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Stata tip 9: Following special sequences

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Did you know about the special sequences stored as c-class values? [P] **creturn** documents various constant and current values, which may be seen by `creturn list` or which may be accessed once you know their individual names. For example, `c(filename)` stores the name of the file last specified with a `use` or `save` in the current session. However, various special sequences have been added in updates on 1 July 2003 and 15 December 2003 and so are not documented in the manuals. Here is the list:

- `c(alpha)` returns a string containing a space-separated list of the lowercase letters.
- `c(ALPHA)` returns a string containing a space-separated list of the uppercase letters.
- `c(Mons)` returns a string containing a space-separated list of month names abbreviated to three characters.
- `c(Months)` returns a string containing a space-separated list of month names.
- `c(Wdays)` returns a string containing a space-separated list of weekday names abbreviated to three characters.
- `c(Weekdays)` returns a string containing a space-separated list of weekday names.

Even the display of one of these lists can be useful. Note the local macro notation ` ' ensuring that the contents of the list are shown, not its name:

```
. display "`c(Months)'"
```

A common application of these lists is specifying variable or value labels. Suppose that a variable `month` included values 1 to 12. We might type

```
. tokenize `c(Months)'
. forvalues i = 1/12 {
  2. label def month `i' "``i''" , modify
  3. }
. label val month month
```

Finally, the SSC archive (see [R] **ssc**) is organized alphabetically using folders `a` through `z` and `_`. We could get a complete listing of what was available by

```
. foreach l in `c(alpha)' _ {
  2. ssc describe `l'
  3. }
```

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