

Symbols

Symbols are defined with an equals sign.

```
N = 212^17
```

No result is printed when a symbol is defined. To see the value of a symbol, just evaluate it.

```
N
```

```
N = 3529471145760275132301897342055866171392
```

Symbols can have more than one letter. Everything after the first letter is displayed as a subscript.

```
NA = 6.02214 10^23
```

```
NA
```

```
NA = 6.02214 × 1023
```

A symbol can be the name of a Greek letter.

```
xi = 1/2
```

```
xi
```

```
xi = 1/2
```

Greek letters can appear in subscripts.

```
Amu = 2.0
```

```
Amu
```

```
Aμ = 2.0
```

The following example shows how a symbol is scanned to find Greek letters.

```
alphamunu = 1
```

```
alphamunu
```

```
αμν = 1
```

Symbol definitions are evaluated serially until a terminal symbol is reached. The following example sets $A = B$ followed by $B = C$. Then when A is evaluated, the result is C .

```
A = B
```

```
B = C
```

```
A
```

$A = C$

Although $A = C$ is printed, inside the program the binding of A is still B , as can be seen with the `binding` function.

```
binding(A)
```

B

The `quote` function returns its argument unevaluated and can be used to clear a symbol. The following example clears A so that its evaluation goes back to being A instead of C .

```
A = quote(A)
```

```
A
```

A