



6 UNDERSTANDING SYMBOLS

SYMBOLS ARE THE basic building blocks in eSignal. The data you collect and display is all keyed to symbols you enter. For issues such as common stock, getting the symbol right is relatively easy. However, if your interests extend to issues such as options, futures, and international markets, the symbols and formulas for creating them often become too numerous and too complex to keep in your head.

This chapter will get you started using symbols by showing you how to format the most commonly used symbols. It pays special attention to options, because their symbology is more complex and variable.



eSignal Help contains extensive information about symbols and the formats for creating them. If you don't find what you're looking for here, try online Help. Check out Working with Symbols under Application Basics or use the Help Index or Find to search on a specific symbol type or "symbols."

Getting Symbols

If you don't know a base symbol, you really can't get started. Fortunately, if you're online using eSignal, you can look up a symbol very quickly.

To look up a symbol

- 1 Click on Research from the menu bar, and then click on Symbol Lookup.

A Browser window opens to the Symbol Lookup tool.



- 2 Click a Search For category and enter an issue name.

If you know the first letter of the issue name, you can speed the search by entering it in the space provided.

- 3 Click the Submit button to find and display the symbol.

Formatting Common Stock Symbols

Common stock symbols are the simplest—they consist of one to five letters. Most exchanges limit stock symbols to three letters, but NASDAQ symbols are up to five letters long.

Formatting Extended Stock Symbols

Extended stocks are represented by a base symbol for the underlying stock plus a modification often preceded by a period or a slash. Most extended stocks are represented as follows:

Class stock:

Format: Four-character base symbol, class code.

Example: ACCOB (800America.com Class B stock)

NASDAQ Class stock:

Format: base symbol, a period, and the class code

Example: NYT.A (New York Times Class A stock)

NASDAQ Bulletin Board stock:

Format: base symbol

Example: DWEB (Dell Webb Corporation)

Emerging Growth Issue:

Format: base symbol, slash, E or SE

Example: AES/SE (AES Corporation)

Preferred stock:

Format: base symbol, slash, P

Example: F/P (Ford Motor Company preferred stock)

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Preferred stock in a series:

Format: base symbol, slash, P, series code

Example: FFB/PB (First Fidelity Bancorp preferred stock, series B)

Warrant:

Format: base symbol, slash, W

Example: OLS/W (Olsten Corporation warrant)

Warrant in a series:

Format: base symbol, slash, W, series code

Example: CDS/WA (Alliance Entertainment warrant, series A)

Regional Stock:

Format: base symbol, =, one character exchange code

Example: IBM=B (IBM on the Boston exchange)

Right:

Format: base symbol, slash, R

Example: IBM/R (IBM right)

Units:

Format: base symbol, period, U

Example: GM.U (General Motors unit)

X-right or x-warrant:

Format: base symbol, slash, X

Example: OLS/X (Olsten Corporation warrant)

When-issued:

Format: base symbol, slash, I

Example: GM/I (General Motors when-issued)

NASDAQ When-issued:

Format: Four-character base symbol, I

Example: SUNWI (Sun Microsystems when-issued)

Units When-issued:

Format: base symbol, period, UI

Example: GM.UI (General Motors when-issued units)

Special:

Format: base symbol, slash, S, code

Example: BP/SP (British Petroleum Special Part Paid)

HELP 

Stocks traded on the NASDAQ exchange may use different formats. Go to Symbol Formats for a complete list of extended stock formats. You can also view the NASDAQ 5th Character Guide that is located in the eSignal Help menu to access this information.

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Formatting International Symbols

International symbols include a base symbol in the same format as a domestic symbol of the same type, followed by a dash and an exchange code.

These are the current exchange codes:

Code	Exchange
AT	Amsterdam Commodity Exchange
BD	Government Bonds
DT	Deutsche Termin Borse
FX	ADP/GTIS Foreign Exchange & Precious Metals
GB	Garvin Bonds
IP	International Petroleum Exchange
LC	London Commodity Exchange
LF	London International Financial Futures Exchange
LM	London Metal Exchange
LS	London Stock Exchange
MA	Paris (MATIF)
MX	Mexico Exchange
SA	Shanghai Agriculture Exchange
SI	Singapore (SIMEX)
SM	Shanghai Metals Exchange
SZ	Shenzhen Exchange

Code	Exchange
TG	Tokyo Grain Exchange
TO	Tokyo Commodity Exchange
TS	Tokyo Sugar Exchange

Formatting Market Index Symbols

eSignal lets you view real-time data for market indices, regardless of the exchanges you subscribe to.

Market indices are represented by symbols that start with a dollar sign. For example, \$INDU represents the Dow Jones Industrial Average, and \$TICK is the NYSE Cumulative Tick.

The following is a list of the most widely-used indices. For a complete listing of eSignal indices go to www.eSignal.com/support/All_Products/HTX_Symbols_Lists/esigind.htx on the Internet.

Symbol	Index
\$ADV	NYSE Advancing Issues
\$COMPQ	NASDAQ Composite
\$DECL	NYSE Declining Issues
\$DVOL	NYSE Declining Volume
\$INDU	Dow Jones Industrial Average
\$OEX	S & P 100
\$SPX	S & P 500
\$TRAN	Dow Jones Transportation

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Symbol	Index
\$UTIL	Dow Jones Utilities
\$UVOL	NYSE Up Volume

Formatting Mutual Fund & Money Market Symbols

Mutual funds and money market funds use similar symbol formats. Mutual funds are represented by four characters that identify the fund, followed by the letter X. For example, the Fidelity Magellan fund is represented by FMAGX.

Money market funds are represented by three characters that identify the fund, followed by XX. For example, the Merrill Lynch Ready Assets fund is represented by MRAXX.

Formatting Option Symbols

Stock option symbols consist of a two or three-letter base symbol for the underlying stock plus strike information. Strike information includes expiration month, strike price, and whether the option is a put or call.

eSignal supports both a short format and long format for specifying options. The short form is faster to enter and takes up less space on your screen, but it's not as intuitive as the long form. You can enter options in either long or short form and you can use the F3 key to toggle between long and short form display.

Short Form Symbols

The short form consists of the base symbol followed by a space, followed by a two-letter code. The first letter of the code represents the expiration month and whether the option is a put or call.

The second letter represents the strike price. Each letter represents a number of different prices. The particular price represented depends on the current price of the base stock. For example, the letter “K” represents \$55, \$155, \$255, \$355, and so on. Thus, if you’re entering a stock option symbol for a stock currently trading at \$55, then the letter K in the option symbol represents \$55.

Example: An option to sell Abbot Labs for \$55 (assuming ABT currently trades at or above \$55) on or before the February expiration would be entered as ABT BK.

HELP

Go to Working with Symbols in Application Basics and select Stock Option Table to see a complete list of option codes. Follow the link for the special strike price codes used for \$DJX options. You can also select Symbol Formats from the eSignal Help menu to pull up options codes.

Long Form Symbols

The long form of a stock option symbol consists of the base symbol followed by a space, the first three letters of the expiration month, the dollar amount, and either P for put or C for call.

Example: An option to sell Merck shares for \$60 on or before the April expiration would be entered as MRK APR60P.

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Switching Between Long and Short Form

You can toggle back and forth between the two as long as you meet the following conditions:

- 1 You subscribe to the exchange on which the base symbol is traded.
- 1 The base symbol already appears in a window (or in the Data Manager).

To switch between the long and short form

- 1 Press the F3 key. Alternatively, click the Long Symbol for Options checkbox in the Preferences dialog box.

Working with NASDAQ Symbols

Because NASDAQ symbols exceed three letters, a shortened version is used for options. The shortened symbol is usually (but not always) the first two letters of the long symbol plus Q.

If a fifth letter appears at the end of a Nasdaq Security, it identifies the issue as something other than a single issue of common stock or capital stock.

eSignal includes a NASDAQ 5th character guide that is accessible from the Help menu. It details the meaning of the fifth character that some NASDAQ symbols include.

Futures Symbols

eSignal lets you view futures information, including spot or cash commodity prices. The basic format for futures symbols is a base symbol followed by a space, a letter representing the delivery month, and the last digit of the delivery year.

Example: TB Z2 represents U.S. Treasury bills delivered in December 2002.

Spot, Cash, or Continuous Futures Prices

Spot or cash futures prices are represented by the base symbol followed by a space; the letter A, X, or Y; and the number 0. The data and prices displayed vary from commodity to commodity. You need to be familiar with the market for the commodity to interpret the information.

Example: DM A0 represents the current spot price of the German mark.

Continuous futures prices are represented by the base symbol followed by a space, a #, and an F. The data represented by a continuous futures symbol represents the current front contract, and, as the next contract expires, the next contract becomes active.

Example: DM #F represents the continuous futures contract for the German mark.

Foreign Futures Symbols

Foreign futures symbols are represented by the base symbol followed by a space, the month code and year code, a dash, and the exchange code.

Example: LX U2-LF represents LX delivered in December 2002.

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Futures Options-Options Chain Feature

eSignal's Option Chain feature lets you view all the actively trading options for a specified equity, future, index, or currency without having to go through the drudgery of entering symbols. You can also use it to view all current futures contracts for a given root symbol.

When you request an Option Chain, the results appear in a new Options window. eSignal also supports an Autolisting feature. When you select autolist from the right-click menu, regional stock quotes are listed in a new Quote window for stocks and active futures contracts are listed in a new Quote window for futures. (See Chapter 11, Displaying Options Information, for more on the option chain and autolisting features.)