the File section, click Save ▾ and select Save Copy As. MATLAB opens the Select File for Backup dialog box. 2 Specify a name and type for the backup file, and then click Save.

Save Option	Steps
<p>Save changes to all open files using current file names.</p> <p>All files remain open.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 On the Editor tab, in the File section, click Save ▾ and select Save All. <p>MATLAB opens the Select File for Save As dialog box for the first unnamed file.</p> 2 Specify a name and type for any unnamed file, and then click Save. 3 Repeat step 2 until all unnamed files are saved.

Recommendations on Saving Files

MathWorks recommends that you save files you create and files from MathWorks that you edit to a folder that is not in the *matlabroot*/toolbox folder tree, where *matlabroot* is the folder returned when you type *matlabroot* in the Command Window. If you keep your files in *matlabroot*/toolbox folders, they can be overwritten when you install a new version of MATLAB software.


At the beginning of each MATLAB session, MATLAB loads and caches in memory the locations of files in the *matlabroot*/toolbox folder tree. Therefore, if you:

- Save files to *matlabroot*/toolbox folders using an external editor, run `rehash toolbox` before you use the files in the current session.
- Add or remove files from *matlabroot*/toolbox folders using file system operations, run `rehash toolbox` before you use the files in the current session.
- Modify existing files in *matlabroot*/toolbox folders using an external editor, run `clear function-name` before you use these files in the current session.

For more information, see rehash or “Toolbox Path Caching in the MATLAB Program”.

Autosaving Files

When you modify a file in the Editor, the Editor saves a copy of the file using the same file name but with an `.asv` extension every 5 minutes. The autosave version is useful if you have system problems and lose changes you made to your file. In that event, you can open the autosave version, `filename.asv`, and then save it as `filename.m` to use the last good version of `filename`.

To select preferences, click  **Preferences**, and then select **Autosave** on the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section. You can then:

- Turn the autosave feature on or off.
- Automatically delete autosave files when you close the corresponding source file.

By default, MATLAB automatically deletes autosave files when you close the Editor. It is best to keep autosave-to-file relationships clear and current. Therefore, when you rename or remove a file, consider deleting or renaming the corresponding autosave file.

- Specify the number of minutes between automatic saves.
- Specify the file extension for autosave files.
- Specify a location for autosave files

If you edit a file in a read-only folder and the autosave **Location** preference is **Source file directories**, then the Editor does not create an autosave copy of the file.

Check Code for Errors and Warnings

MATLAB Code Analyzer can automatically check your code for coding problems, as described in the following sections:

In this section...

“Automatically Check Code in the Editor — Code Analyzer” on page 19-7

“Create a Code Analyzer Message Report” on page 19-12

“Adjust Code Analyzer Message Indicators and Messages” on page 19-13

“Understand Code Containing Suppressed Messages” on page 19-17


“Understand the Limitations of Code Analysis” on page 19-18

“Enable MATLAB Compiler Deployment Messages” on page 19-22

Automatically Check Code in the Editor — Code Analyzer

You can view warning and error messages about your code, and modify your file based on the messages. The messages update automatically and continuously so you can see if your changes addressed the issues noted in the messages. Some messages offer additional information, automatic code correction, or both.

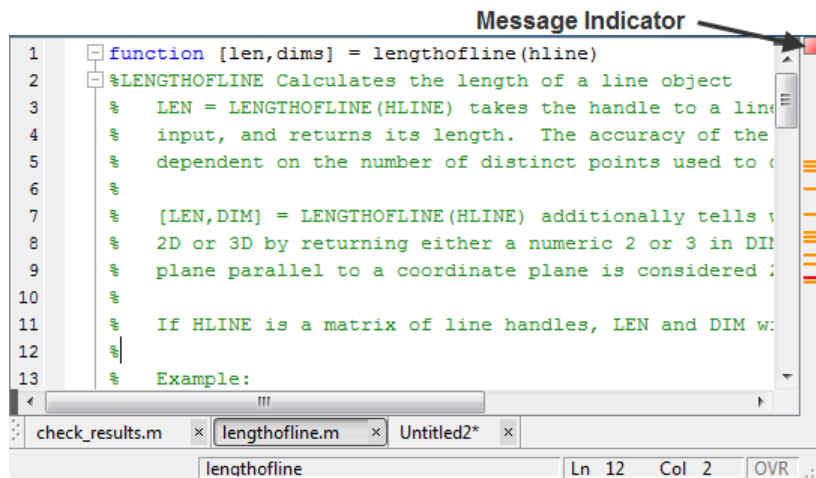
To use continuous code checking in a MATLAB code file in the Editor:

- 1** On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.
- 2** Select **Code Analyzer**, and then select the **Enable integrated warning and error messages** check box.
- 3** Set the **Underlining** option to **Underline warnings and errors**, and then click **OK**.
- 4** Open a MATLAB code file in the Editor. This example uses the sample file `lengthofline.m` that ships with the MATLAB software:
 - a** Open the example file:

```
open(fullfile(matlabroot,'help','techdoc','matlab_env',...
    'examples','lengthofline.m'))
```

- b Save the example file to a folder to which you have write access. For the example, `lengthofline.m` is saved to `C:\my_MATLAB_files`.
- 5 Examine the message indicator at the top of the message bar to see the Code Analyzer messages reported for the file:
 - **Red** indicates syntax errors were detected. Another way to detect some of these errors is using syntax highlighting to identify unterminated strings, and delimiter matching to identify unmatched keywords, parentheses, braces, and brackets.
 - **Orange** indicates warnings or opportunities for improvement, but no errors, were detected.
 - **Green** indicates no errors, warnings, or opportunities for improvement were detected.

In this example, the indicator is red, meaning that there is at least one error in the file.



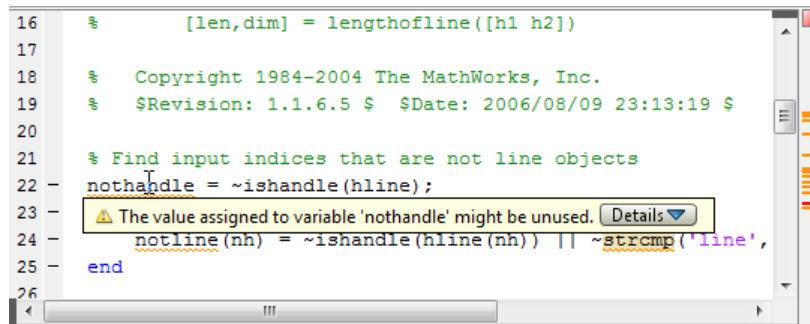
- 6 Click the message indicator to go to the next code fragment containing a message. The next code fragment is relative to the current cursor position, viewable in the status bar.

In the `lengthofline` example, the first message is at line 22. The cursor moves to the beginning of line 22.

The code fragment for which there is a message is underlined in either red for errors or orange for warnings and improvement opportunities.

- 7 View the message by moving the mouse pointer within the underlined code fragment.

The message opens in a tooltip and contains a **Details** button that provides access to additional information by extending the message. Not all messages have additional information.



```

16 % [len,dim] = lengthofline([h1 h2])
17
18 % Copyright 1984-2004 The MathWorks, Inc.
19 % $Revision: 1.1.6.5 $ $Date: 2006/08/09 23:13:19 $
20
21 % Find input indices that are not line objects
22 - nothandle = ~ishandle(hline);
23 -
24 - notline(nh) = ~ishandle(hline(nh)) || ~strcmp('line',
25 - end
26

```

The screenshot shows a MATLAB code editor window. The code is displayed with line numbers 16 through 26. Line 22 contains the code `nothandle = ~ishandle(hline);`. A tooltip is displayed over this line, containing the warning message: "The value assigned to variable 'nothandle' might be unused." and a "Details" button. The code on line 24, `notline(nh) = ~ishandle(hline(nh)) || ~strcmp('line',`, is underlined in orange. The code on line 25, `end`, is underlined in red.

- 8 Click the **Details** button.

The window expands to display an explanation and user action.

- 9 Modify your code, if needed.

The message indicator and underlining automatically update to reflect changes you make, even if you do not save the file.

- 10 On line 28, hover over `prod`.

The code is underlined because there is a warning message, and it is highlighted because an automatic fix is available. When you view the message, it provides a button to apply the automatic fix.

The screenshot shows a MATLAB code editor window. The code is as follows:

```

23 - for nh = 1:prod(size(hline))
24 -     notline(nh) = ~ishandle(hline(nh)) || ~strcmp('line',
25 - end
26
27 - len = zeros(size(hline));
28 - for nl = 1:prod(size(hline))
29 -     if ~notline(nl)
30 -         flds = get(hline(nl));
31 -         fdata = {'XData', 'YData', 'ZData'};
32 -

```

A warning message is displayed over line 29: "NUMEL(x) is usually faster than PROD(SIZE(x))." with a "Fix" button. To the right of the message, the text "compute the length" is visible. The status bar at the bottom right shows "Ln 22 Col 1 OVR".

11 Fix the problem by doing one of the following:

- If you know what the fix is (from previous experience), click **Fix**.
- If you are unfamiliar with the fix, view, and then apply it as follows:
 - a Right-click the highlighted code (for a single-button mouse, press **Ctrl**+ click), and then view the first item in the context menu.
 - b Click the fix.

MATLAB automatically corrects the code.

In this example, MATLAB replaces `prod(size(hline))` with `numel(hline)`.

12 Go to a different message by doing one of the following:

- To go to the next message, click the message indicator or the next underlined code fragment.
- To go to a line that a marker represents, click a red or orange line in the indicator bar .

To see the first error in `lengthofline`, click the first red marker in the message bar. The cursor moves to the first suspect code fragment in line 48. The **Details** and **Fix** buttons are dimmed, indicating that there is no more information about this message and there is no automatic fix.

```

22 - nothandle = ~ishandle(hline);
23 - for nh = 1:prod(size(hline))
24 -     notline(nh) = ~ishandle(hline(nh)) || ~strcmp('line',
25 - end
26
27 -
28 -
29 -
30 -
31 -     flds = get(hline(nl));
32 -     fdata = {'XData', 'YData', 'ZData'};

```

Line 48: Invalid syntax at ':'. Possibly, a), }, or] is missing. Details Fix

Line 48: Invalid syntax at ')'. Possibly, a), }, or] is missing. Details Fix

Line 48: Parse error at ']': usage might be invalid MATLAB syntax. Details Fix

lengthoffline Ln 28 Col 15 OVR

Multiple messages can represent a single problem or multiple problems. Addressing one might address all of them, or after addressing one, the other messages might change or what you need to do might become clearer.

- 13** Modify the code to address the problem noted in the message—the message indicators update automatically.

The message suggests a delimiter imbalance on line 48. You can investigate that as follows:

- a** On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click **Preferences**.
- b** Select **Keyboard**.
- c** Under **Delimiter Matching**, select **Match on arrow key**, and then click **OK**.
- d** In the Editor, move the arrow key over each of the delimiters to see if MATLAB indicates a mismatch.

In the example, it might appear that there are no mismatched delimiters. However, code analysis detects the semicolon in parentheses: `data{3} (;)`, and interprets it as the end of a statement. The message reports that the two statements on line 48 each have a delimiter imbalance.

- e** In line 48, change `data{3} (;)` to `data{3} (:)`.

Now, the underline no longer appears in line 48. The single change addresses the issues in both of the messages for line 48.

Because the change removed the only error in the file, the message indicator at the top of the bar changes from red to orange, indicating that only warnings and potential improvements remain.


After modifying the code to address all the messages, or disabling designated messages, the message indicator becomes green. The example file with all messages addressed has been saved as `lengthofline2.m`. Open the corrected example file with the command:

```
open(fullfile(matlabroot, 'help', 'techdoc', ...  
             'matlab_env', 'examples', 'lengthofline2.m'))
```

Create a Code Analyzer Message Report

You can create a report of messages for an individual file, or for all files in a folder, using one of these methods:

- Run a report for an individual MATLAB code file:

- 1** On the Editor window, click .

- 2** Select **Show Code Analyzer Report**.


A Code Analyzer Report appears in the MATLAB Web Browser.

- 3** Modify your file based on the messages in the report.

- 4** Save the file.

- 5** Rerun the report to see if your changes addressed the issues noted in the messages.

- Run a report for all files in a folder:

- 1** On the Current Folder browser, click .

- 2** Select **Reports > Code Analyzer Report**.

- 3** Modify your files based on the messages in the report.

For details, see “MATLAB Code Analyzer Report” on page 19-52.

- 4** Save the modified file(s).

- 5** Rerun the report to see if your changes addressed the issues noted in the messages.

Adjust Code Analyzer Message Indicators and Messages

Depending on the stage at which you are in completing a MATLAB file, you might want to restrict the code underlining. You can do this by using the Code Analyzer preference referred to in step 1, in “Check Code for Errors and Warnings” on page 19-7. For example, when first coding, you might prefer to underline only errors because warnings would be distracting.

Code analysis does not provide perfect information about every situation and in some cases, you might not want to change the code based on a message. If you do not want to change the code, and you do not want to see the indicator and message for that line, suppress them. For the `lengthofline` example, in line 49, the first message is `Terminate statement with semicolon to suppress output (in functions)`. Adding a semicolon to the end of a statement suppresses output and is a common practice. Code analysis alerts you to lines that produce output, but lack the terminating semicolon. If you want to view output from line 49, do not add the semicolon as the message suggests.

There are a few different ways to suppress (turn off) the indicators for warning and error messages:

- “Suppress an Instance of a Message in the Current File” on page 19-13
- “Suppress All Instances of a Message in the Current File” on page 19-14
- “Suppress All Instances of a Message in All Files” on page 19-15
- “Save and Reuse Code Analyzer Message Settings” on page 19-15

You cannot suppress error messages such as syntax errors. Therefore, instructions on suppressing messages do not apply to those types of messages.

Suppress an Instance of a Message in the Current File

You can suppress a specific instance of a Code Analyzer message in the current file. For example, using the code presented in “Check Code for Errors and Warnings” on page 19-7, follow these steps:

- 1 In line 49, right-click at the first underline (for a single-button mouse, press **Ctrl**+click).

- 2** From the context menu, select **Suppress 'Terminate statement with semicolon...' > On This Line**.

The comment `%#ok<NOPRT>` appears at the end of the line, which instructs MATLAB not to check for a terminating semicolon at that line. The underline and mark in the indicator bar for that message disappear.

- 3** If there are two messages on a line that you do not want to display, right-click separately at each underline and select the appropriate entry from the context menu.

The `%#ok` syntax expands. For the example, in the code presented in “Check Code for Errors and Warnings” on page 19-7, ignoring both messages for line 49 adds `%#ok<NBRAK, NOPRT>`.

Even if Code Analyzer preferences are set to enable this message, the specific instance of the message suppressed in this way does not appear because the `%#ok` takes precedence over the preference setting. If you later decide you want to check for a terminating semicolon at that line, delete the `%#ok<NOPRT>` string from the line.

Suppress All Instances of a Message in the Current File

You can suppress all instances of a specific Code Analyzer message in the current file. For example, using the code presented in “Check Code for Errors and Warnings” on page 19-7, follow these steps:

- 1** In line 49, right-click at the first underline (for a single-button mouse, press **Ctrl+click**).
- 2** From the context menu, select **Suppress 'Terminate statement with semicolon...' > In This File**.

The comment `%#ok<*NOPRT>` appears at the end of the line, which instructs MATLAB to not check for a terminating semicolon throughout the file. All underlines, as well as marks in the message indicator bar that correspond to this message disappear.

If there are two messages on a line that you do not want to display anywhere in the current file, right-click separately at each underline, and then select the appropriate entry from the context menu. The `%#ok` syntax expands. For

the example, in the code presented in “Check Code for Errors and Warnings” on page 19-7, ignoring both messages for line 49 adds `##ok<*NBRAK, *NOPRT>`.

Even if Code Analyzer preferences are set to enable this message, the message does not appear because the `##ok` takes precedence over the preference setting. If you later decide you want to check for a terminating semicolon in the file, delete the `##ok<*NOPRT>` string from the line.


Suppress All Instances of a Message in All Files

You can disable all instances of a Code Analyzer message in all files. For example, using the code presented in “Check Code for Errors and Warnings” on page 19-7, follow these steps:

- 1 In line 49, right-click at the first underline (for a single-button mouse, press **Ctrl**+click).
- 2 From the context menu, select **Suppress 'Terminate statement with semicolon...' > In All Files**.

This modifies the Code Analyzer preference setting.

If you know which message or messages you want to suppress, you can disable them directly using Code Analyzer preferences, as follows:


- 1 On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.
- 2 Select **Code Analyzer**.
- 3 Search the messages to find the ones you want to suppress.
- 4 Clear the check box associated with each message you want to suppress in all files.
- 5 Click **OK**.

Save and Reuse Code Analyzer Message Settings

You can specify that you want certain Code Analyzer messages enabled or disabled, and then save those settings to a file. When you want to use a settings file with a particular file, you select it from the Code Analyzer

preferences pane. That setting file remains in effect until you select another settings file. Typically, you change the settings file when you have a subset of files for which you want to use a particular settings file.


Follow these steps:

- 1** On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.

The Preferences dialog box opens.

- 2** Select **Code Analyzer**.

- 3** Enable or disable specific messages, or categories of messages.

- 4** Click the Actions button , select **Save as**, and then save the settings to a txt file.

- 5** Click **OK**.

You can reuse these settings for any MATLAB file, or provide the settings file to another user.

To use the saved settings:

- 1** On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.

The Preferences dialog box opens.

- 2** Select **Code Analyzer**.

- 3** Use the Active Settings drop-down list to select **Browse...**

The Open dialog box appears.

- 4** Choose from any of your settings files.


The settings you choose are in effect for all MATLAB files until you select another set of Code Analyzer settings.

Understand Code Containing Suppressed Messages

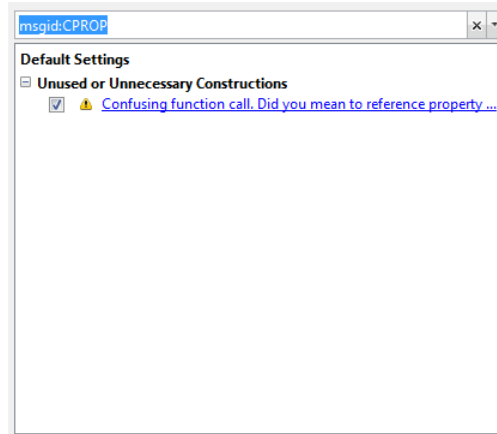
If you receive code that contains suppressed messages, you might want to review those messages without the need to unsuppress them first. A message might be in a suppressed state for any of the following reasons:

- One or more `##ok<message-ID>` directives are on a line of code that elicits a message specified by `<message-ID>`.
- One or more `##ok<*message-ID>` directives are in a file that elicits a message specified by `<message-ID>`.
- It is cleared in the Code Analyzer preferences pane.
- It is disabled by default.

To determine the reasons why some messages are suppressed:

- 1** Search the file for the `##ok` directive and create a list of all the message IDs associated with that directive.
- 2** On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.
The Preferences dialog box opens.
- 3** Select **Code Analyzer**.
- 4** In the search field, type `msgid:` followed by one of the message IDs, if any, you found in step 1.

The message list now contains only the message that corresponds to that ID. If the message is a hyperlink, click it to see an explanation and suggested action for the message. This can provide insight into why the message is suppressed or disabled. The following image shows how the Preferences dialog box appears when you enter `msgid:CPROP` in the search field.



- 5 Click the button to clear the search field, and then repeat step 4 for each message ID you found in step 1.
- 6 Display messages that are disabled by default and disabled in the Preferences pane by clicking the down arrow to the right of the search field. Then, click **Show Disabled Messages**.
- 7 Review the message associated with each message ID to understand why it is suppressed in the code or disabled in Preferences.

Understand the Limitations of Code Analysis

Code analysis is a valuable tool, but there are some limitations:

- Sometimes, it fails to produce Code Analyzer messages where you expect them.

By design, code analysis attempts to minimize the number of incorrect messages it returns, even if this behavior allows some issues to go undetected.

- Sometimes, it produces messages that do not apply to your situation.

When provided with message, click the **Detail** button for additional information, which can help you to make this determination. Error messages are almost always problems. However, many warnings are

suggestions to look at something in the code that is unusual and therefore suspect, but might be correct in your case.

Suppress a warning message if you are certain that the message does not apply to your situation. If your reason for suppressing a message is subtle or obscure, include a comment giving the rationale. That way, those who read your code are aware of the situation.

For details, see “Adjust Code Analyzer Message Indicators and Messages” on page 19-13.

These sections describe code analysis limitations with respect to the following:

- “Distinguish Function Names from Variable Names” on page 19-19
- “Distinguish Structures from Handle Objects” on page 19-20
- “Distinguish Built-In Functions from Overloaded Functions” on page 19-21
- “Determine the Size or Shape of Variables” on page 19-21
- “Analyze Class Definitions with Superclasses” on page 19-21
- “Analyze Class Methods” on page 19-21

Distinguish Function Names from Variable Names

Code analysis cannot always distinguish function names from variable names. For the following code, if the Code Analyzer message is enabled, code analysis returns the message, Code Analyzer cannot determine whether xyz is a variable or a function, and assumes it is a function. Code analysis cannot make a determination because xyz has no obvious value assigned to it. However, the program might have placed the value in the workspace in a way that code analysis cannot detect.

```
function y=foo(x)
    .
    .
    .
    y = xyz(x);
end
```

For example, in the following code, `xyz` can be a function, or can be a variable loaded from the MAT-file. Code analysis has no way of making a determination.

```
function y=foo(x)
    load abc.mat
    y = xyz(x);
end
```

Variables might also be undetected by code analysis when you use the `eval`, `evalc`, `evalin`, or `assignin` functions.

If code analysis mistakes a variable for a function, do one of the following:

- Initialize the variable so that code analysis does not treat it as a function.
- For the `load` function, specify the variable name explicitly in the `load` command line. For example:

```
function y=foo(x)
    load abc.mat xyz
    y = xyz(x);
end
```

Distinguish Structures from Handle Objects

Code analysis cannot always distinguish structures from handle objects. In the following code, if `x` is a structure, you might expect a Code Analyzer message indicating that the code never uses the updated value of the structure. If `x` is a handle object, however, then this code can be correct.

```
function foo(x)
    x.a = 3;
end
```

Code analysis cannot determine whether `x` is a structure or a handle object. To minimize the number of incorrect messages, code analysis returns no message for the previous code, even though it might contain a subtle and serious bug.

Distinguish Built-In Functions from Overloaded Functions

Code analysis does not use the MATLAB path information because it can be different, depending on whether you are editing or running the program. If some built-in functions are overloaded in a class or on the path, Code Analyzer messages might apply to the built-in function, but not to the overloaded function you are calling. In this case, suppress the message on the line where it appears or suppress it for the entire file.

For information on suppressing messages, see “Adjust Code Analyzer Message Indicators and Messages” on page 19-13.

Determine the Size or Shape of Variables

Code analysis has a limited ability to determine the type of variables and the shape of matrixes. Code analysis might produce messages that are appropriate for the most common case, such as for vectors. However, these messages might be inappropriate for less common cases, such as for matrixes.

Analyze Class Definitions with Superclasses

Because code analysis looks at one file at a time and does not use the path, it has no way to analyze superclasses. Therefore, the amount of checking that code analysis can provide for a class definition with superclasses is limited. In general, code analysis cannot always tell whether the class is a handle class. It makes an educated guess, but often cannot get enough information, to make a determination for certain.


Analyze Class Methods

Most class methods must contain at least one argument that is an object of the same class as the method. But it does not always have to be the first argument. When it is, code analysis can determine that an argument is an object of the class you are defining, and it can do various checks. For example, it can check that the property and method names exist and are spelled correctly. However, when code analysis cannot determine that an object is an argument of the class you are defining, then it cannot provide these checks.

Enable MATLAB Compiler Deployment Messages

You can switch between showing or hiding Compiler deployment messages when you work on a file. Change the Code Analyzer preference for this message category. Your choice likely depends on whether you are working on a file to be deployed. When you change the preference, it also changes the setting in the Editor. The converse is also true—when you change the setting from the Editor, it effectively changes this preference. However, if the dialog box is open at the time you modify the setting in the Editor, you will not see the changes reflected in the Preferences dialog box. Whether you change the setting from the Editor or from the Preferences dialog box, it applies to the Editor and to the Code Analyzer Report.

To enable MATLAB Compiler™ deployment messages:

- 1** On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.
The Preferences dialog box opens.
- 2** Select **Code Analyzer**.
- 3** Click the down arrow next to the search field, and then select **Show Messages in Category > MATLAB Compiler (Deployment) Messages**.
- 4** Click the **Enable Category** button.
- 5** Clear individual messages that you do not want to display for your code (if any).
- 6** Decide if you want to save these settings, so you can reuse them next time you work on a file to be deployed.

The settings.txt file, which you can create as described in “Save and Reuse Code Analyzer Message Settings” on page 19-15, includes the status of this setting.

Improve Code Readability

In this section...

“Indenting Code” on page 19-23

“Right-Side Text Limit Indicator” on page 19-25

“Code Folding — Expand and Collapse Code Constructs” on page 19-25

Indenting Code

Indenting code makes reading statements such as `while` loops easier. To set and apply indenting preferences to code in the Editor:

- 1 On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.

The Preferences dialog box opens.

- 2 Select **Editor/Debugger > Language**.

- 3 Choose a computer language from the Language drop-down list.

- 4 In the **Indenting** section, select or clear **Apply smart indenting while typing**, depending on whether you want indenting applied automatically, as you type.

If you clear this option, you can manually apply indenting by selecting the lines in the Editor to indent, right-clicking, and then selecting **Smart Indent** from the context menu.

- 5 Do one of the following:

- If you chose any language other than **MATLAB** in step 2, click **OK**.
- If you chose **MATLAB** in step 2, select a **Function indenting format**, and then click **OK**. Function indent formats are:
 - **Classic** — The Editor aligns the function code with the function declaration.
 - **Indent nested functions** — The Editor indents the function code within a nested function.

- Indent all functions — The Editor indents the function code for both main and nested functions.

The following image illustrates the function indenting formats.




```

1  % Indenting Preferences
2
3  % Classic
4  function classic_one
5 - disp('Main function code')
6      function classic_two
7 -     disp('Nested function code')
8 -     end
9 - end
10
11 % Indent Nested Functions
12 function nested_one
13 - disp('Main function code')
14     function nested_two
15 -     disp('Nested function code')
16 -     end
17 - end
18
19 % Indent All Functions
20 function all_one
21 -     disp('Main function code')
22     function all_two
23 -     disp('Nested function code')
24 -     end
25 - end
26 |

```

Note Indenting preferences are not available for TLC, VHDL, or Verilog.

Regardless of whether you apply indenting automatically or manually, you can move selected lines further to the left or right, by doing one of the following:

- On the **Editor** tab, in the **Edit** section, click , , or .
- Pressing the **Tab** key or the **Shift+Tab** key, respectively.


This works differently if you select the Editor/Debugger **Tab** preference for **Emacs-style Tab key smart indenting**—when you position the cursor in

any line or select a group of lines and press **Tab**, the lines indent according to smart indenting practices.

Right-Side Text Limit Indicator

By default, a light gray vertical line (rule) appears at column 75 in the Editor, indicating where a line exceeds 75 characters. You can set this text limit indicator to another value, which is useful, for example, if you want to view the code in another text editor that has a different line width limit.

To hide, or change the appearance of the vertical line:

- 1 On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.
The Preferences dialog box opens.
- 2 Select **Editor/Debugger > Display**.
- 3 Adjust the settings in the **Right-hand text limit** section.

Note This limit is a visual cue only and does not prevent text from exceeding the limit. To wrap comment text at a specified column number automatically, adjust the settings in the **Comment formatting** section under **Editor/Debugger > Language** in the Preferences dialog box.

Code Folding — Expand and Collapse Code Constructs

Code folding is the ability to expand and collapse certain MATLAB programming constructs. This improves readability when a file contains numerous functions or other blocks of code that you want to hide when you are not currently working with that part of the file. MATLAB programming constructs include:

- Code sections for running and publishing code
- Class code
- For and parfor blocks
- Function and class help

- Function code

To see the entire list of constructs, select **Editor/Debugger > Code Folding** in the Preferences dialog box.

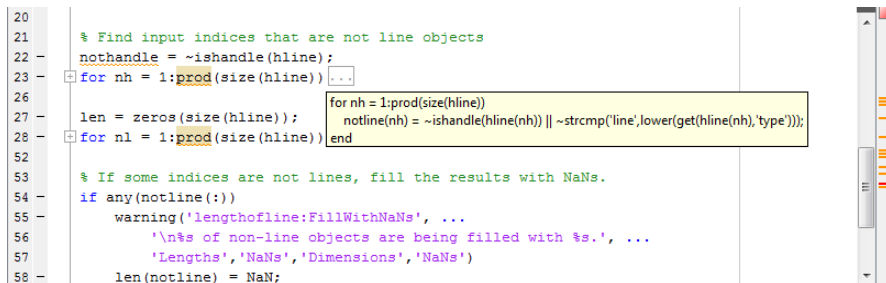
To expand or collapse code, click the plus \oplus or minus sign \ominus that appears to the left of the construct in the Editor.

To expand or collapse all of the code in a file, place your cursor anywhere within the file, right-click, and then select **Code Folding > Expand All** or **Code Folding > Fold All** from the context menu.

View Folded Code in a Tooltip

You can view code that is currently folded by positioning the pointer over its ellipsis \dots . The code appears in a tooltip.

The following image shows the tooltip that appears when you place the pointer over the ellipsis on line 23 of `lengthofline.m` when a `for` loop is folded.



```

20
21 % Find input indices that are not line objects
22 - nothandle = ~ishandle(hline);
23 - for nh = 1:prod(size(hline)) ...
26
27 - len = zeros(size(hline));
28 - for nl = 1:prod(size(hline))
52
53 % If some indices are not lines, fill the results with NaNs.
54 - if any(notline(:))
55 -     warning('lengthofline:FillWithNaNs', ...
56 -         '\n%# of non-line objects are being filled with %s.', ...
57 -         'Lengths', 'NaNs', 'Dimensions', 'NaNs')
58 -     len(notline) = NaN;
  
```

The tooltip displays the code for the folded `for` loop on line 23:

```

for nh = 1:prod(size(hline))
    notline(nh) = ~ishandle(hline(nh)) || ~strcmp('line', lower(get(hline(nh), 'type')));
end
  
```

Print Files with Collapsed Code

If you print a file with one or more collapsed constructs, those constructs are expanded in the printed version of the file.

Code Folding Behavior for Functions that Have No Explicit End Statement

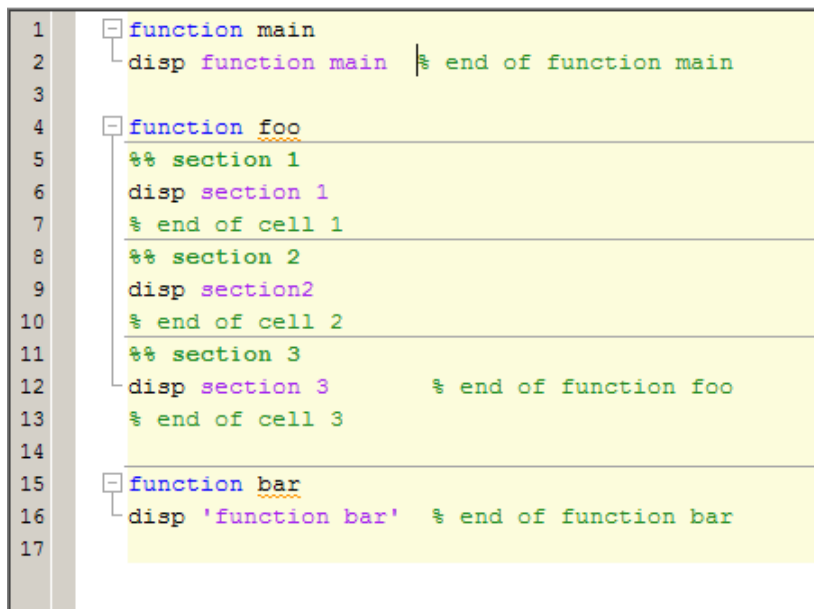
If you enable code folding for functions and a function in your code does not end with an explicit `end` statement, you see the following behavior:

- If a line containing only comments appears at the end of such a function, then the Editor does not include that line when folding the function. MATLAB does not include trailing white space and comments in a function definition that has no explicit end statement.

Code Folding Enabled for Function Code Only on page 19-27 illustrates this behavior. Line 13 is excluded from the fold for the `foo` function.

- If a fold for a code section overlaps the function code, then the Editor does not show the fold for the overlapping section.

The three figures that follow illustrate this behavior. The first two figures, Code Folding Enabled for Function Code Only on page 19-27 and Code Folding Enabled for Cells Only on page 19-28 illustrate how the code folding appears when you enable it for function code only and then section only, respectively. The last figure, Code Folding Enabled for Both Functions and Cells on page 19-29, illustrates the effects when code folding is enabled for both. Because the fold for section 3 (lines 11–13) overlaps the fold for function `foo` (lines 4–12), the Editor does not display the fold for section 3.



```
1  function main
2  disp function main  % end of function main
3
4  function foo
5  %% section 1
6  disp section 1
7  % end of cell 1
8  %% section 2
9  disp section2
10 % end of cell 2
11 %% section 3
12 disp section 3      % end of function foo
13 % end of cell 3
14
15 function bar
16 disp 'function bar' % end of function bar
17
```

Code Folding Enabled for Function Code Only

```
1  function main
2  disp function main % end of function main
3
4  function foo
5  %% section 1
6  disp section 1
7  % end of cell 1
8  %% section 2
9  disp section2
10 % end of cell 2
11 %% section 3
12 disp section 3 % end of function foo
13 % end of cell 3
14
15 function bar
16 disp 'function bar' % end of function bar
17
```

Code Folding Enabled for Cells Only

```
1  function main
2  disp function main % end of function main
3
4  function foo
5  %% section 1
6  disp section 1
7  % end of cell 1
8  %% section 2
9  disp section2
10 % end of cell 2
11 %% section 3
12 disp section 3 % end of function foo
13 % end of cell 3
14
15 function bar
16 disp 'function bar' % end of function bar
17
```

Code Folding Enabled for Both Functions and Cells

Find and Replace Text in Files

In this section...

“Find Any Text in the Current File” on page 19-30

“Find and Replace Functions or Variables in the Current File” on page 19-30

“Automatically Rename All Functions or Variables in a File” on page 19-32


“Find and Replace Any Text” on page 19-34

“Find Text in Multiple File Names or Files” on page 19-34

“Function Alternative for Finding Text” on page 19-34

“Perform an Incremental Search in the Editor” on page 19-34

Find Any Text in the Current File

- 1 Within the current file, select the text you want to find.
- 2 On the **Editor** tab, in the **Navigate** section, click  Find ↕, and then select **Find...**

A Find & Replace dialog box opens.


- 3 Click **Find Next** to continue finding more occurrences of the text.

To find the previous occurrence of selected text (find backwards) in the current file, click **Find Previous** on the Find & Replace dialog box.

Find and Replace Functions or Variables in the Current File

To search for references to a particular function or variable, use the automatic highlighting feature for variables and functions. This feature is more efficient than using the text finding tools. Function and variable highlighting indicates only references to a particular function or variable, not other occurrences. For instance, it does not find instances of the function or variable name in comments. Furthermore, variable highlighting only includes references to

the *same* variable. That is, if two variables use the same name, but are in different scopes, highlighting one does not cause the other to highlight.

- 1 On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.

The Preferences dialog box opens.

- 2 Select **Colors > Programming Tools**.

- 3 Under **Variable and function colors**, select **Automatically highlight**, deselect **Variables with shared scope**, and then click **Apply**.

- 4 In a file open in the Editor, click an instance of the variable you want to find throughout the file.

MATLAB indicates all occurrences of that variable within the file by:

- Highlighting them in teal blue (by default) throughout the file
- Adding a marker for each in the indicator bar

If a code analyzer indicator and a variable indicator appear on the same line in a file, the marker for the variable takes precedence.

- 5 Hover over a marker in the indicator bar to see the line it represents.

- 6 Click a marker in the indicator bar to navigate to that occurrence of the variable.

Replace an instance of a function or variable by editing the occurrence at a line to which you have navigated.

The following image shows an example of how the Editor looks with variable highlighting enabled. In this image, the variable `i` appears highlighted in sky blue, and the indicator bar contains three variable markers.

```

1  function rowTotals = rowsum
2  % Add the values in each row and
3  % store them in a new array.
4
5  x = ones(2,10);
6  [n, m] = size(x);
7  rowTotals = zeros(1,n);
8  for i = 1:n
9      rowTotals(i) = addToSum;
10 end
11
12 function colsum = addToSum
13     colsum = 0;
14     thisrow = x(i,:);
15     for i = 1:m
16         colsum = colsum + thisrow(i);
17     end
18 end
19
20 end

```

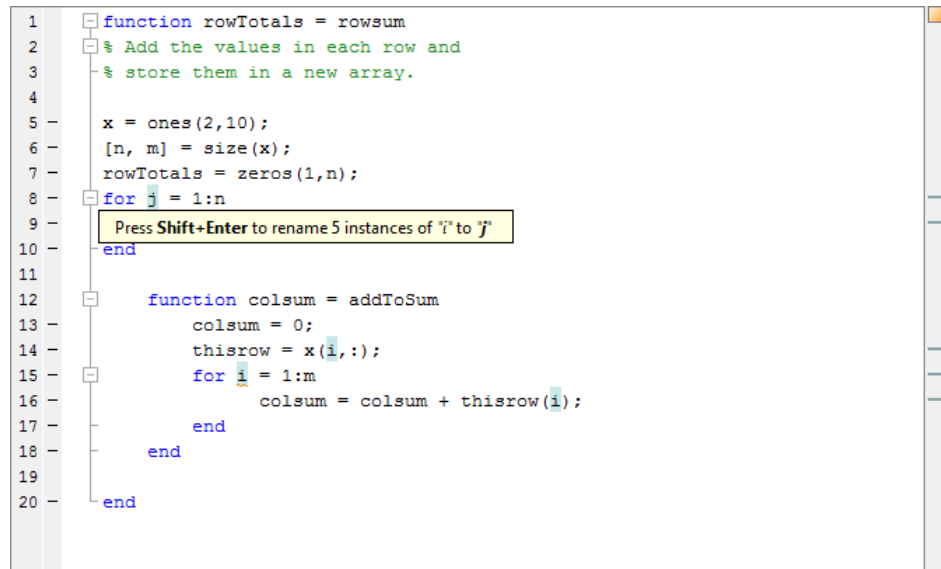
Automatically Rename All Functions or Variables in a File

To help prevent typographical errors, MATLAB provides a feature that helps rename multiple references to a function or variable within a file when you manually change any of the following:

Function or Variable Renamed	Example
Function name in a function declaration	Rename foo in: function foo(m)
Input or output variable name in a function declaration	Rename y or m in: function y = foo(m)
Variable name on the left side of assignment statement	Rename y in: y = 1

As you rename such a function or variable, a tooltip opens if there is more than one reference to that variable or function in the file. The tooltip indicates

that MATLAB will rename all instances of the function or variable in the file when you press **Shift + Enter**.



```

1  function rowTotals = rowsum
2  % Add the values in each row and
3  % store them in a new array.
4
5  x = ones(2,10);
6  [n, m] = size(x);
7  rowTotals = zeros(1,n);
8  for j = 1:n
9
10     end
11
12     function colsum = addToSum
13         colsum = 0;
14         thisrow = x(i,:);
15         for i = 1:m
16             colsum = colsum + thisrow(i);
17         end
18     end
19
20 end


```

Press Shift+Enter to rename 5 instances of "i" to "j"


Typically, multiple references to a function appear when you use nested functions or local functions.

Note MATLAB does *not* prompt you when you change:

- The name of a global variable.
 - The function input and output arguments, `varargin` and `varargout`.
-

To undo automatic name changes, click  once.


By default, this feature is enabled. To disable it:

- 1 On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.


The Preferences dialog box opens.

- 2** Select **Editor/Debugger > Language**.
- 3** In the **Language** field, select **MATLAB**.
- 4** Clear **Enable automatic variable and function renaming**.

Find and Replace Any Text

You can search for, and optionally replace specified text within a file. On the **Editor** tab, in the **Navigate** section, click  **Find** to open and use the Find & Replace dialog box.

Find Text in Multiple File Names or Files

You can find folders and file names that include specified text, or whose contents contain specified text. On the **Editor** tab, in the **File** section, click  **Find Files** to open the Find Files dialog box. For details, see “Finding Files and Folders”.

Function Alternative for Finding Text

Use `lookfor` to search for the specified text in the first line of help for all files with the `.m` extension on the search path.

Perform an Incremental Search in the Editor



When you perform an incremental search, the cursor moves to the next or previous occurrence of the specified text in the current file. It is similar to the Emacs search feature. In the Editor, incremental search uses the same controls as incremental search in the Command Window. For details, see “Incremental Search Using Keyboard Shortcuts”.



Go To Location in File




In this section...
“Navigate to a Specific Location” on page 19-35
“Set Bookmarks” on page 19-39
“Navigate Backward and Forward in Files” on page 19-39
“Open a File or Variable from Within a File” on page 19-40






Navigate to a Specific Location

This table summarizes the steps for navigating to a specific location within a file open in the Editor. In some cases, different sets of steps are available for navigating to a particular location. Choose the set that works best with your workflow.

Go To	Steps	Notes
Line Number	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 On the Editor tab, in the Navigate section, click  Go To 2 Select Go to Line... 3 Specify the line to which you want to navigate. 	None
Function definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 On the Editor tab, in the Navigate section, click  Go To 2 Under the heading Function, select the local function or nested function to which you want to navigate. 	<p>Includes local functions and nested functions</p> <p>For both class and function files, the functions list in alphabetical order—except that in function files, the name of the main function always appears at the top of the list.</p>

Go To	Steps	Notes
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1 In the Current Folder browser, click the name of the file open in the Editor.2 Click the up arrow  at the bottom of Current Folder browser to open the detail panel.3 In the detail panel, double-click the function icon  corresponding to the title of the function or local function to which you want to navigate.	Functions list in order of appearance within your file.


Go To	Steps	Notes
Function reference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Click in any instance of the function name. 2 Press Alt+Up or Alt+Down to go to the next or previous function reference, respectively. 	<p>Alt+Up and Alt+Down are the default keyboard shortcuts for the actions Go to Previous Underline or Highlight or Go to Next Underline or Highlight, respectively.</p> <p>For more information, see “Define Keyboard Shortcuts”.</p>
Variable reference	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Click in any instance of the variable name. 2 Press Alt+Up or Alt+Down to go to the next or previous variable reference, respectively. 	
Code Analyzer Message	Press Alt+Up or Alt+Down to go to the next or previous code analyzer message, respectively.	
Code Section	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 On the Editor tab, in the Navigate section, click  Go To 2 Under Sections, select the title of the code section to which you want to navigate. 	<p>For more information, see “Divide Your File into Code Sections” on page 14-6</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 In the Current Folder browser, click the name of the file that is open in the Editor. 2 Click the up arrow  at the bottom of Current Folder browser to open the detail panel. 3 In the detail panel, double-click the section icon  corresponding 	

Go To	Steps	Notes
	<p>to the title of the section to which you want to navigate.</p>	
<p>Property</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 In the Current Folder browser, click the name of the file that is open in the Editor. 2 Click the up arrow  at the bottom of Current Folder browser to open the detail panel. 3 On the detail panel, double-click the property icon  corresponding to the name of the property to which you want to navigate. 	<p>For more information, see “How to Use Properties”</p>
<p>Method</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 In the Current Folder browser, click the name of the file that is open in the Editor. 2 Click the up arrow  at the bottom of Current Folder browser to open the detail panel. 3 In the detail panel, double-click the icon  corresponding to the name of the method to which you want to navigate. 	<p>For more information, see “How to Use Methods”</p>
<p>Bookmark</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 On the Editor tab, in the Navigate section, click  Go To. 2 Under Bookmarks, select the bookmark to which you want to navigate. 	<p>For information on setting and clearing bookmarks, see “Set Bookmarks” on page 19-39.</p>


Set Bookmarks

You can set a bookmark at any line in a file in the Editor so you can quickly navigate to the bookmarked line. This is particularly useful in long files. For example, suppose while working on a line, you want to look at another part of the file, and then return. Set a bookmark at the current line, go to the other part of the file, and then use the bookmark to return.

To set a bookmark:



- 1 Position the cursor anywhere on the line.
- 2 On the **Editor** tab, in the **Navigate** section, click  **Go To ▾**.
- 3 Under **Bookmarks**, select **Set/Clear**

A bookmark icon  appears to the left of the line.

To clear a bookmark, position the cursor anywhere on the line. Click  **Go To ▾** and select **Set/Clear** under **Bookmarks**.



MATLAB does not maintain bookmarks after you close a file.

Navigate Backward and Forward in Files

To access lines in a file in the same sequence that you previously navigated or edited them, use  and .

Interrupting the Sequence of Go Back and Go Forward




The back and forward sequence is interrupted if you:



- 1 Click .
- 2 Click .
- 3 Edit a line or navigate to another line using the list of features described in “Navigate to a Specific Location” on page 19-35.

You can still go to the lines preceding the interruption point in the sequence, but you cannot go to any lines after that point. Any lines you edit or navigate

to after interrupting the sequence are added to the sequence after the interruption point.

For example:

- 1 Open a file.
- 2 Edit line 2, line 4, and line 6.
- 3 Click  to return to line 4, and then to return to line 2.
- 4 Click  to return to lines 4 and 6.
- 5 Click  to return to line 1.
- 6 Edit at 3.

This interrupts the sequence. You can no longer use  to return to lines 4 and 6. You can, however, click  to return to line 1.

Open a File or Variable from Within a File

You can open a function, file, variable, or Simulink model from within a file in the Editor. Position the cursor on the name, and then right-click and select **Open selection** from the context menu. Based on what the selection is, the Editor performs a different action, as described in this table.

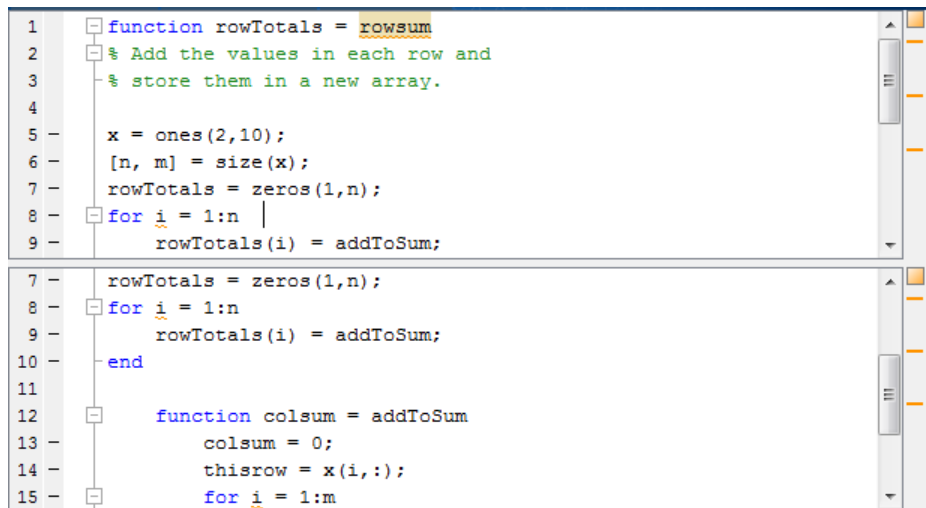
Item	Action
Local function	Navigates to the local function within the current file, if that file is a MATLAB code file. If no function by that name exists in the current file, the Editor runs the <code>open</code> function on the selection, which opens the selection in the appropriate tool.
Text file	Opens in the Editor.
Figure file (.fig)	Opens in a figure window.

Item	Action
MATLAB variable that is in the current workspace	Opens in the Variable Editor.
Model	Opens in Simulink.
Other	If the selection is some other type, Open selection looks for a matching file in a private folder in the current folder and performs the appropriate action.

Display Two Parts of a File Simultaneously

You can simultaneously display two different parts of a file in the Editor by splitting the screen display, as shown in the image that follows. This feature makes it easy to compare different lines in a file or to copy and paste from one part of a file to another.

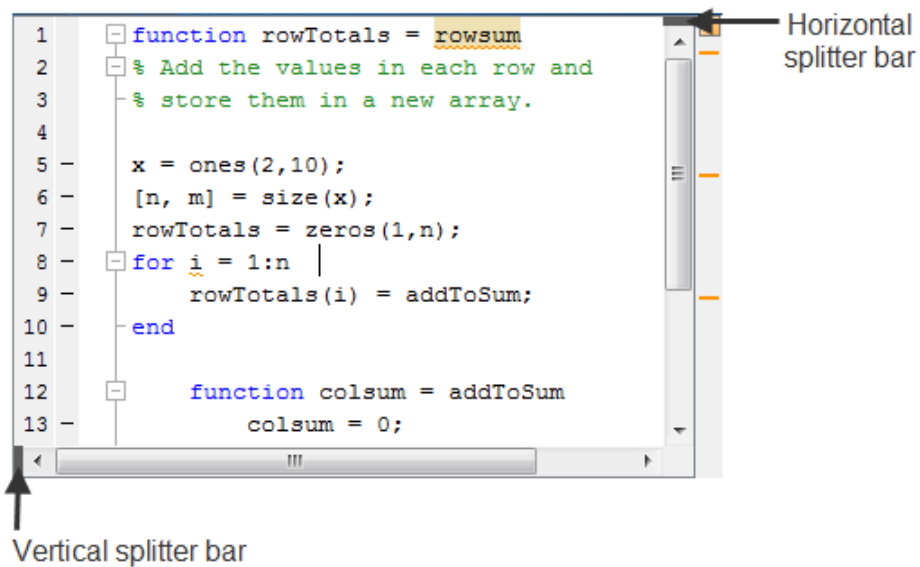
See also “Document Layout” for instructions on displaying multiple documents simultaneously.



```
1  function rowTotals = rowsum
2  % Add the values in each row and
3  % store them in a new array.
4
5  x = ones(2,10);
6  [n, m] = size(x);
7  rowTotals = zeros(1,n);
8  for i = 1:n
9      rowTotals(i) = addToSum;
7  rowTotals = zeros(1,n);
8  for i = 1:n
9      rowTotals(i) = addToSum;
10 end
11
12 function colsum = addToSum
13     colsum = 0;
14     thisrow = x(i,:);
15     for i = 1:m
```

The following table describes the various ways you can split the Editor and manipulate the split-screen views. When you open a document, it opens unsplit, regardless of its split status it had when you closed it.

Operation	Instructions
Split the screen horizontally.	<p>Do either of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right-click and, select Split Screen > Top/Bottom from the Context Menu. • If there is a vertical scroll bar, as shown in the illustration that follows, drag the splitter bar down.
Split the screen vertically.	<p>Do either of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the Context Menu, select Split Screen > Left/Right. • If there is a horizontal scroll bar, as shown in the illustration that follows, drag the splitter bar from the left of the scroll bar.
Specify the active view.	<p>Do either of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From the Context Menu, select Split Screen > Switch Focus. • Click in the view you want to make active. <p>Updates you make to the document in the active view are also visible in the other view.</p>
Remove the splitter	<p>Do one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double-click the splitter. • From the Context Menu, Split Screen > Off.



Add Reminders to Files

Annotating a file makes it easier to find areas of your code that you intend to improve, complete, or update later.

To annotate a file, add comments with the text TODO, FIXME, or a string of your choosing.

After you annotate several files, run the TODO/FIXME Report, to identify all the MATLAB code files within a given folder that you have annotated.

This sample TODO/FIXME Report shows files containing the strings TODO, FIXME, and NOTE. The search is case insensitive.

TODO/FIXME Report

The TODO/FIXME Report shows MATLAB files that contain the text strings selected below ([Learn More](#)).

TODO FIXME

Report for folder H:\Documents\MATLAB debugging

MATLAB File List

collatz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Collatz problem. Generate a sequence of integers resolving to 1 3 For any positive integer, n: 4 Divide n by 2 if n is even 5 Multiply n by 3 and add 1 if n is odd 6 Repeat for the result 7 Continue until the result is 1%
collatzplot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Plot length of sequence for Collatz problem 3 Prepare figure 6 7 Determine and plot sequence and sequence length 14 This M-file has an intentional error at line 10 to demonstrate debugging. 15 The plot_seq variable should be seq_length(N).

Working with TODO/FIXME Reports

- 1 Use the Current Folder browser to navigate to the folder containing the files for which you want to produce a TODO/FIXME report.

Note You cannot run reports when the path is a UNC (Universal Naming Convention) path; that is, a path that starts with \\\. Instead, use an actual hard drive on your system, or a mapped network drive.

- 2** On the Current Folder browser, click , and then select **Reports > TODO/FIXME Report**.

The TODO/FIXME Report opens in the MATLAB Web Browser.

- 3** In the TODO/FIXME Report window, select one or more of the following to specify the lines that you want the report to include:
 - TODO
 - FIXME
 - The text field check box

You can then enter any text string in this field, including a regular expression. For example, you can enter NOTE, tbd, or re.*check.

- 4** Run the report on the files in the current folder, by clicking **Rerun This Report**.

The window refreshes and lists all lines in the MATLAB files within the specified folder that contain the strings you selected in step 1. Matches are not case sensitive.

If you want to run the report on a folder other than the one currently specified in the report window, change the current folder. Then, click **Run Report on Current Folder**.

To open a file in the Editor at a specific line, click the line number in the report. Then you can change the file, as needed.

Suppose you have a file, `area.m`, in the current folder. The code for `area.m` appears in the image that follows.


```

1  function [output] = area(flag,radius)
2  % This function calculates the area of the entity
3  % flag = 1 for calculating the area of a
4  % flag = 2 for calculating the surface area of a sphere
5  % radius = radius of the entity
6
7  switch flag
8      % Modify the function to include the area of square
9      % and rectangle. (todo)
10
11     case 1
12         output = pi * radius^2;
13
14     case 2
15         output = 4 * pi * radius^2;
16         % Fixme: is the area of hemisphere as below?
17         % case 3
18         % output = 2 * pi * radius^2;
19         % fixME
20
21     otherwise
22         disp('Incorrect flag');
23         output = NaN;
24         % NOTE: Find out from manager if we need to include
25         % the area of a cone
26
27 end

```

When you run the TODO/FIXME report on the folder containing `area.m`, with the TODO and FIXME strings selected and the string NOTE specified and selected, the report lists:

```

9 and rectangle. (todo)
14 Fixme: Is the area of hemisphere as below?
17 fixME
21 NOTE: Find out from the manager if we need to include

```

<pre> <u>area</u> </pre>	<pre> <u>9</u> and rectangle. (todo) <u>14</u> Fixme: Is the area of hemisphere as below? <u>17</u> fixME <u>21</u> NOTE: Find out from the manager if we need to include </pre>
--------------------------	--

Notice the report includes the following:

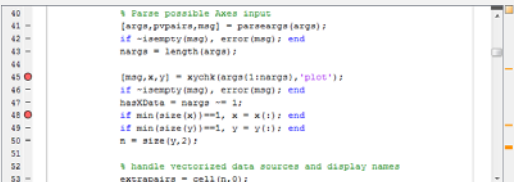

- Line 9 as a match for the TODO string. The report includes lines that have a selected string regardless of its placement within a comment.
- Lines 14 and 17 as a match for the FIXME string. The report matches selected strings in the file regardless of their casing.

- Line 21 as a match for the NOTE string. The report includes lines that have a string specified in the text field, assuming that you select the text field.

Colors in the MATLAB Editor

Colors in the Editor help you to read code, identify code elements, and evaluate sections of code. To find out why certain portions of your code appear in color, how to change the color, or learn more about the features highlighted in color, see the table that follows.

Sample (Using Default Colors)	What the Color Indicates
<pre data-bbox="140 564 615 720"> %create a file for output ! touch testFile.txt fid = fopen('testFile.txt', 'w'); for i = 1:10 fprintf(fid, '%6.2f \n,i); end </pre>	<p>Different types of language elements, such as keywords, comments, and strings appear in different colors. This is called <i>syntax highlighting</i>.</p> <p>See also, “Syntax Highlighting”</p>
<pre data-bbox="140 789 675 1067"> function test(input) persistent multifactor; multifactor = multifactor +1; a_var = nestedfunction(multifactor) unused_var = a_var; function out = nestedfunction(factor) out=input*factor; end end </pre>	<p>Teal blue characters indicate variables with shared scope</p> <p>Sky blue shading indicates function or variable names that match the name in which the cursor is currently placed.</p> <p>See also, “Check Variable Scope in Editor” on page 15-15.</p>
<pre data-bbox="140 1128 690 1380"> if isempty(data{3}) ... (length(unique(data{1}(:)))==1) ... (length(unique(data{2}(:)))==1) ... (length(unique(data{3}(:)))==1) ... data{3} = zeros(size(data{1})); dim(n1) = 2; else dime(n1) = 3; end </pre>	<p>Orange and red wavy underlines indicate warning and error conditions, respectively.</p> <p>Orange shading indicates coding issues that MATLAB can correct for you.</p> <p>See also, “Check Code for Errors and Warnings” on page 19-7</p>

Sample (Using Default Colors)	What the Color Indicates
<pre> %% Plot Sine Wave % Calculate and plot a sine wave. %% Calculate and Plot Sine Wave % Define the range for x. % % \$\$\$00<= x <= pi\$\$ % % Calculate and plot y = sin(x). x = 0:0.125:6*pi; y = sin(x); plot(x,y) %% Modify Plot Properties % Add labels and set colors. </pre>	<p>Yellow highlighting indicates code sections, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help you visually identify subsections of code • Enable you to publish and run subsections of code. <p>See also, “Divide Your File into Code Sections” on page 14-6</p>
 <pre> 40 % Pass possible Axes input 41 [args,propairs,mgp] = parseargs(args); 42 if ~isempty(mgp), error(mgp); end 43 nargs = length(args); 44 45 [mgp,x,y] = xyzmk(args(1:nargs),'plot'); 46 if ~isempty(mgp), error(mgp); end 47 baseNData = nargs - 1; 48 if min(size(x))==1, x = x(:); end 49 if min(size(y))==1, y = y(:); end 50 n = size(y,2); 51 52 % handle vectorized data sources and display names 53 extrapairs = cell(n,0); </pre>	<p>Red dots represent breakpoints, which you use in debugging.</p> <p>If you attempt to run your code, MATLAB stops at the first breakpoint it encounters.</p> <p>See also, “Debugging Process and Features” on page 17-2</p>
	<p>A gray vertical line indicates the location of a particular column in the Editor that you can use to limit line widths.</p> <p>The Editor does not enforce the limit.</p> <p>See also, “Right-Side Text Limit Indicator” on page 19-25</p>

Code Contains %#ok – What Does That Mean?

If code contains the string %#ok at the end of a line of code, it indicates that one or more Code Analyzer messages is suppressed. For more information, see “Understand Code Containing Suppressed Messages” on page 19-17.

MATLAB Code Analyzer Report

In this section...

“Running the Code Analyzer Report” on page 19-52

“Changing Code Based on Code Analyzer Messages” on page 19-54

“Other Ways to Access Code Analyzer Messages” on page 19-55


Running the Code Analyzer Report

The Code Analyzer Report displays potential errors and problems, as well as opportunities for improvement in your code through messages. For example, a common message indicates that a variable `foo` might be unused.

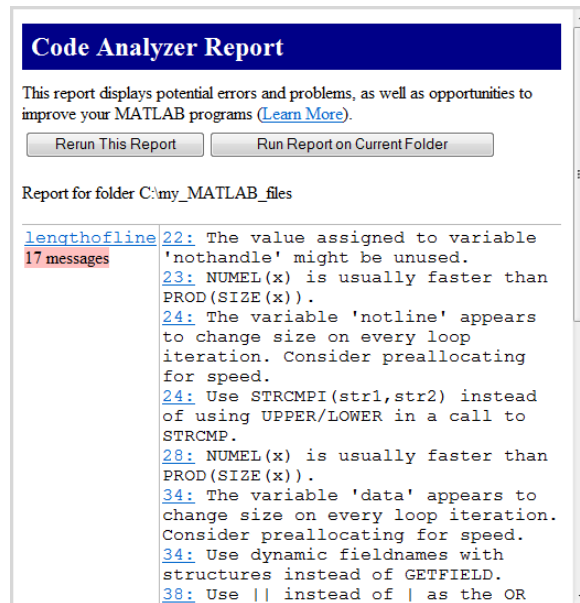
To run the Code Analyzer Report:

- 1 In the Current Folder browser, navigate to the folder that contains the files you want to check. To use the example shown in this documentation, `lengthoffline.m`, you can change the current folder by running

```
cd(fullfile(matlabroot,'help','techdoc','matlab_env','examples'))
```


- 2 If you plan to modify the example, save the file to a folder for which you have write access. Then, make that folder the current MATLAB folder. This example saves the file in `C:\my_MATLAB_files`.
- 3 In the Current Folder browser, click , and then select **Reports > Code Analyzer Report**.

The report displays in the MATLAB Web Browser, showing those files identified as having potential problems or opportunities for improvement.



4 For each message in the report, review the suggestion and your code. Click the line number to open the file in the Editor at that line, and change the file based on the message. Use the following general advice:

- If you are unsure what a message means or what to change in the code, click the link in the message if one appears. For details, see “Check Code for Errors and Warnings” on page 19-7.
- If the message does not contain a link, and you are unsure what a message means or what to do, search for related topics in the Help browser. For examples of messages and what to do about them, including specific changes to make for the example, `lengthofline.m`, see “Changing Code Based on Code Analyzer Messages” on page 19-54.
- The messages do not provide perfect information about every situation and in some cases, you might not want to change anything based on the message. For details, see “Understand the Limitations of Code Analysis” on page 19-18.
- If there are certain messages or types of messages you do not want to see, you can suppress them. For details, see “Adjust Code Analyzer Message Indicators and Messages” on page 19-13.

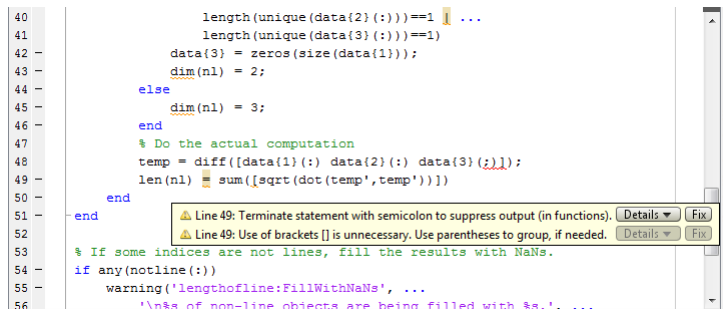
- 5 After modifying it, save the file. Consider saving the file to a different name if you made significant changes that might introduce errors. Then you can refer to the original file, if needed, to resolve problems with the updated file. Use the  **Compare** button on the **Editor** tab to help you identify the changes you made to the file. For more information, see “Comparing Text Files”.
- 6 Run and debug the file or files again to be sure that you have not introduced any inadvertent errors.
- 7 If the report is displaying, click **Rerun This Report** to update the report based on the changes you made to the file. Ensure that the messages are gone, based on the changes you made to the files.

Changing Code Based on Code Analyzer Messages

For information on how to correct the potential problems presented in Code Analyzer messages, use the following resources:

- Open the file in the Editor and click the **Details** button in the tooltip, as shown in the image following this list. An extended message opens. However, not all messages have extended messages.
- Use the Help browser **Search** pane to find documentation about terms presented in the messages.

The following image shows a tooltip with a **Details** button. The orange *line* under the equals (=) sign indicates a tooltip displays if you hover over the equals sign. The orange *highlighting* indicates that an automatic fix is available.



```

40     length(unique(data(2) (:))) == 1 ...
41     length(unique(data(3) (:))) == 1)
42     data(3) = zeros(size(data(1)));
43     dim(nl) = 2;
44     else
45         dim(nl) = 3;
46     end
47     % Do the actual computation
48     temp = diff([data(1) (:); data(2) (:); data(3) (:)]);
49     len(nl) = sum (sqrt(dot(temp', temp)))
50 end
51 -end
52
53 % If some indices are not lines, fill the results with NaNs.
54 if any(notline(:))
55     warning('lengthofline:FillWithNaNs', ...
56         '\n%s of non-line objects are being filled with %s.', ...

```


Other Ways to Access Code Analyzer Messages

You can get Code Analyzer messages using any of the following methods. Each provides the same messages, but in a different format:

- Access the Code Analyzer Report for a file from the Profiler detail report.
- Run the `checkcode` function, which analyzes the specified file and displays messages in the Command Window.
- Run the `mlintrpt` function, which runs `checkcode` and displays the messages in the Web Browser.
- Use automatic code checking while you work on a file in the Editor. See “Automatically Check Code in the Editor — Code Analyzer” on page 19-7.

Change Default Editor


In this section...

“Set Default Editor” on page 19-56

“Set Default Editor in '-nodisplay' mode” on page 19-56

Set Default Editor

To specify the default editor for MATLAB:

- 1 On the **Home** tab, in the **Environment** section, click  **Preferences**.
The Preferences dialog box opens.
- 2 Select the **Editor/Debugger** node on the left pane.
- 3 In the **Editor** pane, click **Text editor** and specify a default text editor.

Set Default Editor in '-nodisplay' mode

If you invoke the `edit` command while running MATLAB with the `-nodisplay` option, choose an appropriate text-based editor instead of the default editor specified in the Preferences dialog box. This is done differently depending on your platform.

Mac Platforms

When running MATLAB with the `-nodisplay` startup option, `edit` opens the editor specified in the `EDITOR` environment variable.

To display the current value of `$EDITOR` in MATLAB, execute the command:

```
!printenv EDITOR
```

UNIX Platforms

When running MATLAB with the `-nodisplay` option (or without the `DISPLAY` environment variable set) on UNIX platforms, you can find the default editor defined for your system in `matlabroot/X11/app-defaults/Matlab`.

You can specify the default editor or editor options by adding the following line to your own `.Xdefaults` file, located in `~home`:

```
matlab*externalEditorCommand: $EDITOR -option $FILE
```

where

- `$EDITOR` is the name of your default editor, for example, `emacs`. Leaving the environment variable `EDITOR` as `$EDITOR` instruct MATLAB to use your default system editor.
- `-option` is a valid option flag you can include for the specified editor.
- `$FILE` means the file name you type with the `edit` command opens in the specified editor.

After adding the line to your `.Xdefaults` file, run the following before starting MATLAB:

```
xrdb -merge -home/.Xdefaults
```

For example, this code opens `foo` in the `emacs` editor:

```
emacs foo
```


Programming Utilities

- “Identify Program Dependencies” on page 20-2
- “Protect Your Source Code” on page 20-9
- “Create Hyperlinks that Run Functions” on page 20-12

Identify Program Dependencies

If you need to know what other functions and scripts your program is dependent upon, use one of the techniques described below.

In this section...
“Simple Display of Program File Dependencies” on page 20-2
“Detailed Display of Program File Dependencies” on page 20-2
“Dependencies Within a Folder” on page 20-3

Simple Display of Program File Dependencies

For a simple display of all program files referenced by a particular function, follow these steps:

- 1 Type `clear functions` to clear all functions from memory (see Note below).

Note `clear functions` does not clear functions locked by `mlock`. If you have locked functions (which you can check using `inmem`) unlock them with `munlock`, and then repeat step 1.

- 2 Execute the function you want to check. Note that the function arguments you choose to use in this step are important, because you can get different results when calling the same function with different arguments.
- 3 Type `inmem` to display all program files that were used when the function ran. If you want to see what MEX-files were used as well, specify an additional output:

```
[mfiles, mexfiles] = inmem
```

Detailed Display of Program File Dependencies

For a much more detailed display of dependent function information, use the `depfun` function. In addition to program files, `depfun` shows which built-ins and classes a particular function depends on:

```
[list, builtins, classes] = deffun('strtok.m');

list
list =
    'D:\matlabR14\toolbox\matlab\strfun\strtok.m'
    'D:\matlabR14\toolbox\distcomp\toChar.m'
    'D:\matlabR14\toolbox\matlab\datafun\prod.m'
    'D:\matlabR14\toolbox\matlab\datatypes\@opaque\char.m'
    .
    .
    .
```

Dependencies Within a Folder

The Dependency Report shows dependencies among MATLAB code files in a folder. Use this report to determine:

- Which files in the folder are required by other files in the folder
- If any files in the current folder will fail if you delete a file
- If any called files are missing from the current folder

The report does not list:

- Files in the `toolbox/matlab` folder because every MATLAB user has those files.

Therefore, if you use a function file that shadows a built-in function file, MATLAB excludes both files from the list.

- Files called from anonymous functions.
- The superclass for a class file.
- Files called from `eval`, `evalc`, `run`, `load`, function handles, and callbacks.

MATLAB does not resolve these files until run time, and therefore the Dependency Report cannot discover them.

- Some method files.

The Dependency Report finds class constructors that you call in a MATLAB file. However, any methods you execute on the resulting object are unknown to the report. These methods can exist in the `classdef` file, as

separate method files, or files belonging to superclass or superclasses of a method file.

To provide meaningful results, the Dependency Report requires the following:

- The search path when you run the report is the same as when you run the files in the folder. (That is, the current folder is at the top of the search path.)
- The files in the folder for which you are running the report do not change the search path or otherwise manipulate it.
- The files in the folder do not load variables, or otherwise create name clashes that result in different program elements with the same name.

Note Do not use the Dependency Report to determine which MATLAB code files someone else needs to run a particular file. Instead use the `depfun` function.

Creating Dependency Reports

- 1 Use the Current Folder pane to navigate to the folder containing the files for which you want to produce a Dependency Report.

Note You cannot run reports when the path is a UNC (Universal Naming Convention) path; that is, a path that starts with `\\`. Instead, use an actual hard drive on your system, or a mapped network drive.

- 2 On the Current Folder pane, click , and then select **Reports > Dependency Report**.

The Dependency Report opens in the MATLAB Web Browser.

- 3 If you want, select one or more options within the report, as follows:
 - To see a list of all MATLAB code files (children) called by each file in the folder (parent), select **Show child functions**.

The report indicates where each child function resides, for example, in a specified toolbox. If the report specifies that the location of a child function is unknown, it can be because:

- The child function is not on the search path.
 - The child function is not in the current folder.
 - The file was moved or deleted.
- To list the files that call each MATLAB code file, select **Show parent functions**.

The report limits the parent (calling) functions to functions in the current folder.

- To include local functions in the report, select **Show subfunctions**. The report lists local functions directly after the main function and highlights them in gray.

4 Click Run Report on Current Folder.

Reading and Working with Dependency Reports

The following image shows a Dependency Report. It indicates that `chirpy.m` calls two files in Signal Processing Toolbox™ and one in Image Processing Toolbox™. It also shows that `go.m` calls `mobius.m`, which is in the current folder.

Dependency Report

The Dependency Report shows dependencies among MATLAB files in a folder ([Learn More](#)).

Show child functions
 Show parent functions (current folder only)

 Show subfunctions

Built-in functions and files in toolbox/matlab are not shown

Report for Folder I:\my_MATLAB_files

MATLAB File List	Children (called functions)
chirpy	toolbox : \images\images\erode.m toolbox : \shared\siglib\chirp.m toolbox : \signal\signal\specgram.m
collatz	
collatzall	subfunction : collatzplot new
collatzplot	current dir : collatz
collatzplot new	current dir : collatz
go	current dir : mobius
mobius	

The Dependency Report includes the following:

- MATLAB File List

The list of files in the folder on which you ran the Dependency Report. Click a link in this column to open the file in the Editor.

- Children

The function or functions called by the MATLAB file.

Click a link in this column to open the MATLAB file listed in the same row, and go to the first reference to the called function. For instance, suppose your Dependency Report appears as shown in the previous image. Clicking `\images\images\erode.m` opens `chirpy.m` and places the cursor at the first line that references `erode`. In other words, it does not open `erode.m`.

- Multiple class methods


Because the report is a static analysis, it cannot determine run-time data types and, therefore, cannot identify the particular class methods required by a file. If multiple class methods match a referenced method, the Dependency Report inserts a question mark link next to the file name. The question mark appears in the following image.

rational differential	toolbox	:	\rf\rf\s2sdd.m
	toolbox	:	\rf\rf\@rfckt\smith.m
	toolbox	:	\rf\rf\s2tf.m
	toolbox	:	\rf\rf\rationalfit.m
	toolbox	:	? Multiple class methods match freqresp.m
	toolbox	:	\rf\rf\@rfmodel\timeresp.m
	toolbox	:	\rf\rf\@rfckt\analyze.m
	toolbox	:	\signal\signal\fftfilt.m

Click the question mark link to list the class methods with the specified name that MATLAB might use. MATLAB lists *almost all* the method files on the search path that match the specified method file (in this case, `freqresp.m`). Do not be concerned if the list includes methods of classes and MATLAB built-in functions that are unfamiliar to you.

It is not necessary for you to determine which file MATLAB will use. MATLAB determines which method to use depending on the object that the program calls at run time.

The following image shows the contents of the right side of the Web Browser after you click the question mark link.

```
toolbox : \rf\rf\s2sdd.m
toolbox : \rf\rf@\rfckt\smith.m
toolbox : \rf\rf\s2tf.m
toolbox : \rf\rf\rationalfit.m
toolbox :  Multiple class methods match freqresp.m

Unable to determine which of the following files will run: (Learn More)
\control\ctrlobsolete\freqresp.m
W:\bat\Akernel\perfect\matlab\toolbox\control\control\@lti\freqresp.m
W:\bat\Akernel\perfect\matlab\toolbox\ident\ident\@idproc\freqresp.m
W:\bat\Akernel\perfect\matlab\toolbox\ident\ident\@idpoly\freqresp.m
W:\bat\Akernel\perfect\matlab\toolbox\ident\ident\@idmodel\freqresp.m
W:\bat\Akernel\perfect\matlab\toolbox\ident\ident\@idfrd\freqresp.m
W:\bat\Akernel\perfect\matlab\toolbox\rf\rf@\rfmodel\freqresp.m
```

Protect Your Source Code

Although MATLAB source (.m) code is executable by itself, the contents of MATLAB source files are easily accessed, revealing design and implementation details. If you do not want to distribute your proprietary application code in this format, you can use one of these more secure options instead:

- Deploy as P-code — Convert some or all of your source code files to a content-obscured form called a *P-code* file (from its .p file extension), and distribute your application code in this format.
- Compile into binary format — Compile your source code files using the MATLAB Compiler to produce a standalone application. Distribute the latter to end users of your application.

In general, if you want to run the code as a standalone application outside of MATLAB, it is best to use the MATLAB Compiler to make your code secure. If you plan to run the code within the MATLAB environment, there is no need to run the Compiler. Instead, convert to P-code those modules of your source code that need to be secure.

Building a Content Obscured Format with P-Code

A P-code file behaves the same as the MATLAB source from which it was produced. The P-code file also runs at the same speed as the source file. Because the contents of P-code files are purposely obscured, they offer a secure means of distribution outside of your organization.

Note Because users of P-code files cannot view the MATLAB code, consider providing diagnostics to enable a user to proceed in the event of an error.

Building the P-Code File

To generate a P-code file, enter the following command in the MATLAB Command Window:

```
pcode file1 file2, ...
```

The command produces the files, `file1.p`, `file2.p`, and so on. To convert *all* `.m` source files residing in your current folder to P-code files, use the command:

```
pcode *.m
```

See the `pcode` function reference page for a description of all syntaxes for generating P-code files.

Invoking the P-Code File

You invoke the resulting P-code file in the same way you invoke the MATLAB `.m` source file from which it was derived. For example, to invoke file `myfun.p`, type

```
[out, out2, ...] = myfun(in1, in2, ...);
```

To invoke script `mymyscript.p`, type

```
mymyscript;
```

When you call a P-code file, MATLAB gives it execution precedence over its corresponding `.m` source file. This is true even if you happen to change the source code at some point after generating the P-code file. Remember to remove the `.m` source file before distributing your code.

Running Older P-Code Files on Later Versions of MATLAB

P-Code files are designed to be independent of the release under which they were created and the release in which they are used (backward and forward compatibility). New and deprecated MATLAB features can be a problem, but it is the same problem that would exist if you used the original MATLAB input file. To fix errors of this kind in a P-code file, fix the corresponding MATLAB input file and create a new P-code file.

P-code files built using MATLAB Version 7.4 and earlier have a different format than those built with more recent versions of MATLAB. You still can use these older P-code files when you run MATLAB 7.4 and later, but this capability could be removed in a future release. MathWorks recommends that you rebuild any P-code files that were built with MATLAB 7.4 or earlier using a more recent version of MATLAB, and then redistribute them as necessary.

Building a Standalone Executable

Another way to protect your source code is to build it into a standalone executable and distribute the executable, along with any other necessary files, to external customers. You must have the MATLAB Compiler and a supported C or C++ compiler installed to prepare files for deployment. The end user, however, does not need MATLAB.

To build a standalone application for your MATLAB application, develop and debug your application following the usual procedure for MATLAB program files. Then, generate the executable file or files following the instructions in “Steps by the Developer to Deploy to End Users” in the MATLAB Compiler documentation.

Create Hyperlinks that Run Functions

The special keyword `matlab:` lets you embed commands in other functions. Most commonly, the functions that contain it display hyperlinks, which execute the commands when you click the hyperlink text. Functions that support `matlab:` syntax include `disp`, `error`, `fprintf`, `help`, and `warning`.

Use `matlab:` syntax to create a hyperlink in the Command Window that runs one or more functions. For example, you can use `disp` to display the word Hypotenuse as an executable hyperlink as follows:

```
disp(' <a href="matlab:a=3; b=4;c=hypot(a,b)">Hypotenuse</a> ')
```

Clicking the hyperlink executes the three commands following `matlab:`, resulting in

```
c =  
    5
```

Executing the link creates or redefines the variables `a`, `b`, and `c` in the base workspace.

The argument to `disp` is an `<a href>` HTML hyperlink. Include the full hypertext string, from `'<a href=` to `'` within a single line, that is, do not continue a long string on a new line. No spaces are allowed after the opening `<` and before the closing `>`. A single space is required between `a` and `href`.

You cannot directly execute `matlab:` syntax. That is, if you type

```
matlab:a=3; b=4;c=hypot(a,b)
```

you receive an error, because MATLAB interprets the colon as an array operator in an illegal context:

```
??? matlab:a=3; b=4;c=hypot(a,b)
```

```
      |  
Error: The expression to the left of the equals sign  
      is not a valid target for an assignment.
```


You do not need to use `matlab:` to display a live hyperlink to the Web. For example, if you want to link to an external Web page, you can use `disp`, as follows:

```
disp(' <a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hypotenuse">Hypotenuse</a> ')
```

The result in the Command Window looks the same as the previous example, but instead opens a page at `en.wikipedia.org`:

Hypotenuse

Using `matlab:`, you can:

- “Run a Single Function” on page 20-13
- “Run Multiple Functions” on page 20-13
- “Provide Command Options” on page 20-14
- “Include Special Characters” on page 20-14

Run a Single Function

Use `matlab:` to run a specified statement when you click a hyperlink in the Command Window. For example, run this command:

```
disp(' <a href="matlab:magic(4)">Generate magic square</a> ')
```

It displays this link in the Command Window:

[Generate magic square](#)

When you click the link, MATLAB runs `magic(4)`.

Run Multiple Functions

You can run multiple functions with a single link. For example, run this command:

```
disp(' <a href="matlab: x=0:1:8;y=sin(x);plot(x,y)">Plot x,y</a> ')
```

It displays this link in the Command Window:

[Plot x,y](#)

When you click the link, MATLAB runs this code:

```
x = 0:1:8;  
y = sin(x);  
plot(x,y)
```

Redefine x in the base workspace:

```
x = -2*pi:pi/16:2*pi;
```

Click the hyperlink, `Plot x,y` again and it changes the current value of `x` back to `0:1:8`. The code that `matlab:` runs when you click the `Plot x,y` defines `x` in the base workspace.

Provide Command Options

Use multiple `matlab:` statements in a file to present options, such as

```
disp('<a href = "matlab:state = 0">Disable feature</a>')  
disp('<a href = "matlab:state = 1">Enable feature</a>')
```

The Command Window displays the links that follow. Depending on which link you click, MATLAB sets `state` to 0 or 1.

[Disable feature](#)
[Enable feature](#)

Include Special Characters

MATLAB correctly interprets most strings that include special characters, such as a greater than symbol (>). For example, the following statement includes a greater than symbol (>).

```
disp('<a href="matlab:str = ''Value > 0''">Positive</a>')
```

and generates the following hyperlink.

[Positive](#)

Some symbols might not be interpreted correctly and you might need to use the ASCII value for the symbol. For example, an alternative way to run the previous statement is to use ASCII 62 instead of the greater than symbol:

```
disp('<a href="matlab:str=['Value ' char(62) ' 0']">Positive</a>')
```


Software Development

- Chapter 21, “Error Handling”
- Chapter 22, “Program Scheduling”
- Chapter 23, “Performance”
- Chapter 24, “Memory Usage”
- Chapter 25, “Custom Help and Documentation”
- Chapter 26, “Source Control Interface”

Error Handling

- “Exception Handling in a MATLAB Application” on page 21-2
- “Capture Information About Exceptions” on page 21-5
- “Throw an Exception” on page 21-16
- “Respond to an Exception” on page 21-18
- “Clean Up When Functions Complete” on page 21-23
- “Issue Warnings and Errors” on page 21-30
- “Suppress Warnings” on page 21-34
- “Restore Warnings” on page 21-37
- “Change How Warnings Display” on page 21-40
- “Use try/catch to Handle Errors” on page 21-42

Exception Handling in a MATLAB Application

In this section...

“Overview” on page 21-2

“Getting an Exception at the Command Line” on page 21-2

“Getting an Exception in Your Program Code” on page 21-3

“Generating a New Exception” on page 21-4

Overview

No matter how carefully you plan and test the programs you write, they may not always run as smoothly as expected when executed under different conditions. It is always a good idea to include error checking in programs to ensure reliable operation under all conditions.

In the MATLAB software, you can decide how your programs respond to different types of errors. You may want to prompt the user for more input, display extended error or warning information, or perhaps repeat a calculation using default values. The error-handling capabilities in MATLAB help your programs check for particular error conditions and execute the appropriate code depending on the situation.

When MATLAB detects a severe fault in the command or program it is running, it collects information about what was happening at the time of the error, displays a message to help the user understand what went wrong, and terminates the command or program. This is called *throwing an exception*. You can get an exception while entering commands at the MATLAB command prompt or while executing your program code.

Getting an Exception at the Command Line

If you get an exception at the MATLAB prompt, you have several options on how to deal with it as described below.

Determine the Fault from the Error Message

Evaluate the error message MATLAB has displayed. Most error messages attempt to explain at least the immediate cause of the program failure. There

is often sufficient information to determine the cause and what you need to do to remedy the situation.

Review the Failing Code

If the function in which the error occurred is implemented as a MATLAB program file, the error message should include a line that looks something like this:

```
surf
```

```
Error using surf (line 50)  
Not enough input arguments.
```

The text includes the name of the function that threw the error (`surf`, in this case) and shows the failing line number within that function's program file. Click the line number; MATLAB opens the file and positions the cursor at the location in the file where the error originated. You may be able to determine the cause of the error by examining this line and the code that precedes it.

Step Through the Code in the Debugger

You can use the MATLAB Debugger to step through the failing code. Click the underlined error text to open the file in the MATLAB Editor at or near the point of the error. Next, click the hyphen at the beginning of that line to set a breakpoint at that location. When you rerun your program, MATLAB pauses execution at the breakpoint and enables you to step through the program code. The command `dbstop on error` is also helpful in finding the point of error.

See the documentation on “Debugging Process and Features” on page 17-2 for more information.

Getting an Exception in Your Program Code

When you are writing your own program in a program file, you can *catch* exceptions and attempt to handle or resolve them instead of allowing your program to terminate. When you catch an exception, you interrupt the normal termination process and enter a block of code that deals with the faulty situation. This block of code is called a *catch block*.

Some of the things you might want to do in the catch block are:

- Examine information that has been captured about the error.
- Gather further information to report to the user.
- Try to accomplish the task at hand in some other way.
- Clean up any unwanted side effects of the error.

When you reach the end of the catch block, you can either continue executing the program, if possible, or terminate it.

The documentation on “Capture Information About Exceptions” on page 21-5 describes how to acquire information about what caused the error, and “Respond to an Exception” on page 21-18 presents some ideas on how to respond to it.

Generating a New Exception

When your program code detects a condition that will either make the program fail or yield unacceptable results, it should throw an exception. This procedure

- Saves information about what went wrong and what code was executing at the time of the error.
- Gathers any other pertinent information about the error.
- Instructs MATLAB to throw the exception.

The documentation on “Capture Information About Exceptions” on page 21-5 describes how to use an `MException` object to capture information about the error, and “Throw an Exception” on page 21-16 explains how to initiate the exception process.

Capture Information About Exceptions

In this section...

“Overview” on page 21-5

“The MException Class” on page 21-5

“Properties of the MException Class” on page 21-7

“Methods of the MException Class” on page 21-14

Overview

When the MATLAB software throws an exception, it captures information about what caused the error in a data structure called an MException object. This object is an instance of the MATLAB MException class. You can obtain access to the MException object by *catching* the exception before your program aborts and accessing the object constructed for this particular error via the catch command. When throwing an exception in response to an error in your own code, you will have to create a new MException object and store information about the error in that object.

This section describes the MException class and objects constructed from that class:

Information on how to use this class is presented in later sections on “Respond to an Exception” on page 21-18 and “Throw an Exception” on page 21-16.

The MException Class

The figure shown below illustrates one possible configuration of an object of the MException class. The object has four properties: `identifier`, `message`, `stack`, and `cause`. Each of these properties is implemented as a field of the structure that represents the MException object. The `stack` field is an N-by-1 array of additional structures, each one identifying a function, and line number from the call stack. The `cause` field is an M-by-1 cell array of MException objects, each representing an exception that is related to the current one.

where `identifier` is a MATLAB message identifier of the form

```
component:mnemonic
```

that is enclosed in single quotes, and `message` is a text string, also enclosed in single quotes, that describes the error. The output `ME` is the resulting `MException` object.

If you are responding to an exception rather than throwing one, you do not have to construct an `MException` object. The object has already been constructed and populated by the code that originally detected the error.

Properties of the `MException` Class

The `MException` class has four properties. Each of these properties is implemented as a field of the structure that represents the `MException` object. Each of these properties is described in the sections below and referenced in the sections on “Respond to an Exception” on page 21-18 and “Throw an Exception” on page 21-16. All are read-only; their values cannot be changed.

The `MException` properties are:

- `identifier`
- `message`
- `stack`
- `cause`

Repeating the `surf` example shown above, but this time catching the exception, you can see the four properties of the `MException` object structure. (This example uses `try/catch` in an atypical fashion. See the section on “The `try/catch` Statement” on page 21-18 for more information on using `try/catch`).

```
try
    surf
catch ME
    ME
end
```

Run this at the command line and MATLAB returns the contents of the MException object:

```
ME =  
MException object with properties:  
  
    identifier: 'MATLAB:narginchk:notEnoughInputs'  
    message: 'Not enough input arguments.'  
    stack: [1x1 struct]  
    cause: {}
```

The `stack` field shows the filename, function, and line number where the exception was thrown:

```
ME.stack  
ans =  
    file: 'matlabroot\toolbox\matlab\graph3d\surf.m'  
    name: 'surf'  
    line: 54
```

The `cause` field is empty in this case. Each field is described in more detail in the sections that follow.

Message Identifiers

A message identifier is a tag that you attach to an error or warning statement that makes that error or warning uniquely recognizable by MATLAB. You can use message identifiers with error reporting to better identify the source of an error, or with warnings to control any selected subset of the warnings in your programs.

The message identifier is a read-only character string that specifies a *component* and a *mnemonic* label for an error or warning. The format of a simple identifier is

```
component:mnemonic
```

A colon separates the two parts of the identifier: `component` and `mnemonic`. If the identifier uses more than one `component`, then additional colons are required to separate them. A message identifier must always contain at least one colon.

Some examples of message identifiers are

```
MATLAB:rmpath:DirNotFound
MATLAB:odearguments:InconsistentDataType
Simulink:actionNotTaken
TechCorp:OpenFile:notFoundInPath
```

Both the component and mnemonic fields must adhere to the following syntax rules:

- No white space (space or tab characters) is allowed anywhere in the identifier.
- The first character must be alphabetic, either uppercase or lowercase.
- The remaining characters can be alphanumeric or an underscore.

There is no length limitation to either the component or mnemonic. The identifier can also be an empty string.

Component Field. The component field specifies a broad category under which various errors and warnings can be generated. Common components are a particular product or toolbox name, such as `MATLAB` or `Control`, or perhaps the name of your company, such as `TechCorp` in the preceding example.

You can also use this field to specify a multilevel component. The following statement has a three-level component followed by a mnemonic label:

```
TechCorp:TestEquipDiv:Waveform:obsoleteSyntax
```

The component field enables you to guarantee the uniqueness of each identifier. Thus, while the internal MATLAB code might use a certain warning identifier like `MATLAB:InconsistentDataType`, that does not preclude you from using the same mnemonic, as long as you precede it with a unique component. For example,

```
warning('TechCorp:InconsistentDataType', ...
    'Value %s is inconsistent with existing properties.' ...
    sprocketDiam)
```

Mnemonic Field. The mnemonic field is a string normally used as a tag relating to the particular message. For example, when reporting an error resulting from the use of ambiguous syntax, a simple component and mnemonic such as the following might be appropriate:

```
MATLAB:ambiguousSyntax
```

Message Identifiers in an MException Object. When throwing an exception, create an appropriate identifier and save it to the MException object at the time you construct the object using the syntax

```
ME = MException(identifier, string)
```

For example,

```
ME = MException('AcctError:NoClient', ...  
               'Client name not recognized.');
```

```
ME.identifier  
ans =  
    AcctError:NoClient
```

When responding to an exception, you can extract the message identifier from the MException object as shown here. Using the surf example again,

```
try  
    surf  
catch ME  
    id = ME.identifier  
end  
  
id =  
    MATLAB:narginchk:notEnoughInputs
```

Text of the Error Message

An error message in MATLAB is a read-only character string issued by the program code and returned in the MException object. This message can assist the user in determining the cause, and possibly the remedy, of the failure.

When throwing an exception, compose an appropriate error message and save it to the `MException` object at the time you construct the object using the syntax

```
ME = MException(identifier, string)
```

If your message string requires formatting specifications, like those available with the `sprintf` function, use this syntax for the `MException` constructor:

```
ME = MException(identifier, formatstring, arg1, arg2, ...)
```

For example,

```
S = 'Accounts'; f1 = 'ClientName';  
ME = MException('AcctError:Incomplete', ...  
    'Field ''%.%s'' is not defined.', S, f1);
```

```
ME.message  
ans =  
    Field 'Accounts.ClientName' is not defined.
```

When responding to an exception, you can extract the error message from the `MException` object as follows:

```
try  
    surf  
catch ME  
    msg = ME.message  
end  
  
msg =  
    Not enough input arguments.
```

The Call Stack

The `stack` field of the `MException` object identifies the line number, function, and filename where the error was detected. If the error occurs in a called function, as in the following example, the `stack` field contains the line number, function name, and filename not only for the location of the immediate error, but also for each of the calling functions. In this case, `stack`

is an N-by-1 array, where N represents the depth of the call stack. That is, the stack field displays the function name and line number where the exception occurred, the name and line number of the caller, the caller's caller, etc., until the top-most function is reached.

When throwing an exception, MATLAB stores call stack information in the stack field. You cannot write to this field; access is read-only.

For example, suppose you have three functions that reside in two separate files:

```
mfileA.m
=====
      .
      .
42 function A1(x, y)
43 B1(x, y);
```

```
mfileB.m
=====
      .
      .
 8 function B1(x, y)
 9 B2(x, y)
      .
      .
26 function B2(x, y)
27      .
28      .
29      .
30      .
31 % Throw exception here
```

Catch the exception in variable ME and then examine the stack field:

```
for k=1:length(ME.stack)
    ME.stack(k)
end
```

```
ans =  
    file: 'C:\matlab\test\mfileB.m'  
    name: 'B2'  
    line: 31  
ans =  
    file: 'C:\matlab\test\mfileB.m'  
    name: 'B1'  
    line: 9  
ans =  
    file: 'C:\matlab\test\mfileA.m'  
    name: 'A1'  
    line: 43
```

The Cause Array

In some situations, it can be important to record information about not only the one command that caused execution to stop, but also other exceptions that your code caught. You can save these additional `MException` objects in the `cause` field of the primary exception.

The `cause` field of an `MException` is an optional cell array of related `MException` objects. You must use the following syntax when adding objects to the `cause` cell array:

```
primaryException = addCause(primaryException, secondaryException)
```

This example attempts to assign an array `D` to variable `X`. If the `D` array does not exist, the code attempts to load it from a `MAT`-file and then retries assigning it to `X`. If the load fails, a new `MException` object (`ME3`) is constructed to store the cause of the first two errors (`ME1` and `ME2`):

```
try  
    X = D(1:25)  
catch ME1  
    try  
        filename = 'test200';  
        load(filename);  
        X = D(1:25)  
    catch ME2  
        ME3 = MException('MATLAB:LoadErr', ...
```

```
        'Unable to load from file %s', filename);
    ME3 = addCause(ME3, ME1);
    ME3 = addCause(ME3, ME2);
end
end
```

There are two exceptions in the cause field of ME3:

```
ME3.cause
ans =
    [1x1 MException]
    [1x1 MException]
```

Examine the cause field of ME3 to see the related errors:

```
ME3.cause{:}
ans =

MException object with properties:

    identifier: 'MATLAB:UndefinedFunction'
    message: 'Undefined function or method 'D' for input
arguments of type 'double'.'
    stack: [0x1 struct]
    cause: {}
ans =

MException object with properties:

    identifier: 'MATLAB:load:couldNotReadFile'
    message: 'Unable to read file test204: No such file or
directory.'
    stack: [0x1 struct]
    cause: {}
```

Methods of the MException Class

There are ten methods that you can use with the MException class. The names of these methods are case-sensitive. See the MATLAB function reference pages for more information.

Method Name	Description
<code>addCause</code>	Append an <code>MException</code> to the <code>cause</code> field of another <code>MException</code> .
<code>disp</code>	Display an <code>MException</code> object.
<code>eq</code>	Compare <code>MException</code> objects for equality.
<code>getReport</code>	Return a formatted message based on the current exception.
<code>isequal</code>	Compare <code>MException</code> objects for equality.
<code>last</code>	Return the last uncaught exception. This is a static method.
<code>ne</code>	Compare <code>MException</code> objects for inequality.
<code>rethrow</code>	Reissue an exception that has previously been caught.
<code>throw</code>	Issue an exception.
<code>throwAsCaller</code>	Issue an exception, but omit the current stack frame from the <code>stack</code> field.

Throw an Exception

When your program detects a fault that will keep it from completing as expected or will generate erroneous results, you should halt further execution and report the error by throwing an exception. The basic steps to take are

- 1** Detect the error. This is often done with some type of conditional statement, such as an `if` statement that checks the output of the current operation.
- 2** Construct an `MException` object to represent the error. Add a message identifier string and error message string to the object when calling the constructor.
- 3** If there are other exceptions that may have contributed to the current error, you can store the `MException` object for each in the `cause` field of a single `MException` that you intend to throw. Use the `addCause` method for this.
- 4** Use the `throw` or `throwAsCaller` function to have the MATLAB software issue the exception. At this point, MATLAB stores call stack information in the `stack` field of the `MException`, exits the currently running function, and returns control to either the keyboard or an enclosing catch block in a calling function.

This example illustrates throwing an exception using the steps just described:

```
function check_results(resultsArr, dataFile)
minValue = 0.09;    maxValue = 2.14;

% 1) Detect the error.
if any(resultsArr < minValue) || any(resultsArr > maxValue)

    % 2) Construct an MException object to represent the error.
    err = MException('ResultChk:OutOfRange', ...
        'Resulting value is outside expected range');
    fileInfo = dir(dataFile);

    % 3) Store any information contributing to the error.
    if datenum(fileInfo.date) < datenum('Oct09','mmyy')
        errCause = MException('ResultChk:BadInput', ...
            'Input file %s is out of date.', dataFile);
```

```
        err = addCause(err, errCause);
    end

    % 4) Throw the exception to stop execution and display
        an error message.
    throw(err)
end
```

If the program detects the `OutOfRange` condition, the `throw(err)` statement throws an exception at the end. If the `BadInput` condition is also detected, the program also displays this as the cause:

```
resultsArr = [1.63, 2.05, 0.91, 2.16, 1.5, 2.11 0.72];
check_results(resultsArr, 'run33.dat')
```

```
Error using check_results (line 20)
Resulting value is outside expected range
```

```
Caused by:
```

```
    Input file run33.dat is out of date.
```

Respond to an Exception

In this section...
“Overview” on page 21-18
“The try/catch Statement” on page 21-18
“Suggestions on How to Handle an Exception” on page 21-20

Overview

As stated earlier, the MATLAB software, by default, terminates the currently running program when an exception is thrown. If you catch the exception in your program, however, you can capture information about what went wrong, and deal with the situation in a way that is appropriate for the particular condition. This requires a try/catch statement.

This section covers the following topics:

The try/catch Statement

When you have statements in your code that could generate undesirable results, put those statements into a try/catch block that catches any errors and handles them appropriately.

A try/catch statement looks something like the following pseudocode. It consists of two parts:

- A try block that includes all lines between the try and catch statements.
- A catch block that includes all lines of code between the catch and end statements.

```
try
    Perform one ...
        or more operations
A catch ME
    Examine error info in exception object ME
    Attempt to figure out what went wrong
    Either attempt to recover, or clean up and abort
```



```
end
```

B Program continues

The program executes the statements in the `try` block. If it encounters an error, it skips any remaining statements in the `try` block and jumps to the start of the `catch` block (shown here as point A). If all operations in the `try` block succeed, then execution skips the `catch` block entirely and goes to the first line following the `end` statement (point B).

Specifying the `try`, `catch`, and `end` commands and also the code of the `try` and `catch` blocks on separate lines is recommended. If you combine any of these components on the same line, separate them with commas:

```
try, surf, catch ME, ME.stack, end
ans =
    file: 'matlabroot\toolbox\matlab\graph3d\surf.m'
    name: 'surf'
    line: 54
```

Note You cannot define nested functions within a `try` or `catch` block.

The Try Block

On execution, your code enters the `try` block and executes each statement as if it were part of the regular program. If no errors are encountered, MATLAB skips the `catch` block entirely and continues execution following the `end` statement. If any of the `try` statements fail, MATLAB immediately exits the `try` block, leaving any remaining statements in that block unexecuted, and enters the `catch` block.

The Catch Block

The `catch` command marks the start of a `catch` block and provides access to a data structure that contains information about what caused the exception. This is shown as the variable `ME` in the preceding pseudocode. This data structure is an object of the MATLAB `MException` class. When an exception occurs, MATLAB constructs an instance of this class and returns it in the `catch` statement that handles that error.

You are not required to specify any argument with the `catch` statement. If you do not need any of the information or methods provided by the `MException` object, just specify the `catch` keyword alone.

The `MException` object is constructed by internal code in the program that fails. The object has properties that contain information about the error that can be useful in determining what happened and how to proceed. The `MException` object also provides access to methods that enable you to respond to the exception. See the section on “The `MException` Class” on page 21-5 to find out more about the `MException` class.

Having entered the `catch` block, MATLAB executes the statements in sequence. These statements can attempt to

- Attempt to resolve the error.
- Capture more information about the error.
- Switch on information found in the `MException` object and respond appropriately.
- Clean up the environment that was left by the failing code.

The `catch` block often ends with a `rethrow` command. The `rethrow` causes MATLAB to exit the current function, keeping the call stack information as it was when the exception was first thrown. If this function is at the highest level, that is, it was not called by another function, the program terminates. If the failing function was called by another function, it returns to that function. Program execution continues to return to higher level functions, unless any of these calls were made within a higher-level `try` block, in which case the program executes the respective `catch` block.

More information about the `MException` class is provided in the section “Capture Information About Exceptions” on page 21-5.

Suggestions on How to Handle an Exception

The following example reads the contents of an image file. The `try` block attempts to open and read the file. If either the `open` or `read` fails, the program catches the resulting exception and saves the `MException` object in the variable `ME1`.

The catch block in the example checks to see if the specified file could not be found. If so, the program allows for the possibility that a common variation of the filename extension (e.g., jpeg instead of jpg) was used by retrying the operation with a modified extension. This is done using a try/catch statement nested within the original try/catch.

```
function d_in = read_image(filename)
[path name ext] = fileparts(filename);
try
    fid = fopen(filename, 'r');
    d_in = fread(fid);
catch ME1
    % Get last segment of the error message identifier.
    idSegLast = regexp(ME1.identifier, '(?<=:\)\w+$', 'match');

    % Did the read fail because the file could not be found?
    if strcmp(idSegLast, 'InvalidFid') && ...
        ~exist(filename, 'file')

        % Yes. Try modifying the filename extension.
        switch ext
        case '.jpg'      % Change jpg to jpeg
            filename = strrep(filename, '.jpg', '.jpeg')
        case '.jpeg'    % Change jpeg to jpg
            filename = strrep(filename, '.jpeg', '.jpg')
        case '.tif'     % Change tif to tiff
            filename = strrep(filename, '.tif', '.tiff')
        case '.tiff'    % Change tiff to tif
            filename = strrep(filename, '.tiff', '.tif')
        otherwise
            fprintf('File %s not found\n', filename);
            rethrow(ME1);
        end

        % Try again, with modified filenames.
        try
            fid = fopen(filename, 'r');
            d_in = fread(fid);
        catch ME2
            fprintf('Unable to access file %s\n', filename);
```

```
        ME2 = addCause(ME2, ME1);
        rethrow(ME2)
    end
end
end
```

This example illustrates some of the actions that you can take in response to an exception:

- Compare the `identifier` field of the `MException` object against possible causes of the error.
- Use a nested `try/catch` statement to retry the open and read operations using a known variation of the filename extension.
- Display an appropriate message in the case that the file truly does not exist and then rethrow the exception.
- Add the first `MException` object to the `cause` field of the second.
- Rethrow the exception. This stops program execution and displays the error message.

Cleaning up any unwanted results of the error is also advisable. For example, your program may have allocated a significant amount of memory that it no longer needs.

Clean Up When Functions Complete

In this section...

“Overview” on page 21-23

“Examples of Cleaning Up a Program Upon Exit” on page 21-25

“Retrieving Information About the Cleanup Routine” on page 21-27

“Using onCleanup Versus try/catch” on page 21-28

“onCleanup in Scripts” on page 21-28

Overview

A good programming practice is to make sure that you leave your program environment in a clean state that does not interfere with any other program code. For example, you might want to

- Close any files that you opened for import or export.
- Restore the MATLAB path.
- Lock or unlock memory to prevent or allow erasing MATLAB function or MEX-files.
- Set your working folder back to its default if you have changed it.
- Make sure global and persistent variables are in the correct state.

MATLAB provides the `onCleanup` function for this purpose. This function, when used within any program, establishes a cleanup routine for that function. When the function terminates, whether normally or in the event of an error or **Ctrl+C**, MATLAB automatically executes the cleanup routine.

The following statement establishes a cleanup routine `cleanupFun` for the currently running program:

```
cleanupObj = onCleanup(@cleanupFun);
```

When your program exits, MATLAB finds any instances of the `onCleanup` class and executes the associated function handles. The process of generating and activating function cleanup involves the following steps:

- 1** Write one or more cleanup routines for the program under development. Assume for now that it takes only one such routine.
- 2** Create a function handle for the cleanup routine.
- 3** At some point, generally early in your program code, insert a call to the `onCleanup` function, passing the function handle.
- 4** When the program is run, the call to `onCleanup` constructs a cleanup object that contains a handle to the cleanup routine created in step 1.
- 5** When the program ends, MATLAB implicitly clears all objects that are local variables. This invokes the destructor method for each local object in your program, including the cleanup object constructed in step 4.
- 6** The destructor method for this object invokes this routine if it exists. This perform the tasks needed to restore your programming environment.

You can declare any number of cleanup routines for a program file. Each call to `onCleanup` establishes a separate cleanup routine for each cleanup object returned.

If, for some reason, the object returned by `onCleanup` persists beyond the life of your program, then the cleanup routine associated with that object is not run when your function terminates. Instead, it will run whenever the object is destroyed (e.g., by clearing the object variable).

Your cleanup routine should never rely on variables that are defined outside of that routine. For example, the nested function shown here on the left executes with no error, whereas the very similar one on the right fails with the error, `Undefined function or variable 'k'`. This results from the cleanup routine's reliance on variable `k` which is defined outside of the nested cleanup routine:

```
function testCleanup
k = 3;
myFun
    function myFun
        fprintf('k is %d\n', k)
    end
end
```

```
function testCleanup
k = 3;
obj = onCleanup(@myFun);
function myFun
    fprintf('k is %d\n', k)
end
end
```

Examples of Cleaning Up a Program Upon Exit

Example 1 – Close Open Files on Exit

MATLAB closes the file with identifier `fid` when function `openFileSafely` terminates:

```
function openFileSafely(fileName)
    fid = fopen(fileName, 'r');
    c = onCleanup(@()fclose(fid));

    s = fread(fid);
        .
        .
        .
end
```

Example 2 – Maintain the Selected Folder

This example preserves the current folder whether function `functionThatMayError` returns an error or not:

```
function changeFolderSafely(fileName)
    currentFolder = pwd;
    c = onCleanup(@()cd(currentFolder));

    functionThatMayError;
end % c executes cd(currentFolder) here.
```

Example 3 – Close Figure and Restore MATLAB Path

This example extends the MATLAB path to include files in the toolbox\images folders, and then displays a figure from one of these folders. After the figure displays, the cleanup routine `restore_env` closes the figure and restores the path to its original state:

```
function showImageOutsidePath(imageFile)
    fig1 = figure;
    imgpath = genpath([matlabroot '\toolbox\images']);
```

```
% Define the cleanup routine.
cleanupObj = onCleanup(@()restore_env(fig1, imgpath));

% Modify the path to gain access to the image file,
% and display the image.
addpath(imgpath);
rgb = imread(imageFile);
fprintf('\n  Opening the figure %s\n', imageFile);
image(rgb);
pause(2);

% This is the cleanup routine.
function restore_env(fighandle, newpath)
    disp '  Closing the figure'
    close(fighandle);
    pause(2)

    disp '  Restoring the path'
    rmpath(newpath);
end
end
```

Run the function as shown here. You can verify that the path has been restored by comparing the length of the path before and after running the function:

```
origLen = length(path);

showImageOutsidePath('greens.jpg')
    Opening the figure greens.jpg
    Closing the figure
    Restoring the path

currLen = length(path);
currLen == origLen
ans =
    1
```


Retrieving Information About the Cleanup Routine

In Example 3 shown above, the cleanup routine and data needed to call it are contained in a handle to an anonymous function:

```
@()restore_env(fig1, imgpath)
```

The details of that handle are then contained within the object returned by the `onCleanup` function:

```
cleanupObj = onCleanup(@()restore_env(fig1, imgpath));
```

You can access these details using the `task` property of the cleanup object as shown here. (Modify the `showImageOutsidePath` function by adding the following code just before the comment line that says, “% This is the cleanup routine.”)

```
disp '   Displaying information from the function handle:'
task = cleanupObj.task;
fun = functions(task)
wsp = fun.workspace{2,1}
fprintf('\n');
pause(2);
```

Run the modified function to see the output of the `functions` command and the contents of one of the workspace cells:

```
showImageOutsidePath('greens.jpg')
```

Opening the figure `greens.jpg`

Displaying information from the function handle:

```
fun =
    function: '@()restore_env(fig1,imgpath)'
    type: 'anonymous'
    file: 'c:\work\g6.m'
workspace: {2x1 cell}
wsp =
    imageFile: 'greens.jpg'
    fig1: 1
    imgpath: [1x3957 char]
    cleanupObj: [1x1 onCleanup]
    rgb: [300x500x3 uint8]
```

```
task: @()restore_env(fig1,imgpath)
```

Closing the figure
Restoring the path

Using onCleanup Versus try/catch

Another way to run a cleanup routine when a function terminates unexpectedly is to use a `try/catch` statement. There are limitations to using this technique however. If the user ends the program by typing **Ctrl+C**, MATLAB immediately exits the `try` block, and the cleanup routine never executes. The cleanup routine also does not run when you exit the function normally.

The following program cleans up if an error occurs, but not in response to **Ctrl+C**:

```
function cleanupByCatch
try
    pause(10);
catch
    disp('    Collecting information about the error')
    disp('    Executing cleanup tasks')
end
```

Unlike the `try/catch` statement, the `onCleanup` function responds not only to a normal exit from your program and any error that might be thrown, but also to **Ctrl+C**. This next example replaces the `try/catch` with `onCleanup`:

```
function cleanupByFunc
obj = onCleanup(@()...
    disp('    Executing cleanup tasks'));
pause(10);
```

onCleanup in Scripts

`onCleanup` does not work in scripts as it does in functions. In functions, the cleanup object is stored in the function workspace. When the function exits, this workspace is cleared thus executing the associated cleanup routine. In scripts, the cleanup object is stored in the base workspace (that is, the workspace used in interactive work done at the command prompt). Because exiting a script has no effect on the base workspace, the cleanup object is

not cleared and the routine associated with that object does not execute. To use this type of cleanup mechanism in a script, you would have to explicitly clear the object from the command line or another script when the first script terminates.

Issue Warnings and Errors

In this section...

“Issue Warnings” on page 21-30

“Throw Errors” on page 21-30

“Add Run-Time Parameters to Your Warnings and Errors” on page 21-31

“Add Identifiers to Warnings and Errors” on page 21-32

Issue Warnings

You can issue a warning to flag unexpected conditions detected when running a program. The warning function prints a warning message to the command line. Warnings differ from errors in two significant ways:

- Warnings do not halt the execution of the program.
- You can suppress any unhelpful MATLAB warnings.

Use the warning function in your code to generate a warning message during execution. Specify the message string as the input argument to the warning function:

```
warning('Input must be a string')
```

For example, you can insert a warning in your code to verify the software version:

```
function warningExample1
    if ~strncmp(version, '7', 1)
        warning('You are using a version other than v7')
    end
```

Throw Errors

You can throw an error to flag fatal problems within the program. Use the error function to print error messages to the command line. After displaying the message, MATLAB stops the execution of the current program.

For example, suppose you construct a function that returns the number of combinations of k elements from n elements. Such a function is nonsensical if $k > n$; you cannot choose 8 elements if you start with just 4. You must incorporate this fact into the function to let anyone using combinations know of the problem:

```
function com = combinations(n,k)
    if k > n
        error('Cannot calculate with given values')
    end
    com = factorial(n)/(factorial(k)*factorial(n-k));
end
```

If the combinations function receives invalid input, MATLAB stops execution immediately after throwing the error message:

```
combinations(4,8)
```

```
Error using combinations (line 3)
Cannot calculate with given values
```

Add Run-Time Parameters to Your Warnings and Errors

To make your warning or error messages more specific, insert components of the message string at the time of execution. The warning function uses *conversion characters* that are the same as those used by the `sprintf` function. Conversion characters act as placeholders for substrings or values, unknown until the code executes.

For example, this warning uses `%s` and `%d` to mark where to insert the values of variables `arrayname` and `arraydims`:

```
warning('Array %s has %d dimensions.',arrayname,arraydims)
```

If you execute this command with `arrayname = 'A'` and `arraydims = 3`, MATLAB responds:

```
Warning: Array A has 3 dimensions.
```

Adding run-time parameters to your warnings and errors can clarify the problems within a program. Consider the function combinations from

“Throw Errors” on page 21-30. You can throw a much more informative error using run-time parameters:

```
function com = combinations(n,k)
    if k > n
        error('Cannot choose %i from %i elements',k,n)
    end
    com = factorial(n)/(factorial(k)*factorial(n-k));
end
```

If this function receives invalid arguments, MATLAB throws an error message and stops the program:

```
combinations(6,9)
```

```
Error using combinations (line 3)
Cannot choose 9 from 6 elements
```

Add Identifiers to Warnings and Errors

A message identifier provides a way to uniquely reference a warning or an error.

Enable or disable warnings with identifiers. Use an identifying string argument with the `warning` function to attach a unique tag to a message:

```
warning(identifier_string,message_string)
```

For example, you can add an identifier tag to the previous MATLAB warning about which version of software is running:

```
minver = '7';
if ~strncmp(version,minver,1)
    warning('MYTEST:VERCHK','You are using a version other than v%s',minver)
end
```

Adding an identifier to an error message allows for negative testing. However, adding and recovering more information from errors often requires working with `MException` objects.

See Also

`warning` | `lastwarn` | `warndlg` | `MException`

Related Examples

- “Suppress Warnings” on page 21-34
- “Restore Warnings” on page 21-37
- “Capture Information About Exceptions” on page 21-5
- “Exception Handling in a MATLAB Application” on page 21-2

Concepts

- “Message Identifiers” on page 21-8

Suppress Warnings

Your program might issue warnings that do not always adversely affect execution. To avoid confusion, you can hide warning messages during execution by changing their states from 'on' to 'off'.

To suppress specific warning messages, you must first find the warning identifier. Each warning message has a unique identifier. To find the identifier associated with a MATLAB warning, reproduce the warning. For example, this code reproduces a warning thrown if MATLAB attempts to remove a nonexistent folder:

```
rmpath('folderthatisnotonpath');
```

```
Warning: "folderthatisnotonpath" not found in path.
```

Note If this statement does not produce a warning message, use the following code to temporarily enable the display of all warnings, and then restore the original warning state:

```
w = warning('on','all');  
rmpath('folderthatisnotonpath');  
warning(w);
```

To obtain information about the most recently issued warning, use the `warning` or `lastwarn` functions. This code uses the `query` state to return a data structure containing the message identifier and the current state of the last warning:

```
w = warning('query','last')  
  
w =  
  
    identifier: 'MATLAB:rmpath:DirNotFound'  
    state: 'on'
```

You can save the identifier field in the variable, `id`:

```
id = w.identifier;
```

Note `warning('query','last')` returns the last warning whether or not MATLAB displays the message. MATLAB only displays warning messages that have state: `'on'`.

Using the `lastwarn` function, you can retrieve the last-*displayed* warning message:

```
lastwarn
```

```
ans =
```

```
"folderthatisnotonpath" not found in path.
```

Turn Warnings On and Off

After you obtain the identifier from the `query` state, use this information to disable or enable the warning associated with that identifier.

Continuing the example from the previous section, turn the warning `'MATLAB:rmpath:DirNotFound'` off, and repeat the operation.

```
warning('off',id)
rmpath('folderthatisnotonpath');
```

MATLAB displays no warning.

Turn the warning on, and try to remove a nonexistent path:

```
warning('on',id)
rmpath('folderthatisnotonpath');
```

```
Warning: "folderthatisnotonpath" not found in path.
```

MATLAB now issues a warning.

Tip Turn off the most recently invoked warning with `warning('off','last')`.

Controlling All Warnings

The term **all** refers *only* to those warnings that have been issued or modified during your current MATLAB session. Modified warning states persist only through the current session. Starting a new session restores the default settings.

Use the identifier 'all' to represent the group of all warnings. View the state of all warnings with either syntax:

```
warning('query','all')
```

```
warning
```

To enable all warnings and verify the state:

```
warning('on','all');  
warning('query','all');
```

All warnings have the state 'on'.

To disable all warnings and verify the state, use this syntax:

```
warning('off','all');  
warning;
```

All warnings have the state 'off'.

Related Examples

- “Restore Warnings” on page 21-37
- “Change How Warnings Display” on page 21-40

Restore Warnings

MATLAB allows you to save the on-off warning states, modify warning states, and restore the original warning states. This is useful if you need to temporarily turn off some warnings and later reinstate the original settings.

The following statement saves the current state of all warnings in the structure array called `orig_state`:

```
orig_state = warning;
```

To restore the original state after any warning modifications, use this syntax:

```
warning(orig_state);
```

You also can save the current state and toggle warnings in a single command. For example, the statement, `orig_state = warning('off', 'all');` is equivalent to the commands:

```
orig_state = warning;  
warning('off', 'all');
```

Disable and Restore a Particular Warning

This example shows you how to restore the state of a particular warning.

- 1 Query the `Control:parameterNotSymmetric` warning:

```
warning('query', 'Control:parameterNotSymmetric')
```

The state of warning `'Control:parameterNotSymmetric'` is `'on'`.

- 2 Turn off the `Control:parameterNotSymmetric` warning:

```
orig_state = warning('off', 'Control:parameterNotSymmetric')
```

```
orig_state =
```

```
    identifier: 'Control:parameterNotSymmetric'  
         state: 'on'
```

```
orig_state contains the warning state before MATLAB turns
Control:parameterNotSymmetric off.
```

3 Query all warning states:

```
warning
```

```
The default warning state is 'on'. Warnings not set to the default are
```

```
State Warning Identifier
```

```
off Control:parameterNotSymmetric
```

```
MATLAB indicates that Control:parameterNotSymmetric is 'off'.
```

4 Restore the original state:

```
warning(orig_state)
warning('query','Control:parameterNotSymmetric')
```

```
The state of warning 'Control:parameterNotSymmetric' is 'on'.
```

Disable and Restore Multiple Warnings

This example shows you how to save and restore multiple warning states.

1 Disable three warnings, and query all the warnings:

```
w(1) = warning('off','MATLAB:rmpath:DirNotFound');
w(2) = warning('off','MATLAB:singularMatrix');
w(3) = warning('off','Control:parameterNotSymmetric');
warning
```

```
The default warning state is 'on'. Warnings not set to the default are
```

```
State Warning Identifier
```

```
off Control:parameterNotSymmetric
off MATLAB:rmpath:DirNotFound
off MATLAB:singularMatrix
```

2 Restore the three warnings to their the original state, and query all warnings:

```
warning(w)  
warning
```

All warnings have the state 'on'.

You do not need to store information about the previous warning states in an array, but doing so allows you to restore warnings with one command.

Note When temporarily disabling multiple warnings, using methods related to `onCleanup` might be advantageous.

Alternatively, you can save and restore all warnings.

- 1 Enable all warnings, and save the original warning state:

```
orig_state = warning('on', 'all');
```

- 2 Restore your warnings to the previous state:

```
warning(orig_state)
```

```
warning | onCleanup
```

See Also

Related Examples

- “Suppress Warnings” on page 21-34
- “Clean Up When Functions Complete” on page 21-23

Change How Warnings Display

You can control how warnings appear in MATLAB by modifying two warning *modes*, `verbose` and `backtrace`.

Mode	Description	Default
<code>verbose</code>	Display a message on how to suppress the warning.	<code>off</code> (<code>terse</code>)
<code>backtrace</code>	Display a stack trace after a warning is invoked.	<code>on</code> (<code>enabled</code>)

Note The `verbose` and `backtrace` modes present some limitations:

- `prev_state` does not contain information about the `backtrace` or `verbose` modes in the statement, `prev_state = warning('query','all')`.
 - A mode change affects all enabled warnings.
-

Enable Verbose Warnings

When you enable verbose warnings, MATLAB displays an extra line of information with each warning that tells you how to suppress it.

For example, you can turn on all warnings, disable `backtrace`, and enable verbose warnings:

```
warning on all
warning off backtrace
warning on verbose
```

Running a command that produces an error displays an extended message:

```
rmrpath('folderthatisnotonpath');
```

```
Warning: "folderthatisnotonpath" not found in path.
(Type "warning off MATLAB:rmrpath:DirNotFound" to suppress this warning.)
```

Display a Stack Trace on a Specific Warning

It can be difficult to locate the source of a warning when it is generated from code buried in several levels of function calls. When you enable the backtrace mode, MATLAB displays the file name and line number where the warning occurred. For example, you can enable backtrace and disable verbose:

```
warning on backtrace  
warning off verbose
```

Running a command that produces an error displays a hyperlink with a line number:

```
Warning: "folderthatisnotonpath" not found in path.  
> In rmpath at 58
```

Clicking the hyperlink takes you to the location of the warning.

Use try/catch to Handle Errors

You can use a `try/catch` statement to execute code after your program encounters an error. `try/catch` statements can be useful if you:

- Want to finish the program in another way that avoids errors
- Need to clean up unwanted side effects of the error
- Have many problematic input parameters or commands

Arrange `try/catch` statements into blocks of code, similar to this pseudocode:

```
try
    try block...
catch
    catch block...
end
```

If an error occurs within the `try block`, MATLAB skips any remaining commands in the `try block` and executes the commands in the `catch block`. If no error occurs within `try block`, MATLAB skips the entire `catch block`.

For example, a `try/catch` statement can prevent the need to throw errors. Consider the `combinations` function that returns the number of combinations of k elements from n elements:

```
function com = combinations(n,k)
    com = factorial(n)/(factorial(k)*factorial(n-k));
end
```

MATLAB throws an error whenever $k > n$. You cannot construct a set with more elements, k , than elements you possess, n . Using a `try/catch` statement, you can avoid the error and execute this function regardless of the order of inputs:

```
function com = robust_combine(n,k)
    try
        com = factorial(n)/(factorial(k)*factorial(n-k));
    catch
        com = factorial(k)/(factorial(n)*factorial(k-n));
    end
```



```
end
```

`robust_combine` treats any order of integers as valid inputs:

```
C1 = robust_combine(8,4)
```

```
C2 = robust_combine(4,8)
```

```
C1 =
```

```
    70
```

```
C2 =
```

```
    70
```

MATLAB might give you a code analyzer message: Line 4: Best practice is for CATCH to be followed by an identifier that gets the error information. This message indicates that you can capture more information about errors if a variable follows your catch statement:

```
catch MExc
```

`MExc` is an `MException` class object that contains more information about the thrown error. To learn more about accessing information from `MException` objects, see “Exception Handling in a MATLAB Application” on page 21-2.

See Also

`MException` | `onCleanup`

Program Scheduling

- “Using a MATLAB Timer Object” on page 22-2
- “Creating Timer Objects” on page 22-5
- “Working with Timer Object Properties” on page 22-7
- “Starting and Stopping Timers” on page 22-10
- “Creating and Executing Callback Functions” on page 22-14
- “Timer Object Execution Modes” on page 22-19
- “Deleting Timer Objects from Memory” on page 22-23
- “Finding Timer Objects in Memory” on page 22-24

Using a MATLAB Timer Object

In this section...
“Overview” on page 22-2
“Example: Displaying a Message” on page 22-3

Overview

The MATLAB software includes a timer object that you can use to schedule the execution of MATLAB commands. This section describes how you can create timer objects, start a timer running, and specify the processing that you want performed when a timer fires. A timer is said to *fire* when the amount of time specified by the timer object elapses and the timer object executes the commands you specify.

To use a timer, perform these steps:

- 1 Create a timer object.

You use the `timer` function to create a timer object. See “Creating Timer Objects” on page 22-5 for more information.

- 2 Specify which MATLAB commands you want executed when the timer fires and control other aspects of timer object behavior.

You use timer object properties to specify this information. To learn about all the properties supported by the timer object, see “Working with Timer Object Properties” on page 22-7. (You can also set timer object properties when you create them, in step 1.)

- 3 Start the timer object.

After you create the timer object, you must start it, using either the `start` or `startat` function. See “Starting and Stopping Timers” on page 22-10 for more information.

- 4 Delete the timer object when you are done with it.

After you are finished using a timer object, you should delete it from memory. See “Deleting Timer Objects from Memory” on page 22-23 for more information.

Note The specified execution time and the actual execution of a timer can vary because timer objects work in the MATLAB single-threaded execution environment. The length of this time lag is dependent on what other processing MATLAB is performing. To force the execution of the callback functions in the event queue, include a call to the `drawnow` function in your code. The `drawnow` function flushes the event queue.

Example: Displaying a Message

The following example sets up a timer object that executes a MATLAB command string after 10 seconds elapse. The example creates a timer object, specifying the values of two timer object properties, `TimerFcn` and `StartDelay`. `TimerFcn` specifies the timer callback function. This is the MATLAB command string or program file that you want to execute when the timer fires. In the example, the timer callback function sets the value of the MATLAB workspace variable `stat` and executes the MATLAB `disp` command. The `StartDelay` property specifies how much time elapses before the timer fires.

After creating the timer object, the example uses the `start` function to start the timer object. (The additional commands in this example are included to illustrate the timer but are not required for timer operation.)

```
t = timer('TimerFcn', 'stat=false; disp(''Timer!'')',...
         'StartDelay',10);
start(t)

stat=true;
while(stat==true)
    disp('.')
    pause(1)
end
```

When you execute this code, it produces this output:

Creating Timer Objects

In this section...

“Creating the Object” on page 22-5

“Naming the Object” on page 22-6

Creating the Object

To use a timer in MATLAB, you must create a timer object. The timer object represents the timer in MATLAB, supporting various properties and functions that control its behavior.

To create a timer object, use the `timer` function. This creates a valid timer object with default values for most properties. The following shows an example of the default timer object and its summary display:

```
t = timer
Timer Object: timer-1

Timer Settings
  ExecutionMode: singleShot
        Period: 1
  BusyMode: drop
        Running: off

Callbacks
  TimerFcn: ''
  ErrorFcn: ''
  StartFcn: ''
  StopFcn: ''
```

MATLAB names the timer object `timer-1`. (See “Naming the Object” on page 22-6 for more information.)

To specify the value of timer object properties after you create it, you can use the `set` function. This example sets the value of the `TimerFcn` property and the `StartDelay` property. For more information about timer object properties, see “Working with Timer Object Properties” on page 22-7.

```
set(t, 'TimerFcn', @(x,y)disp('Hello World!'), 'StartDelay', 5)
```

You can also set timer object properties when you create the timer object by specifying property name and value pairs as arguments to the `timer` function. The following example sets the same properties at object creation time:

```
t = timer('TimerFcn', @(x,y)disp('Hello World!'), 'StartDelay', 5);
```

Always delete timer objects when you are done using them. See “Deleting Timer Objects from Memory” on page 22-23 for more information.

Naming the Object

MATLAB assigns a name to each timer object you create. This name has the form `timer-i`, where *i* is a number representing the total number of timer objects created this session.

For example, the first time you call the `timer` function to create a timer object, MATLAB names the object `timer-1`. If you call the `timer` function again to create another timer object, MATLAB names the object `timer-2`.

MATLAB keeps incrementing the number associated with each timer object it creates, even if you delete the timer objects you already created. For example, if you delete the first two timer objects and create a new object, MATLAB names it `timer-3`, even though the other two timer objects no longer exist in memory. To reset the numeric part of timer object names to 1, execute the `clear classes` command.

Working with Timer Object Properties

In this section...

“Retrieving the Value of Timer Object Properties” on page 22-7

“Setting the Value of Timer Object Properties” on page 22-8

To get information about timer object properties, see the `timer` function reference page.

Retrieving the Value of Timer Object Properties

The timer object supports many properties that provide information about the current state of the timer object and control aspects of its functioning. To retrieve the value of a timer object property, you can use the `get` function or use subscripts (dot notation) to access the field.

The following example uses the `set` function to retrieve the value of the `ExecutionMode` property:

```
t = timer;  
  
tmode = get(t, 'ExecutionMode')  
  
tmode =  
  
singleShot
```

The following example uses dot notation to retrieve the value of the `ExecutionMode` property:

```
tmode = t.ExecutionMode  
  
tmode =  
  
singleShot
```

To view a list of all the properties of a timer object, use the `get` function, specifying the timer object as the only argument:

```
get(t)
    AveragePeriod: NaN
    BusyMode: 'drop'
    ErrorFcn: ''
    ExecutionMode: 'singleShot'
    InstantPeriod: NaN
    Name: 'timer-4'
ObjectVisibility: 'on'
    Period: 1
    Running: 'off'
    StartDelay: 0
    StartFcn: ''
    StopFcn: ''
    Tag: ''
    TasksExecuted: 0
    TasksToExecute: Inf
    TimerFcn: ''
    Type: 'timer'
    UserData: []
```

Setting the Value of Timer Object Properties

To set the value of a timer object property, use the `set` function or subscripted assignment (dot notation). You can also set timer object properties when you create the timer object. For more information, see “Creating Timer Objects” on page 22-5.

The following example uses both methods to assign values to timer object properties. The example creates a timer that, once started, displays a message every second until you stop it with the `stop` command.

- 1 Create a timer object.

```
t = timer;
```

- 2 Assign values to timer object properties using the `set` function.

```
set(t,'ExecutionMode','fixedRate','BusyMode','drop','Period',1);
```

- 3 Assign a value to the timer object `TimerFcn` property using dot notation.

```
t.TimerFcn = @(x,y)disp('Processing...');
```

- 4 Start the timer object. It displays a message at 1-second intervals.

```
start(t)
```

- 5 Stop the timer object.

```
stop(t)
```

- 6 Delete timer objects after you are done using them.

```
delete(t)
```

Viewing a List of All Settable Properties

To view a list of all timer object properties that can have values assigned to them (in contrast to the read-only properties), use the `set` function, specifying the timer object as the only argument.

The display includes the values you can use to set the property if, like the `BusyMode` property, the property accepts an enumerated list of values.

```
t = timer;

set(t)
  BusyMode: [ {drop} | queue | error ]
  ErrorFcn: string -or- function handle -or- cell array
  ExecutionMode: [{singleShot} | fixedSpacing | fixedDelay | fixedRate]
  Name
  ObjectVisibility: [ {on} | off ]
  Period
  StartDelay
  StartFcn: string -or- function handle -or- cell array
  StopFcn: string -or- function handle -or- cell array
  Tag
  TasksToExecute
  TimerFcn: string -or- function handle -or- cell array
  UserData
```

Starting and Stopping Timers

In this section...

“Starting a Timer” on page 22-10

“Starting a Timer at a Specified Time” on page 22-10

“Stopping Timer Objects” on page 22-11

“Blocking the MATLAB Command Line” on page 22-12

Note Because the timer works within the MATLAB single-threaded environment, it cannot guarantee execution times or execution rates.

Starting a Timer

To start a timer object, call the `start` function, specifying the timer object as the only argument. The `start` function starts a timer object running; the amount of time the timer runs is specified in seconds in the `StartDelay` property.

This example creates a timer object that displays a greeting after 5 seconds elapse.

- 1 Create a timer object, specifying values for timer object properties.

```
t = timer('TimerFcn',@(x,y)disp('Hello World!'),'StartDelay', 5);
```

- 2 Start the timer object.

```
start(t)
```

- 3 Delete the timer object after you are finished using it.

```
delete(t);
```

Starting a Timer at a Specified Time

To start a timer object and specify a date and time for the timer to fire, (rather than specifying the number of seconds to elapse), use the `startat` function. This function starts a timer object and allows you to specify the date, hour,

minute, and second when you want to the timer to execute. You specify the time as a MATLAB serial date number or as a specially formatted date text string.

This example creates a timer object that displays a message after an hour has elapsed. The `startat` function starts the timer object running and calculates the value of the `StartDelay` property based on the time you specify.

```
t2=timer('TimerFcn',@(x,y)disp('It has been an hour now'));
startat(t2,now+1/24);
```

Stopping Timer Objects

Once started, the timer object stops running if one of the following conditions apply:

- The timer function callback (`TimerFcn`) has been executed the number of times specified in the `TasksToExecute` property.
- An error occurred while executing a timer function callback (`TimerFcn`).

You can also stop a timer object by using the `stop` function, specifying the timer object as the only argument. The following example illustrates stopping a timer object:

- 1 Create a timer object.

```
t = timer('TimerFcn',@(x,y)disp('Hello World!'), ...
          'StartDelay', 100);
```

- 2 Start it running.

```
start(t)
```

- 3 Check the state of the timer object after starting it.

```
get(t, 'Running')
```

```
ans =
```

```
on
```

- 4 Stop the timer using the `stop` command and check the state again. When a timer stops, the value of the `Running` property of the timer object is set to `'off'`.

```
stop(t)

get(t, 'Running')

ans =

off
```

- 5 Delete the timer object when you are finished using it.

```
delete(t)
```

Note The timer object can execute a callback function that you specify when it starts or stops. See “Creating and Executing Callback Functions” on page 22-14.

Blocking the MATLAB Command Line

By default, when you use the `start` or `startat` function to start a timer object, the function returns control to the command line immediately. For some applications, you might prefer to block the command line until the timer fires. To do this, call the `wait` function right after calling the `start` or `startat` function.

- 1 Create a timer object.

```
t = timer('StartDelay', 5, 'TimerFcn', ...
         @(x,y)disp('Hello World!'));
```

- 2 Start the timer object running.

```
start(t)
```

- 3** After the `start` function returns, call the `wait` function immediately. The `wait` function blocks the command line until the timer object fires.

```
wait(t)
```

- 4** Delete the timer object after you are finished using it.

```
delete(t)
```

Creating and Executing Callback Functions

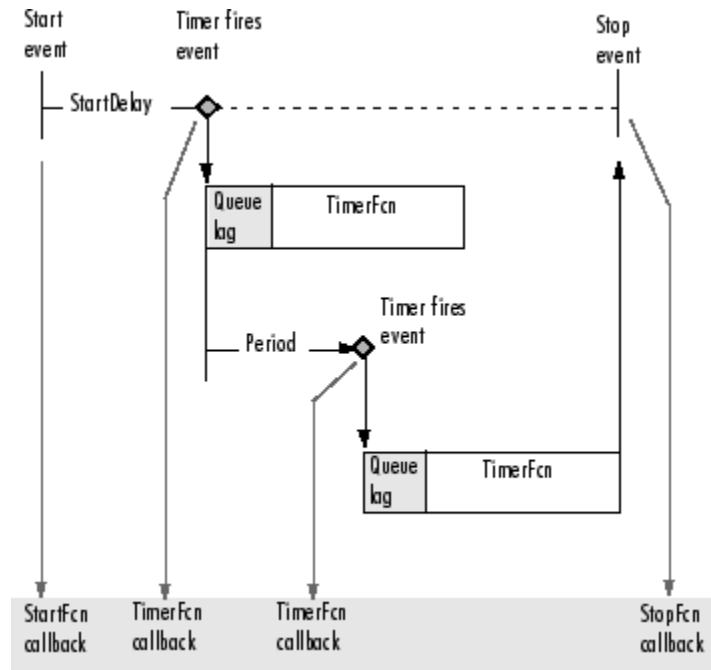
In this section...
“Associating Commands with Timer Object Events” on page 22-14
“Creating Callback Functions” on page 22-15
“Specifying the Value of Callback Function Properties” on page 22-17

Note Callback function execution might be delayed if the callback involves a CPU-intensive task such as updating a figure.

Associating Commands with Timer Object Events

The timer object supports properties that let you specify the MATLAB commands that execute when a timer fires, and for other timer object events, such as starting, stopping, or when an error occurs. These are called *callbacks*. To associate MATLAB commands with a timer object event, set the value of the associated timer object callback property.

The following diagram shows when the events occur during execution of a timer object and give the names of the timer object properties associated with each event. For example, to associate MATLAB commands with a start event, assign a value to the `StartFcn` callback property. Error callbacks can occur at any time.



Timer Object Events and Related Callback Function

Creating Callback Functions

When the time period specified by a timer object elapses, the timer object executes one or more MATLAB functions of your choosing. You can specify the functions directly as the value of the callback property. You can also put the commands in a function file and specify the function as the value of the callback property.

Specifying Callback Functions Directly

This example creates a timer object that displays a greeting after 5 seconds. The example specifies the value of the `TimerFcn` callback property directly, putting the commands in a text string.

```
t = timer('TimerFcn',@(x,y)disp('Hello World!'),'StartDelay',5);
```

Note When you specify the callback commands directly as the value of the callback function property, the commands are evaluated in the MATLAB workspace.

Putting Commands in a Callback Function

Instead of specifying MATLAB commands directly as the value of a callback property, you can put the commands in a MATLAB program file and specify the file as the value of the callback property.

When you create a callback function, the first two arguments must be a handle to the timer object and an event structure. An event structure contains two fields: `Type` and `Data`. The `Type` field contains a text string that identifies the type of event that caused the callback. The value of this field can be any of the following strings: `'StartFcn'`, `'StopFcn'`, `'TimerFcn'`, or `'ErrorFcn'`. The `Data` field contains the time the event occurred.

In addition to these two required input arguments, your callback function can accept application-specific arguments. To receive these input arguments, you must use a cell array when specifying the name of the function as the value of a callback property. For more information, see “Specifying the Value of Callback Function Properties” on page 22-17.

Example: Writing a Callback Function

This example implements a simple callback function that displays the type of event that triggered the callback and the time the callback occurred. To illustrate passing application-specific arguments, the example callback function accepts as an additional argument a text string and includes this text string in the display output. To see this function used with a callback property, see “Specifying the Value of Callback Function Properties” on page 22-17.

```
function my_callback_fcn(obj, event, string_arg)

txt1 = ' event occurred at ';
txt2 = string_arg;

event_type = event.Type;
```

```

event_time = datestr(event.Data.time);

msg = [event_type txt1 event_time];
disp(msg)
disp(txt2)

```

Specifying the Value of Callback Function Properties

You associate a callback function with a specific event by setting the value of the appropriate callback property. You can specify the callback function as a cell array or function handle. If your callback function accepts additional arguments, you must use a cell array.

The following table shows the syntax for several sample callback functions and describes how you call them.

Callback Function Syntax	How to Specify as a Property Value for Object t
function myfile	t.StartFcn = @myfile
function myfile(obj, event)	t.StartFcn = @myfile
function myfile(obj, event, arg1, arg2)	t.StartFcn = {@myfile, 5, 6}

This example illustrates several ways you can specify the value of timer object callback function properties, some with arguments and some without. To see the code of the callback function, `my_callback_fcn`, see “Example: Writing a Callback Function” on page 22-16:

- 1 Create a timer object.

```

t = timer('StartDelay', 4, 'Period', 4, 'TasksToExecute', 2, ...
         'ExecutionMode', 'fixedRate');

```

- 2 Specify the value of the `StartFcn` callback. Note that the example specifies the value in a cell array because the callback function needs to access arguments passed to it:

```

t.StartFcn = {@my_callback_fcn, 'My start message'};

```

- 3 Specify the value of the `StopFcn` callback. Again, the value is specified in a cell array because the callback function needs to access the arguments passed to it:

```
t.StopFcn = { @my_callback_fcn, 'My stop message' };
```

- 4 Specify the value of the `TimerFcn` callback. The example specifies the MATLAB commands in a text string:

```
t.TimerFcn = @(x,y)disp('Hello World!');
```

- 5 Start the timer object:

```
start(t)
```

The example outputs the following.

```
StartFcn event occurred at 10-Mar-2004 17:16:59  
My start message  
Hello World!  
Hello World!  
StopFcn event occurred at 10-Mar-2004 17:16:59  
My stop message
```

- 6 Delete the timer object after you are finished with it.

```
delete(t)
```

Timer Object Execution Modes

In this section...

“Executing a Timer Callback Function Once” on page 22-19

“Executing a Timer Callback Function Multiple Times” on page 22-20

“Handling Callback Function Queuing Conflicts” on page 22-21

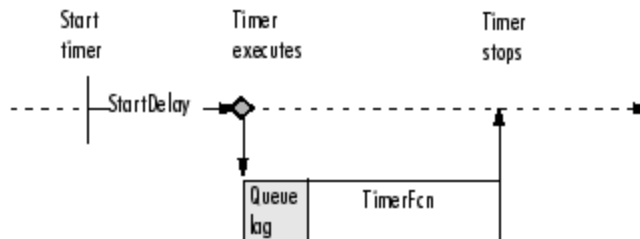
Executing a Timer Callback Function Once

The timer object supports several execution modes that determine how it schedules the timer callback function (`TimerFcn`) for execution. You specify the execution mode by setting the value of the `ExecutionMode` property.

To execute a timer callback function once, set the `ExecutionMode` property to `'singleShot'`. This is the default execution mode. In this mode, the timer object starts the timer and, after the time period specified in the `StartDelay` property elapses, adds the timer callback function (`TimerFcn`) to the MATLAB execution queue. When the timer callback function finishes, the timer stops.

The following figure graphically illustrates the parts of timer callback execution for a `singleShot` execution mode. The shaded area in the figure, labelled `queue lag`, represents the indeterminate amount of time between when the timer adds a timer callback function to the MATLAB execution queue and when the function starts executing. The duration of this lag is dependent on what other processing MATLAB happens to be doing at the time.

`singleShot`



Timer Callback Execution (singleShot Execution Mode)

Executing a Timer Callback Function Multiple Times

The timer object supports three multiple-execution modes:

- 'fixedRate'
- 'fixedDelay'
- 'fixedSpacing'

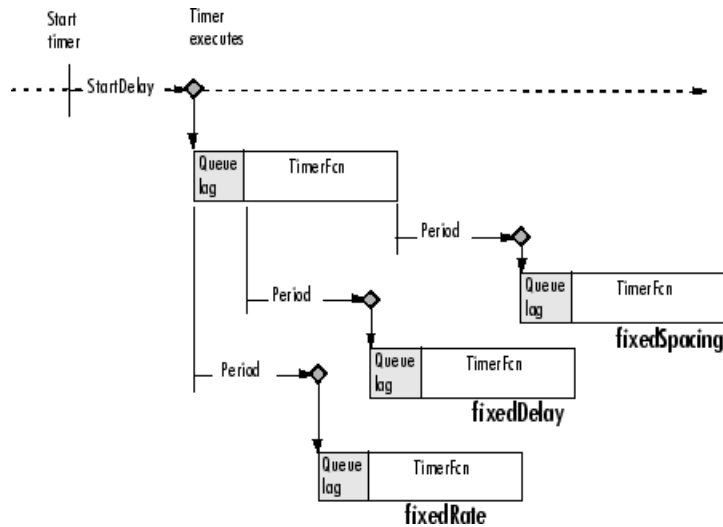
In many ways, these execution modes operate the same:

- The `TasksToExecute` property specifies the number of times you want the timer to execute the timer callback function (`TimerFcn`).
- The `Period` property specifies the amount of time between executions of the timer callback function.
- The `BusyMode` property specifies how the timer object handles queuing of the timer callback function when the previous execution of the callback function has not completed. See “Handling Callback Function Queuing Conflicts” on page 22-21 for more information.

The execution modes differ only in where they start measuring the time period between executions. The following table describes these differences.

Execution Mode	Description
'fixedRate'	Time period between executions begins immediately after the timer callback function is added to the MATLAB execution queue.
'fixedDelay'	Time period between executions begins when the timer function callback actually starts executing, after any time lag due to delays in the MATLAB execution queue.
'fixedSpacing'	Time period between executions begins when the timer callback function finishes executing.

The following figure illustrates the difference between these modes. Note that the amount of time between executions (specified by the `Period` property) remains the same. Only the point at which execution begins is different.



Differences Between Execution Modes

Handling Callback Function Queuing Conflicts

At busy times, in multiple-execution scenarios, the timer may need to add the timer callback function (`TimerFcn`) to the MATLAB execution queue before the previously queued execution of the callback function has completed. You can determine how the timer object handles this scenario by using the `BusyMode` property.

If you specify `'drop'` as the value of the `BusyMode` property, the timer object skips the execution of the timer function callback if the previously scheduled callback function has not already completed.

If you specify `'queue'`, the timer object waits until the currently executing callback function finishes before queuing the next execution of the timer callback function.

Note In 'queue' mode, the timer object tries to make the average time between executions equal the amount of time specified in the `Period` property. If the timer object has to wait longer than the time specified in the `Period` property between executions of the timer function callback, it shortens the time period for subsequent executions to make up the time.

If the `BusyMode` property is set to 'error', the timer object stops and executes the timer object error callback function (`ErrorFcn`), if one is specified.

Deleting Timer Objects from Memory

In this section...
“Deleting One or More Timer Objects” on page 22-23
“Testing the Validity of a Timer Object” on page 22-23

Deleting One or More Timer Objects

When you are finished with a timer object, delete it from memory using the `delete` function:

```
delete(t)
```

When you delete a timer object, workspace variables that referenced the object remain. Deleted timer objects are invalid and cannot be reused. Use the `clear` command to remove workspace variables that reference deleted timer objects.

To remove all timer objects from memory, enter

```
delete(timerfind)
```

For information about the `timerfind` function, see “Finding Timer Objects in Memory” on page 22-24.

Testing the Validity of a Timer Object

To test if a timer object has been deleted, use the `isvalid` function. The `isvalid` function returns logical 0 (false) for deleted timer objects:

```
isvalid(t)  
ans =
```

```
0
```

Finding Timer Objects in Memory

In this section...

“Finding All Timer Objects” on page 22-24

“Finding Invisible Timer Objects” on page 22-24

Finding All Timer Objects

To find all the timer objects that exist in memory, use the `timerfind` function. This function returns an array of timer objects. If you leave off the semicolon, and there are multiple timer objects in the array, `timerfind` displays summary information in a table:

```
t1 = timer;
t2 = timer;
t3 = timer;
t_array = timerfind
```

Timer Object Array

Index:	ExecutionMode:	Period:	TimerFcn:	Name:
1	singleShot	1	''	timer-3
2	singleShot	1	''	timer-4
3	singleShot	1	''	timer-5

Using `timerfind` to determine all the timer objects that exist in memory can be helpful when deleting timer objects.

Finding Invisible Timer Objects

If you set the value of a timer object's `ObjectVisibility` property to 'off', the timer object does not appear in listings of existing timer objects returned by `timerfind`. The `ObjectVisibility` property provides a way for application developers to prevent end-user access to the timer objects created by their application.

Objects that are not visible are still valid. If you have access to the object (for example, from within the file that created it), you can set its properties. To

retrieve a list of all the timer objects in memory, including invisible ones, use the `timerfindall` function.

Performance

- “Analyzing Your Program’s Performance” on page 23-2
- “Profiling for Improving Performance” on page 23-4
- “Determining Profiler Coverage” on page 23-27
- “Techniques for Improving Performance” on page 23-29
- “Vectorization” on page 23-33

Analyzing Your Program's Performance

In this section...

“Overview” on page 23-2

“Stopwatch Timer Functions” on page 23-2

Overview

The MATLAB Profiler and the stopwatch timer functions enable you to get back information on how your program is performing and help you identify areas that need improvement. The Profiler can be more useful in measuring relative execution time and in identifying specific performance bottlenecks in your code, while the stopwatch functions tend to be more useful for providing absolute time measurements.

Stopwatch Timer Functions

If you just need to get an idea of how long your program (or a portion of it) takes to run, or to compare the speed of different implementations of a program, you can use the stopwatch timer functions, `tic` and `toc`. Invoking `tic` starts the timer, and the first subsequent `toc` stops it and reports the time elapsed between the two.

Use `tic` and `toc` as shown here:

```
tic
    -- run the program section to be timed --
toc
```

Keep in mind that `tic` and `toc` measure overall elapsed time. Make sure that no other applications are running in the background on your system that could affect the timing of your MATLAB programs.

Measuring Smaller Programs

Shorter programs sometimes run too fast to get useful data from `tic` and `toc`. When this is the case, try measuring the program running repeatedly in a loop, and then average to find the time for a single run:

```
tic
  for k = 1:100
    -- run the program --
  end
toc
```

Using tic and toc Versus the cputime Function

Although it is possible to measure performance using the `cputime` function, it is recommended that you use the `tic` and `toc` functions for this purpose exclusively. It has been the general rule for CPU-intensive calculations run on Microsoft Windows machines that the elapsed time using `cputime` and the elapsed time using `tic` and `toc` are close in value, ignoring any first time costs. There are cases however that show a significant difference between these two methods. For example, in the case of a Pentium 4 with hyperthreading running Windows, there can be a significant difference between the values returned by `cputime` versus `tic` and `toc`.

Related Examples

- “Profiling for Improving Performance” on page 23-4

Profiling for Improving Performance

In this section...

“What Is Profiling?” on page 23-4

“Profiling Process and Guidelines” on page 23-5

“Using the Profiler” on page 23-6

“Profile Summary Report” on page 23-12

“Profile Detail Report” on page 23-14

“The profile Function” on page 23-20

What Is Profiling?

Profiling is a way to measure where a program spends time. To assist you in profiling, MATLAB software provides a graphical user interface, called the Profiler, which is based on the results returned by the `profile` function. Once you identify which functions are consuming the most time, you can determine why you are calling them. Then, look for ways to minimize their use and thus improve performance. It is often helpful to decide whether the number of times the code calls a particular function is reasonable. Because programs often have several layers, your code might not explicitly call the most time-consuming functions. Rather, functions within your code might be calling other time-consuming functions that can be several layers down in the code. In this case it is important to determine which of your functions are responsible for such calls.

Profiling helps to uncover performance problems that you can solve by:

- Avoiding unnecessary computation, which can arise from oversight
- Changing your algorithm to avoid costly functions
- Avoiding recomputation by storing results for future use

When profiling spends most of its time on calls to a few built-in functions, you have probably optimized the code as much as you can.

Note When using the Parallel Computing Toolbox™ software, you can use the parallel profiler to profile parallel jobs. See “Profiling Parallel Code” for details.

Profiling Process and Guidelines

Here is a general process you can follow to use the Profiler to improve performance in your code. This section includes the following topics:

- Using Profiling as a Debugging Tool
- “Using Profiling to Understand an Unfamiliar File” on page 23-6

Tip Premature optimization can increase code complexity unnecessarily without providing a real gain in performance. Your first implementation should be as simple as possible. Then, if speed is an issue, use profiling to identify bottlenecks.

- 1** In the summary report produced by the Profiler, look for functions that used a significant amount of time or are called most frequently. See “Profile Summary Report” on page 23-12 for more information.
- 2** View the detail report produced by the Profiler for those functions and look for the lines that use the most time or are called most often. See “Profile Detail Report” on page 23-14 for more information.

Consider keeping a copy of your first detail report as a basis for comparison. After you change the function file, run the Profiler again and compare the reports.

- 3** Determine whether there are changes you can make to the lines most called or the most time-consuming lines to improve performance.

For example, if you have a `load` statement within a loop, `load` is called every time the loop is called. You might be able to save time by moving the `load` statement so it is before the loop and therefore is called only once.

- 4 Click the links to the files and make the changes you identified for potential performance improvement. Save the files and run `clear all`. Run the Profiler again and compare the results to the original report. Note that there are inherent time fluctuations that are not dependent on your code. If you profile the identical code twice, you can get slightly different results each time.
- 5 Repeat this process to continue improving the performance.

Using Profiling as a Debugging Tool

The Profiler is a useful tool for isolating problems in your code.

For example, if a particular section of a file did not run, you can look at the detail reports to see what lines did run. The detail report might point you to the problem.

You can also view the lines that did not run to help you develop test cases that exercise that code.

If you get an error in the file when profiling, the Profiler provides partial results in the reports. You can see what ran and what did not to help you isolate the problem. Similarly, you can do this if you stop the execution using **Ctrl+C**. Using **Ctrl+C** can be useful when a file is taking much more time to run than expected.

Using Profiling to Understand an Unfamiliar File

For a lengthy MATLAB code file that you did not create, or with which you are unfamiliar, use the Profiler to see how the file actually works. Use the Profiler detail reports to see the lines called.

If there is an existing GUI tool (or file) like one that you want to create, start profiling, use the tool, then stop profiling. Look through the Profiler detail reports to see what functions and lines ran. This helps you determine the lines of code in the file that are most like the code you want to create.

Using the Profiler

Use the Profiler to help you determine where you can modify your code to make performance improvements. The Profiler is a tool that shows you where a file is spending its time. This section covers:

- “Opening the Profiler” on page 23-7
- “Running the Profiler” on page 23-7
- “Profiling a Graphical User Interface” on page 23-11
- “Profiling Statements from the Command Window” on page 23-11
- “Changing Fonts for the Profiler” on page 23-12

For information about the reports generated by the Profiler, see “Profile Summary Report” on page 23-12 and “Profile Detail Report” on page 23-14.

Opening the Profiler

You can open the Profiler using several different methods:

- Select one or more statements in the Command History window, right-click to view the context menu, and then select **Profile Code**.
- Type `profile viewer` in the Command Window.

Running the Profiler

To profile a MATLAB code file or a line of code:

- 1** If your system uses Intel® multi-core chips, consider restricting the active number of CPUs to one.

See one of the following for details:

- “Intel Multi-Core Processors — Setting for Most Accurate Profiling on Windows Systems” on page 23-9
- “Intel Multi-Core Processors — Setting for Most Accurate Profiling on Linux Systems” on page 23-10

- 2** In the Command Window, type `profile viewer`.

- 3** Do one of the following in the Profiler:

- For a statement you have not profiled in the current MATLAB session:

In the **Run this code** field, type the statement you want to run.

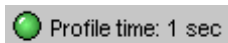
For example, you can run the Lotka-Volterra example, which is provided with MATLAB examples (lotkademo):

```
[t,y] = ode23('lotka',[0 2],[20;20])
```

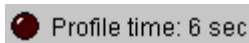
- For a statement you previously profiled in the current MATLAB session:
 - 1 Select the statement from the list box—MATLAB automatically starts profiling the code.
 - 2 Skip to step 5.

4 Click **Start Profiling**.

While the Profiler is running, the **Profile time** indicator is green and the number of seconds it reports increases. The **Profile time** indicator appears at the top right of the Profiler window.

A small green circle icon followed by the text "Profile time: 1 sec" in a light gray box.

When the Profiler finishes, the **Profile time** indicator becomes dark red and shows the length of time the Profiler ran. The statements you profiled display as having been executed in the Command Window.

A small dark red circle icon followed by the text "Profile time: 6 sec" in a light gray box.

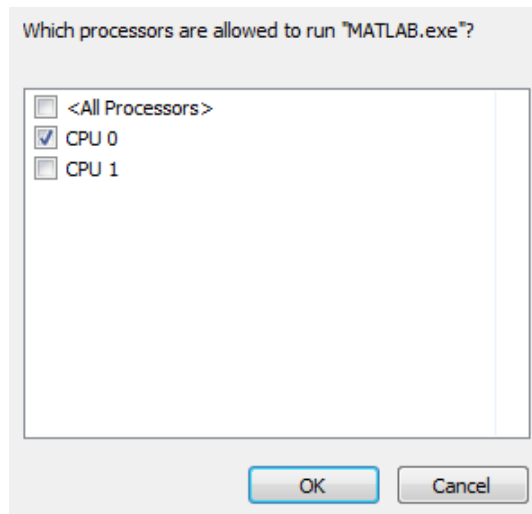
This time is not the actual time that your statements took to run. It is the wall clock (or `tic/toc`) time elapsed from when you clicked **Start Profiling** until profiling stops. If the time reported is very different from what you expected (for example, hundreds of seconds for a simple statement), you might have had profiling on longer than you realize. This time also does not match the time reported in Profiler Summary report statistics, which is based on `cpu` time by default, not wall clock time. To view profile statistics based on wall clock time, use the `profile` function with the `-timer real` option as shown in “Using the profile Function to Change the Time Type Used by the Profiler” on page 23-25.

- 5 When profiling is complete, the Profile Summary report appears in the Profiler window. For more information about this report, see “Profile Summary Report” on page 23-12.
- 6 Reset the number of active CPUs to the original setting if you restricted the number in step 1.

Intel Multi-Core Processors – Setting for Most Accurate Profiling on Windows Systems. If your system uses Intel multi-core chips, and you plan to profile using CPU time, set the number of active CPUs to one before you start profiling. This results in the most accurate and efficient profiling.

- 1 Open Windows Task Manager.
- 2 On the **Processes** tab, right-click `MATLAB.exe` and then click **Set Affinity**.
The Processor Affinity dialog box opens.
- 3 In the Processor Affinity dialog box, note the current settings, and then clear all the CPUs except one.

Your Processor Affinity dialog box should appear like the following image.



- 4 Click **OK**.

- 5 Reset the state of the Profiler so that it recognizes the processor affinity changes you made. The easiest way to do so is to change the Profiler timer setting to `real` and then back to `cpu`, by issuing the following in the Command Window:

```
profile -timer real
profile -timer cpu
```

Remember to set the number of CPUs back to their original settings when you finish profiling. Rerun the preceding steps, and restore the original selections in the Processor Affinity dialog box in step 3.

Intel Multi-Core Processors – Setting for Most Accurate Profiling on Linux® Systems. If your system uses Intel multi-core chips, and you plan to profile using CPU time, set the number of active CPUs to one before you start profiling. This results in the most accurate and efficient profiling.

For example, to set the processor affinity to one you can use the Linux `taskset` command, as follows:

- 1 Get the process ID (PID) of the currently running MATLAB instance:

```
ps -C MATLAB
PID  TTY  TIME  CMD
8745 pts/1 00:00:50  MATLAB
```

The PID in this example is 8745.

- 2 Call the Linux `taskset` command to get the current number of active CPUs for the MATLAB process:

```
taskset -pc 8745
pid 8745's current affinity list: 0-3
```

The `-p` option specifies that `taskset` operate on an existing PID, instead of creating a new task. The `-c` option lists the processor numbers.

- 3 Call the Linux `taskset` command again — this time to set the processor affinity for the MATLAB process to one CPU (that is, CPU #0):

```
taskset -pc 0 8745
pid 8745's current affinity list: 0-3
```

```
pid 8745's new affinity list: 0
```

For more information on the syntax of `taskset`, execute `man taskset` from a Linux terminal.

Reset the state of the Profiler so that it recognizes the processor affinity changes you made. The easiest way to do this is to change the Profiler timer setting to `real` and then back to `cpu`, by issuing the following in the Command Window:

```
profile -timer real
profile -timer cpu
```

Remember to set the number of CPUs back to its original setting when you finish profiling. Rerun the preceding steps, and then restore the original number of CPUs returned in step 2.

Profiling a Graphical User Interface

You can run the Profiler for a graphical user interface, such as the Filter Design and Analysis tool included with Signal Processing Toolbox. You can also run the Profiler for an interface you created, such as one built using GUIDE.

To profile a graphical user interface:

- 1** In the Profiler, click **Start Profiling**. Make sure that no code appears in the **Run this code** field.
- 2** Start the graphical user interface. (If you do not want to include its startup process in the profile, do not click **Stop Profiling**, step 1, until after you start the graphical interface.)
- 3** Use the graphical interface. When you finish, click **Stop Profiling** in the Profiler.

The Profile Summary report appears in the Profiler.

Profiling Statements from the Command Window


To profile more than one statement:

- 1 In the Profiler, clear the **Run this code** field and click **Start Profiling**.
- 2 In the Command Window, enter and run the statements you want to profile.
- 3 After running all the statements, click **Stop Profiling** in the Profiler.

The Profile Summary report appears in the Profiler.

Changing Fonts for the Profiler

To change the fonts used in the Profiler:

- 1 On the Home tab, in the Environment section, click **Preferences** .
- 2 Select **Fonts > Custom** in the left pane.
- 3 Under **Desktop Tools**, select the code or text font that you want to use in the Profiler. The Profiler is an HTML Proportional Text tool. For more information, click the **Help** button in the dialog box.
- 4 Click **Apply** or **OK**. The Profiler font reflects the changes.

Profile Summary Report

The Profile Summary report presents statistics about the overall execution of the function and provides summary statistics for each function called. The report formats these values in four columns.

- **Function Name** — A list of all the functions called by the profiled function. When first displayed, the functions are listed in order by the amount of time they took to process. To sort the functions alphabetically, click the **Function Name** link at the top of the column.
- **Calls** — The number of times the function was called while profiling was on. To sort the report by the number of times functions were called, click the **Calls** link at the top of the column.
- **Total Time** — The total time spent in a function, including all child functions called, in seconds. The time for a function includes time spent on child functions. To sort the functions by the amount of time they consumed, click the **Total Time** link at the top of the column. By default, the summary report displays profiling information sorted by **Total Time**.

Be aware that the Profiler itself uses some time, which is included in the results. Also note that total time can be zero for files whose running time was inconsequential.

- **Self Time** — The total time spent in a function, *not* including time for any child functions called, in seconds. If MATLAB can determine the amount of time spent for profiling overhead, MATLAB excludes it from the self time also. (MATLAB excludes profiling overhead from the total time and the time for individual lines in the Profile Detail Report as well.)

The bottom of the Profiler page contains a message like one of the following, depending on whether MATLAB can determine the profiling overhead:

- Self time is the time spent in a function excluding:
 - The time spent in its child functions
 - Most of the overhead resulting from the process of profiling

In the present run, self time excludes 0.240 secs of profiling overhead. The amount of remaining overhead reflected in self time cannot be determined, and therefore is not excluded.


- Self time is the time spent in a function excluding the time spent in its child functions. Self time also includes some overhead resulting from the process of profiling.

To sort the functions by this time value, click the **Self Time** link at the top of the column.

- **Total Time Plot** — Graphic display showing self time compared to total time.

The following is an image of the summary report for the Lotka-Volterra model used in “Example: Using the profile Function” on page 23-21.


In the summary report, you can:

- Print it, by clicking the Print button .
- Get more detailed information about a particular function by clicking its name in the **Function Name** column. See “Profile Detail Report” on page 23-14 for more information.

- Sort by a given column by clicking the name of the column. For example, click [Function Name](#) to sort by the names of the functions included in the summary report.

Profile Summary				
Generated 12-Jun-2012 16:13:44 using cpu time.				
Function Name	Calls	Total Time	Self Time*	Total Time Plot (dark band = self time)
ode23	1	0.085 s	0.060 s	
workspacefunc	4	0.032 s	0.003 s	
funfun\private\odearguments	1	0.016 s	0.013 s	
workspacefunc>getStatObjectsJ	2	0.015 s	0.002 s	
workspacefunc>getStatObjectJ	38	0.013 s	0.000 s	
workspacefunc>getShortValueObjectsJ	1	0.012 s	0.002 s	
workspacefunc>num2complex	54	0.010 s	0.003 s	
workspacefunc>getShortValueObjectJ	19	0.010 s	0.005 s	
workspacefunc>getStatObjectM	38	0.008 s	0.002 s	
odeget	11	0.005 s	0.005 s	
funfun\private\odefinalize	1	0.005 s	0.005 s	
workspacefunc>getAbstractValueSummaryJ	21	0.003 s	0.000 s	

Profile Detail Report

The Profile Detail report shows profiling results for a selected function that was called during profiling. A Profile Detail report has seven sections. The topics that follow describe each section. By default, the Profile Detail report includes all seven sections, although, depending on the function, not every section contains data. To return to the Profile Summary report from the Profile Detail report, click  in the toolbar of the Profile window.

The following topics provide details about opening and using a Profile Detail Report:

- “Opening the Profile Detail Report” on page 23-15
- “Controlling the Contents of the Detail Report Display” on page 23-15

- “Profile Detail Report Header” on page 23-15
- “Parent Functions” on page 23-16
- “Busy Lines” on page 23-16
- “Child Functions” on page 23-17
- “Code Analyzer Results” on page 23-18
- “File Coverage” on page 23-19
- “Function Listing” on page 23-19

Opening the Profile Detail Report

To open the Profile Detail Report:

- 1 Create a Profile Summary report, as described in “Using the Profiler” on page 23-6.
- 2 Click a function name listed in the Profile Summary report.

Controlling the Contents of the Detail Report Display

To specify which sections the Profile Detail Report includes:

- 1 Select report options from the set of check boxes at the top of the report.
- 2 Click the **Refresh** button.

Profile Detail Report Header

The detail report header includes:

- The name of the function profiled
- The number of times the profiled function was called in the parent function
- The amount of time the profiled function used
- A link that opens the function in your default text editor
- A link that copies the report to a separate window

Creating a copy of the report is helpful when you change the file, run the Profiler for the updated file, and compare the Profile Detail reports for the two runs. Do not change files provided with products from MathWorks, that is, files in the *matlabroot/toolbox* folders.

Parent Functions

To include the **Parents** section in the Detail Report, select the **Show parent functions** check box. This section of the report provides information about the parent functions, with links to their detail reports. Click the name of a parent function to open a Detail Report for that parent function.

Refresh







Show parent functions
 Show busy lines
 Show child functions
 Show Code Analyzer results
 Show file coverage
 Show function listing

Parents (calling functions)

Function Name	Function Type	Calls
ode23	M-function	1

Busy Lines

To include information about the lines of code that used the most amount of processing time in the detail report, select the **Show busy lines** check box.

Refresh					
<input type="checkbox"/> Show parent functions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show busy lines <input type="checkbox"/> Show child functions <input type="checkbox"/> Show Code Analyzer results <input type="checkbox"/> Show file coverage <input type="checkbox"/> Show function listing					
Lines where the most time was spent					
Line Number	Code	Calls	Total Time	% Time	Time Plot
110	<code>f0 = feval(ode,t0,y0,args{:});...</code>	1	0.482 s	58.5%	
81	<code>if (nargin(ode) == 2) ...</code>	1	0.110 s	13.3%	
148	<code>rtol = odeget(options,'RelTol'...</code>	1	0.063 s	7.6%	
184	<code>htry = abs(odeget(options,'Ini...</code>	1	0.032 s	3.9%	
105	<code>if any(tdir*diff(tspan) <=...</code>	1	0.032 s	3.9%	
All other lines			0.107 s	12.9%	
Totals			0.825 s	100%	

Child Functions

To include the **Children** section of the detail report, select the **Show child functions** check box. This section of the report lists all the functions called by the profiled function. If the called function is a MATLAB code file, you can view the source code for the function by clicking its name.

Refresh

Show parent functions
 Show busy lines
 Show child functions
 Show Code Analyzer results
 Show file coverage
 Show function listing

Children (called functions)

Function Name	Function Type	Calls	Total Time	% Time	Time Plot
lotka	M-function	1	0.466 s	56.5%	
odeget	M-function	5	0.032 s	3.9%	
double_superiorfloat	M-function	1	0 s	0%	
Self time (built-ins, overhead, etc.)			0.327 s	39.6%	
Totals			0.825 s	100%	

Code Analyzer Results

To include the **Code Analyzer results** section in the detail report display, select the **Show Code Analyzer results** check box. This section of the report provides information about problems and potential improvements for the function.

Refresh

Show parent functions
 Show busy lines
 Show child functions
 Show Code Analyzer results
 Show file coverage
 Show function listing

M-Lint results

Line number	Message
52	EXIST with two input arguments is generally faster and clearer than with one input argument.
80	EXIST with two input arguments is generally faster and clearer than with one input argument.
90	The value assigned to variable 'ME' might be unused.

File Coverage

To include the **Coverage results** section in the detail report display, select the **Show file coverage** check box. This section of the report provides statistical information about the number of lines in the code that executed during the profile run.

Refresh

Show parent functions
 Show busy lines
 Show child functions
 Show Code Analyzer results
 Show file coverage
 Show function listing

Coverage results
[\[Show coverage for parent directory \]](#)

Total lines in function	190
Non-code lines (comments, blank lines)	57
Code lines (lines that can run)	133
Code lines that did run	53
Code lines that did not run	80
Coverage (did run/can run)	39.85 %

Function Listing

To include the **Function listing** section in the detail report display, select the **Show function listing** check box. If the file is a MATLAB code file, the Profile Detail report includes three columns:

- The first column lists the execution time for each line.
- The second column lists the number of times the line was called
- The third column specifies the source code for the function.

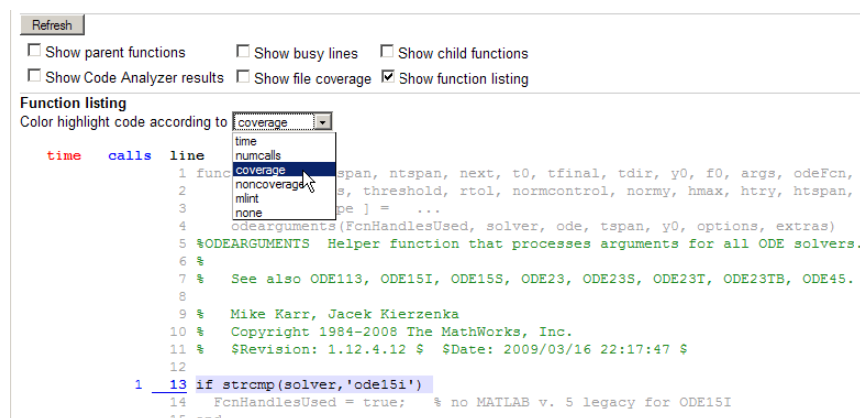
In the function listing, the color of the text indicates the following:

- Green — Comment lines
- Black — Lines of code that executed
- Gray — Lines of code that did not execute

By default, the Profile Detail report highlights lines of code with the longest execution time. The darker the highlighting, the longer the line of code took to execute.

To change the lines of code highlighted based on other criteria, use the drop-down menu in this section of the detail report. The color of the highlighting changes, depending on the drop-down option you choose. You can choose to highlight lines of code called the most, lines of code that were (or were not) executed, or lines called out by the Code Analyzer. Or, you can turn off highlighting by selecting none.

The following image shows that lines highlight in blue when you select coverage from the drop-down menu.



The profile Function

The Profiler is based on the results returned by the `profile` function. The `profile` function provides some features that are not available in the GUI. For example, use the `profile` function to specify that statistics display the time it takes for statements to run as clock time, instead of CPU time.

This section includes the following topics with respect to the `profile` function:

- “Example: Using the profile Function” on page 23-21
- “Accessing profile Function Results” on page 23-22

- “Saving profile Function Reports” on page 23-24
- “Using the profile Function to Change the Time Type Used by the Profiler” on page 23-25

Example: Using the profile Function

This example demonstrates how to run `profile`:

- 1** To start `profile`, type the following in the Command Window:

```
profile on
```

- 2** Execute a MATLAB code file. This example runs the Lotka-Volterra predator-prey population model. For more information about this model, type `lotkadem`, which runs a demonstration.

```
[t,y] = ode23('lotka',[0 2],[20;20]);
```

- 3** Generate the profile report and display it in the Profiler window. This suspends `profile`.

```
profile viewer
```

- 4** Restart `profile`, without clearing the existing statistics.

```
profile resume
```

The `profile` function is now ready to continue gathering statistics for any more files you run. It will add these new statistics to those statistics generated in the previous steps.

- 5** Stop `profile` when you finish gathering statistics.

```
profile off
```

- 6** To view the profile data, call `profile` specifying the `'info'` argument. The `profile` function returns data in a structure.

```
p = profile('info')
```

```
p =
```

```
FunctionTable: [33x1 struct]
FunctionHistory: [2x0 double]
ClockPrecision: 1.0000e-03
ClockSpeed: 3.0000e+09
Name: 'MATLAB'
Overhead: 0
```

The `FunctionTable` indicates that statistics were gathered for 33 functions.

- 7 To save the profile report, use the `profsave` function. This function stores the profile information in separate HTML files, for each function listed in `FunctionTable` of `p`.

```
profsave(p)
```

By default, `profsave` puts these HTML files in a subfolder of the current folder named `profile_results`, and displays the summary report in your system browser. You can specify another folder name as an optional second argument to `profsave`.

Accessing profile Function Results

The `profile` function returns results in a structure. This example illustrates how you can access these results:

- 1 To start `profile`, specifying the history option, type the following in the Command Window:

```
profile on -history
```

The history option specifies that the report include information about the sequence of functions as they are entered and exited during profiling.

- 2 Execute a MATLAB code file. This example runs the Lotka-Volterra predator-prey population model. For more information about this model, type `lotkademo`, which runs a demonstration.

```
[t,y] = ode23('lotka',[0 2],[20;20]);
```

- 3 Stop profiling.

```
profile off
```

- 4 Get the structure containing profile results.

```
stats = profile('info')
stats =

    FunctionTable: [33x1 struct]
  FunctionHistory: [2x880 double]
  ClockPrecision: 1.0000e-03
    ClockSpeed: 3.0000e+09
           Name: 'MATLAB'
    Overhead: 0
```

- 5 The FunctionTable field is an array of structures, where each structure represents a MATLAB function (M-function), MATLAB local function, MEX-function, or, because the builtin option is specified, a MATLAB built-in function.

```
stats.FunctionTable
```

```
ans =
```

```
33x1 struct array with fields:
  CompleteName
  FunctionName
  FileName
  Type
  Children
  Parents
  ExecutedLines
  IsRecursive
  TotalRecursiveTime
  PartialData
  NumCalls
  TotalTime
```

- 6 View the second structure in FunctionTable.

```
stats.FunctionTable(2)
```

```
ans =  
  
    CompleteName: [1x95 char]  
    FunctionName: 'ode23'  
    FileName: [1x89 char]  
    Type: 'M-function'  
    Children: [6x1 struct]  
    Parents: [0x1 struct]  
    ExecutedLines: [139x3 double]  
    IsRecursive: 0  
    TotalRecursiveTime: 0  
    PartialData: 0  
    NumCalls: 1  
    TotalTime: 0.0920
```

- 7 To view the history data generated by `profile`, view the `FunctionHistory`, for example, `stats.FunctionHistory`. The history data is a 2-by-n array. The first row contains Boolean values, where 0 (zero) means entrance into a function and 1 means exit from a function. The second row identifies the function being entered or exited by its index in the `FunctionTable` field. To see how to create a formatted display of history data, see the example on the `profile` reference page.

Saving profile Function Reports

To save the profile report, use the `profsave` function.

This function stores the profile information in separate HTML files, for each function listed in the `FunctionTable` field of the structure, `stats`.

```
profsave(stats)
```

By default, `profsave` puts these HTML files in a subfolder of the current folder named `profile_results`. You can specify another folder name as an optional second argument to `profsave`.

```
profsave(stats, 'mydir')
```

Using the profile Function to Change the Time Type Used by the Profiler

By default, MATLAB generates the Profiler Summary report using CPU time, as opposed to real (wall clock) time. This example illustrates how you can direct MATLAB to use real time instead.

Specify that the Profiler use real time instead, by using the `profile` function with the `-timer real` option, as shown in this example:

- 1 If the Profiler is currently open, close the Profiler, and if prompted, stop profiling.
- 2 Set the timer to real time by typing the following in the Command Window:

```
profile on -timer real
```

- 3 Run the file that you want to profile. This example runs the Lotka-Volterra predator-prey population model.

```
[t,y] = ode23('lotka',[0 2],[20;20]);
```

- 4 Open the Profiler by typing the following in the Command Window:

```
profile viewer
```

The Profiler opens and indicates that it is using real time, as shown in the following image.

Profile Summary
Generated 12-Jun-2012 16:27:28 using real time.

Function Name	Calls	Total Time	Self Time*	Total Time Plot (dark band = self time)
ode23	1	0.082 s	0.061 s	
workspacefunc	4	0.037 s	0.002 s	
workspacefunc>getShortValueObjects.J	1	0.016 s	0.003 s	

- 5 To change the timer back to using CPU time:

- a** Close the Profiler, and if prompted, stop profiling.
- b** Type the following in the Command Window:

```
profile on -timer cpu
```
- c** Type the following in the Command Window to reopen the Profiler:

```
profile viewer
```

Determining Profiler Coverage

When you run the Profiler on a file, some code might not run, such as a block containing an `if` statement.

To determine how much of a file ran when you profiled it, run the Coverage Report:

- 1 In the Command Window, type `profile viewer`.
- 2 Profile a MATLAB code file in the Profiler.

For detailed instructions, see “Profiling for Improving Performance” on page 23-4.

- 3 Ensure the Profiler is not currently profiling.


The Profiler displays a **Start Profiling** button when the Profiler is not running. If the Profiler is running, then do one of the following:

- Wait for it to stop profiling before proceeding to step 4.
- Click **Stop Profiling**.

The **Stop Profiling** button is available only when the Profiler is running.

- 4 Use the Current Folder browser to navigate to the folder containing the file for which you ran the Profiler.

Note You cannot run reports when the path is a UNC (Universal Naming Convention) path; that is, a path that starts with `\\`. Instead, use an actual hard drive on your system, or a mapped network drive.

- 5 On the Current Folder browser, click , and then select **Reports > Coverage Report**.

The Profiler Coverage Report appears, providing a summary of coverage for the file you profiled. In the image that follows, the profiled file is `lengthofline2.m`.


- 6 Click the **Coverage** link to see the Profile Detail Report for the file.

Profiler Coverage Report

Run the Coverage Report after you run the Profiler to identify how much of a file ran when it was profiled ([Learn More](#)).

[Rerun This Report](#) [Run Report on Current Folder](#)

Report for folder I:\my_MATLAB_files

lengthofline2.m	
	Coverage : 87.9%
	Total time: 0.2 seconds
	Total lines:
api2.m	
area.m	
basic_matrix.m	
breakpoint.m	
collat2z.m	

Techniques for Improving Performance

In this section...

“Preallocating Arrays” on page 23-29

“Assigning Variables” on page 23-30

“Using Appropriate Logical Operators” on page 23-31

“Additional Tips on Improving Performance” on page 23-31

Preallocating Arrays

for and while loops that incrementally increase the size of a data structure each time through the loop can adversely affect performance and memory use. Repeatedly resizing arrays often requires MATLAB to spend extra time looking for larger contiguous blocks of memory, and then moving the array into those blocks. Often, you can improve code execution time by preallocating the maximum amount of space required for the array.

The following code displays the amount of time needed to create a scalar variable, `x`, and then to gradually increase the size of `x` in a for loop.

```
tic
x = 0;
for k = 2:1000000
    x(k) = x(k-1) + 5;
end
toc
```

Elapsed time is 0.301528 seconds.

If you preallocate a 1-by-1,000,000 block of memory for `x` and initialize it to zero, then the code runs much faster because there is no need to repeatedly reallocate memory for the growing data structure.

```
tic
x = zeros(1, 1000000);
for k = 2:1000000
    x(k) = x(k-1) + 5;
end
```

```
toc
```

```
Elapsed time is 0.011938 seconds.
```

Use the appropriate preallocation function for the kind of array you want to initialize:

- `zeros` for numeric arrays
- `cell` for character arrays

Preallocating a Nondouble Matrix

When you preallocate a block of memory to hold a matrix of some type other than `double`, avoid using the method

```
A = int8(zeros(100));
```

This statement preallocates a 100-by-100 matrix of `int8`, first by creating a full matrix of `double` values, and then by converts each element to `int8`. Creating the array as `int8` values saves time and memory. For example:

```
A = zeros(100, 'int8');
```

Assigning Variables

For best performance, keep the following suggestions in mind when you assign values to variables.

- If you need to store data of a different type, it is advisable to create a new variable. Changing the class or array shape of an existing variable slows MATLAB down because it takes extra time to process.

This code changes the type of `X` from `double` to `char`, which has a negative impact on performance:

```
X = 23;
.
-- other code --
.
X = 'A';           % X changed from type double to char
.
-- other code --
```

- You should not assign a real value to a variable that already holds a complex value, and vice versa. Assigning a complex number to a variable that already holds a real number impacts the performance of your program.

Using Appropriate Logical Operators

When performing a logical AND or OR operation, you have a choice of whether to use short-circuit operators.

Operator	Description
&,	Perform logical AND and OR on arrays element by element
&&,	Perform logical AND and OR on scalar values with short-circuiting

In `if` and `while` statements, it is more efficient to use the short-circuit operators, `&&` and `||`, because these operators often do not evaluate the entire logical expression. For example, whenever the first input argument is not numeric, MATLAB evaluates only the first part of this expression.

```
if (isnumeric(varargin{1})) && (ischar(varargin{2}))
```

See “Short-Circuit Operators” on page 2-10 in the MATLAB documentation for a discussion about using `&&` and `||`.

Additional Tips on Improving Performance

If the performance of your program remains a concern, then consider the following suggestions:

- Split large script files into smaller ones, having the first file call the second if necessary.
- Construct separate functions (or local functions and nested functions) from the larger chunks of code.
- If you have overly complicated functions or expressions, use simpler ones to reduce size. Simpler functions often make good utility functions that you can share with others.
- Use functions instead of scripts because they are generally faster.

- Vectorize your code to take advantage of the full functionality of MATLAB.
- Use a sparse matrix structure to vectorize code without requiring large amounts of memory.
- Avoid running large processes in the background while executing your program in MATLAB.
- Avoid overloading MATLAB built-in functions on any standard MATLAB data classes because this can negatively affect performance.

Concepts

- “Analyzing Your Program’s Performance” on page 23-2
- “Profiling for Improving Performance” on page 23-4
- “Vectorization” on page 23-33

Vectorization

In this section...

“Using Vectorization” on page 23-33

“Indexing Methods for Vectorization” on page 23-34

“Array Operations” on page 23-37

“Logical Array Operations” on page 23-37

“Matrix Operations” on page 23-39

“Ordering, Setting, and Counting Operations” on page 23-41

“Functions Commonly Used in Vectorizing” on page 23-43

Using Vectorization

MATLAB is optimized for operations involving matrices and vectors. The process of revising loop-based, scalar-oriented code to use MATLAB matrix and vector operations is called *vectorization*. Vectorizing your code is worthwhile for several reasons:

- *Appearance*: Vectorized mathematical code appears more like the mathematical expressions found in textbooks, making the code easier to understand.
- *Less Error Prone*: Without loops, vectorized code is often shorter. Fewer lines of code mean fewer opportunities to introduce programming errors.
- *Performance*: Vectorized code often runs much faster than the corresponding code containing loops.

Vectorizing Code for General Computing

This code computes the sine of 1,001 values ranging from 0 to 10:

```
i = 0;
for t = 0:.01:10
    i = i + 1;
    y(i) = sin(t);
end
```

This is a vectorized version of the same code:

```
t = 0:.01:10;  
y = sin(t);
```

The second code sample usually executes faster than the first and is a more efficient use of MATLAB. Test execution speed on your system by creating scripts that contain the code shown, and then use the `tic` and `toc` functions to measure their execution time.

Vectorizing Code for Specific Tasks

This code computes the cumulative sum of a vector at every tenth element:

```
x = 1:10000;  
ylength = (length(x) - mod(length(x),5))/5;  
y(1:ylength) = 0;  
for n= 5:5:length(x)  
    y(n/5) = sum(x(1:n));  
end
```

Using vectorization, you can write a much more concise MATLAB process. This code shows one way to accomplish the task:

```
x = 1:10000;  
xsums = cumsum(x);  
y = xsums(5:5:length(x));
```

Indexing Methods for Vectorization

Many vectorizing techniques rely on flexible MATLAB indexing methods. Three basic types of indexing exist:

- “Subscripted Indexing” on page 23-35
- “Linear Indexing” on page 23-35
- “Logical Indexing” on page 23-36

Subscripted Indexing

In subscripted indexing, the index values indicate their position within the matrix. Thus, if `A = 6:10`, then `A([3 5])` denotes the third and fifth elements of vector `A`:

```
A = 6:10;
A([3 5])
```

```
ans =
```

```
     8     10
```

Multidimensional arrays or matrices use multiple index parameters for subscripted indexing.

```
A = [11 12 13; 14 15 16; 17 18 19]
A(2:3,2:3)
```

```
A =
```

```
    11    12    13
    14    15    16
    17    18    19
```

```
ans =
```

```
    15    16
    18    19
```

Linear Indexing

In linear indexing, MATLAB assigns every element of a matrix a single index as if the entire matrix structure stretches out into one column vector.

```
A = [11 12 13; 14 15 16; 17 18 19];
A(6)
A([3,1,8])
A([3;1;8])
```

```
ans =  
  
    18  
  
ans =  
  
    17    11    16  
  
ans =  
  
    17  
    11  
    16
```

In the previous example, the returned matrix elements preserve the shape specified by the index parameter. If the index parameter is a row vector, MATLAB returns the specified elements as a row vector.

Note Use the functions `sub2ind` and `ind2sub` to convert between subscripted and linear indices.

Logical Indexing

With logical indexing, the index parameter is a logical matrix that is the same size as `A` and contains only 0s and 1s.

MATLAB selects elements of `A` that contain a 1 in the corresponding position of the logical matrix:

```
A = [11 12 13; 14 15 16; 17 18 19];  
A(logical([0 0 1; 0 1 0; 1 1 1]))
```

```
ans =  
  
    17  
    15
```


18
13
19

Array Operations

Array operators perform the same operation for all elements in the data set. These types of operations are useful for repetitive calculations. For example, suppose you collect the volume (V) of various cones by recording their diameter (D) and height (H). If you collect the information for just one cone, you can calculate the volume for that single cone:

$$V = 1/12*\pi*(D^2)*H;$$

Now, collect information on 10,000 cones. The vectors D and H each contain 10,000 elements, and you want to calculate 10,000 volumes. In most programming languages, you need to set up a loop similar to this MATLAB code:

```
for n = 1000
    V(n) = 1/12*pi*(D(n)^2)*H(n);
end
```

With MATLAB, you can perform the calculation for each element of a vector with similar syntax as the scalar case:

```
%Vectorized Calculation
V = 1/12*pi*(D.^2).*H;
```

Note Placing a period (.) before the operators $*$, $/$, and $^$, transforms them into array operators.

Logical Array Operations

A logical extension of the bulk processing of arrays is to vectorize comparisons and decision making. MATLAB comparison operators accept vector inputs and return vector outputs.

For example, suppose while collecting data from 10,000 cones, you record several negative values for the diameter. You can determine which values in a vector are valid with the `>=` operator:

```
D = [-0.2 1.0 1.5 3.0 -1.0 4.2 3.14];  
D >= 0
```

```
ans =
```

```
      0      1      1      1      0      1      1
```

You can directly exploit the logical indexing power of MATLAB to select the valid cone volumes, `Vgood`, for which the corresponding elements of `D` are nonnegative:

```
Vgood = V(D >= 0);
```

MATLAB allows you to perform a logical AND or OR on the elements of an entire vector with the functions `all` and `any`, respectively. You can throw a warning if all values of `D` are below zero:

```
if all(D < 0)  
    warning('All values of diameter are negative.');
```

```
    return;
```

```
end
```

MATLAB can compare two vectors of the same size, allowing you to impose further restrictions. This code finds all the values where `V` is nonnegative and `D` is greater than `H`:

```
V((V >= 0) & (D > H))
```

The resulting vector is the same size as the inputs.

To aid comparison, MATLAB contains special values to denote overflow, underflow, and undefined operators, such as `inf` and `nan`. Logical operators `isinf` and `isnan` exist to help perform logical tests for these special values. For example, it is often useful to exclude NaN values from computations:

```
x = [2 -1 0 3 NaN 2 NaN 11 4 Inf];  
xvalid = x(~isnan(x))
```

```
xvalid =
      2      -1      0      3      2      11      4      Inf
```

Note `Inf == Inf` returns true; however, `NaN == NaN` always returns false.

Matrix Operations

Matrix operations act according to the rules of linear algebra. These operations are most useful in vectorization if you are working with multidimensional data.

Suppose you want to evaluate a function, F , of two variables, x and y .

$$F(x,y) = x \cdot \exp(-x^2 - y^2)$$

To evaluate this function at every combination of points in the x and y , you need to define a grid of values:

```
x = -2:0.2:2;
y = -1.5:0.2:1.5;
[X,Y] = meshgrid(x,y);
F = X.*exp(-X.^2-Y.^2);
```

Without `meshgrid`, you might need to write two `for` loops to iterate through vector combinations. The function `ndgrid` also creates number grids from vectors, but can construct grids beyond three dimensions. `meshgrid` can only construct 2-D and 3-D grids.

In some cases, using matrix multiplication eliminates intermediate steps needed to create number grids:

```
x = -2:2;
y = -1:0.5:1;
x'*y

ans =

      2.0000      1.0000           0      -1.0000      -2.0000
```

```

1.0000    0.5000         0   -0.5000   -1.0000
         0         0         0         0         0
-1.0000   -0.5000         0    0.5000    1.0000
-2.0000   -1.0000         0    1.0000    2.0000

```

Constructing Matrices

When vectorizing code, you often need to construct a matrix with a particular size or structure. Techniques exist for creating uniform matrices. For instance, you might need a 5-by-5 matrix of equal elements:

```
A = ones(5,5)*10;
```

Or, you might need a matrix of repeating values:

```
v = 1:5;
A = repmat(v,3,1)
```

A =

```

1     2     3     4     5
1     2     3     4     5
1     2     3     4     5

```

The function `repmat` possesses flexibility in building matrices from smaller matrices or vectors. `repmat` creates matrices by repeating an input matrix:

```
A = repmat(1:3,5,2)
B = repmat([1 2; 3 4],2,2)
```

A =

```

1     2     3     1     2     3
1     2     3     1     2     3
1     2     3     1     2     3
1     2     3     1     2     3
1     2     3     1     2     3

```

B =

```

1     2     1     2

```

```

3     4     3     4
1     2     1     2
3     4     3     4

```

The `bsxfun` function provides a way of combining matrices of different dimensions. Suppose that matrix `A` represents test scores, the rows of which denote different classes. You want to calculate the difference between the average score and individual scores for each class. Your first thought might be to compute the simple difference, `A - mean(A)`. However, MATLAB throws an error if you try this code because the matrices are not the same size. Instead, `bsxfun` performs the operation without explicitly reconstructing the input matrices so that they are the same size.

```

A = [97 89 84; 95 82 92; 64 80 99;76 77 67;...
     88 59 74; 78 66 87; 55 93 85];
dev = bsxfun(@minus,A,mean(A))

```

```
dev =
```

```

18     11     0
16     4     8
-15     2    15
-3     -1   -17
 9    -19   -10
-1    -12     3
-24    15     1

```

Ordering, Setting, and Counting Operations

In many applications, calculations done on an element of a vector depend on other elements in the same vector. For example, a vector, `x`, might represent a set. How to iterate through a set without a `for` or `while` loop is not obvious. The process becomes much clearer and the syntax less cumbersome when you use vectorized code.

Eliminating Redundant Elements

A number of different ways exist for finding the redundant elements of a vector. One way involves the function `diff`. After sorting the vector elements, equal adjacent elements produce a zero entry when you use the `diff` function on that vector. Because `diff(x)` produces a vector that has one fewer element

than `x`, you must add an element that is not equal to any other element in the set. `NaN` always satisfies this condition. Finally, you can use logical indexing to choose the unique elements in the set:

```
x = [2 1 2 2 3 1 3 2 1 3];
x = sort(x);
difference = diff([x,NaN]);
y = x(difference~=0)
```

```
y =
     1     2     3
```

Alternatively, you could accomplish the same operation by using the `unique` function:

```
y=unique(x);
```

However, the `unique` function might provide more functionality than is needed and slow down the execution of your code. Use the `tic` and `toc` functions if you want to measure the performance of each code snippet.

Counting Elements in a Vector

Rather than merely returning the set, or subset, of `x`, you can count the occurrences of an element in a vector. After the vector sorts, you can use the `find` function to determine the indices of zero values in `diff(x)` and to show where the elements change value. The difference between subsequent indices from the `find` function indicates the number of occurrences for a particular element:

```
x = [2 1 2 2 3 1 3 2 1 3];
x = sort(x);
difference = diff([x,max(x)+1]);
count = diff(find([1,difference]))
y = x(find(difference))
```

```
count =
     3     4     3
```

y =

1 2 3

The `find` function does not return indices for NaN elements. You can count the number of NaN and Inf values using the `isnan` and `isinf` functions.

```
count_nans = sum(isnan(x(:)));
count_infs = sum(isinf(x(:)));
```

Functions Commonly Used in Vectorizing

Function	Description
<code>all</code>	Test to determine if all elements are nonzero
<code>any</code>	Test for any nonzeros
<code>cumsum</code>	Find cumulative sum
<code>diff</code>	Find differences and approximate derivatives
<code>find</code>	find indices and values of nonzero elements
<code>ind2sub</code>	Convert from linear index to subscripts
<code>ipermute</code>	Inverse permute dimensions of a multidimensional array
<code>logical</code>	Convert numeric values to logical
<code>meshgrid</code>	Generate X and Y arrays for 3-D plots
<code>ndgrid</code>	Generate arrays for multidimensional functions and interpolations
<code>permute</code>	Rearrange dimensions of a multidimensional array
<code>prod</code>	Find product of array elements
<code>repmat</code>	Replicate and tile an array
<code>reshape</code>	Change the shape of an array
<code>shiftdim</code>	Shift array dimensions
<code>sort</code>	Sort array elements in ascending or descending order
<code>squeeze</code>	Remove singleton dimensions from an array

Function	Description
sub2ind	Convert from subscripts to linear index
sum	find the sum of array elements

Concepts

- “Techniques for Improving Performance” on page 23-29
<http://www.mathworks.com/company/newsletters/articles/Matrix-Indexing-in-MATLAB/m>

Memory Usage

- “Memory Allocation” on page 24-2
- “Memory Management Functions” on page 24-12
- “Strategies for Efficient Use of Memory” on page 24-15
- “Resolving “Out of Memory” Errors” on page 24-23

Memory Allocation

In this section...
“Memory Allocation for Arrays” on page 24-2
“Data Structures and Memory” on page 24-6

Memory Allocation for Arrays

The topics below provide information on how the MATLAB software allocates memory when working with arrays and variables. The purpose is to help you use memory more efficiently when writing code. Most of the time, however, you should not need to be concerned with these internal operations as MATLAB handles data storage for you automatically.

- “Creating and Modifying Arrays” on page 24-2
- “Copying Arrays” on page 24-3
- “Array Headers” on page 24-4
- “Function Arguments” on page 24-6

Note Any information on how the MATLAB software handles data internally is subject to change in future releases.

Creating and Modifying Arrays

When you assign a numeric or character array to a variable, MATLAB allocates a contiguous virtual block of memory and stores the array data in that block. MATLAB also stores information about the array data, such as its class and dimensions, in a separate, small block of memory called a *header*.

If you add new elements to an existing array, MATLAB expands the existing array in memory in a way that keeps its storage contiguous. This usually requires finding a new block of memory large enough to hold the expanded array. MATLAB then copies the contents of the array from its original location to this new block in memory, adds the new elements to the array in this block, and frees up the original array location in memory.

If you remove elements from an existing array, MATLAB keeps the memory storage contiguous by removing the deleted elements, and then compacting its storage in the original memory location.

Working with Large Data Sets. If you are working with large data sets, you need to be careful when increasing the size of an array to avoid getting errors caused by insufficient memory. If you expand the array beyond the available contiguous memory of its original location, MATLAB must make a copy of the array and set this copy to the new value. During this operation, there are two copies of the original array in memory. This temporarily doubles the amount of memory required for the array and increases the risk of your program running out of memory during execution. It is better to preallocate sufficient memory for the largest potential size of the array at the start. See “Preallocating Arrays” on page 23-29.

Copying Arrays

Internally, multiple variables can point to the same block of data, thus sharing that array's value. When you copy a variable to another variable (e.g., `B = A`), MATLAB makes a copy of the array reference, but not the array itself. As long as you do not modify the contents of the array, there is no need to store more than one copy of it. If you do modify any elements of the array, MATLAB makes a copy of the array and then modifies that copy.

The following example demonstrates this. Start by creating a simple script `memUsed.m` to display how much memory is currently being used by your MATLAB process. Put these two lines of code in the script:

```
[usr, sys] = memory;  
usr.MemUsedMATLAB
```

Get an initial reading of how much memory is currently being used by your MATLAB process:

```
format short eng;  
memUsed  
ans =  
    295.4977e+006
```

Create a 2000-by-2000 numeric array `A`. This uses about 32MB of memory:

```
A = magic(2000);
memUsed
ans =
    327.6349e+006
```

Make a copy of array A in B. As there is no need at this point to have two copies of the array data, MATLAB only makes a copy of the array reference. This requires no significant additional memory:

```
B = A;
memUsed
ans =
    327.6349e+006
```

Now modify B by making it one half its original size (i.e., set 1000 rows to empty). This requires that MATLAB make a copy of at least the first 1000 rows of the A array, and assign that copy to B:

```
B(1001:2000,:) = [];
format short;    size(B)
ans =
        1000         2000
```

Check the memory used again. Even though B is significantly smaller than it was originally, the amount of memory used by the MATLAB process has increased by about 16 MB (1/2 of the 32 MB originally required for A) because B could no longer remain as just a reference to A:

```
format short eng;    memUsed
ans =
    343.6421e+006
```

Array Headers

When you assign an array to a variable, MATLAB also stores information about the array (such as class and dimensions) in a separate piece of memory called a header. For most arrays, the memory required to store the header is insignificant. There is a small advantage to storing large data sets in a small

number of large arrays as opposed to a large number of small arrays. This is because the former configuration requires fewer array headers.

Structure and Cell Arrays. For structures and cell arrays, MATLAB creates a header not only for each array, but also for each field of the structure and for each cell of a cell array. Because of this, the amount of memory required to store a structure or cell array depends not only on how much data it holds, but also on how it is constructed.

For example, take a scalar structure array `S1` having fields `R`, `G`, and `B`. Each field of size 100-by-50 requires one array header to describe the overall structure, one header for each unique field name, and one header per field for the 1-by-1 structure array. This makes a total of seven array headers for the entire data structure:

```
S1.R(1:100,1:50)
S1.G(1:100,1:50)
S1.B(1:100,1:50)
```

On the other hand, take a 100-by-50 structure array `S2` in which each element has scalar fields `R`, `G`, and `B`. In this case, you need one array header to describe the overall structure, one for each unique field name, and one per field for each of the 5,000 elements of the structure, making a total of 15,004 array headers for the entire data structure:

```
S2(1:100,1:50).R
S2(1:100,1:50).G
S2(1:100,1:50).B
```

Even though `S1` and `S2` contain the same amount of data, `S1` uses significantly less space in memory. Not only is less memory required, but there is a corresponding speed benefit to using the `S1` format, as well.

See “Cell Arrays” and “Structures” under “Data Structures and Memory” on page 24-6.

Memory Usage Reported By the whos Function. The `whos` function displays the amount of memory consumed by any variable. For reasons of simplicity, `whos` reports only the memory used to store the actual data. It does not report storage for the array header, for example.

Function Arguments

MATLAB handles arguments passed in function calls in a similar way. When you pass a variable to a function, you are actually passing a reference to the data that the variable represents. As long as the input data is not modified by the function being called, the variable in the calling function and the variable in the called function point to the same location in memory. If the called function modifies the value of the input data, then MATLAB makes a copy of the original array in a new location in memory, updates that copy with the modified value, and points the input variable in the called function to this new array.

In the example below, function `myfun` modifies the value of the array passed into it. MATLAB makes a copy in memory of the array pointed to by `A`, sets variable `X` as a reference to this new array, and then sets one row of `X` to zero. The array referenced by `A` remains unchanged:

```
A = magic(500);  
myfun(A);
```

```
function myfun(X)  
X(400,:) = 0;
```

If the calling function needs the modified value of the array it passed to `myfun`, you need to return the updated array as an output of the called function, as shown here for variable `A`:

```
A = magic(500);  
A = myfun(A);  
sprintf('The new value of A is %d', A)
```

```
function Y = myfun(X)  
X(400,:) = 0;  
Y = X;
```

Data Structures and Memory

Memory requirements differ for the various types of MATLAB data structures. You may be able to reduce the amount of memory used for these structures by considering how MATLAB stores them.

Numeric Arrays

MATLAB requires 1, 2, 4, or 8 bytes to store 8-bit, 16-bit, 32-bit, and 64-bit signed and unsigned integers, respectively. For floating-point numbers, MATLAB uses 4 or 8 bytes for `single` and `double` types. To conserve memory when working with numeric arrays, MathWorks recommends that you use the smallest integer or floating-point type that will contain your data without overflowing. For more information, see “Numeric Types”.

Complex Arrays

MATLAB stores complex data as separate real and imaginary parts. If you make a copy of a complex array variable, and then modify only the real or imaginary part of the array, MATLAB creates a new array containing both real and imaginary parts.

Sparse Matrices

It is best to store matrices with values that are mostly zero in sparse format. Sparse matrices can use less memory and may also be faster to manipulate than full matrices. You can convert a full matrix to sparse format using the `sparse` function.

Compare two 1000-by-1000 matrices: `X`, a matrix of doubles with 2/3 of its elements equal to zero; and `Y`, a sparse copy of `X`. The following example shows that the sparse matrix requires approximately half as much memory:

```
whos
  Name      Size      Bytes  Class
  X         1000x1000  8000000  double array
  Y         1000x1000  4004000  double array (sparse)
```

Cell Arrays

In addition to data storage, cell arrays require a certain amount of additional memory to store information describing each cell. This information is recorded in a *header*, and there is one header for each cell of the array. You can determine the amount of memory required for a cell array header by finding the number of bytes consumed by a 1-by-1 cell that contains no data, as shown below for a 32-bit system:

```
A = {[]};      % Empty cell array
```

```
whos A
  Name      Size      Bytes  Class  Attributes
  A         1x1         60    cell
```

In this case, MATLAB shows the number of bytes required for each header in the cell array on a 32-bit system to be 60. This is the header size that is used in all of the 32-bit examples in this section. For 64-bit systems, the header size is assumed to be 112 bytes in this documentation. You can find the correct header size on a 64-bit system using the method just shown for 32 bits.

To predict the size of an entire cell array, multiply the number you have just derived for the header by the total number of cells in the array, and then add to that the number of bytes required for the data you intend to store in the array:

$$(\text{header_size} \times \text{number_of_cells}) + \text{data}$$

So a 10-by-20 cell array that contains 400 bytes of data would require 22,800 bytes of memory on a 64-bit system:

$$(112 \times 200) + 400 = 22800$$

Note While numeric arrays must be stored in contiguous memory, structures and cell arrays do not.

Example 1 – Memory Allocation for a Cell Array. The following 4-by-1 cell array records the brand name, screen size, price, and on-sale status for three laptop computers:

```
Laptops = {'SuperrrFast 89X', 'ReliablePlus G5', ...
           'UCanA4dIt 140L6'}; ...
           [single(17), single(15.4), single(14.1)]; ...
           [2499.99, 1199.99, 499.99]; ...
           [true, true, false]];
```

On a 32-bit system, the cell array header alone requires 60 bytes per cell:

4 cells * 60 bytes per cell = 240 bytes for the cell array

Calculate the memory required to contain the data in each of the four cells:

45 characters * 2 bytes per char = 90 bytes

3 doubles * 8 bytes per double = 24 bytes

3 singles * 4 bytes per single = 12 bytes

3 logicals * 1 byte per logical = 3 bytes

90 + 24 + 12 + 3 = 129 bytes for the data

Add the two, and then compare your result with the size returned by MATLAB:

240 + 129 = 369 bytes total

```
whos Laptops
  Name          Size          Bytes  Class  Attributes
  Laptops       4x1             369   cell
```

Structures

```
S.A = [];
B = whos('S');
B.bytes - 60
ans =
    64
```

Compute the memory needed for a structure array as follows:

32-bit systems: fields x ((60 x array elements) + 64) + data

64-bit systems: fields x ((112 x array elements) + 64) + data

On a 64-bit computer system, a 4-by-5 structure `Clients` with fields `Address` and `Phone` uses 4,608 bytes just for the structure:

2 fields x ((112 x 20) + 64) = 2 x (2240 + 64) = 4608 bytes

To that sum, you must add the memory required to hold the data assigned to each field. If you assign a 25-character string to `Address` and a 12-character

string to Phone in each element of the 4-by-5 Clients array, you use 1480 bytes for data:

$(25+12)$ characters * 2 bytes per char * 20 elements = 1480 bytes

Add the two and you see that the entire structure consumes 6,088 bytes of memory.

Example 1 – Memory Allocation for a Structure Array. Compute the amount of memory that would be required to store the following 6-by-5 structure array having the following four fields on a 32-bit system:

A: 5-by-8-by-6 signed 8-bit integer array
B: 1-by-200 single array
C: 30-by-30 unsigned 16-bit integer array
D: 1-by-27 character array

Construct the array:

```
A = int8(ones(5,8,6));  
B = single(1:500);  
C = uint16(magic(30));  
D = 'Company Name: MathWorks';  
  
s = struct('f1', A, 'f2', B, 'f3', C, 'f4', D);  
  
for m=1:6  
    for n=1:5  
        s(m,n)=s(1,1);  
    end  
end
```

Calculate the amount of memory required for the structure itself, and then for the data it contains:

structure = fields * ((60 * array elements) + 64) =
4 * ((60 * 30) + 64) = 7,456 bytes

data = (field1 + field2 + field3 + field4) * array elements =
(240 + 2000 + 1800 + 54) * 30 = 122,820 bytes

Add the two, and then compare your result with the size returned by MATLAB:

Total bytes calculated for structure s: $7,456 + 122,820 = 130,276$

```
whos s
```

Name	Size	Bytes	Class	Attributes
s	6x5	130036	struct	

Memory Management Functions

The following functions can help you to manage memory use while running the MATLAB software:

- `memory` displays or returns information about how much memory is available and how much is used by MATLAB. This includes the following:
 - Size of the largest single array MATLAB can create at this time.
 - Total size of the virtual address space available for data.
 - Total amount of memory used by the MATLAB process for both libraries and data.
 - Available and total Virtual Memory for the MATLAB software process.
 - Available system memory, including both physical memory and paging file.
 - Available and the total physical memory (RAM) of the computer.
- `whos` shows how much memory MATLAB currently has allocated for variables in the workspace.
- `pack` saves existing variables to disk, and then reloads them contiguously. This reduces the chances of running into problems due to memory fragmentation.
- `clear` removes variables from memory. One way to increase the amount of available memory is to periodically clear variables from memory that you no longer need.

If you use `pack` and there is still not enough free memory to proceed, you probably need to remove some of the variables you are no longer using from memory. Use `clear` to do this.

- `save selectively` stores variables to the disk. This is a useful technique when you are working with large amounts of data. Save data to the disk periodically, and then use the `clear` function to remove the saved data from memory.
- `load` reloads a data file saved with the `save` function.
- `quit` exits MATLAB and returns all allocated memory to the system. This can be useful on The Open Group UNIX systems, which do not free up

memory allocated to an application (e.g., MATLAB) until the application exits.

You can use the `save` and `load` functions in conjunction with the `quit` command to free memory by:

- 1 Saving any needed variables with the `save` function.
- 2 Quitting MATLAB to free all memory allocated to MATLAB.
- 3 Starting a new MATLAB session and loading the saved variables back into the clean MATLAB workspace.

The `whos` Function

The `whos` command can give you an idea of the memory used by MATLAB variables.

```
A = ones(10,10);
```

```
whos
```

Name	Size	Bytes	Class	Attributes
A	10x10	800	double	

Note that `whos` does not include information about

- Memory used by MATLAB (e.g., Sun Java code and plots).
- Memory used for most objects (e.g., time series, custom) .
- Memory for variables not in the calling workspace .
- Shared data copies. `whos` shows bytes used for a shared data copy even when it does not use any memory. This example shows that `whos` reports an array (A) and a shared data copy of that array (B) separately, even though the data exists only once in memory:

Store 400 MB array as A. Memory used = 381MB (715 MB – 334 MB) :

```
memory
```

```
Memory used by MATLAB: 334 MB (3.502e+008 bytes)
```

```
A = rand(5e7,1);
```

```
memory
Memory used by MATLAB:          715 MB (7.502e+008 bytes)
```

```
whos
  Name          Size          Bytes  Class  Attributes
  A            50000000x1      400000000  double
```

Create B and point it to A. Note that although whos shows both A and B, there is only one copy of the data in memory. No additional memory is consumed by assigning A to B:

```
B = A;
```

```
memory
Memory used by MATLAB:          715 MB (7.502e+008 bytes)
```

```
whos
  Name          Size          Bytes  Class  Attributes
  A            50000000x1      400000000  double
  B            50000000x1      400000000  double
```

Modifying B(1) copies all of A to B and changes the value of B(1). Memory used = 382MB (1097 MB – 715 MB). Now there are two copies of the data in memory, yet the output of whos does not change:

```
B(1) = 3;
```

```
memory
Memory used by MATLAB:          1097 MB (1.150e+009 bytes)
```

```
whos
  Name          Size          Bytes  Class  Attributes
  A            50000000x1      400000000  double
  B            50000000x1      400000000  double
```

Strategies for Efficient Use of Memory

In this section...

“Ways to Reduce the Amount of Memory Required” on page 24-15

“Using Appropriate Data Storage” on page 24-17

“How to Avoid Fragmenting Memory” on page 24-20

“Reclaiming Used Memory” on page 24-21

Ways to Reduce the Amount of Memory Required

The source of many "out of memory" problems often involves analyzing or processing an existing large set of data such as in a file or a database. This requires bringing all or part of the data set into the MATLAB software process. The following techniques deal with minimizing the required memory during this stage.

Load Only As Much Data As You Need

Only import into MATLAB as much of a large data set as you need for the problem you are trying to solve. This is not usually a problem when importing from sources such as a database, where you can explicitly search for elements matching a query. But this is a common problem with loading large flat text or binary files. Rather than loading the entire file, use the appropriate MATLAB function to load parts of files.

MAT-Files. Load part of a variable by indexing into an object that you create with the `matfile` function.

Text Files. Use the `textscan` function to access parts of a large text file by reading only the selected columns and rows. If you specify the number of rows or a repeat format number with `textscan`, MATLAB calculates the exact amount of memory required beforehand.

Binary Files. You can use low-level binary file I/O functions, such as `fread`, to access parts of any file that has a known format. For binary files of an unknown format, try using memory mapping with the `memmapfile` function.

Image, HDF, Audio, and Video Files. Many of the MATLAB functions that support loading from these types of files allow you to select portions of the data to read. For details, see the function reference pages listed in “Supported File Formats”.

Process Data By Blocks

Consider block processing, that is, processing a large data set one section at a time in a loop. Reducing the size of the largest array in a data set reduces the size of any copies or temporaries needed. You can use this technique in either of two ways:

- For a subset of applications that you can break into separate chunks and process independently.
- For applications that only rely on the state of a previous block, such as filtering.

Avoid Creating Temporary Arrays

Avoid creating large temporary variables, and also make it a practice to clear those temporary variables you do use when they are no longer needed. For example, when you create a large array of zeros, instead of saving to a temporary variable `A`, and then converting `A` to a single:

```
A = zeros(1e6,1);  
As = single(A);
```

use just the one command to do both operations:

```
A = zeros(1e6,1,'single');
```

Using the `repmat` function, array preallocation and `for` loops are other ways to work on `nondouble` data without requiring temporary storage in memory.

Use Nested Functions to Pass Fewer Arguments

When working with large data sets, be aware that MATLAB makes a temporary copy of an input variable if the called function modifies its value. This temporarily doubles the memory required to store the array, which causes MATLAB to generate an error if sufficient memory is not available.

One way to use less memory in this situation is to use nested functions. A nested function shares the workspace of all outer functions, giving the nested function access to data outside of its usual scope. In the example shown here, nested function `setrowval` has direct access to the workspace of the outer function `myfun`, making it unnecessary to pass a copy of the variable in the function call. When `setrowval` modifies the value of `A`, it modifies it in the workspace of the calling function. There is no need to use additional memory to hold a separate array for the function being called, and there also is no need to return the modified value of `A`:

```
function myfun
A = magic(500);

    function setrowval(row, value)
        A(row,:) = value;
    end

setrowval(400, 0);
disp('The new value of A(399:401,1:10) is')
A(399:401,1:10)
end
```

Using Appropriate Data Storage

MATLAB provides you with different sizes of data classes, such as `double` and `uint8`, so you do not need to use large classes to store your smaller segments of data. For example, it takes 7 KB less memory to store 1,000 small unsigned integer values using the `uint8` class than it does with `double`.

Use the Appropriate Numeric Class

The numeric class you should use in MATLAB depends on your intended actions. The default class `double` gives the best precision, but requires 8 bytes per element of memory to store. If you intend to perform complicated math such as linear algebra, you must use a floating-point class such as a `double` or `single`. The `single` class requires only 4 bytes. There are some limitations on what you can do with `singles`, but most MATLAB Math operations are supported.

If you just need to carry out simple arithmetic and you represent the original data as integers, you can use the integer classes in MATLAB. The following is

a list of numeric classes, memory requirements (in bytes), and the supported operations.

Class (Data Type)	Bytes	Supported Operations
single	4	Most math
double	8	All math
logical	1	Logical/conditional operations
int8, uint8	1	Arithmetic and some simple functions
int16, uint16	2	Arithmetic and some simple functions
int32, uint32	4	Arithmetic and some simple functions
int64, int64	8	Arithmetic and some simple functions

Reduce the Amount of Overhead When Storing Data

MATLAB arrays (implemented internally as `mxArrays`) require room to store meta information about the data in memory, such as type, dimensions, and attributes. This takes about 80 bytes per array. This overhead only becomes an issue when you have a large number (e.g., hundreds or thousands) of small `mxArrays` (e.g., scalars). The `whos` command lists the memory used by variables, but does not include this overhead.

Because simple numeric arrays (comprising one `mxArray`) have the least overhead, you should use them wherever possible. When data is too complex to store in a simple array (or matrix), you can use other data structures.

Cell arrays are comprised of separate `mxArrays` for each element. As a result, cell arrays with many small elements have a large overhead.

Structures require a similar amount of overhead per field (see the documentation on “Array Headers” on page 24-4 above). Structures with many fields and small contents have a large overhead and should be avoided. A large array of structures with numeric scalar fields requires much more memory than a structure with fields containing large numeric arrays.

Also note that while MATLAB stores numeric arrays in contiguous memory, this is not the case for structures and cell arrays.

Import Data to the Appropriate MATLAB Class

When reading data from a binary file with `fread`, it is a common error to specify only the class of the data in the file, and not the class of the data MATLAB uses once it is in the workspace. As a result, the default `double` is used even if you are reading only 8-bit values. For example,

```
fid = fopen('large_file_of_uint8s.bin', 'r');
a = fread(fid, 1e3, 'uint8');           % Requires 8k
whos a
  Name      Size      Bytes  Class  Attributes

  a         1000x1      8000  double

a = fread(fid, 1e3, 'uint8=>uint8');    % Requires 1k
whos a
  Name      Size      Bytes  Class  Attributes

  a         1000x1      1000  uint8
```

Make Arrays Sparse When Possible

If your data contains many zeros, consider using sparse arrays, which store only nonzero elements. The example below compares the space required for storage of an array of mainly zeros:

```
A = diag(1e3,1e3);    % Full matrix with ones on the diagonal
As = sparse(A)        % Sparse matrix with only nonzero elements
whos
  Name      Size      Bytes  Class

  A         1001x1001      8016008  double array
  As        1001x1001       4020      double array (sparse)
```

You can see that this array requires only approximately 4 KB to be stored as sparse, but approximately 8 MB as a full matrix. In general, for a sparse double array with `nnz` nonzero elements and `ncol` columns, the memory required is

- $16 * nnz + 8 * ncol + 8$ bytes (on a 64 bit machine)
- $12 * nnz + 4 * ncol + 4$ bytes (on a 32 bit machine)

Note that MATLAB does not support all mathematical operations on sparse arrays.

How to Avoid Fragmenting Memory

MATLAB always uses a contiguous segment of memory to store a numeric array. As you manipulate this data, however, the contiguous block can become fragmented. When memory is fragmented, there may be plenty of free space, but not enough contiguous memory to store a new large variable. Increasing fragmentation can use significantly more memory than is necessary.

Preallocate Contiguous Memory When Creating Arrays

In the course of a MATLAB session, memory can become fragmented due to dynamic memory allocation and deallocation. `for` and `while` loops that incrementally increase, or *grow*, the size of a data structure each time through the loop can add to this fragmentation as they have to repeatedly find and allocate larger blocks of memory to store the data.

To make more efficient use of your memory, preallocate a block of memory large enough to hold the matrix at its final size before entering the loop. When you preallocate memory for an array, MATLAB reserves sufficient contiguous space for the entire full-size array at the beginning of the computation. Once you have this space, you can add elements to the array without having to continually allocate new space for it in memory.

For more information on preallocation, see “Preallocating Arrays” on page 23-29.

Allocate Your Larger Arrays First

MATLAB uses a heap method of memory management. It requests memory from the operating system when there is not enough memory available in the heap to store the current variables. It reuses memory as long as the size of the memory segment required is available in the heap.

The following statements can require approximately 4.3 MB of RAM. This is because MATLAB may not be able to reuse the space previously occupied by two 1 MB arrays when allocating space for a 2.3 MB array:

```
a = rand(1e6,1);
```

```
b = rand(1e6,1);  
clear  
c = rand(2.3e6,1);
```

The simplest way to prevent overallocation of memory is to allocate the largest vectors first. These statements require only about 2.0 MB of RAM:

```
c = rand(2.3e6,1);  
clear  
a = rand(1e6,1);  
b = rand(1e6,1);
```

Long-Term Usage (Windows Systems Only)

On 32-bit Microsoft Windows, the workspace of MATLAB can fragment over time due to the fact that the Windows memory manager does not return blocks of certain types and sizes to the operating system. Clearing the MATLAB workspace does not fix this problem. You can minimize the problem by allocating the largest variables first. This cannot address, however, the eventual fragmentation of the workspace that occurs from continual use of MATLAB over many days and weeks, for example. The only solution to this is to save your work and restart MATLAB.

The `pack` command, which saves all variables to disk and loads them back, does not help with this situation.

Reclaiming Used Memory

One simple way to increase the amount of memory you have available is to clear large arrays that you no longer use.

Save Your Large Data Periodically to Disk

If your program generates very large amounts of data, consider writing the data to disk periodically. After saving that portion of the data, use the `clear` function to remove the variable from memory and continue with the data generation.

Clear Old Variables from Memory When No Longer Needed

When you are working with a very large data set repeatedly or interactively, clear the old variable first to make space for the new variable. Otherwise, MATLAB requires temporary storage of equal size before overriding the variable. For example,

```
a = rand(100e6,1)           % 800 MB array
b = rand(100e6,1)           % New 800 MB array
Error using rand
Out of memory. Type HELP MEMORY for your options.

clear a
a = rand(100e6,1)           % New 800 MB array
```

Resolving “Out of Memory” Errors

In this section...

“General Suggestions for Reclaiming Memory” on page 24-23

“Setting the Process Limit” on page 24-24

“Disabling Java VM on Startup” on page 24-25

“Increasing System Swap Space” on page 24-26

“Using the 3GB Switch on Windows Systems” on page 24-26

“Freeing Up System Resources on Windows Systems” on page 24-27

General Suggestions for Reclaiming Memory

The MATLAB software generates an Out of Memory message whenever it requests a segment of memory from the operating system that is larger than what is currently available. When you see the Out of Memory message, use any of the techniques discussed under “Strategies for Efficient Use of Memory” on page 24-15 to help optimize the available memory. If the Out of Memory message still appears, you can try any of the following:

- Compress data to reduce memory fragmentation.
- If possible, break large matrices into several smaller matrices so that less memory is used at any one time.
- If possible, reduce the size of your data.
- Make sure that there are no external constraints on the memory accessible to MATLAB. (On The Open Group UNIX³ systems, use the `limit` command to check).
- Increase the size of the swap file. We recommend that you configure your system with twice as much swap space as you have RAM. See “Increasing System Swap Space” on page 24-26, below.
- Add more memory to the system.

3. UNIX is a registered trademark of The Open Group in the United States and other countries.

Setting the Process Limit

The platforms and operating systems that MATLAB supports have different memory characteristics and limitations. In particular, the *process limit* is the maximum amount of virtual memory a single process (or application) can address. On 32-bit systems, this is the most important factor limiting data set size. The process limit must be large enough for MATLAB to store all of the data it is to process, any MATLAB program files, the MATLAB executable itself, and additional state information.

Where possible, choose an operating system that maximizes this number, that is, a 64-bit operating system. The following is a list of MATLAB supported operating systems and their process limits.

Operating System	Process Limit
32-bit Microsoft Windows XP, Windows Vista™, Windows 7	2 GB
32-bit Windows XP with 3 GB boot.ini switch or 32-bit Windows Vista or Windows 7 with increaseuserva set (see later)	3 GB
32-bit Linux (Linux is a registered trademark of Linus Torvalds)	~3 GB
64-bit Windows or Linux running 32-bit MATLAB	≤ 4 GB
64-bit Windows, Apple Macintosh OS X, or Linux running 64-bit MATLAB	8 TB

To verify the current process limit of MATLAB on Windows systems, use the `memory` function.

```
Maximum possible array:          583 MB (6.111e+008 bytes) *
Memory available for all arrays: 1515 MB (1.588e+009 bytes) **
Memory used by MATLAB:          386 MB (4.050e+008 bytes)
Physical Memory (RAM):          2014 MB (2.112e+009 bytes)
```

* Limited by contiguous virtual address space available.

** Limited by virtual address space available.

When called with one output variable, the `memory` function returns or displays the following values. See the function reference for `memory` to find out how to use it with more than one output.

memory Return Value	Description
<code>MaxPossibleArrayBytes</code>	Size of the largest single array MATLAB can currently create
<code>MemAvailableAllArrays</code>	Total size of the virtual address space available for data
<code>MemUsedMATLAB</code>	Total amount of memory used by the MATLAB process

View the value against the Total entry in the Virtual Memory section. It is shown as 2 GB in the table, which is the default on Windows XP systems. On UNIX systems, see the `ulimit` command to view and set user limits including virtual memory.

Disabling Java VM on Startup

On UNIX systems, you can increase the workspace size by approximately 400 MB if you start MATLAB without the Sun Java VM. To do this, use the command line option `-nojvm` to start MATLAB. This also increases the size of the largest contiguous block (and therefore the largest matrix) by about the same.

Using `-nojvm` comes with a penalty in that you will lose many features that rely on the Java software, including the entire development environment.

Starting MATLAB with the `-nodesktop` option does not save any substantial amount of memory.

Shutting down other applications and services (e.g., using `msconfig` on Windows systems) can help if total system memory is the limiting factor, but usually process limit (on 32-bit machines) is the main limiting factor.

Increasing System Swap Space

The total memory available to applications on your computer is comprised of physical memory (RAM), plus a *page file*, or *swap file*, on disk. The swap file can be very large (e.g., 16 TB on 32-bit Windows, 512 TB on 64-bit Windows). The operating system allocates the virtual memory of each process to physical memory or to the swap file, depending on the needs of the system and other processes.

Most systems allow you to control the size of your swap file. The steps involved depend on the system you are running on.

Note There is no interface for directly controlling the swap space on Macintosh OS X systems.

Windows Systems

Use the Windows Control Panel to change the size of the virtual memory paging file on your system. For more information, refer to the Windows help.

Linux Systems

You can change your swap space by using the `mkswap` and `swapon` commands. For more information on the above commands, type `man` followed by the command name at the Linux prompt.

Using the 3GB Switch on Windows Systems

Microsoft Windows XP systems can allocate 3 GB (instead of the default 2 GB) to processes, if you set an appropriate switch in the `boot.ini` file of the system. MathWorks recommends that you only do this with Windows XP SP2 systems or later. This gives an extra 1 GB of virtual memory to MATLAB, not contiguous with the rest of the memory. This enables you to store more data, but not larger arrays, as these are limited by contiguous space. This is mostly beneficial if you have enough RAM (e.g., 3 or 4 GB) to use it.

After setting the switch, confirm the new value of the virtual memory after restarting your computer and using the `memory` function.

```
[userview systemview] = memory;  
  
systemview.VirtualAddressSpace  
ans =  
    Available: 1.6727e+009    % Virtual memory available to MATLAB.  
    Total: 2.1474e+009    % Total virtual memory
```

For more documentation on this option, use the following URL:

<http://support.microsoft.com/kb/291988>

Similarly, on machines running Microsoft Windows Vista and Windows 7, you can achieve the same effect by using the command:

```
BCDEdit /set increaseuserva 3072
```

For more information on this option, go to the following website:

<http://msdn.microsoft.com>

Freeing Up System Resources on Windows Systems

There are no functions implemented to manipulate the way MATLAB handles Microsoft Windows system resources. Windows systems use these resources to track fonts, windows, and screen objects. Resources can be depleted by using multiple figure windows, multiple fonts, or several UI controls. One way to free up system resources is to close all inactive windows. Windows system icons still use resources.

Custom Help and Documentation

- “Create Help for Classes” on page 25-2
- “Check Which Programs Have Help” on page 25-8
- “Create Help Summary Files (Contents.m)” on page 25-11
- “Display Custom Documentation” on page 25-14
- “Display Custom Examples” on page 25-23

Create Help for Classes

In this section...

“Help Text from the doc Command” on page 25-2

“Custom Help Text” on page 25-3

Help Text from the doc Command

When you use the `doc` command to display help for a class, MATLAB automatically displays information that it derives from the class definition.

For example, create a class definition file named `someClass.m` with several properties and methods, as shown.

```
classdef someClass
    %someClass Summary of this class goes here
    % Detailed explanation goes here

    properties
        One    % First public property
        Two    % Second public property
    end
    properties (Access=private)
        Three % Do not show this property
    end

    methods
        function obj = someClass
            % Summary of constructor
        end
        function myMethod(obj)
            % Summary of myMethod
            disp(obj)
        end
    end
end
methods (Static)
    function myStaticMethod
        % Summary of myStaticMethod
    end
end
```

```

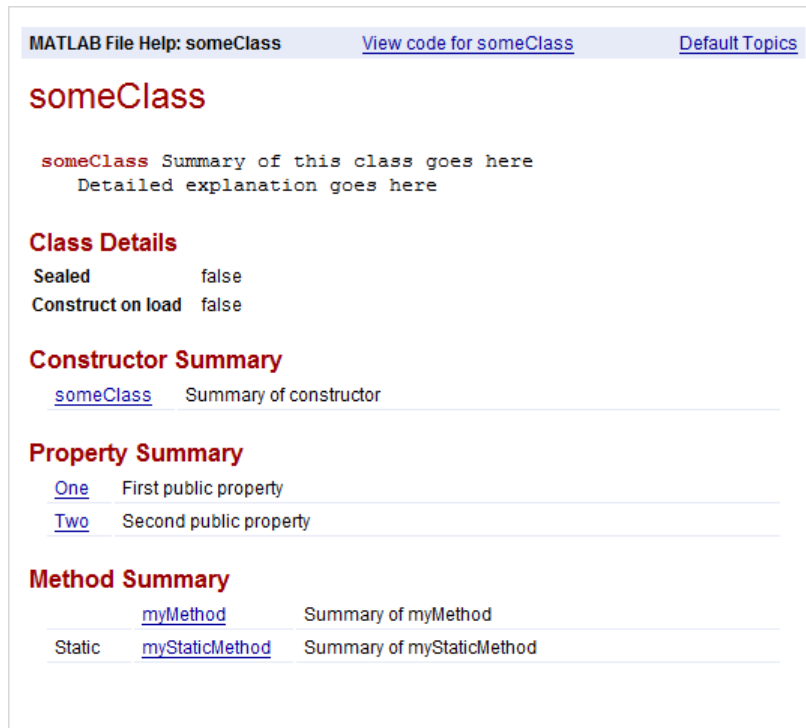
        end
    end

end

```

View the help text and the details from the class definition using the `doc` command.

```
doc someClass
```



The screenshot shows the MATLAB File Help interface for a class named `someClass`. The title bar includes "MATLAB File Help: someClass", a link to "View code for someClass", and a link to "Default Topics". The main content area is titled "someClass" in red. Below the title, there is a summary: `someClass` Summary of this class goes here, followed by "Detailed explanation goes here". The "Class Details" section lists "Sealed" as false and "Construct on load" as false. The "Constructor Summary" section has a link to `someClass` with the text "Summary of constructor". The "Property Summary" section lists two properties: "One" (First public property) and "Two" (Second public property). The "Method Summary" section lists two methods: `myMethod` (Summary of myMethod) and a static method `myStaticMethod` (Summary of myStaticMethod).

Custom Help Text

You can add information about your classes, methods, and properties that both the `doc` command and the `help` command include in their displays. The `doc` command displays the help text at the top of the generated HTML pages, above the information derived from the class definition. The `help` command displays the help text in the Command Window. For details, see:

- “Classes” on page 25-4
- “Methods” on page 25-5
- “Properties” on page 25-6

Classes

Create help text for classes by including comments on lines immediately after the `classdef` statement in a file. For example, create a file named `myClass.m`, as shown.

```
classdef myClass
    % myClass    Summary of myClass
    % This is the first line of the description of myClass.
    % Descriptions can include multiple lines of text.
    %
    % myClass Properties:
    %   a - Description of a
    %   b - Description of b
    %
    % myClass Methods:
    %   doThis - Description of doThis
    %   doThat - Description of doThat

    properties
        a
        b
    end

    methods
        function obj = myClass
            end
        function doThis(obj)
            end
        function doThat(obj)
            end
    end
end
```


Lists and descriptions of the properties and methods in the initial comment block are optional. If you include comment lines that contain the name of your class followed by `Properties` or `Methods` and a colon (:), then MATLAB creates hyperlinks to the help for the properties or methods.

View the help text for the class in the Command Window using the `help` command.

```
help myClass
```

```
myClass Summary of myClass
This is the first line of the description of myClass.
Descriptions can include multiple lines of text.

myClass Properties:
  a - Description of a
  b - Description of b

myClass Methods:
  doThis - Description of doThis
  doThat - Description of doThat
```

Methods

Create help for a method by inserting comments immediately after the function definition statement. For example, modify the class definition file `myClass.m` to include help for the `doThis` method.

```
function doThis(obj)
% doThis Do this thing
% Here is some help text for the doThis method.
%
% See also DOTHAT.

disp(obj)
end
```

View the help text for the method in the Command Window using the `help` command. Specify both the class name and method name, separated by a dot.

```
help myClass.doThis
```

```
doThis Do this thing
      Here is some help text for the doThis method.
```

```
See also doThat.
```

Properties

There are two ways to create help for properties:

- Insert comment lines above the property definition. Use this approach for multiline help text.
- Add a single-line comment next to the property definition.

Comments above the property definition have precedence over a comment next to the property definition.

For example, modify the property definitions in the class definition file `myClass.m`.

```
properties
    a          % First property of myClass

    % b - Second property of myClass
    % The description for b has several
    % lines of text.
    b          % Other comment
end
```

View the help for properties in the Command Window using the `help` command. Specify both the class name and property name, separated by a dot.

```
help myClass.a
```

```
a - First property of myClass
```

```
help myClass.b
```

```
b - Second property of myClass
The description for b has several
lines of text.
```

See Also

[help](#) | [doc](#)


Concepts

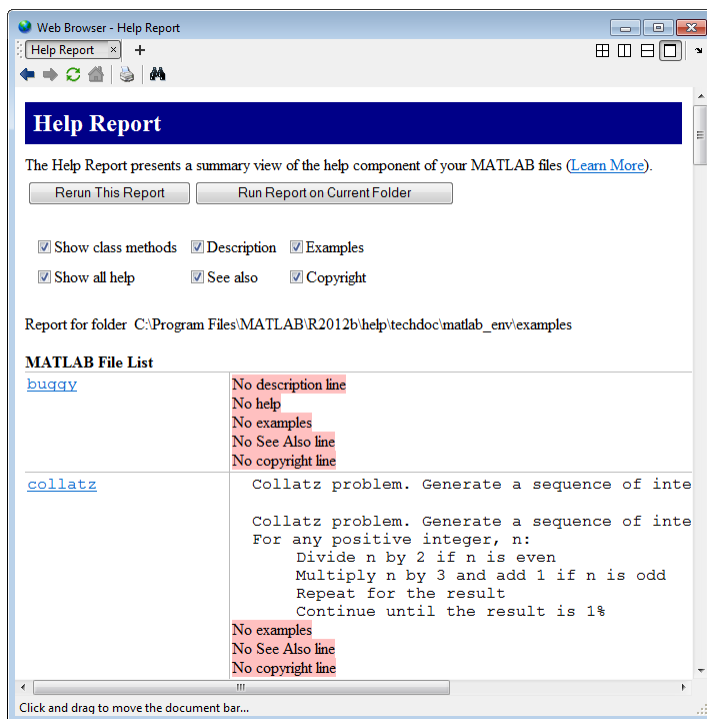
- “Classes in the MATLAB Language”
- “User-Defined Classes”

Check Which Programs Have Help

To determine which of your programs files have help text, you can use the Help Report.

In the Help Report, you specify a set of help components for which you want to search, such as examples or See Also lines. For each file searched, MATLAB displays the help text for the components it finds. Otherwise, MATLAB displays a highlighted message to indicate that the component is missing.

To generate a Help Report, in the Current Folder browser, navigate to the folder you want to check, click , and then select **Reports > Help Report**. The Help Report displays in the MATLAB Web browser.



Note You cannot run reports when the path is a UNC (Universal Naming Convention) path; that is, a path that starts with \\ . Instead, use an actual hard drive on your system, or a mapped network drive.

This table describes the available options for Help Reports.

Help Report Option	Description
Show class methods	Include methods in the report. If you do not select this option, then the report includes results for classes, but not for methods within a class definition file.
Show all help	<p>Display all help text found in each file. If you also select individual help components, such as Description, then help text appears twice in the report for each file: once for the overall help text, and once for the component.</p> <p>If your program has the same name as other programs on the MATLAB search path, then the <code>help</code> command generates a list of those <i>overloaded</i> items and automatically adds links to the help for those items.</p>
Description	Check for an initial, nonempty comment line in the file. This line is sometimes called the H1 line.
Examples	Check for examples in the help text. The Help Report performs a case-insensitive search for a help line with a single-word variant of <code>example</code> . The report displays that line and subsequent nonblank comment lines, along with the initial line number.

Help Report Option	Description
See Also	<p>Check for a line in the help that begins with the string <code>See also</code>. The report displays the text and the initial line number.</p> <p>If the programs listed after <code>See also</code> are on the search path, then the <code>help</code> command generates hyperlinks to the help for those programs. The Help Report indicates when a program in the <code>See also</code> line is not on the path.</p>
Copyright	<p>Check for a comment line in the file that begins with the string <code>Copyright</code>. When there is a copyright line, the report also checks whether the end year is current. The date check requires that the copyright line includes either a single year (such as 2012) or a range of years with no spaces (such as 2001-2012).</p> <p>The recommended practice is to include a range of years from the year you created the file to the current year.</p>

Related Examples

- “Add Help for Your Program” on page 15-5
- “Create Help Summary Files (Contents.m)” on page 25-11

Create Help Summary Files (Contents.m)

In this section...

“What Is a Contents.m File?” on page 25-11

“Create a Contents.m File” on page 25-12

“Check an Existing Contents.m File” on page 25-12

What Is a Contents.m File?

A Contents.m file provides a summary of the programs in a particular folder. The `help`, `doc`, and `ver` functions refer to Contents.m files to display information about folders.

Contents.m files contain only comment lines. The first two lines are headers that describe the folder. Subsequent lines list the program files in the folder, along with their descriptions. Optionally, you can group files and include category descriptions. For example, view the functions available in the `codetools` folder:

```
help codetools
```

```
Commands for creating and debugging code
MATLAB Version 8.0 (R2012b) 02-Oct-2012
```

```
Editing and publishing
```

```
edit      - Edit or create a file
grabcode  - Copy MATLAB code from published HTML
mlint     - Check files for possible problems
notebook  - Open MATLAB Notebook in Microsoft Word
publish   - Publish file containing cells to output file
snapnow   - Force snapshot of image for published document
```

```
Directory tools
```


```
mlintrpt  - Run mlint for file or folder, reporting results in browser
visdiff   - Compare two files (text, MAT, or binary) or folders
```

```
...
```

If you do *not* want others to see a summary of your program files, place an empty `Contents.m` file in the folder. An empty `Contents.m` file causes `help foldername` to report `No help found for foldername`. Without a `Contents.m` file, the `help` and `doc` commands display a generated list of all program files in the folder.

Create a Contents.m File

When you have a set of existing program files in a folder, the easiest way to create a `Contents.m` file is to use the Contents Report. The primary purpose of the Contents Report is to check that an existing `Contents.m` file is up-to-date. However, it also checks whether `Contents.m` exists, and can generate a new file based on the contents of the folder. Follow these steps to create a file:


- 1 In the Current Folder browser, navigate to the folder that contains your program files.
- 2 Click , and then select **Reports > Contents Report**.
- 3 In the report, where prompted to make a `Contents.m` file, click **yes**. The new file includes the names of all program files in the folder, using the description line (the first nonempty comment line) whenever it is available.
- 4 Open the generated file in the Editor, and modify the file so that the second comment line is in this form:

```
% Version xxx dd-mmm-yyyy
```

Do not include any spaces in the date. This comment line enables the `ver` function to detect the version information.

Check an Existing Contents.m File

Verify whether your `Contents.m` file reflects the current contents of the folder using the Contents Report, as follows:

- 1 In the Current Folder browser, navigate to the folder that contains the `Contents.m` file.
- 2 Click , and then select **Reports > Contents Report**.

Note You cannot run reports when the path is a UNC (Universal Naming Convention) path; that is, a path that starts with \\ . Instead, use an actual hard drive on your system, or a mapped network drive.

The Contents Report performs the following checks.

Check Whether the Contents.m File...	Details
Exists	If there is no Contents.m file in the folder, you can create one from the report.
Includes all programs in the folder	Missing programs appear in gray highlights. You do not need to add programs that you do not want to expose to end users.
Incorrectly lists nonexistent files	Listed programs that are not in the folder appear in pink highlights.
Matches the program file descriptions	The report compares file descriptions in Contents.m with the first nonempty comment line in the corresponding file. Discrepancies appear in pink highlights. You can update either the program file or the Contents.m file.
Uses consistent spacing between file names and descriptions	Fix the alignment by clicking fix spacing at the top of the report.

You can make all the suggested changes by clicking **fix all**, or open the file in the Editor by clicking **edit Contents.m**.

See Also

doc | help | ver

Display Custom Documentation

In this section...

“Overview” on page 25-14

“Identify Your Documentation (info.xml)” on page 25-15

“Create a Table of Contents (helptoc.xml)” on page 25-18

“Build a Search Database” on page 25-20

“Address Validation Errors for info.xml Files” on page 25-21

Overview

If you create a toolbox that works with MathWorks products—even if it only contains a few functions—you can include with it HTML documentation files. Providing HTML files for your toolbox allows you to include figures, diagrams, screen captures, equations, and formatting to make your toolbox help more usable.

To display custom documentation:

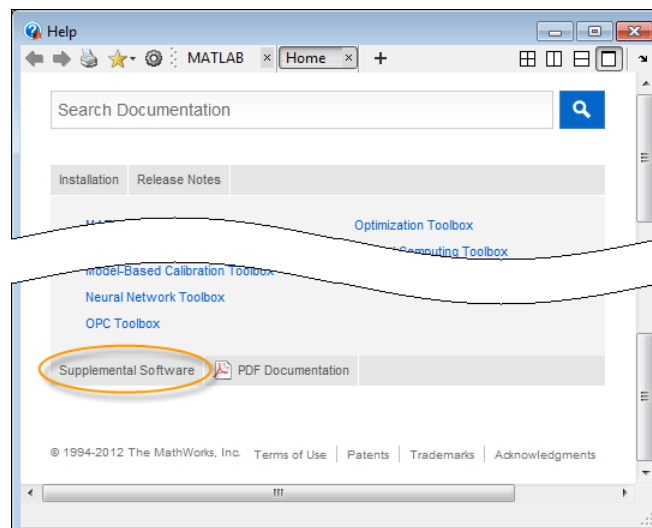
- 1 Create HTML help files. Store these files in a common folder, such as an `html` subfolder relative to your primary program files. Documentation sets often contain:
 - A roadmap page (that is, an initial landing page for the documentation)
 - Examples and topics that explain how to use the toolbox
 - Function or block reference pages

You can create HTML files in any text editor or Web publishing software. MATLAB includes functionality to convert `.m` files to formatted HTML files. For more information, see “Publish MATLAB Code” on page 18-4.

- 2 Create an `info.xml` file, which enables MATLAB to find and identify your documentation files.
- 3 Create a `helptoc.xml` file, which creates a Table of Contents for your documentation to display in the **Contents** pane of the Supplemental

Software browser. Store this file in the folder that contains your HTML files.

- 4 Optionally, create a search database for your HTML help files using the `builddocsearchdb` function.
- 5 View your documentation.
 - a In the Help browser, navigate to the home page.
 - b At the bottom of the home page, click **Supplemental Software**.



The Supplemental Software browser opens in a new window.

Identify Your Documentation (info.xml)

The `info.xml` file specifies the name and icon to display for your documentation set. It also identifies where to find your HTML help files and the `helptoc.xml` file. You must create a file named `info.xml` for each toolbox you document.

The following listing is a template for `info.xml` that you can adapt to describe your toolbox:

```
<productinfo xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
```

```

xsi:noNamespaceSchemaLocation="optional">
<?xml-stylesheet type="text/xsl"href="optional"?>

<matlabrelease>2012b</matlabrelease>
<name>MyToolbox</name>
<type>toolbox</type>
<icon></icon>
<help_location>html</help_location>
<help_contents_icon>$toolbox/matlab/icons/bookicon.gif</help_contents_icon>

</productinfo>

```

The following table describes required elements of the `info.xml` file.

XML Tag	Description	Value in Template	Notes
<code><matlabrelease></code>	Release of MATLAB	R2012b	Not displayed in the browser, but indicates when you added help files.
<code><name></code>	Title of toolbox	MyToolbox	The name of your toolbox that appears in the browser Contents pane.
<code><type></code>	Label for the toolbox	toolbox	Allowable values: matlab, toolbox, simulink, blockset, links_targets, other.
<code><icon></code>	Icon for the Start button (obsolete)		No longer used, but the <code><icon></code> element is required to parse the <code>info.xml</code> file.

XML Tag	Description	Value in Template	Notes
<help_location>	Location of help files	html	Name of subfolder containing helptoc.xml and HTML help files you provide for your toolbox. If not a subfolder, specify the path to help_location relative to the info.xml file. If you provide HTML help files for multiple toolboxes, each help_location must be a different folder.
<help_contents_icon>	Icon to display in Contents pane	\$toolbox/matlab/icons/bookicon.gif	

When you set define the `info.xml` file, make sure that:

- You include all required elements.
- The entries are in the same order as in the preceding list.
- File and folder names in the XML exactly match the names of your files and folders and use upper and lower case letters identically.
- The `info.xml` file is in a folder on the MATLAB search path.

Note MATLAB parses the `info.xml` file and displays your documentation when you add the folder that contains `info.xml` to the path. If you created an `info.xml` file in a folder already on the path, remove the folder from the path and then add it again, so that MATLAB parses the file. Make sure that the folder you are adding is *not* your current folder.

You can include comments in your `info.xml` file, such as copyright and contact information. Create comments by enclosing the text on a line with between `<!--` and `-->` markup.

Create a Table of Contents (helptoc.xml)

The `helptoc.xml` file defines a hierarchy of entries within the **Contents** pane of the Supplemental Software browser. Each `<tocitem>` entry in the `helptoc.xml` file references one of your HTML help files.

Place the `helptoc.xml` file in the folder that contains your HTML documentation files. This folder is designated as `<help_location>` in your `info.xml` file.

For example, suppose you have created the following HTML files:

- A roadmap or starting page for your toolbox, `mytoolbox.html`.
- A page that lists your functions, `funclist.html`.
- Three function reference pages: `firstfx.html`, `secondfx.html`, and `thirdfx.html`.
- An example, `myexample.html`.

Include file names and descriptions in a `helptoc.xml` file as follows:

```
<?xml version='1.0' encoding="utf-8"?>
<toc version="2.0">

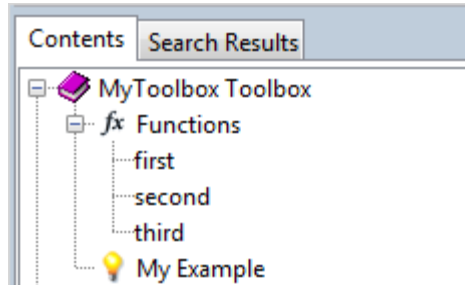
  <tocitem target="mytoolbox.html">My Toolbox
    <tocitem target="funclist.html" image="HelpIcon.FUNCTION">Functions
      <tocitem target="firstfx.html">first</tocitem>
      <tocitem target="secondfx.html">second</tocitem>
      <tocitem target="thirdfx.html">third</tocitem>
    </tocitem>
    <tocitem target="myexample.html"
      image="HelpIcon.EXAMPLES">My Example
    </tocitem>
  </tocitem>

</toc>
```

Within the top-level `<toc>` element, the nested `<tocitem>` elements define the structure of your table of contents. Each `<tocitem>` element has a `target` attribute that provides the file name. `<tocitem>` elements also can include

an `image` attribute to specify icons. Be sure that file and path names exactly match those of the files and folders, including upper- and lower-case letters.

The elements in the previous `helptoc.xml` and `info.xml` files correspond to the following display in the browser.









If your HTML pages include anchor elements, you can refer to an anchor in the `target` attribute of a `<tocitem>` element. In HTML files, anchors are of the form `Any content`. In the `helptoc.xml` file, you can create a link to that anchor using a pound sign (`#`), such as

```
<tocitem target="mypage.html#anchorid">Descriptive text</tocitem>
```

Icons for Table of Contents Entries

You can display icons for your **Contents** pane entries within your toolbox. To use standard MathWorks icons, include any of the following icons as `image` attributes for `<tocitem>` elements.

Icon	Use For	Image Tag String
	Getting Started Guides	<code>HelpIcon.GETTING_STARTED</code>
	User Guides	<code>HelpIcon.USER_GUIDE</code>
	Functions	<code>HelpIcon.FUNCTION</code>
	Blocks	<code>HelpIcon.BLOCK</code>

Icon	Use For	Image Tag String
	Examples	HelpIcon.EXAMPLES
	Release Notes	HelpIcon.RELEASE_NOTES

Include the icons as `image` attributes in top-level TOC entries. If you provide a roadmap page, also include icons for second-level TOC entries under the roadmap.

Template for helptoc.xml

A complete template for `helptoc.xml` files that includes `<tocitem>` elements for all standard content types, such as Getting Started, User Guide, and Release Notes, is located in an examples folder included with the MATLAB documentation. To copy the template file, `helptoc_template.xml`, to your current folder and edit the copy, click [here](#) or run the following code:

```
copyfile(fullfile(matlabroot,'help','techdoc','matlab_env', ...
    'examples','templates','helptoc_template.xml'),pwd), ...
fileattrib('helptoc_template.xml','+w')
edit('helptoc_template.xml')
```

Build a Search Database

To support searches of your documentation, create a search database using the `bulddocsearchdb` function. When using this function, specify the complete path to the folder that contains your HTML files.

For example, suppose your HTML files are in `C:\MATLAB\MyToolbox\html`. This command creates a searchable database:

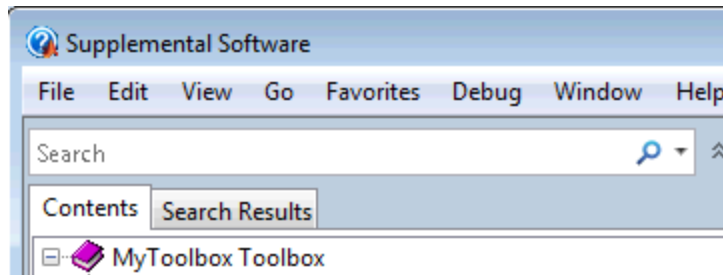
```
bulddocsearchdb('C:\MATLAB\MyToolbox\html')
```

`bulddocsearchdb` creates a subfolder of `C:\MATLAB\MyToolbox\html` named `helpsearch`, which contains three files:

- A file called `deletable`.
- A file called `segments`.

- A file having a `cfs` extension with a name that varies.

You can search for terms in your toolbox from the search bar of the Supplemental Software browser.



Address Validation Errors for `info.xml` Files

- “About XML File Validation” on page 25-21
- “Entities Missing or Out of Order in `info.xml`” on page 25-22
- “Unrelated `info.xml` File” on page 25-22
- “Invalid Constructs in `info.xml` File” on page 25-22
- “Outdated `info.xml` File for a MathWorks Product” on page 25-22

About XML File Validation

When MATLAB finds an `info.xml` file on the search path or in the current folder, it automatically validates the file against the supported schema. If there is an invalid construct in the `info.xml` file, MATLAB displays an error in the Command Window. The error is typically of the form:

```
Warning: File <yourxmlfile.xml> did not validate.
...
```

An `info.xml` validation error can occur when you start MATLAB or add folders to the search path.

The following sections describe the primary causes of an XML file validation error and information to address them.

Entities Missing or Out of Order in info.xml

If you do not list required XML elements in the prescribed order, you receive an XML validation error:

Often, errors result from incorrect ordering of XML tags. Correct the error by updating the `info.xml` file contents to follow the guidelines in the MATLAB help documentation.

For a description of the elements you need in an `info.xml` file and their required ordering, see “Identify Your Documentation (`info.xml`)” on page 25-15.

Unrelated info.xml File

Suppose you have a file named `info.xml` that has nothing to do with custom documentation. Because this `info.xml` file is an unrelated file, if the file causes an error, the validation error is irrelevant. In this case, the error is not actually causing any problems, so you can safely ignore it. To prevent the error message from reoccurring, rename the offending `info.xml` file, or ensure that the file is not on the search path or in the current folder.

Invalid Constructs in info.xml File

If the purpose of the `info.xml` file is to display custom documentation, correct the reported problem. Use the message in the error to isolate the problem or use any validator. One validator you can use is from the W3C® at <http://www.w3.org/2001/03/webdata/xsv>. For more information about the structure of the `info.xml` file, consult its schema, located at `matlabroot/sys/namespace/info/v1/info.xsd`.

Outdated info.xml File for a MathWorks Product

If you have an `info.xml` file from a different version of MATLAB, that file could contain constructs that are not valid with your version. To identify an `info.xml` file from another version, look at the full path names reported in the error message. The path usually includes a version number, for example, `... \MATLAB\R14\...`. In this situation, the error is not actually causing any problems, so you can safely ignore the error message. To ensure that the error does not reoccur, remove the offending `info.xml` file, or ensure that the file is not on the search path or in the current folder.

Display Custom Examples

In this section...

“How to Display Examples” on page 25-23

“Elements of the demos.xml File” on page 25-26

“Thumbnail Images” on page 25-27

How to Display Examples

If you have videos, published program scripts, or other files that illustrate the use of your programs, you can display these examples in a MATLAB browser, as follows.

- 1 Create your example files.

Tip MATLAB includes a publishing feature that converts scripts or functions to formatted HTML files, which you can display as examples. For information about creating these HTML files, see “Publish MATLAB Code” on page 18-4.

- 2 Create a `demos.xml` file that describes the name, type, and display information for your examples.

For example, suppose you have a toolbox named `My Sample`, which contains a script named `my_example` that you published to HTML. This `demos.xml` file allows you to display `my_example` and a MATLAB video:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="utf-8"?>
<demos>
  <name>My Sample</name>
  <type>toolbox</type>
  <icon>HelpIcon.DEMOS</icon>
  <description>This text appears on the main page for your examples.</description>
  <website><a href="http://www.mathworks.com">Link to your Web site</a></website>

  <demosession>
```

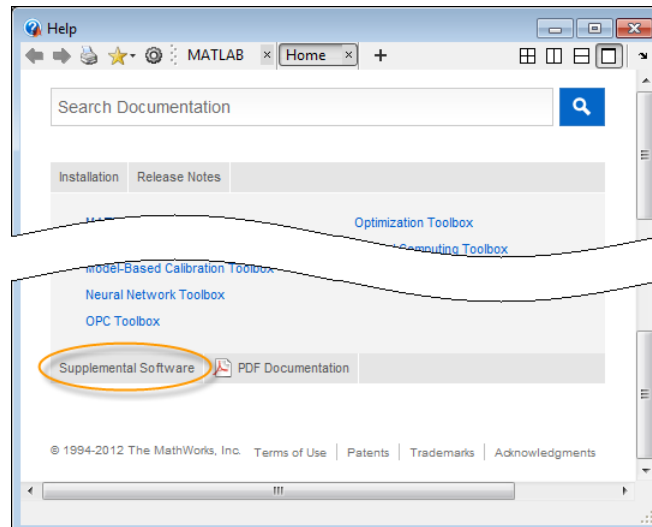
```
<label>First Section</label>
<demoitem>
  <label>My Example Title</label>
  <type>M-file</type>
  <source>my_example</source>
</demoitem>
</demosection>

<demosection>
  <label> Second Section</label>
  <demoitem>
    <label>My Video (4 min, 7 sec)</label>
    <type>video</type>
    <callback>
      playbackdemo('WorkingInTheDevelopmentEnvironment', 'toolbox/matlab/web/demos');
    </callback>
  </demoitem>
</demosection>

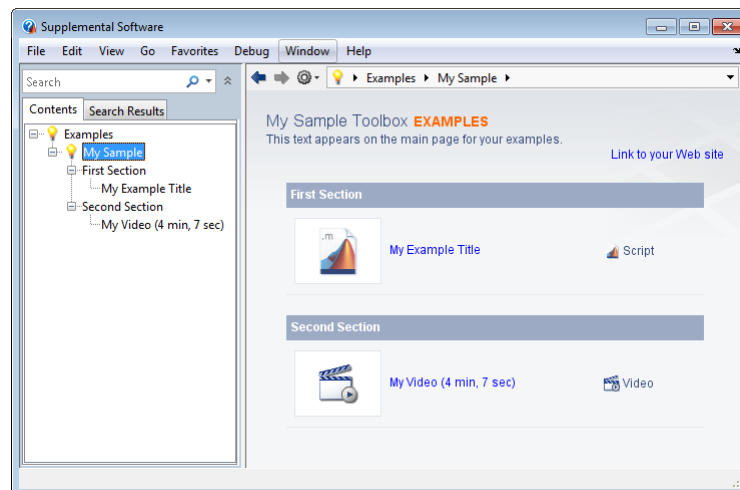
</demos>
```

Note <demosection> elements are optional.

- 3 View your examples.
 - a In the Help browser, navigate to the home page.
 - b At the bottom of the home page, click **Supplemental Software**.



The Supplemental Software browser opens in a new window. The **Contents** pane contains an **Examples** node, which contains the entries corresponding to your `demos.xml` file.



Tip If your examples do not appear, refresh the browser. In the **Contents** pane, right-click **Examples**, and then select **Refresh Examples**.

Alternatively, force a refresh by removing the folder that contains `demos.xml` from the path, and then adding it back. When you add the folder back to the path, make sure it is not the current folder.

Elements of the `demos.xml` File

- “General Information in `<demos>`” on page 25-26
- “Categories Using `<demosession>` (Optional)” on page 25-27
- “Information About Each Example in `<demositem>`” on page 25-27

General Information in `<demos>`

Within the `demos.xml` file, the root tag is `<demos>`. This tag includes elements that determine the contents of the main page for your examples.

XML Tag	Notes
<code><name></code>	Name of your toolbox or collection of examples.
<code><type></code>	Possible values are <code>matlab</code> , <code>simulink</code> , <code>toolbox</code> , or <code>blockset</code> .
<code><icon></code>	Icon for your example. You can use a standard icon, <code>HelpIcon.DEMOS</code> , or provide a custom icon by specifying a path to the icon relative to the location of the <code>demos.xml</code> file.
<code><description></code>	The description that appears on the main page for your examples.
<code><website></code>	(Optional) Link to a Web site. For example, MathWorks examples include a link to the product page at http://www.mathworks.com .

Categories Using `<demosection>` (Optional)

Define categories for your examples by including a `<demosection>` for each category. If you include *any* categories, then *all* examples must be in categories.

Each `<demosection>` element contains a `<label>` that provides the category name, and the associated `<demoitem>` elements.

Information About Each Example in `<demoitem>`

XML Tag	Notes
<code><label></code>	Defines the title to display in the browser.
<code><type></code>	Possible values are M-file, model, M-GUI, video, or other.
<code><source></code>	If <code><type></code> is M-file, model, M-GUI, then <code><source></code> is the name of the associated .m file or model file, with no extension. Otherwise, do not include a <code><source></code> element, but include a <code><callback></code> element.
<code><file></code>	Use this element only for examples with a <code><type></code> value other than M-file when you want to display an HTML file that describes the example. Specify a relative path from the location of <code>demos.xml</code> .
<code><callback></code>	Use this element only for examples with a <code><type></code> value of video or other to specify an executable file or a MATLAB command to run the example.
<code><dependency></code>	(Optional) Specifies other products required to run the example, such as another toolbox. The text must match a product name specified in an <code>info.xml</code> file that is on the search path or in the current folder.

Thumbnail Images

If your example has an HTML file to describe it, you can include a *thumbnail*, a small image typifying the example. The `demos.xml` file does not specify thumbnail images directly.

To include a thumbnail, supply a `.png` image file in the same folder as the HTML file. Keep the image size to within 96-by-64 pixels (width-by-height). Give the `.png` file the same name as the HTML file. Thus, if the `<file>` element for your example is `./html/my_example.html`, then your thumbnail must be named `my_example.png` and reside in the same folder.

When you publish a script to HTML within MATLAB, you get a `.png` thumbnail file in the correct place with the correct name by default.

Source Control Interface

The source control interface provides access to your source control system from the MATLAB desktop. Source control systems, also known as version control, revision control, configuration management, and file management systems, are platform dependent—the topics for the Microsoft Windows platforms appear first, followed by the topics for the UNIX platforms.

- “Source Control Interface on Microsoft Windows” on page 26-2
- “Set Up Source Control (Microsoft Windows)” on page 26-3
- “Check Files In and Out (Microsoft Windows)” on page 26-11
- “Additional Source Control Actions (Microsoft Windows)” on page 26-14
- “Access Source Control from Editors (Microsoft Windows)” on page 26-23
- “Troubleshoot Source Control Problems (Microsoft Windows)” on page 26-24
- “Source Control Interface on UNIX Platforms” on page 26-26
- “Specify Source Control System (UNIX Platforms)” on page 26-27
- “Check In Files (UNIX Platforms)” on page 26-30
- “Check Out Files (UNIX Platforms)” on page 26-32
- “Undo the Checkout (UNIX Platforms)” on page 26-35

Source Control Interface on Microsoft Windows

If you use source control systems to manage your files, you can interface with the systems to perform source control actions from within the MATLAB, Simulink, and Stateflow® products. Use menu items in the MATLAB, Simulink, or Stateflow products, or run functions in the MATLAB Command Window to interface with your source control systems.

The source control interface on Windows works with any source control system that conforms to the Microsoft Common Source Control standard, Version 1.1. If your source control system does not conform to the standard, use a Microsoft Source Code Control API wrapper product for your source control system so that you can interface with it from the MATLAB, Simulink, and Stateflow products.

This documentation uses the Microsoft Visual SourceSafe® software as an example. Your source control system might use different terminology and not support the same options or might use them in a different way. Regardless, you should be able to perform similar actions with your source control system based on this documentation.

Perform most source control interface actions from the Current Folder browser. You can also perform many of these actions for a single file from the MATLAB Editor, a Simulink model window, or a Stateflow chart window—for more information, see “Access Source Control from Editors (Microsoft Windows)” on page 26-23. Another way to access many of the source control actions is with the `verctrl` function.

Set Up Source Control (Microsoft Windows)

In this section...

“Create Projects in Source Control System” on page 26-3

“Specify Source Control System with MATLAB Software” on page 26-5

“Register Source Control Project with MATLAB Software” on page 26-7

“Add Files to Source Control” on page 26-9

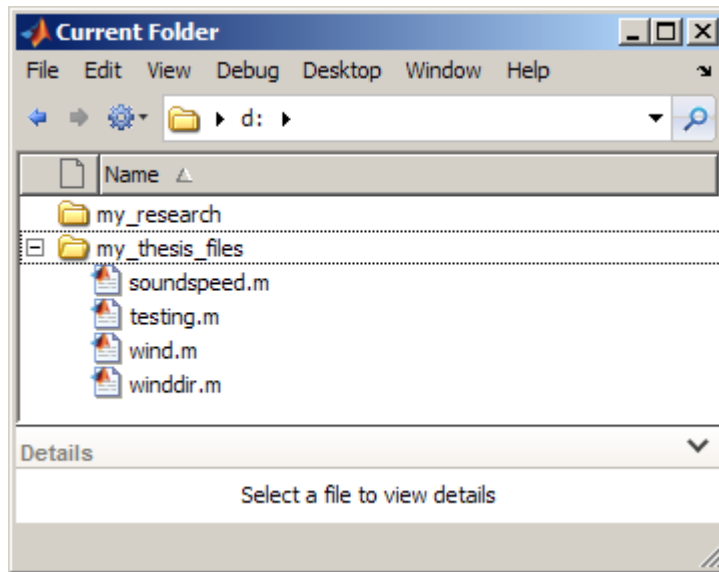
Create Projects in Source Control System

In your source control system, create the projects that your folders and files will be associated with.

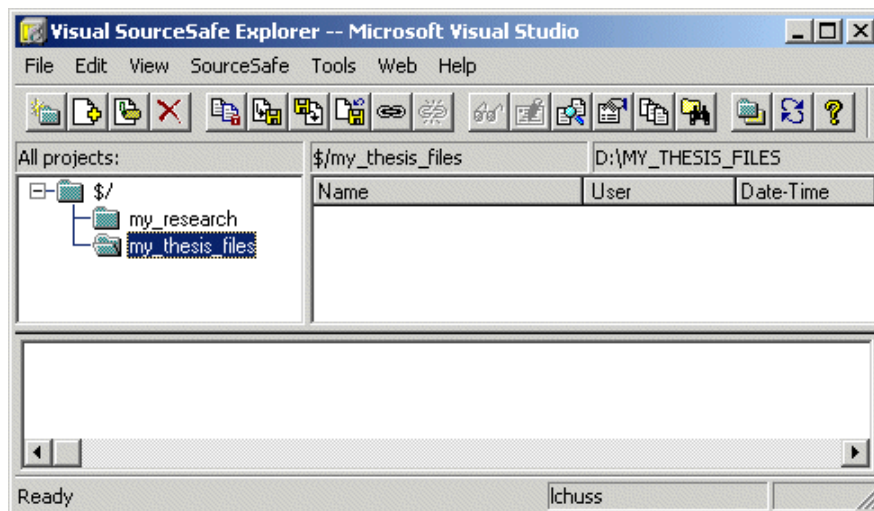
All files in a folder must belong to the same source control project. Be sure the working folder for the project in the source control system specifies the correct path to the folder on disk.

Example of Creating Source Control Project

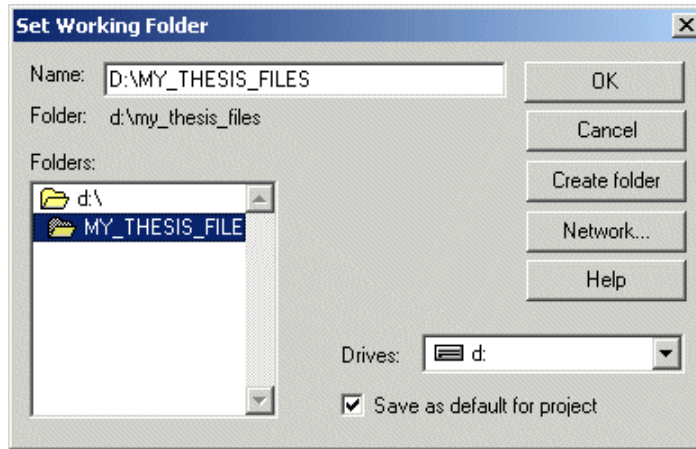
This example uses the project `my_thesis_files` in Microsoft Visual SourceSafe. This illustration of the Current Folder browser shows the path to the folder on disk, `D:\my_thesis_files`.



The following illustration shows the example project in the source control system.



To set the working folder in Microsoft Visual SourceSafe for this example, select `my_thesis_files`, right-click, select **Set Working Folder** from the context menu, and specify `D:\my_thesis_files` in the resulting dialog box.

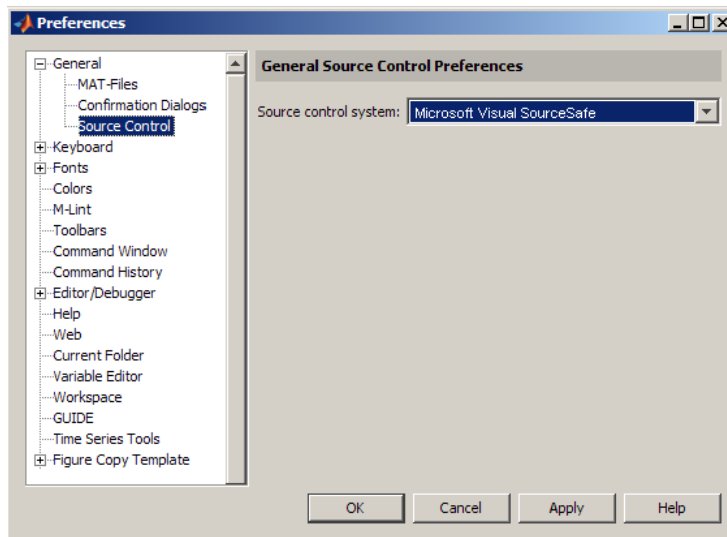


Specify Source Control System with MATLAB Software

In MATLAB, specify the source control system you want to access. On the Home tab, in the Environment section, click .

The currently selected system is shown in the Preferences dialog box. The list includes all installed source control systems that support the Microsoft Common Source Control standard.

Select the source control system you want to interface with and click **OK**.



MATLAB remembers preferences between sessions, so you only need to perform this action again when you want to access a different source control system.

Source Control with 64-Bit Versions of MATLAB

If you run a 64-bit version of MATLAB and want MATLAB to interface with your source control system, your source control system must be 64-bit compliant. If you have a 32-bit source control system, or if you have a 64-bit source control system running in 32-bit compatibility mode, MATLAB cannot use it. In that event, MATLAB displays a warning about the problem in the Source Control preference pane.

Function Alternative for Specifying Source Control System

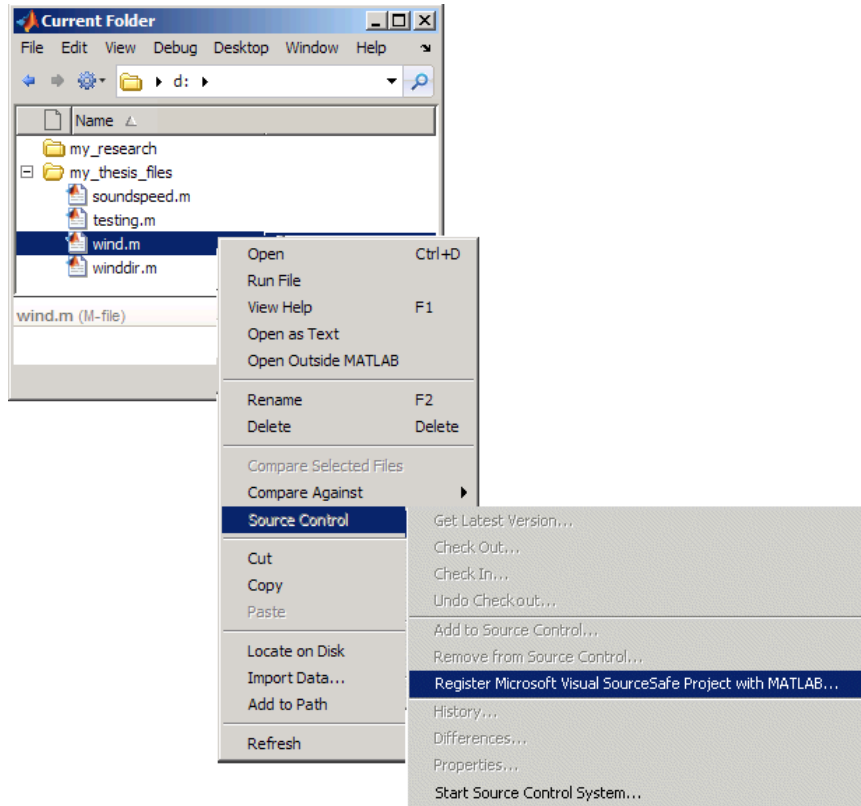
A function alternative to select a source control system is not available, but you can list all available source control systems using `verctrl` with the `all_systems` argument. Use `cmopts` to display the name of the currently selected source control system.

Register Source Control Project with MATLAB Software

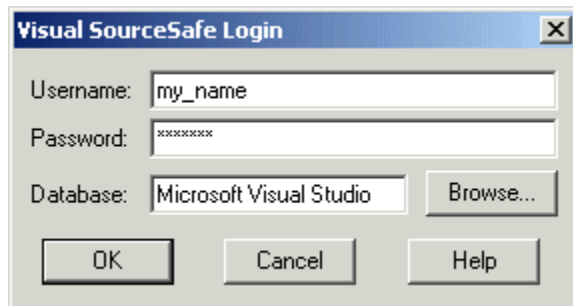
Register a source control system project with a folder in MATLAB, that is, associate a source control system project with a folder and all files in that folder. Do this only one time for any file in the folder, which registers all files in that folder:

- 1** In the MATLAB Current Folder browser, select a file that is in the folder you want to associate with a project in your source control system. For example, select `D:\my_thesis_files\wind.m`. This will associate all files in the `my_thesis_files` folder.
- 2** Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Register Name_of_Source_Control_System Project with MATLAB**. The **Name_of_Source_Control_System** is the source control system you selected using preferences as described in “Specify Source Control System with MATLAB Software” on page 26-5.

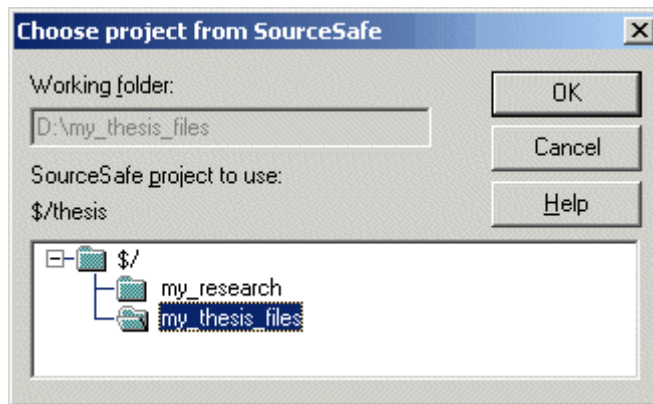
The following example shows Microsoft Visual SourceSafe.



- 3 In the resulting **Name_of_Source_Control_System Login** dialog box, provide the user name and password you use to access your source control system, and click **OK**.



- 4 In the resulting **Choose project from Name_of_Source_Control_System** dialog box, select the source control system project to associate with the folder and click **OK**. This example shows `my_thesis_files`.



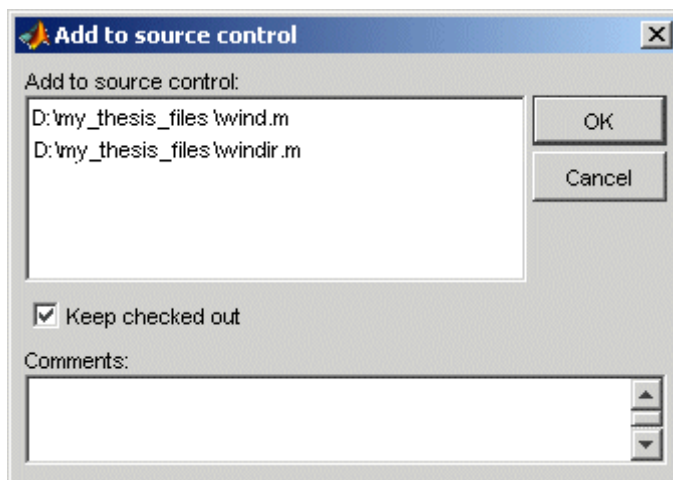
The selected file, its folder, and all files in the folder, are associated with the source control system project you selected. For the example, MATLAB associates all files in `D:\my_thesis_files` with the source control project `my_thesis_files`.

Add Files to Source Control

Add files to the source control system. Do this only once for each file:

- 1 In the Current Folder browser, select files you want to add to the source control system.

- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Add to Source Control**.
- 3 The resulting **Add to source control** dialog box lists files you selected to add. You can add text in the **Comments** field. If you expect to use the files soon, select the **Keep checked out** check box (which is selected by default). Click **OK**.



If you try to add an unsaved file, the file is automatically saved upon adding.

Function Alternative

The function alternative is `verctrl` with the `add` argument.

Check Files In and Out (Microsoft Windows)

In this section...

“Check Files Into Source Control” on page 26-11

“Check Files Out of Source Control” on page 26-11

“Undoing the Checkout” on page 26-12

Before checking files into and out of your source control system from the MATLAB desktop, be sure to set up your system for use with MATLAB as described in “Set Up Source Control (Microsoft Windows)” on page 26-3.

Check Files Into Source Control

After creating or modifying files using MATLAB software or related products, check the files into the source control system by performing these steps:

- 1 In the Current Folder browser, select the files to check in. A file can be open or closed when you check it in, but it must be saved, that is, it cannot contain unsaved changes.
- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Check In**.
- 3 In the resulting **Check in file(s)** dialog box, you can add text in the **Comments** field. If you want to continue working on the files, select the check box **Keep checked out**. Click **OK**.

If a file contains unsaved changes when you try to check it in, you will be prompted to save the changes to complete the checkin. If you did not keep the file checked out and you keep the file open, note that it is a read-only version.

Function Alternative

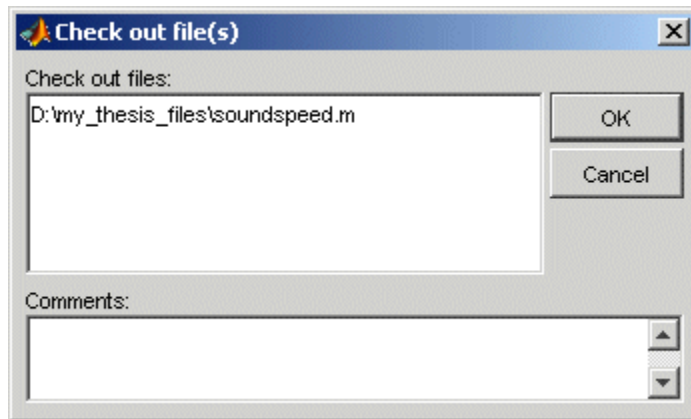
The function alternative is `verctrl` with the `checkin` argument.

Check Files Out of Source Control

From MATLAB, to check out the files you want to modify, perform these steps:

- 1 In the Current Folder browser, select the files to check out.

- 2** Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Check Out**.
- 3** The resulting **Check out file(s)** dialog box lists files you selected to check out. Enter comment text in the **Comments** field, which appears if your source control system supports comments on checkout. Click **OK**.



After checking out a file, make changes to it in MATLAB or another product, and save the file. For example, edit a file in the Editor.

If you try to change a file without first having checked it out, the file is read-only, as seen in the title bar, and you will not be able to save any changes. This protects you from accidentally overwriting the source control version of the file.

If you end the MATLAB session, the file remains checked out. You can check in the file from within MATLAB during a later session, or folder from your source control system.

Function Alternative

The function alternative is `verctrl` with the `checkout` argument.

Undoing the Checkout

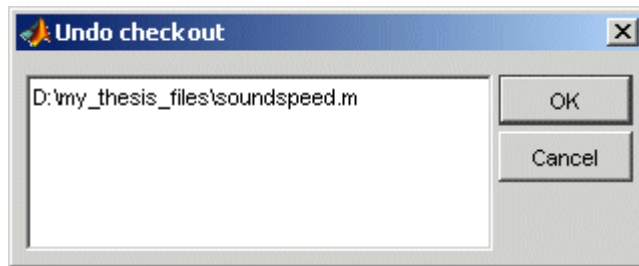
You can undo the checkout for files. The files remain checked in, and do not have any of the changes you made since you last checked them out. To save

any changes you have made since checking out a particular file click **Save** on the **Editor** tab, select **Save As**, and supply a different file name before you undo the checkout.

To undo a checkout, follow these steps:

- 1 In the MATLAB Current Folder browser, select the files for which you want to undo the checkout.
- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Undo Checkout**.

The MATLAB **Undo checkout** dialog box opens, listing the files you selected.



- 3 Click **OK**.

Function Alternative

The function alternative is `verctrl` with the `undocheckout` argument.

Additional Source Control Actions (Microsoft Windows)

In this section...
“Getting the Latest Version of Files for Viewing or Compiling” on page 26-14
“Removing Files from the Source Control System” on page 26-15
“Showing File History” on page 26-16
“Comparing the Working Copy of a File to the Latest Version in Source Control” on page 26-18
“Viewing Source Control Properties of a File” on page 26-20
“Starting the Source Control System” on page 26-21

Getting the Latest Version of Files for Viewing or Compiling

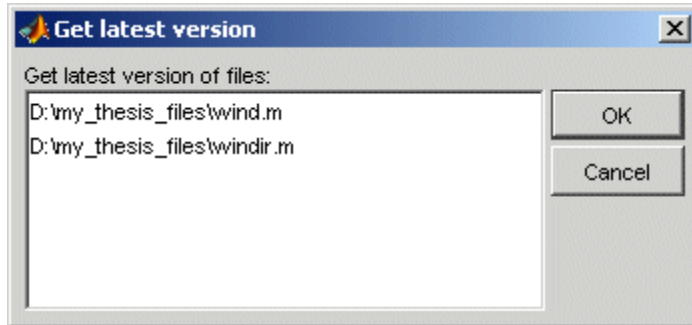
You can get the latest version of a file from the source control system for viewing or running. Getting a file differs from checking it out. When you get a file, it is write protected so you cannot edit it, but when you check out a file, you can edit it.

To get the latest version, follow these steps:

- 1 In the MATLAB Current Folder browser, select the folders or files that you want to get. If you select files, you cannot select folders too.

- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Get Latest Version**.

The MATLAB Get latest version dialog box opens, listing the files or folders you selected.



- 3 Click **OK**.

You can now open the file to view it, run the file, or check out the file for editing.

Function Alternative

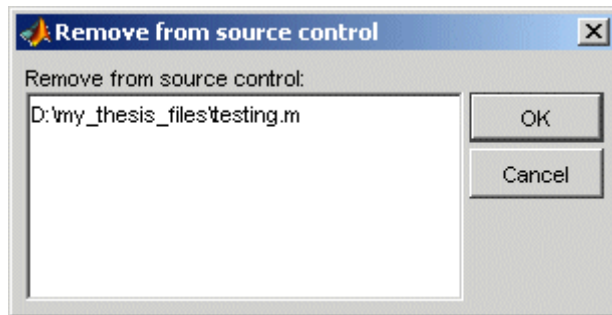
The function alternative is `verctrl` with the `get` argument.

Removing Files from the Source Control System

To remove files from the source control system, follow these steps:

- 1 In the MATLAB Current Folder browser, select the files you want to remove.
- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Remove from Source Control**.

The MATLAB **Remove from source control** dialog box opens, listing the files you selected.



- 3 Click **OK**.

Function Alternative

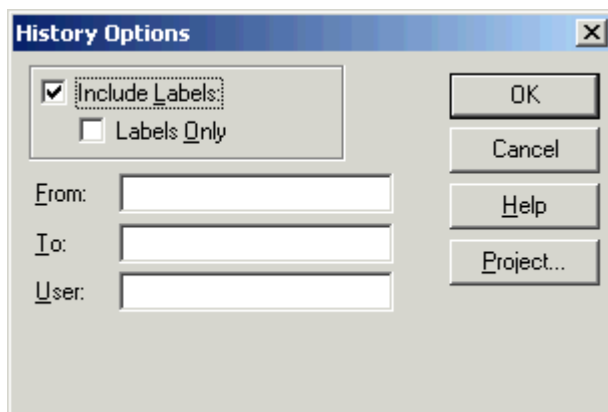
The function alternative is `verctrl` with the `remove` argument.

Showing File History

To show the history of a file in the source control system, follow these steps:

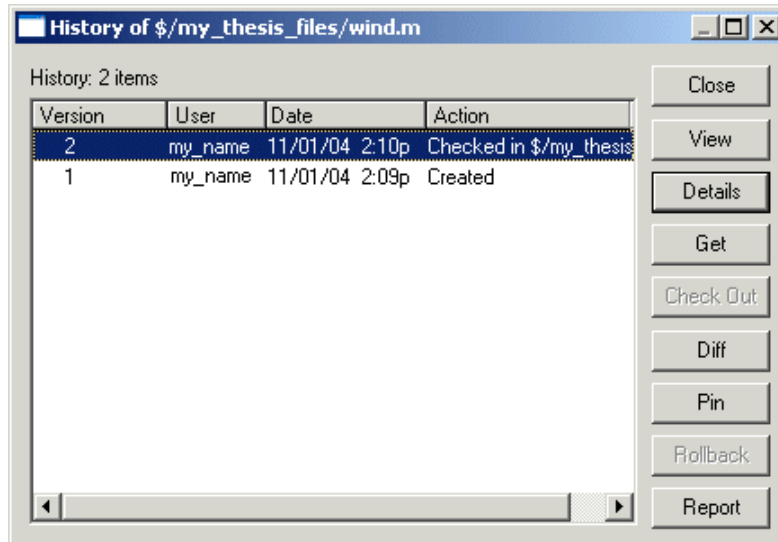
- 1 In the MATLAB Current Folder browser, select the file for which you want to view the history.
- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > History**.

A dialog box, which is specific to your source control system, opens. For Microsoft Visual SourceSafe, the **History Options** dialog box opens, as shown in the following example illustration.



- 3 Complete the dialog box to specify the range of history you want for the selected file and click **OK**. For example, enter my_name for **User**.

The history presented depends on your source control system. For Microsoft Visual SourceSafe, the **History** dialog box opens for that file, showing the file's history in the source control system.



Function Alternative

The function alternative is `verctrl` with the `history` argument.

Comparing the Working Copy of a File to the Latest Version in Source Control

You can compare the current working copy of a file with the latest checked-in version of the file in the source control system. This highlights the differences between the two files, showing the changes you made since you checked out the file.

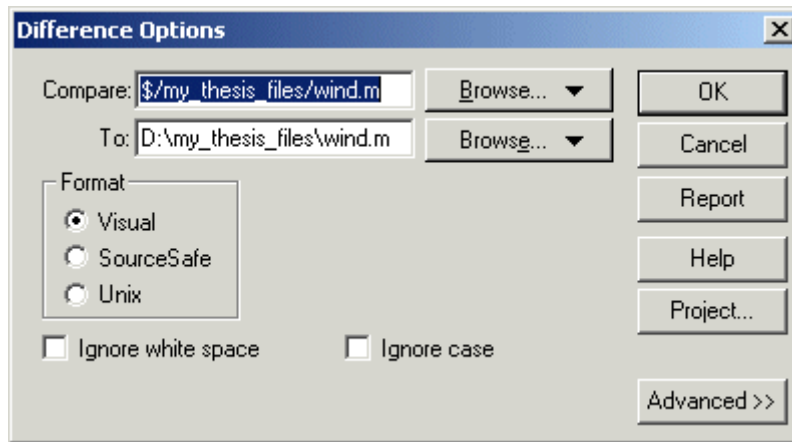
To view the differences, follow these steps:

- 1 In the MATLAB Current Folder browser, select the file for which you want to view differences. This is a file that has been checked out and edited.

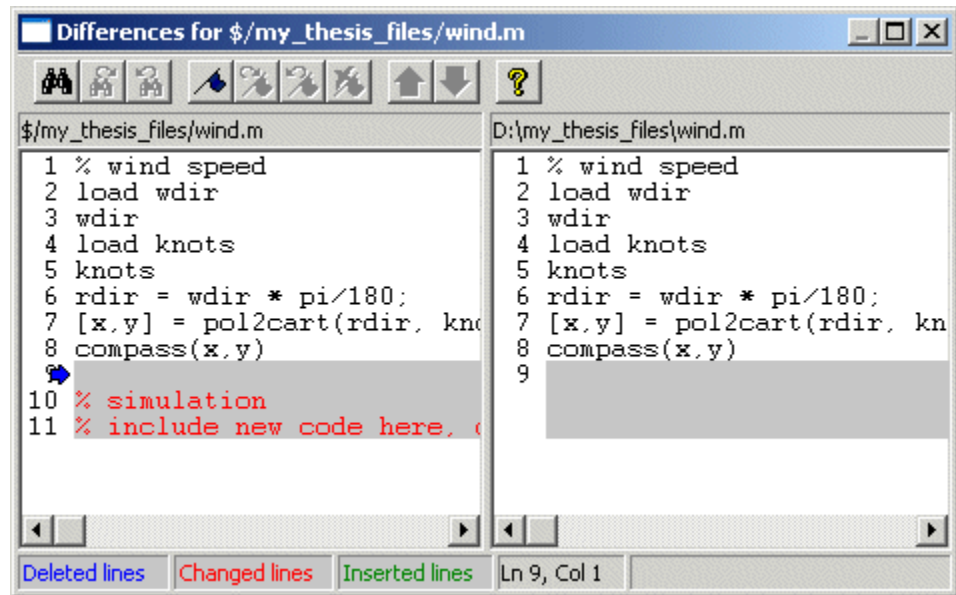
- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Differences**.

A dialog box, which is specific to your source control system, opens. For Microsoft Visual SourceSafe, the **Difference Options** dialog box opens.

- 3 Review the default entries in the dialog box, make any needed changes, and click **OK**. The following example is for Microsoft Visual SourceSafe.



The method of presenting differences depends on your source control system. For Microsoft Visual SourceSafe, the **Differences for** dialog box opens. This highlights the differences between the working copy of the file and the latest checked-in version of the file.



Function Alternative

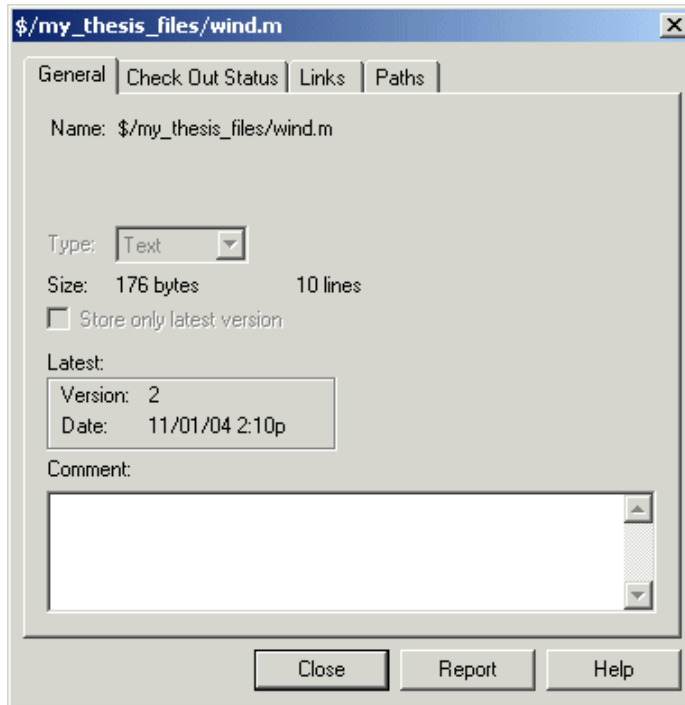
The function alternative is `verctrl` with the `showdiff` or `isdiff` argument.

Viewing Source Control Properties of a File

To view the source control properties of a file, follow these steps:

- 1 In the MATLAB Current Folder browser, select the file for which you want to view properties.
- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Properties**.

A dialog box, which is specific to your source control system, opens. The following example shows the Microsoft Visual SourceSafe properties dialog box.



Function Alternative

The function alternative is `verctrl` with the `properties` argument.

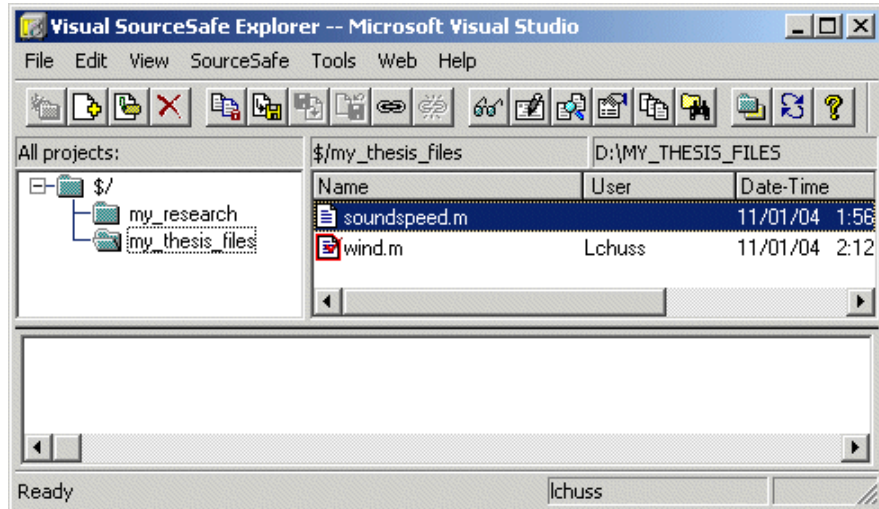
Starting the Source Control System

All the MATLAB source control actions automatically start the source control system to perform the action, if the source control system is not already open. If you want to start the source control system from MATLAB without performing a specific action source control action,

- 1 Right-click any folder or file in the MATLAB Current Folder browser

- 2 From the context menu, select **Source Control > Start Source Control System**.

The interface to your source control system opens, showing the source control project associated with the current folder in MATLAB. The following example shows the Microsoft Visual SourceSafe Explorer interface.



Function Alternative

The function alternative is `verctrl` with the `runsc` argument.

Access Source Control from Editors (Microsoft Windows)

You can create or open a file in the Editor, the Simulink or Stateflow products and perform most source control actions from their **File > Source Control** menus, rather than from the Current Folder browser. Following are some differences in the source control interface process when you use the Editor, Simulink, or Stateflow:

- You can perform actions on only one file at time.
- Some of the dialog boxes have a different icon in the title bar. For example, the **Check out file(s)** dialog box uses the MATLAB Editor icon instead of the MATLAB icon.
- You cannot add a new (Untitled) file, but must instead first save the file.
- You cannot register projects from the Simulink or Stateflow products. Instead, register a project using the Current Folder browser, as described in “Register Source Control Project with MATLAB Software” on page 26-7.

Troubleshoot Source Control Problems (Microsoft Windows)

In this section...

“Source Control Error: Provider Not Present or Not Installed Properly” on page 26-24

“Restriction Against @ Character” on page 26-25

“Add to Source Control Is the Only Action Available” on page 26-25

“More Solutions for Source Control Problems” on page 26-25

Source Control Error: Provider Not Present or Not Installed Properly

In some cases, MATLAB software recognizes your source control system but you cannot use source control features for MATLAB. Specifically, when you select **General > Source Control** in the Preferences dialog box, or run `cmopts`, MATLAB lists your source control system, but you cannot perform any source control actions. Only the **Start Source Control System** item is available, and when you select it, MATLAB displays this error:

Source control provider is not present or not installed properly.

Often, this error occurs because a registry key that MATLAB requires from the source control application is not present. Make sure this registry key is present:

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\SourceCodeControlProvider\  
InstalledSCCProviders
```

The registry key refers to another registry key that is similar to

```
HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\SourceSafe\ScsServerPath
```

This registry key has a path to a DLL-file in the file system. Make sure the DLL-file exists in that location. If you are not familiar with registry keys, ask your system administrator for help.

If this does not solve the problem and you use Microsoft Visual SourceSafe, try running a client setup for your source control application. When SourceSafe is installed on a server for a group to use, each machine client can run a setup but is not required to do so. However, some applications that interface with SourceSafe, including MATLAB, require you to run the client setup. Run the client setup, which should resolve the problem.

If the problem persists, access source control outside of MATLAB.

Restriction Against @ Character

Some source control systems, such as Perforce® and Synergy™, reserve the @ character. Perforce, for example, uses it as a revision specifier. Therefore, you might experience problems if you use these source control systems with MATLAB files and folders that include the @ character in the folder or file name.

You might be able to work around this restriction by quoting nonstandard characters in file names, such as with an escape sequence, which some source control systems allow. Consult your source control system documentation or technical support resources for a workaround.

Add to Source Control Is the Only Action Available

To use source control features for a file in the Simulink or Stateflow products, the file's source control project must first be registered with MATLAB. When a file's source control project is *not* registered with MATLAB, all **General > Source Control** menu items on the Preferences dialog box are disabled except **Add to Source Control**. You can select **Add to Source**, which registers the project with MATLAB, or you can register the project using the Current Folder browser, as described in "Register Source Control Project with MATLAB Software" on page 26-7. You can then perform source control actions for all files in that project (folder).

More Solutions for Source Control Problems

The latest solutions for problems interfacing MATLAB with a source control system appear on the MathWorks Web page for support at <http://www.mathworks.com/support/>. Search Solutions and Technical Notes for "source control."

Source Control Interface on UNIX Platforms

If you use a source control system to manage your files, you can check MATLAB program files and Simulink models, and Stateflow charts into and out of the source control system from within the MATLAB, Simulink, and Stateflow products.

The source control interface supports four popular source control systems, as well as a custom option:

- ClearCase® software from IBM® Rational®
- Concurrent Version System (CVS)
- ChangeMan® and PVCS® software from Serena®
- Revision Control System (RCS)
- Custom option — Allows you to build your own interface if you use a different source control system. For details, see the reference page for `customverctrl`.

Perform source control interface actions for a single file using menu items in the MATLAB Editor, a Simulink model window, or a Stateflow chart window. To perform source control actions on multiple files, use the Current Folder browser. Alternatively, run source control functions in the Command Window, which provide some options not supported with the menu items.

Specify Source Control System (UNIX Platforms)


In this section...

“MATLAB Desktop Alternative” on page 26-27

“Function Alternative” on page 26-28

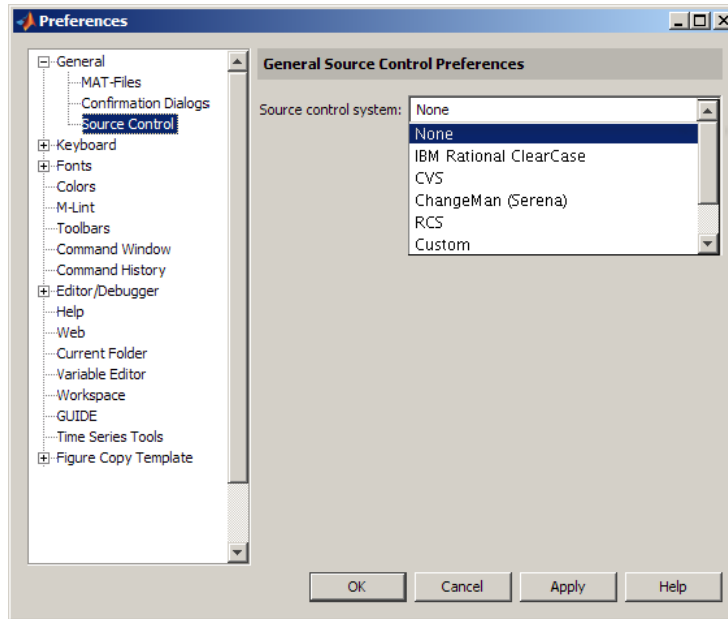
“Setting a View and Checking Out a Folder with ClearCase Software on UNIX Platforms” on page 26-28

MATLAB Desktop Alternative

To specify the source control system you want to access, click  **Preferences** on the **Home** tab, and select **General > Source Control**.

The currently selected system is shown in the Preferences dialog box. The default selection is **None**.

Select the source control system with which you want to interface and click **OK**.



MATLAB remembers preferences between sessions, so you only need to perform this action when you want to access a different source control system.

Function Alternative

A function alternative to select a source control system is not available, but you can list the currently selected source control system by running `cmopts`.

Setting a View and Checking Out a Folder with ClearCase Software on UNIX Platforms

If you use ClearCase software on a UNIX platform, perform the following from ClearCase:

- 1 Set a view.
- 2 Check out the folder that contains files you want to save, check in, or check out.

You can now use the MATLAB, Simulink, or Stateflow source control interfaces to ClearCase software.

Check In Files (UNIX Platforms)

In this section...

“Checking In One or More Files Using the Current Folder Browser” on page 26-30

“Checking In One File Using the Editor, or the Simulink or Stateflow Products” on page 26-30

“Function Alternative” on page 26-31

Checking In One or More Files Using the Current Folder Browser

- 1 From the Current Folder browser, select the file or files to check in. A file can be open or closed when you check it in, but it must be saved, that is, it cannot contain unsaved changes.
- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Check In**.
- 3 In the resulting **Check in file(s)** dialog box, you can add text in the **Comments** field. If you want to continue working on the files, select the check box **Keep checked out**. Click **OK**.

The files are checked into the source control system. If any file contains unsaved changes when you try to check it in, you will be prompted to and must then save the changes to complete the checkin.

An error appears in the Command Window if a file is already checked in.

If you did not keep a file checked out and you keep that file open, note that it is a read-only version.

Checking In One File Using the Editor, or the Simulink or Stateflow Products

- 1 From the Editor, or the Simulink or Stateflow products, with the file open and saved, select **File > Source Control > Check In**.

- 2 In the resulting **Check in file(s)** dialog box, you can add text in the **Comments** field. If you want to continue working on the files, select the check box **Keep checked out**. Click **OK**.

Function Alternative

Use `checkin` to check files into the source control system. The files can be open or closed when you use `checkin`. The `checkin` function takes this form:

```
checkin({'file1', 'file2', ...}, 'comments', 'comment_text', ...  
       'option', 'value')
```

For `file n` , use the complete path and include the file extension. You must supply the `comments` argument and a comments string with `checkin`.

Use the `option` argument to

- Check in a file and keep it checked out — set the `lock` option value to `on`.
- Check in a file even though it has not changed since the previous check in — set the `force` option value to `on`.

The `comments` argument and the `lock` and `force` options apply to all files checked in.

Example Using checkin Function

To check in the file `clock.m` with the comment `Adjustment for leap year`, type

```
checkin('\myserver\myfiles\clock.m', 'comments', ...  
       'Adjustment for leap year')
```

For other examples, see the reference page for `checkin`.

Check Out Files (UNIX Platforms)

In this section...

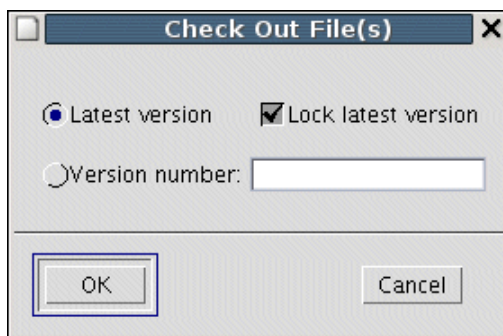
“Checking Out One or More Files Using the Current Folder Browser” on page 26-32

“Checking Out a Single File Using the Editor, or the Simulink or Stateflow Products” on page 26-33

“Function Alternative” on page 26-33

Checking Out One or More Files Using the Current Folder Browser

- 1 In the Current Folder browser, select the file or files to check out.
- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Check Out**. The **Check out file(s)** dialog box opens.



- 3 Complete the dialog box:
 - a To check out the versions that were most recently checked in, select the **Latest version** option.
 - b To check out a specific version of the files, select the **Version number** option and type the version number in the field.

- c To prevent others from checking out the files while you have them checked out, select **Lock latest version**. To check out read-only versions of the file, clear **Lock latest version**.

4 Click **OK**.

An error appears in the Command Window if a file is already checked out.

After checking out files, make changes to them using MATLAB software or another software product, and save the files. For example, edit a file in the Editor.

If you try to change a file without first having checked it out, the file is read-only, as seen in the title bar, and you will not be able to save any changes. This protects you from accidentally overwriting the source control version of the file.

If you end the MATLAB session, the file or files remain checked out. You can check in files from within MATLAB during a later session, or directly from your source control system.

Checking Out a Single File Using the Editor, or the Simulink or Stateflow Products

- 1 Open the MATLAB program file, Simulink model, or Stateflow chart you want to check out. The title bar indicates the file is read-only.
- 2 Select **File > Source Control > Check Out**. The **Check out file(s)** dialog box opens.
- 3 Complete the dialog box as described in step of “Checking Out One or More Files Using the Current Folder Browser” on page 26-32, and click **OK**.

Function Alternative

Use `checkout` to check out a file from the source control system. You can check out multiple files at once and specify checkout options. The `checkout` function takes this form:

```
checkout({'file1','file2', ...},'option','value')
```

For `filename`, use the complete path and include the file extension.

Use the option argument to

- Check out a read-only version of the file — set the `lock` option value to `off`.
- Check out the file even if you already have it checked out — set the `force` option value to `on`.
- Check out a specific version of the file — use the `revision` option, and assign the version number to the `value` argument.

The options apply to all files being checked out. The files can be open or closed when you use `checkout`.

Example Using checkout Function—Check Out a Specific Version of a File

To check out the 1.1 version of the file `clock.m`, type

```
checkout('\myserver\myfiles\clock.m','revision','1.1')
```

For other examples, see the reference page for `checkout`.

Undo the Checkout (UNIX Platforms)

In this section...

“Impact of Undoing a File Checkout” on page 26-35

“Undoing the Checkout for One or More Files Using the Current Folder Browser” on page 26-35

“Function Alternative” on page 26-35

Impact of Undoing a File Checkout

When you undo the checkout for a file, the file remains checked in, and does not have any of the changes you made since you checked it out. To save any changes you have made since checking out a file, click **Save** on the **Editor** tab, select **Save As**, and supply a different file name before you undo the checkout. Undo the checkout using the Current Folder browser.

Undoing the Checkout for One or More Files Using the Current Folder Browser

- 1 In the MATLAB Current Folder browser, select the file or files for which you want to undo the checkout.
- 2 Right-click, and from the context menu, select **Source Control > Undo Checkout**. MATLAB undoes the checkout.

An error appears in the Command Window if the file is not checked out.

Function Alternative

The `undocheckout` function takes this form:

```
undocheckout({'file1','file2', ...})
```

Use the complete path for `filen` and include the file extension. For example, to undo the checkout for the files `clock.m` and `calendar.m`, type

```
undocheckout({'\myserver\myfiles\clock.m',...  
'\myserver\myfiles\calendar.m'})
```


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