

symbolstyle — Choices for the shape of markers

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Description

Markers are the ink used to mark where points are on a plot; see [G-3] *marker_options*. *symbolstyle* specifies the shape of the marker.

You specify the *symbolstyle* inside the `msymbol()` option allowed with many of the `graph` commands:

```
. graph twoway ..., msymbol(symbolstyle) ...
```

Sometimes you will see that a *symbolstylelist* is allowed:

```
. scatter ..., msymbol(symbolstylelist) ...
```

A *symbolstylelist* is a sequence of *symbolstyles* separated by spaces. Shorthands are allowed to make specifying the list easier; see [G-4] *stylelists*.

Syntax

<i>symbolstyle</i>	Synonym (if any)	Description
circle	O	solid
diamond	D	solid
triangle	T	solid
square	S	solid
plus	+	
X	X	
smcircle	o	solid
smdiamond	d	solid
smsquare	s	solid
smtriangle	t	solid
smplus		
smx	x	
circle_hollow	Oh	hollow
diamond_hollow	Dh	hollow
triangle_hollow	Th	hollow
square_hollow	Sh	hollow
smcircle_hollow	oh	hollow
smdiamond_hollow	dh	hollow
smtriangle_hollow	th	hollow
smsquare_hollow	sh	hollow
point	p	a small dot
none	i	a symbol that is invisible

For a symbol palette displaying each of the above symbols, type

```
palette symbolpalette [ , scheme(schemename) ]
```

Other *symbolstyles* may be available; type

```
. graph query symbolstyle
```

to obtain the complete list of *symbolstyles* installed on your computer.

Remarks and examples

stata.com

Remarks are presented under the following headings:

Typical use

Filled and hollow symbols

Size of symbols

Typical use

`msymbol(symbolstyle)` is one of the more commonly specified options. For instance, you may not be satisfied with the default rendition of

```
. scatter mpg weight if foreign ||
   scatter mpg weight if !foreign
```

and prefer

```
. scatter mpg weight if foreign, msymbol(oh) ||
   scatter mpg weight if !foreign, msymbol(x)
```

When you are graphing multiple *y* variables in the same plot, you can specify a list of *symbolstyles* inside the `msymbol()` option:

```
. scatter mpg1 mpg2 weight, msymbol(oh x)
```

The result is the same as typing

```
. scatter mpg1 weight, msymbol(oh) ||
   scatter mpg2 weight, msymbol(x)
```

Also, in the above, we specified the symbol-style synonyms. Whether you type

```
. scatter mpg1 weight, msymbol(oh) ||
   scatter mpg2 weight, msymbol(x)
```

or

```
. scatter mpg1 weight, msymbol(smcircle_hollow) ||
   scatter mpg2 weight, msymbol(smx)
```

makes no difference.

Filled and hollow symbols

The *symbolstyle* specifies the *shape* of the symbol, and in that sense, one of the styles `circle` and `hcircle`—and `diamond` and `hdiamond`, etc.—is unnecessary in that each is a different rendition of the same shape. The option `mfcolor(colorstyle)` (see [G-3] *marker_options*) specifies how the inside of the symbol is to be filled. `hcircle()`, `hdiamond`, etc., are included for convenience and are equivalent to specifying

```
msymbol(0h): msymbol(0) mfcolor(none)
```

```
msymbol(dh): msymbol(d) mfcolor(none)
```

etc.

Using `mfcolor()` to fill the inside of a symbol with different colors sometimes creates what are effectively new symbols. For instance, if you take `msymbol(0)` and fill its interior with a lighter shade of the same color used to outline the shape, you obtain a pleasing result. For instance, you might try

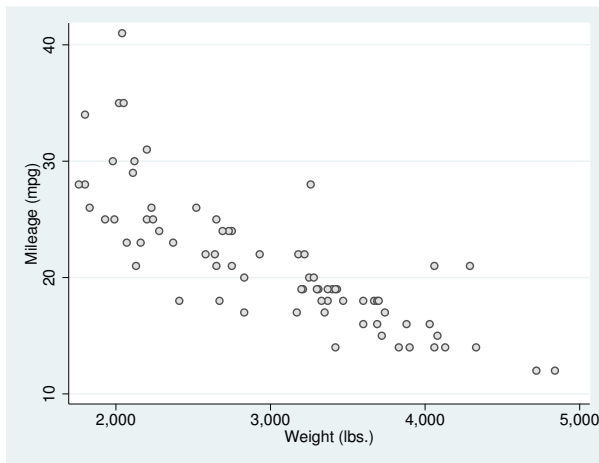
```
msymbol(0) mlcolor(yellow) mfcolor(.5*yellow)
```

or

```
msymbol(0) mlcolor(gs5) mfcolor(gs12)
```

as in

```
. scatter mpg weight, msymbol(0) mlcolor(gs5) mfcolor(gs14)
```



Size of symbols

Just as `msymbol(0)` and `msymbol(0h)` differ only in `mfcolor()`, `msymbol(0)` and `msymbol(o)`—symbols `circle` and `smcircle`—differ only in `msize()`. In particular,

```
msymbol(0): msymbol(0) msize(medium)
```

```
msymbol(o): msymbol(0) msize(small)
```

and the same is true for all the other large and small symbol pairs.

`msize()` is interpreted as being relative to the size of the graph region (see [G-3] [region_options](#)), so the same symbol size will in fact be a little different in

```
. scatter mpg weight
```

and

```
. scatter mpg weight, by(foreign total)
```

Also see

[G-3] *marker_options* — Options for specifying markers

[G-4] *colorstyle* — Choices for color

[G-4] *linepatternstyle* — Choices for whether lines are solid, dashed, etc.

[G-4] *linestyle* — Choices for overall look of lines

[G-4] *linewidthstyle* — Choices for thickness of lines

[G-4] *markersizestyle* — Choices for the size of markers

[G-4] *markerstyle* — Choices for overall look of markers