# Basic Reference

!

! is an indirection operator that does a similar job to PEEK and POKE, e.g. accesses memory. It can be used either in unary fashion (!47 reads the word at location 47) or binary (a!4 reads the word at the value in address a+4). It can also appear on the left hand side of an assignment statement.

!a = 42 print !a print a!b a!b=12

%

Binary constant prefix. %101010 is the same as the decimal constant 42.

%101010

&

Hexadecimal constant prefix. &2A is the same as the decimal constant 42.

&2A &FFFE

' rem

Comment. ‘ and rem are synonyms. The comment can either be empty or a string ; the standard BASIC format is *not* supported

‘ “My Program” Rem rem “Hello world”

\*

Binary multiply

4\*2

+

Binary add or string concatenation.

4+2 “Hello “+”World !”

-

Binary subtract

44 – 2

/

Signed binary division. An error occurs if the divisor is zero.

420/10

< <= <> = > >=

Comparison binary operators, which return 0 for false and -1 for true. They can be used to either compare two integers or two strings.

A<42 c$>=”Hello”

? print

Prints to the current output device, either strings or integers (which are preceded by a space). Print a ‘ goes to the next line. Print a , goes to the next tab stop. A return is printed unless the command ends in ; or , . ? is a synonym for print

Print 42,”Hello”’”World”

abs()

Returns the absolute value of the parameter

Abs(-4)

and

Binary and operator. This is a binary operator not a logical, e.g. it is the binary and *not* a logical and so it can return values other than true and false

Count & 7

asc()

Returns the ASCII value of the first character in the string, or zero if the string is empty.

Asc(“\*”)

assert

Every good programming language should have assert. It verifies contracts and detects error conditions. If the expression following is zero, an error is produced.

Assert my.age = 42

blit

Sends one command to the display blitter. This is documented in the eris hardware document. The parameters are x and y position, data source, mask/colour and command.

Blit 42,10,gfxData,&F6,16

call proc endproc

Simple procedures. At present there are no parameters or local variables. These should be used rather than gosub. Or else.

Call print.message

….

Proc print.message

Print “Hello World”

Endproc

chr$()

Convert an ASCII integer to a single character string.

Chr$(42)

clear

Erase all variables. This does *not erase* integer variables A-Z which are permanent

clear

cls

Clears the text screen. Paradoxically this does not … clear the screen. Only the text screen. If there is a sprite plane, this will be unaffected by the cls command.

cls

dim

Dimension integer or string arrays with up to two dimensions

Dim a$(10),a.score(10) dim name$(10,2)

dir

Displays the local file system directory.

dir

end

Ends the current program and returns to the command line

end

false

Returns the constant zero.

false

fkey

Programs the function keys f1-f6 (also accessible by Ctrl 1-6). Sets the string that is put into the keyboard buffer when you press the key. To make it enter, follow with chr$(13) (Carriage Return)

Fkey 1,”List”+chr$(13) fkey 2,”\*\*\*\*”

for to step next

Loop which repeats code a fixed numer of times, which must be executed at least once. The default step is 1, but can be negative. The final letter on next is optional.

For I = 1 to 10 step 2:print i:next i

get$()

Get a single keystroke from the keyboard and return as a single character string

Get$()

get()

Get a single keystroke from the keyboard and return as an ascii value

Get()

gosub

Call a routine at a given line number. This is provided for compatibility only. Do not use it or I will hunt you down and torture you.

Gosub 1000

goto

Transfer execution to given line number. See GOSUB ; same comment.

Goto 666:rem “If you use Goto. You don’t need it”

if then else endif

If has two forms. The first is classic BASIC, e.g. if <condition> then <do something>

If name=”Benny” then my.iq = 70

The second form is more complex. It allows multi line conditional execution, with an optional else clause. This is why there is a death threat attached to GOTO. This is better. Note the endif is mandatory, you cannot use a single line if then else.

If age < 18 print “Child” else print “Adult” endif

ink

Sets the text drawing colour.

Ink 4

inkey$()

Sees if a new key press has occurred, if so returns it as a string, if no key available returns “”. It’s like get$() except it doesn’t wait.

Inkey$()

inkey(

Sees if a new key press has occurred, if so returns it’s ASCII value as an integer, if no key available returns 0. It’s like get() except it doesn’t wait. You probably guessed.

Inkey()

input

Inputs a string or an integer which can be edited using backspace, and ends with return. The string cannot go beyond one line. Very limited. Deliberately.

Input a$

joyb()

Checks the joystick button. As there are two , this has a parameter , 1 or 2.

Joyb(2)

joyx()

Current x position of the joystick, which is a simple controller non analogue type (or also the keyboard), returns -1 0 or 1

Joyx()

joyy()

Current x position of the joystick, which is a simple controller non analogue type (or also the keyboard), returns -1 0 or 1

Joyy()

left$()

Returns a number of characters from a string counting from the left

Left$(a$,4)

len() length()

Returns the length of the string as an integer

Len(“Hello, World”)

let

Assignment statement. Can be assumed (except for PAGE).

Let a = 42 a$=”Hello”

list

Lists the program. Can start from the beginning or named line. This is slightly unusual in that it clears the screen and lists from the top down, and stops when the screen is mostly full. This is deliberate. The indentation is automatic, and doesn’t work for else at the time of writing.

List 1000

load

Loads a file from local storage. The load address is part of the file, and can be overridden so a file can be loaded elsewhere. If the file is loaded to the basic Program area (e.g. the value of PAGE) it is assumed to be a BASIC program and variables are cleared ready to run the program.

Load “myprogram” load “my.data”,&7800

mid$()

Returns a subsegment of a string, given the start position (first character is 1) and the length, so mid$(“abcdef”,3,2) returns “cd”. It does, I just tried it. The third parameter is optional and if omitted means “to the end of the string”

Mid$(“Hello”,2,3) mid$(“Another word”,2)

mod

Binary modulus operator. The second value must be non zero.

42 mod 5

new

Erases the current program

New

old

Unerases the current program, or tries to. Some things will corrupt it, and it won’t work, and the first line might be corrupted. It usually sets the line number of the first line to zero. But then using line numbers for anything other than editing is a capital offence anyway. How well this works depends on what you’ve done.

old

or

Binary or operator. This is a binary operator not a logical, e.g. it is the binary and *not* a logical and so it can return values other than true and false

Read.value or 4

page

Sets the program location, or gets it. It behaves like a variable and moves the basic program address about. So if you change it, it can do wacky things if you don’t have program there. I’m not psychic

Print page let page=$6800

palette

Change the palette colour. This is not instant as in hardware palettes because some implementation are not hardware palettes. So this should be set before you start drawing stuff. Don’t use it to do things like flashing the screen at the end of a Pacman level, it won’t work. The parameters are a colour number, the plane (0 background 1 foreground) and a BGR value which is Blue \* 16 + Green \* 4 + Red where each component has the values 0-3. The range of colour numbers depends on how you set the screen up. I’ll probably write more under SCREEN if I remember.

Palette 0,0,16

paper

Sets the text drawing colour

Paper 12

peek()

Returns the contents of the given memory location. I prefer using the pling operator but if you want it it’s here

Peek(a)

poke

Sets the contents of a memory location. See peek() regarding pling.

Poke 32768,42

rnd() random()

Generates random numbers. This has two forms, which is still many fewer than Odo. Without a parameter, it returns a random integer in range (-32768..32767). With two parameters it returns a number between them inclusive, so random(1,6) could be used to simulate a die. Rnd() and random() are synonyms. I like clarity.

Rnd() random(1,6)

repeat until

Conditional loop, which is tested at the bottom.

repeat

call drink.a.pint

until alcohol.in.blood > 100

return

Return from GOSUB call. You can make up your own death threats.

return

right$()

Returns a number of characters from a string counting from the right

Right$(a$,4)

run

Runs the current program after clearing variables as for CLEAR. If a filename is provided, that file is loaded and run. Running programs can be stopped using the Ctrl+Space combination.

Run run “myProgram.bas”

save

Saves to the local store. This can either be the current basic program which is the default when just a file name is given, or any area of memory, in which case there are three parameters, the file name, the start and the length. The saved file will automatically load into the same space

Save “my.program” save “some.data”,&6800,&800

screen

The Eris display is built using two planes, the foreground which is used for sprites, and the background which is used for text and fixed graphics. The screen display allocates the 4 planes available on the base system between the background, the first parameter and the foreground, the second parameter. It is possible to have no foreground or no background if you wish. The screen is erased and the default palette is loaded.

The system defaults to 0,4 e.g. no foreground/sprite plane and 4 text planes, which gives a 16 colour text display (because 2^4 = 16). Screen 2,2 reorganises this so there are 2 foreground planes and 2 background planes. The background plane has four colours and the foreground three (because on the foreground colour 0 is transparent).

So you can have no sprites and 16 colour, a single sprite colour and 8 colours, 4 sprite colours and 4 background colours and so on. Later implementation may allow the use of more colours without affecting background compatibility.

This is done entirely in software ; in reality it is a single 4 bit plane with (limited) palette mapping (see PALETTE) in which any plane or planes can be written to by the blitter. The use of palettes and different bit allocations creates this 2 layer display.

The default palette is calculate from BGR where B is bit 2, G bit 1 and R bit 0, 0 = Black, 1 = Red, 2 = Green, 3 = Yellow, 4 = Blue, 5 = Magenta, 6 = Cyan, 7 = White, and is repeated where necessary. This is of course reprogrammable. As stated earlier, the reprogrammable palette should not be used for palette effects, e.g. flashing the screen by changing the palette. Direct hardware palettes are not required ; it simply affects all future writes. The emulation and ESP32 versions do this differently. If you draw something on the screen in a colour and change that colours palette definition, it will change instantly on emulation, but not on the ESP32. This is deliberate.

Screen 0,4 screen 3,1

sgn() sign()

Returns the sign of an integer, which is -1 0 or 1 depending on the value.

Sgn(42)

stop

Stops program with an error

stop

sys

Executes a machine code routine at a given address. On entry, R0 points to the fixed variable A, and variables B-Z follow in logical sequence

Sys &FFE4

sysvar()

Returns a kernel system value. These are listed in the kernel source

example

to.number() val()

Converts a number to a string. There must be some number there e.g. “-42xxx” works and returns 42 but “xxx” returns an error. It’s a compatibility thing and I’ll probably replace it with something usable.

Val(“42”)

to.string$() str$()

Converts a string to a number, in 16 bit signed decimal form.

Str$(42)

true

Returns the constant -1

true

while wend

Conditional loop with test at the top

While wife.very.cross

Call buy.flowers

Call grovel

wend

xor

Binary exclusive or operator. This is a binary operator not a logical, e.g. it is the binary and *not* a logical and so it can return values other than true and false

A xor &0E