

op_conditional — Conditional operator

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Description

The conditional operator returns b if a is true (a is not equal to 0) and c otherwise.

Syntax

$$a ? b : c$$

where a must evaluate to a real scalar, and b and c may be of any type whatsoever.

Remarks and examples

[stata.com](#)

Conditional operators

$$\text{dof} = (k==0 ? n-1 : n-k)$$

are more compact than the `if-else` alternative

```
if (k==0) dof = n-1
else      dof = n-k
```

and they can be used as parts of expressions:

$$\text{mse} = \text{ess}/(k==0 ? n-1 : n-k)$$

Conformability

$a ? b : c$:

a :	1×1	
b :	$r_1 \times c_1$	
c :	$r_2 \times c_2$	
<i>result</i> :	$r_1 \times c_1$	or $r_2 \times c_2$

Diagnostics

In $a ? b : c$, only the necessary parts are evaluated: a and b if a is true, or a and c if a is false. However, the `++` and `--` operators are always evaluated:

$$(k==0 ? i++ : j++)$$

increments both i and j , regardless of the value of k .

Also see

[M-2] [exp](#) — Expressions

[M-2] [Intro](#) — Language definition