NAME

bc − arbitrary-precision arithmetic language

SYNOPSIS

bc [−c] [−l] [file ...]

DESCRIPTION

Bc is an interactive processor for a language which resembles C but provides unlimited precision arithmetic. It takes input from any files given, then reads the standard input. The −l argument stands for the name of an arbitrary precision math library. The syntax for *bc* programs is as follows; L means letter a−z, E means expression, S means statement.

Comments

are enclosed in /* and */.

Names

simple variables: L
array elements: L [E]
The words 'ibase', 'obase', and 'scale'

Other operands

arbitrarily long numbers with optional sign and decimal point.
(E)
sqrt (E)
length (E) number of significant decimal digits
scale (E) number of digits right of decimal point
L (E , ... , E)

Operators

+ − * / % ^ (% is remainder; ^ is power)
++ −− (prefix and postfix; apply to names)
== <= >= != < >
= =+ =− =* =/ =% =^

Statements

E
{ S ; ... ; S }
if (E) S
while (E) S
for (E ; E ; E) S
null statement
break
quit

Function definitions

```
define L ( L ,..., L ) {
        auto L, ... , L
        S; ... S
        return ( E )
}
```

Functions in −l math library

s(x) sine
c(x) cosine
e(x) exponential
l(x) log
a(x) arctangent
j(n,x) Bessel function

All function arguments are passed by value.

The value of a statement that is an expression is printed unless the main operator is an assignment. Either semicolons or new-lines may separate statements. Assignment to *scale* influences the number of digits to be retained on arithmetic operations in the manner of *dc*(1). Assignments to *ibase* or *obase* set the input and output number radix respectively.

The same letter may be used as an array, a function, and a simple variable simultaneously. All variables are global to the program. 'Auto' variables are pushed down during function calls. When using arrays as function arguments or defining them as automatic variables empty square brackets must follow the array name.

Bc is actually a preprocessor for *dc*(1), which it invokes automatically, unless the −c (compile only) option is present. In this case the *dc* input is sent to the standard output instead.

EXAMPLE

```
scale = 20
define e(x){
        auto a, b, c, i, s
        a = 1
        b = 1
        s = 1
        for(i=1; 1==1; i++){
                a = a*x
                b = b*i
                c = a/b
                if(c == 0) return(s)
                s = s+c
        }
}
```

defines a function to compute an approximate value of the exponential function and

```
for(i=1; i<=10; i++) e(i)
```

prints approximate values of the exponential function of the first ten integers.

FILES

/usr/lib/lib.b	mathematical library
/usr/bin/dc	desk calculator proper

SEE ALSO

dc(1)

L. L. Cherry and R. Morris, *BC − An arbitrary precision desk-calculator language*

BUGS

No &&, || yet.

For statement must have all three E's.

Quit is interpreted when read, not when executed.