

**unlink()** — Erase file

|                            |                    |                      |                |
|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| Description<br>Diagnostics | Syntax<br>Also see | Remarks and examples | Conformability |
|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|

## Description

`unlink(filename)` erases *filename* if it exists, does nothing if *filename* does not exist, and aborts with error if *filename* exists but cannot be erased.

`_unlink(filename)` does the same, except that, if *filename* cannot be erased, rather than aborting with error, `_unlink()` returns a negative error code. `unlink()` returns 0 if *filename* was erased or *filename* did not exist.

## Syntax

```
void          unlink(string scalar filename)
real scalar  _unlink(string scalar filename)
```

## Remarks and examples

stata.com

To remove directories, see `rmdir()` in [M-5] [chdir\(\)](#).

## Conformability

```
unlink(filename)
  filename:    1 × 1
  result:     void

_unlink(filename)
  filename:    1 × 1
  result:     1 × 1
```

## Diagnostics

`unlink(filename)` aborts with error when `_unlink()` would give a negative result.

`_unlink(filename)` returns a negative result if the file cannot be erased and returns 0 otherwise. If the file did not exist, 0 is returned. When there is an error, most commonly returned are `-3602` (filename invalid) or `-3621` (file is read-only).

## Also see

[M-4] [io](#) — I/O functions