

## Description

*Namelists* appear in syntax diagrams.

## Syntax

Many mata commands allow or require a *namelist*, such as

```
: mata describe [ namelist ] [ , all ]
```

A *namelist* is defined as a list of matrix and/or function names, such as

```
alpha beta foo()
```

The above *namelist* refers to the matrices `alpha` and `beta` along with the function named `foo()`.

Function names always end in `()`, hence

```
alpha      refers to the matrix named alpha
alpha()    refers to the function of the same name
```

Names may also be specified using the `*` and `?` wildcard characters:

```
*      means zero or more characters go here
?      means exactly one character goes here
```

hence,

```
*      means all matrices
*( )   means all functions
* *( ) means all matrices and all functions
s*     means all matrices that start with s
s*( )  means all functions that start with s
*e     means all matrices that end with e
*e( )  means all functions that end with e
s*e    means all matrices that start with s and end with e
s*e( ) means all functions that start with s and end with e
s?e    means all matrices that start with s and end with e
       and have one character in between
s?e( ) means all functions that start with s and end with e
       and have one character in between
```

## Remarks and examples

Some *namelists* allow only matrices, and some allow only functions. Even when only functions are allowed, you must include the `()` suffix.

## Also see

[M-3] [Intro](#) — Commands for controlling Mata

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