Errors — Error codes

Description

When an error occurs, Mata presents a number as well as text describing the problem. The codes are presented below.

Also the error codes can be used as an argument with _error(), see [M-5] error().

Mata’s error codes are a special case of Stata’s return codes. In particular, they are the return codes in the range 3000–3999. In addition to the 3000-level codes, it is possible for Mata functions to generate any Stata error message and return code.

Remarks and examples

Error messages in Mata break into two classes: errors that occur when the function is compiled (code 3000) and errors that occur when the function is executed (codes 3001–3999).

Compile-time error messages look like this:

```
: 2,,3
  invalid expression
  r(3000);
: "this" + "that
  mismatched quotes
  r(3000);
```

The text of the message varies according to the error made, but the error code is always 3000.

Run-time errors look like this:

```
: myfunction(2,3)
  solve(): 3200  conformity error
  mysub(): - function returned error
  myfunction(): - function returned error
  <istmt>: - function returned error
  r(3200);
```

The output is called a traceback log. Read from bottom to top, it says that what we typed (the <istmt>) called myfunction(), which called mysub(), which called solve() and, at that point, things went wrong. The error is possibly in solve(), but because solve() is a library function, it is more likely that the error is in how mysub() called solve(). Moreover, the error is seldom in the program listed at the top of the traceback log because the log lists the identity of the program that detected the error. Say solve() did have an error. Then the traceback log would probably have read something like

```
*: 3200  conformity error
  solve(): - function returned error
  mysub(): - function returned error
  myfunction(): - function returned error
  <istmt>: - function returned error
```
The above log says the problem was detected by \*(the multiplication operator), and at that point, \texttt{solve()} would be suspect, because one must ask, why did \texttt{solve()} use the multiplication operator incorrectly?

In any case, let’s assume that the problem is not with \texttt{solve()}. Then you would guess the problem lies with \texttt{mysub()}. If you have used \texttt{mysub()} in many previous programs without problems, however, you might now shift your suspicion to \texttt{myfunction()}. If \texttt{myfunction()} is always trustworthy, perhaps you should not have typed \texttt{myfunction(2,3)}. That is, perhaps you are using \texttt{myfunction()} incorrectly.

### The error codes

3000. (message varies)
   There is an error in what you have typed. Mata cannot interpret what you mean.

3001. \texttt{incorrect number of arguments}
   The function expected, say, three arguments and received two, or five. Or the function allows
   between three and five arguments, but you supplied too many or too few. Fix the calling
   program.

3002. \texttt{identical arguments not allowed}
   You have called a function specifying the same variable more than once. Usually this would
   not be a problem, but here, it is, usually because the supplied arguments are matrices that
   the function wishes to overwrite with different results. For instance, say function \( f(A, B, C) \) examines matrix \( A \) and returns a calculation based on \( A \) in \( B \) and \( C \). The function might well complain that you specified the same matrix for \( B \) and \( C \).

3010. \texttt{attempt to dereference NULL pointer}
   The program made reference to \*\( s \), and \( s \) contains NULL; see \[M-2\] pointers.

3011. \texttt{invalid lval}
   In an assignment, what appears on the left-hand side of the equals is not something to which
   a value can be assigned; see \[M-2\] \texttt{op_assignment}.

3012. \texttt{undefined operation on pointer}
   You have, for instance, attempted to add two pointers; see \[M-2\] pointers.

3020. \texttt{class child/parent compiled at different times}
   One class is being used to extend another class, and the parent has been updated since the
   class was compiled.

3021. \texttt{class compiled at different times}
   A function using a predefined class has not been recompiled since the class has last been
   changed.

3022. \texttt{function not supported on this platform}
   You have tried to use a function that is defined for some operating system or flavor supported
   by Stata but not for the one you are currently using. For example, you may have tried to
   use a Mac-only function in Stata for Windows.

3101. \texttt{matrix found where function required}
   A particular argument to a function is required to be a function, and a matrix was found
   instead.
3102. function found where matrix required
   A particular argument to a function is required to be a matrix, vector, or scalar, and a
   function was found instead.

3103. view found where array required
   In general, view matrices can be used wherever a matrix is required, but there are a few
   exceptions, both in low-level routines and in routines that wish to write results back to the
   argument. Here a view is not acceptable. If \( V \) is the view variable, simply code \( X = V \) and
   then pass \( X \) in its stead. See \([M-5]\) `st_view()`.

3104. array found where view required
   A function argument was specified with a matrix that was not a view, and a view was
   required. See \([M-5]\) `st_view()`.

3200. conformability error
   A matrix, vector, or scalar has the wrong number of rows and/or columns for what is
   required. Adding a \( 2 \times 3 \) matrix to a \( 1 \times 4 \) would result in this error.

3201. vector required
   An argument is required to be \( r \times 1 \) or \( 1 \times c \), and a matrix was found instead.

3202. rowvector required
   An argument is required to be \( 1 \times c \) and it is not.

3203. colvector required
   An argument is required to be \( r \times 1 \) and it is not.

3204. matrix found where scalar required
   An argument is required to be \( 1 \times 1 \) and it is not.

3205. square matrix required
   An argument is required to be \( n \times n \) and it is not.

3206. invalid use of view containing op.vars
   Factor variables have been used in a view, and the view is now being used in a context that
   does not support the use of factor variables.

3208. more than 2 billion rows or columns (LAPACK)
   A call was made to a `LAPACK()` function with a matrix containing more than \( 2^{31} - 1 \) rows
   or columns. The LAPACK functions used by Mata cannot accept matrices larger than this.

3209. more than 281 terarows or teracolumns
   A call was made to a function with a matrix containing more than \( 2^{48} - 1 \) rows or columns.
   This is not allowed.

3211. view frame not found
   The referenced view is linked to a frame that no longer exists.

3212. view vars & obs out of range
   An attempt was made to access a view using both a variable number and an observation
   number that are out of range.

3213. view vars out of range
   An attempt was made to access a view using a variable number out of range.
3214. **view obs out of range**
   An attempt was made to access a view using an observation number out of range.

3250. **type mismatch**
   The *eltype* of an argument does not match what is required. For instance, perhaps a real was expected and a string was received. See *eltype* in [M-6] Glossary.

3251. **nonnumeric found where numeric required**
   An argument was expected to be real or complex and it is not.

3252. **noncomplex found where complex required**
   An argument was expected to be complex and it is not.

3253. **nonreal found where real required**
   An argument was expected to be real and it is not.

3254. **nonstring found where string required**
   An argument was expected to be string and it is not.

3255. **real or string required**
   An argument was expected to be real or string and it is not.

3256. **numeric or string required**
   An argument was expected to be real, complex, or string and it is not.

3257. **nonpointer found where pointer required**
   An argument was expected to be a pointer and it is not.

3258. **nonvoid found where void required**
   An argument was expected to be void and it is not.

3259. **nonstruct found where struct required**
   A variable that is not a structure was passed to a function that expected the variable to be a structure.

3260. **nonclass found where class required**
   A variable that is not a class was passed to a function that expected the variable to be a class.

3261. **non class/struct found where class/struct required**
   A variable that is not a class or a structure was passed to a function that expected the variable to be a class or a structure.

3300. **argument out of range**
   The *eltype* and *orgtype* of the argument are correct, but the argument contains an invalid value, such as if you had asked for the 20th row of a $4 \times 5$ matrix. See *eltype* and *orgtype* in [M-6] Glossary.

3301. **subscript invalid**
   The subscript is out of range (refers to a row or column that does not exist) or contains the wrong number of elements. See [M-2] Subscripts.

3302. **invalid %fmt**
   The %fmt for formatting data is invalid. See [M-5] printf() and see [U] 12.5 Formats: Controlling how data are displayed.
3303. invalid permutation vector
   The vector specified does not meet the requirements of a permutation vector, namely, that an n-element vector contain a permutation of the integers 1 through n. See [M-1] Permutation.

3304. struct nested too deeply
   Structures may contain structures that contain structures, and so on, but only to a depth of 500.

3305. class nested too deeply
   Classes may contain classes that contain classes, and so on, but only to a depth of 500.

3351. argument has missing values
   In general, Mata is tolerant of missing values, but there are exceptions. This function does not allow the matrix, vector, or scalar to have missing values.

3352. singular matrix
   The matrix is singular and the requested result cannot be carried out. If singular matrices are a possibility, then you are probably using the wrong function.

3353. matrix not positive definite
   The matrix is non–positive definite and the requested results cannot be computed. If non–positive-definite matrices are a possibility, then you are probably using the wrong function.

3360. failure to converge
   The function that issued this message used an algorithm that the function expected would converge but did not, probably because the input matrix was extreme in some way.

3492. resulting string too long
   A string that the function was attempting to produce became too long. Because the maximum length of strings in Mata is 2,147,483,647 characters, it is unlikely that Mata imposed the limit. Review the documentation on the function for the source of the limit that was imposed (for example, perhaps a string was being produced for use by Stata). In any case, this error does not arise because of an out-of-memory situation. It arises because some limit was imposed.

3498. (message varies)
   An error specific to this function arose. The text of the message should describe the problem.

3499. _____ not found
   The specified variable or function could not be found. For a function, it was not already loaded, it is not in the libraries, and there is no .mo file with its name.

3500. invalid Stata variable name
   A variable name—which name is contained in a Mata string variable—is not appropriate for use with Stata.

3598. Stata returned error
   You are using a Stata interface function and have asked Stata to perform a task. Stata could not or refused.

3601. invalid file handle
   The number specified does not correspond to an open file handle; see [M-5] fopen().

3602. invalid filename
   The filename specified is invalid.
3603. invalid file mode
   The file mode (whether read, write, read-write, etc.) specified is invalid; see [M-5] \texttt{fopen()}.

3610. file from more recent version of Stata
   An attempt was made to read a file created by a newer version of Stata than you are currently using. The file is in a format that your version of Stata does not understand.

3611. too many open files
   The maximum number of files that may be open simultaneously is 50, although your operating system may not allow that many.

3621. attempt to write read-only file
   The file was opened read-only and an attempt was made to write into it.

3622. attempt to read write-only file
   The file was opened write-only and an attempt was made to read it.

3623. attempt to seek append-only file
   The file was opened append-only and then an attempt was made to seek into the file; see [M-5] \texttt{fopen()}.

3698. file seek error
   An attempt was made to seek to an invalid part of the file, or the seek failed for other reasons; see [M-5] \texttt{fopen()}.

3900. out of memory
   Mata is out of memory; the operating system refused to supply what Mata requested. There is no Mata or Stata setting that affects this, and so nothing in Mata or Stata to reset in order to get more memory. You must take up the problem with your operating system.

3901. macro memory in use
   This error message should not occur; please notify StataCorp if it does.

3930. error in LAPACK routine
   The linear-algebra LAPACK routines—see [M-1] LAPACK—generated an error that Mata did not expect. Please notify StataCorp if you should receive this error.

3995. unallocated function
   This error message should not occur; please notify StataCorp if it does.

3996. built-in unallocated
   This error message should not occur; please notify StataCorp if it does.

3997. unimplemented opcode
   This error message should not occur; please notify StataCorp if it does.

3998. stack overflow
   Your program nested too deeply. For instance, imagine calculating the factorial of \( n \) by recursively calling yourself and then requesting the factorial of \( 1e+100 \). Functions that call themselves in an infinite loop inevitably cause this error.

3999. system assertion false
   Something unexpected happened in the internal Mata code. Please contact Technical Services and report the problem. You do not need to exit Stata or Mata. Mata stopped doing what was leading to a problem.
Also see

[M-5] error( ) — Issue error message

[M-2] Intro — Language definition