Foxtrot/Clousot FAQ

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# Why not use custom attributes instead of method calls?

There are several attractive features of using custom attributes, primarily that they do not impact the code at all. But there are several shortcomings:

* **Runtime support:** Without depending on a binary rewriter, contracts expressed with attributes cannot be enforced at runtime. This means that if there are preconditions (or other contracts) that you want enforced at runtime, you need to either duplicate the contracts in the code or else include a binary rewriter in your build process.
* **Need for parsing:** Since the values that can be used with custom attributes are limited, conditions end up being encoded as strings. This requires the strings to be parsed, duplicating all of the functionality the compiler already possesses.
* **Lack of IDE support:** Expressed as strings, there is no support for intellisense, type checking, or refactoring, all of which should be as available for authoring contracts as for code.