Description

st_varindex(*s*) returns the variable index associated with each variable name recorded in *s*. st_varindex(*s*) does not allow variable-name abbreviations such as "pr" for "price".

st_varindex(*s*, *abbrev*) does the same thing but allows you to specify whether variable-name abbreviations are to be allowed. Abbreviations are allowed if *abbrev* ≠ 0. st_varindex(*s*) is equivalent to st_varindex(*s*, 0).

_st_varindex() does the same thing as st_varindex(). The two functions differ in how they respond when a name is not found. st_varindex() aborts with error, and _st_varindex() places missing in the appropriate element of the returned result.

Syntax

> *real rowvector*   st_varindex(*string rowvector s*)

> *real rowvector*   st_varindex(*string rowvector s*, *real scalar abbrev*)

> *real rowvector*   _st_varindex(*string rowvector s*)

> *real rowvector*   _st_varindex(*string rowvector s*, *real scalar abbrev*)

Remarks and examples

Remarks are presented under the following headings:

> *Overview*
> *Cautions when using variable indices: A variable index can change*

Overview

These functions require that each element of *s* contain a variable name, such as

> *s* = ("price", "mpg", "weight")

If you have one string containing multiple names

> *s* = ("price mpg weight")

then use tokens() to split it into the desired form, as in

> *k* = st_varindex(tokens(*s*))

See [M-5] **tokens( )**.

Cautions when using variable indices: A variable index can change

Accessing variable data using a variable index is faster than referencing the variable by name. However, variable indices can change when variables are created or removed. If a variable is created or removed while your code is using a variable index, there is a chance the index will switch to another variable.

Conformability

st_varindex(*s*, *abbrev*), _st_varindex(*s*, *abbrev*):

s:	$1 \times k$
abbrev:	1×1 (optional)
result:	$1 \times k$

Diagnostics

st_varindex() aborts with error if any name is not found.

_st_varindex() puts missing in the appropriate element of the returned result for any name that is not found.

Also see

[M-5] **st_varname( )** — Obtain variable names from variable indices

[M-5] **tokens( )** — Obtain tokens from string

[M-4] **Stata** — Stata interface functions