

# What is the purpose of a plus symbol before a variable?



this really sounds like a simple question but I had no luck searching. what does the `+d` in

213

```
function addMonths(d, n, keepTime) {
  if (+d) {
```



means?



34

[javascript](#)

edited Aug 7 '18 at 13:58



isherwood

38.6k 12 86 114

asked Jul 13 '11 at 17:24



goh

8,740 26 69 133

possible duplicate of [What does the plus sign do in 'return +new Date'](#) – nawfal Jan 10 '14 at 12:36

2 Same issue but the title of other page doesn't describe the general case as this does – geotheory Aug 30 '15 at 10:12

possible duplicate of [What does +... mean in JavaScript](#) – Bergi Aug 8 '17 at 17:02

## 3 Answers



The `+` operator returns the numeric representation of the object. So in your particular case, it would appear to be predicating the if on whether or not `d` is a non-zero number.

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Reference [here](#). And, as pointed out in comments, [here](#).



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1 Right on, Paul. @amateur, details are here: [developer.mozilla.org/en/JavaScript/Reference/Operators/...](https://developer.mozilla.org/en/JavaScript/Reference/Operators/...) – Ray Toal Jul 13 '11 at 17:28

The anchor link to MDN has been changed to [developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/JavaScript/Reference/...](https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/JavaScript/Reference/...) – theRemix May 30 '14 at 1:04

Working link: [developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/JavaScript/Reference/...](https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/JavaScript/Reference/...) – Ilker Cat Jan 4 '18 at 22:17

I just wonder which is more efficient, parse a string into an integer using the function parseInt or using the plus operator? – acarlstein Jul 23 '18 at 23:24

It is a unary "+" operator which yields a numeric expression. It would be the same as `d*1`, I believe.

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answered Jul 13 '11 at 17:29



naivists

27k 5 48 79

As explained in other answers it converts the variable to a number. Specially useful when `d` can be either a number or a string **function** that evaluates to a number.

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Example (using the `addMonths` function in the question):

```
addMonths(34,1,true);  
addMonths("34",1,true);
```

then the `+d` will evaluate to a number in all cases. Thus avoiding the need to check for the type and take different code paths depending on whether `d` is a number, a function or a string that can be converted to a number.

edited Dec 14 '18 at 14:38

answered May 16 '14 at 14:25



ecerulm

8,632 6 63 69

`+d` will not evaluate to a number with the first invocation example of `addMonths` – Gus Crawford Oct 16 '17 at 16:22

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