

# A new command for plotting regression coefficients and other estimates

Ben Jann

University of Bern, [jann@soz.unibe.ch](mailto:jann@soz.unibe.ch)

12th German Stata Users Group meeting  
Hamburg, June 13, 2014

# Outline

- Introduction
- The coefplot command
  - ▶ Basic usage
  - ▶ Labels
  - ▶ Confidence intervals
  - ▶ The recast option
  - ▶ Marker labels
  - ▶ The at option

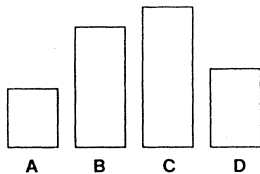
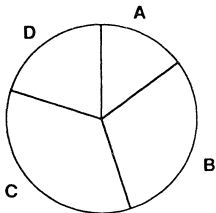
# Introduction

- Statistical estimates such as coefficients from regression models are often presented as tables in research articles and presentations.
- However, results display in form of graphs can be much more effective than tabulation. This is because the ...

*“... reexpression of data in pictorial form capitalizes upon one of the most highly developed human information processing capabilities – the ability to recognize, classify, and remember visual patterns.”*

(Lewandowsky and Spence 1989:200)

- Graphs do a great job in “revealing patterns, trends, and relative quantities” (Jacoby 1997:7) because they translate differences among numbers into spatial distances, thereby emphasizing the main features of the data.
- Plus, pictorial representations seem to be easier to remember than tabular results (Lewandowsky and Spence 1989).



A	B	C	D
15	30	35	20

(Lewandowsky and Spence 1989:209)

# Introduction

- In many applications, statistics is about estimation based on sample data. Since estimation results are uncertain, standard errors, statistical tests, or confidence intervals are reported.
- Visualizations of results should reflect precision or uncertainty. This is why so called “ropeladder” plots have become increasingly popular. They display, against a common scale,
  - ▶ markers for point estimates (e.g. of regression coefficients)
  - ▶ and spikes or bars for confidence intervals (“error bars”).
- Ropeladder plots are effective because they capitalize on two of the most powerful perceptual capabilities of humans – evaluating the position of points along a common scale and judging the length of lines (Cleveland and McGill 1985). Furthermore, they provide a much better impression of statistical precision than p-values or significance stars in tables.

# Introduction

- Here's an early example of an error-bar plot in a paper by Student (1927)

(Thanks to Nick Cox for pointing me to this and some of the following examples.)

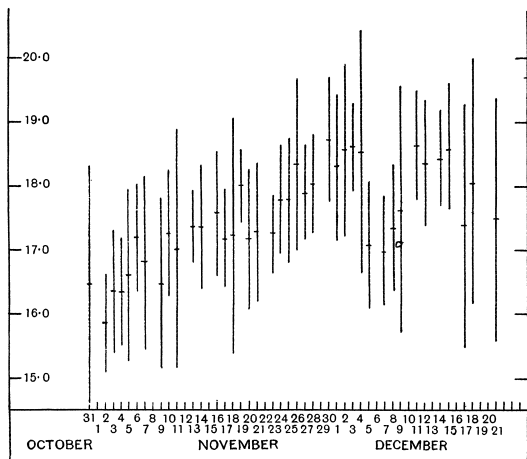


Fig. 3. Means of Daily Analyses with lines showing on each side of the Mean twice the S.D. appropriate to the Number of Analyses made on any given day. The S.D. is derived from the total observations by the formula

$$\sigma = \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{S(a - \bar{a})^2}{S(n-1)}}$$

where  $a$  = Average of a Farm,  
 $\bar{a}$  = Mean of a Day's Analyses,  
 $n$  = Number of Farms analysed in the Day.

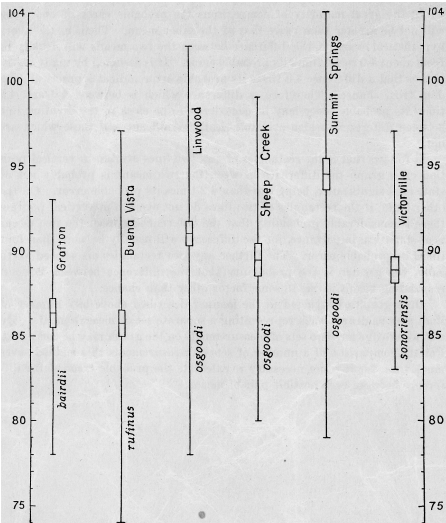
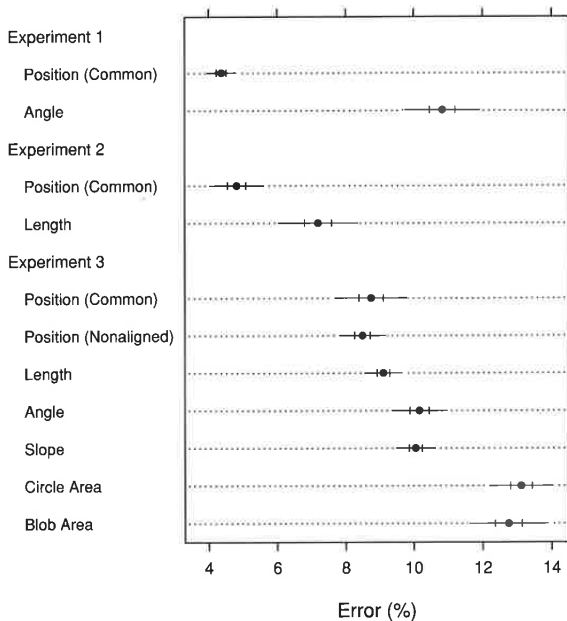


FIG. 1. Graph of body lengths in millimeters of several stocks of *Peromyscus maniculatus*. The length of each line represents the extremes of that set of measurements. The middle crossbar represents the mean. Two other crossbars are placed three times the probable error ( $\approx$  two times the standard error) of the mean above and below the mean, respectively, forming a rectangle. If the rectangles of two comparable lines do not overlap in vertical position the two means are indicated to differ by a statistically significant amount. For example, in body length the Linwood stock does not differ significantly from the Sheep Creek stock, but it is significantly shorter than the Summit Springs stock, and is significantly longer than either the Victorville, Grafton, or Buena Vista stocks.

(Dice and Leraas 1936)



**3.78 TWO-TIERED ERROR BARS.** The outer error bars are 95% confidence intervals and the inner error bars are 50% confidence intervals. The goal in this method is to show confidence intervals and not standard errors, although for some statistics, confidence intervals happen to be formed from multiples of standard errors.



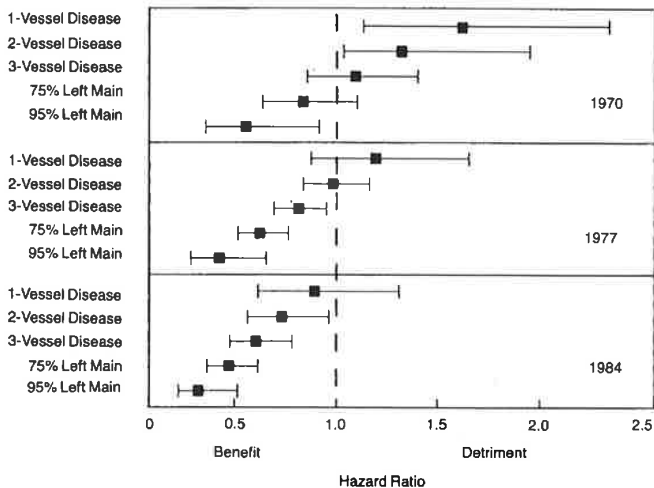


FIGURE 19.12: A display of an interaction between treatment and extent of disease, and between treatment and calendar year of start of treatment. Comparison of medical and surgical average hazard ratios for patients treated in 1970, 1977, and 1984 according to coronary anatomy. Closed squares represent point estimates; bars represent 0.95 confidence limits of average hazard ratios.<sup>61</sup> Reprinted by permission, American Medical Association.

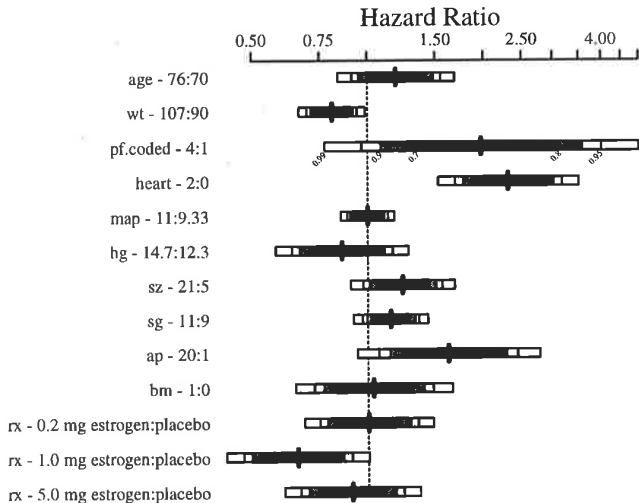


FIGURE 20.4: Hazard ratios and multilevel confidence bars for effects of predictors in model, using default ranges except for *ap*.

**Table 8**  
**Pekkanen, Nyblade and Krauss (2006),**  
**table 1: Logit analysis of electoral**  
**incentives and LDP post allocation**  
**(1996–2003)**

Variable	Model 1	Model 2
<i>Block 1: MP Type</i>		
Zombie	0.18 (.22)	0.27 (0.22)
SMD Only	-0.19 (0.22)	-0.19 (0.24)
PR Only	-0.39 (0.18)**	—
Costa Rican in PR	-0.09 (0.29)	—
<i>Block 2: Electoral Strength</i>		
Vote share margin	—	0.005 (0.004)
Margin Squared	—	—
<i>Block 3: Misc Controls</i>		
Urban-Rural Index	0.04 (0.08)	0.04 (0.09)
No Factional Membership	-0.86 (0.26)***	-0.98 (0.31)***
Legal Professional	0.39 (0.29)	-0.36 (0.30)
<i>Seniority</i>		
1 <sup>st</sup> Term	-3.76 (0.36)***	-3.66 (0.37)***
2 <sup>nd</sup> Term	-1.61 (0.19)***	-1.59 (0.21)***
4 <sup>th</sup> Term	-0.34 (0.19)**	-0.45 (0.21)***
5 <sup>th</sup> Term	-1.17 (0.22)***	-1.24 (0.24)***
6 <sup>th</sup> Term	-1.15 (0.22)***	-1.04 (0.24)***
7 <sup>th</sup> Term	-1.52 (0.25)***	-1.83 (0.29)***
8 <sup>th</sup> Term	-1.66 (0.28)***	-1.82 (0.32)***
9 <sup>th</sup> Term	-1.34 (0.32)***	-1.21 (0.33)***
10 <sup>th</sup> Term	-2.89 (0.48)***	-2.77 (0.49)***
11 <sup>th</sup> Term	-1.88 (0.43)***	-1.34 (0.46)***
12 <sup>th</sup> Term	-1.08 (0.41)***	-0.94 (0.49)**
Constant	.020 (.20)	0.13 (0.26)
Log-likelihood	-917.24	-764.77
N	1895	1574

Notes: Dependent Variables: 1 if MP holds a post of minister, vice minister, PARC, or HoR Committee Chair.

Base categories: SMD dual-listed, 3rd term. Excluded observations: senior MPs that held no post (> 12 terms, PR-Only MPs in Model 2).

\*p < .10, \*\*p < .05, \*\*\*p < .001.

**Figure 7**  
**Using parallel dot plots with error bars to**  
**present two regression models.**

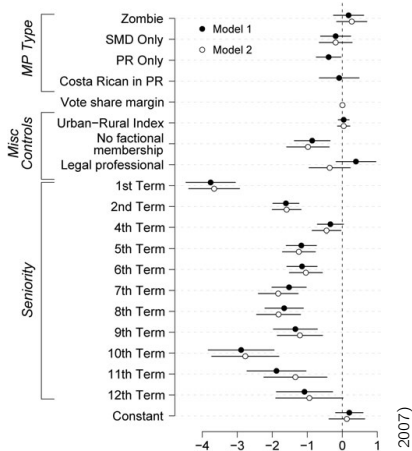


Table 1 from Pekkanen et al. 2006 displays two logistic regression models that examine the allocation of posts in the LDP party in Japan. We turn the table into a graph, and present the two models by plotting parallel lines for each of them grouped by coefficients. We differentiate the models by plotting different symbols for the point estimates: filled (black) circles for Model 1 and empty (white) circles for Model 2.

(Kastellec and Leoni 2007)

# Introduction

- Creating graphs of point estimates and confidence intervals has been notoriously difficult in Stata (although see Newson 2003).
  1. gather coefficients and variances from the `e()`-returns
  2. compute confidence intervals
  3. store results as variables
  4. create a variable for the category axis
  5. compile labels for coefficients
  6. run a lengthy graph command
- Things got better with the introduction of `marginsplot` in Stata 12. With `marginsplot` it is easily possible to create a ropeladder plot from results left behind by `margins`.

# Introduction

```
. sysuse auto, clear  
(1978 Automobile Data)
```

```
. regress price mpg trunk length turn
```

Source	SS	df	MS
Model	159570047	4	39892511.8
Residual	475495349	69	6891236.94
Total	635065396	73	8699525.97

```
Number of obs =      74  
F( 4, 69) =      5.79  
Prob > F      = 0.0004  
R-squared     = 0.2513  
Adj R-squared = 0.2079  
Root MSE     = 2625.1
```

price	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
mpg	-186.8417	88.17601	-2.12	0.038	-362.748	-10.93533
trunk	-12.72642	104.8785	-0.12	0.904	-221.9534	196.5005
length	54.55294	35.56248	1.53	0.130	-16.39227	125.4981
turn	-200.3248	140.0166	-1.43	0.157	-479.6502	79.00066
_cons	8009.893	6205.538	1.29	0.201	-4369.817	20389.6

# Introduction

```
. margins, dydx(*) post
```

```
Average marginal effects
```

```
Number of obs = 74
```

```
Model VCE : OLS
```

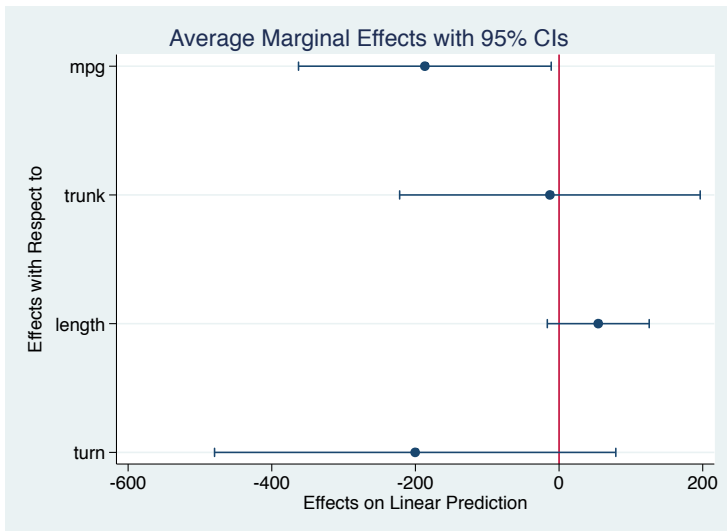
```
Expression : Linear prediction, predict()
```

```
dy/dx w.r.t. : mpg trunk length turn
```

	Delta-method					
	dy/dx	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
mpg	-186.8417	88.17601	-2.12	0.038	-362.748	-10.93533
trunk	-12.72642	104.8785	-0.12	0.904	-221.9534	196.5005
length	54.55294	35.56248	1.53	0.130	-16.39227	125.4981
turn	-200.3248	140.0166	-1.43	0.157	-479.6502	79.00066

# Introduction

- . marginsplot, horizontal xline(0) yscale(reverse) recast(scatter)
- Variables that uniquely identify margins: `_deriv`



## The coefplot command

- `marginsplot` is a very versatile command that can do much more than what is shown above, especially when plotting predictive margins.
- However, `marginsplot` can only deal with results left behind by `margins` and also has various other limitations.
- I therefore wrote a new command called `coefplot`. It is a general tool to graph results from estimation commands in Stata, similar to `outreg` (Gallup 2012) or `estout` (Jann 2007) for tables.



# The coefplot command

- Some of `coefplot`'s functionality overlaps with the possibilities offered by `marginsplot`, but `coefplot` goes much beyond:
  - ▶ `coefplot` can be applied to the results of any estimation command that posts its results in `e()` and can also be used to plot results that have been collected manually in matrices.
  - ▶ Results from multiple models can be freely combined and arranged in a single graph, including the possibility to distribute results across subgraphs.
  - ▶ Given the criticism of a strict interpretation of significance tests and confidence intervals it seems often advisable to display multiple confidence intervals using varying levels. `coefplot` offers such functionality.
  - ▶ Good graphs need good labels. `coefplot` offers various options to label coefficients, equations, and subgraphs, include labels for groups of estimates, or insert subheadings to structure the display.

# Syntax

```
coefplot subgraph [ | subgraph ... ] [, globalopts ]
```

where *subgraph* is defined as

```
(plot) [ (plot) ... ] [, subgropts ]
```

and *plot* is either `_skip` (to skip a plot) or

```
model [ \ model ... ] [, plotopts ]
```

and *model* is either

```
name [, modelopts ]
```

where *name* is the name of a stored model (see help `estimates`; type `.` or leave blank to refer to the active model) or

```
_matrix(mspec) [, modelopts ]
```

to plot results from a matrix (see *Plotting results from matrices* below). Parentheses around *plot* can be omitted if *plot* does not contain spaces.

*modelopts*

Description

---

Main

`omitted`

include omitted coefficients

`baselevels`

include base levels

`b(mspec)`

specify source to be plotted; default is to plot  $e(\mathbf{b})$

`at[(spec)]`

get plot positions from  $e(\mathbf{at})$ , or as specified by *spec*

`keep(coeflist)`

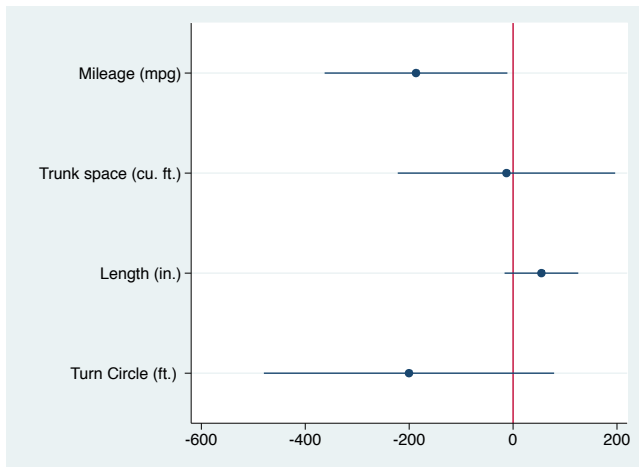
keep specified coefficients

`drop(coeflist)`

drop specified coefficients

# Basic usage: Plotting a single model

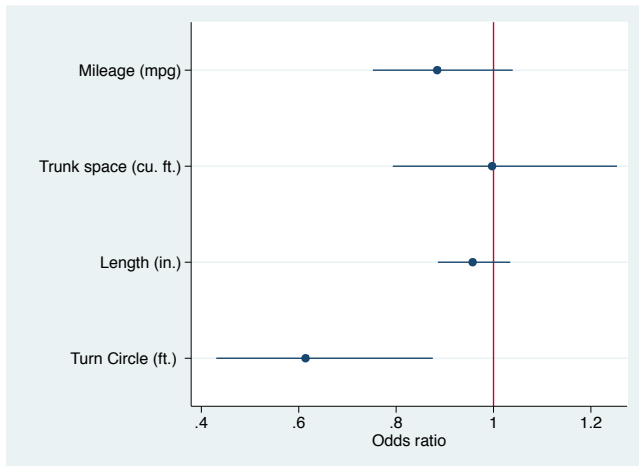
```
. quietly sysuse auto, clear  
. quietly regress price mpg trunk length turn  
. coefplot, drop(_cons) xline(0)
```



# Basic usage: Plotting a single model

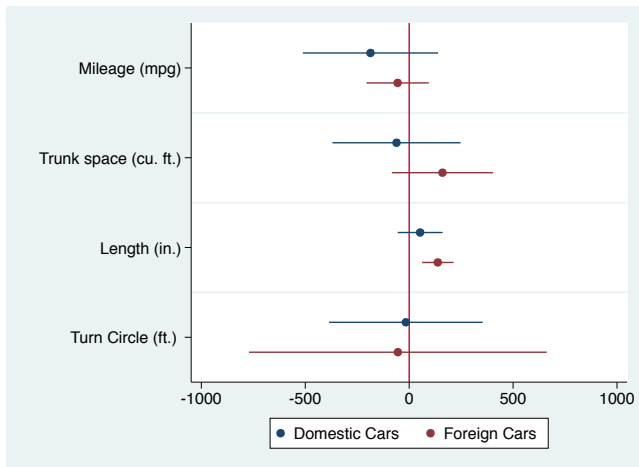
## Odds ratios from a logit model (eform option)

```
. quietly logit foreign mpg trunk length turn  
. coefplot, drop(_cons) xline(1) eform xtitle(Odds ratio)
```



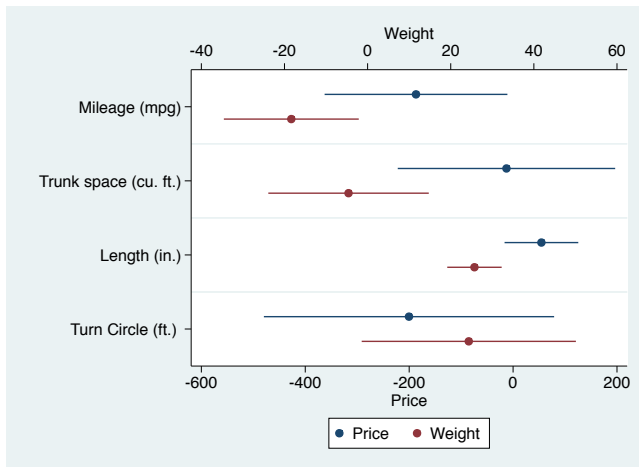
## Basic usage: Plotting multiple models

```
. quietly regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==0  
. estimates store domestic  
. quietly regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==1  
. estimates store foreign  
. coefplot (domestic, label(Domestic Cars)) (foreign, label(Foreign Cars)), drop(_cons) xline(0)
```



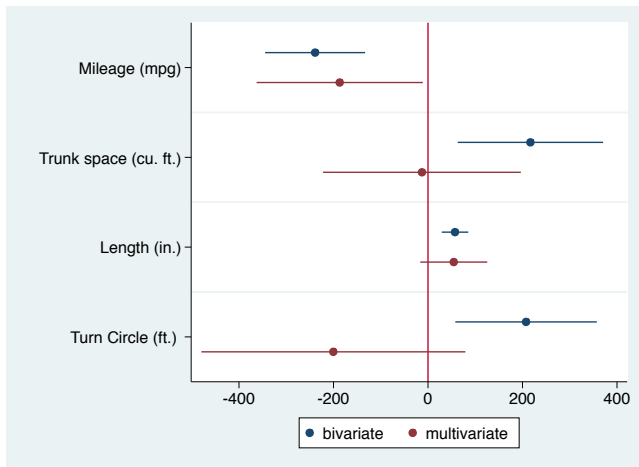
## Basic usage: Multiple models on separate scales

- . quietly regress price mpg trunk length turn
- . estimates store Price
- . quietly regress weight mpg trunk length turn
- . estimates store Weight
- . coefplot (Price) (Weight, axis(2)), drop(\_cons) xtitle(Price) xtitle(Weight, axis(2))



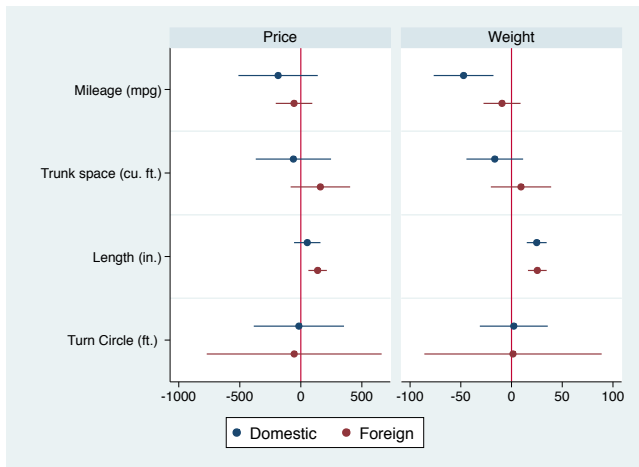
## Basic usage: Appending models

- ```
. quietly eststo multivariate: regress price mpg trunk length turn
. foreach var in mpg trunk length turn { // (using -eststo- from -estout- pkg for sake of brevity)
2.     quietly eststo `var': regress price `var'
3. }
. coefplot (mpg \ trunk \ length \ turn, label(bivariate)) (multivariate), drop(_cons) xline(0)
```



# Basic usage: Subgraphs

```
. quietly eststo Price_D: regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==0
. quietly eststo Price_F: regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==1
. quietly eststo Weight_D: regress weight mpg trunk length turn if foreign==0
. quietly eststo Weight_F: regress weight mpg trunk length turn if foreign==1
. coefplot (Price_D, label(Domestic)) (Price_F, label(Foreign)), bylabel(Price) ///
>         || (Weight_D) (Weight_F) , bylabel(Weight) ///
>         ||, drop(_cons) xline(0) byopts(xrescale)
```

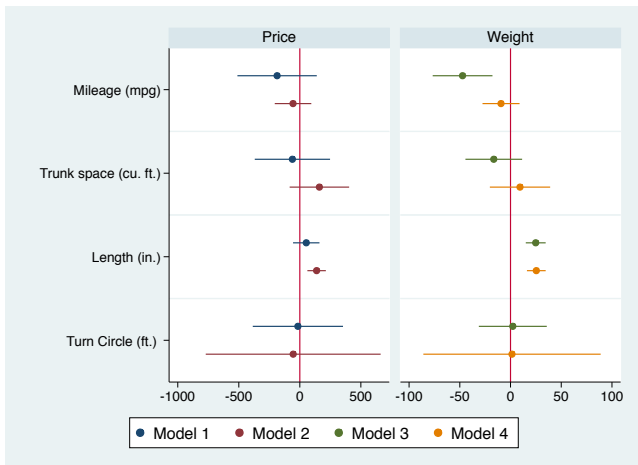




# Basic usage: Subgraphs

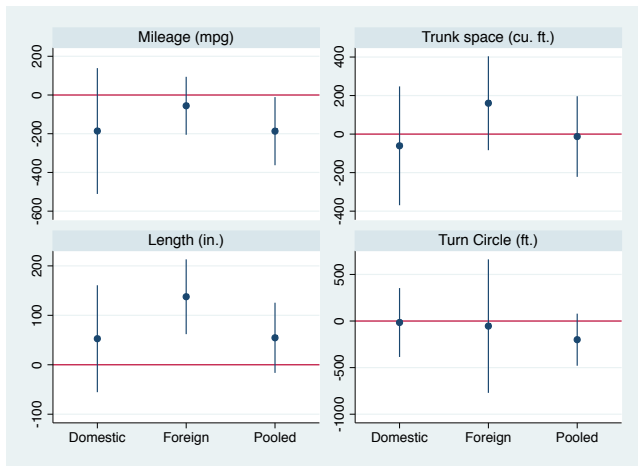
## Different plot styles across subgraphs

```
. coefplot (Price_D, label(Model 1)) (Price_F, label(Model 2)), bylabel(Price) ///  
>    || (Weight_D, label(Model 3)) (Weight_F, label(Model 4)), bylabel(Weight) ///  
>    ||, drop(_cons) xline(0) byopts(xrescale) norecycle legend(rows(1))
```



# Basic usage: Subgraphs by coefficients

- . quietly eststo Domestic: regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==0
- . quietly eststo Foreign: regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==1
- . quietly eststo Pooled: regress price mpg trunk length turn
- . coefplot Domestic || Foreign || Pooled, drop(\_cons) yline(0) vertical bycoefs byopts(yrescale)



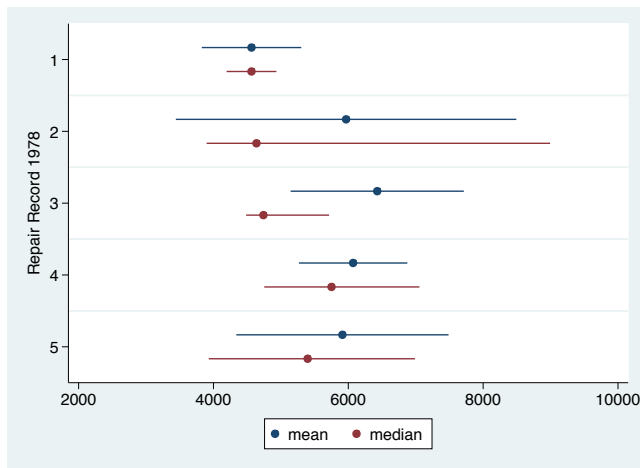
# Basic usage: Plotting results from matrix

```
. matrix median = J(5, 3, .)
. matrix coln median = median l195 ul95
. matrix rown median = 1 2 3 4 5
. forv i = 1/5 {
  2.   quietly centile price if rep78==`i´
  3.   matrix median[´i´,1] = r(c_1), r(lb_1), r(ub_1)
  4. }
. matrix list median
median[5,3]
      median      l195      ul95
1      4564.5      4195      4934
2      4638      3898.525    8993.35
3      4741      4484.8407   5714.9172
4      5751.5      4753.4403   7055.1933
5      5397      3930.5673   6988.0509
. eststo mean: mean price, over(rep78)
Mean estimation      Number of obs      =      69
      1: rep78 = 1
      2: rep78 = 2
      3: rep78 = 3
      4: rep78 = 4
      5: rep78 = 5
```

|       | Over | Mean     | Std. Err. | [95% Conf. Interval] |          |
|-------|------|----------|-----------|----------------------|----------|
| price | 1    | 4564.5   | 369.5     | 3827.174             | 5301.826 |
|       | 2    | 5967.625 | 1265.494  | 3442.372             | 8492.878 |
|       | 3    | 6429.233 | 643.5995  | 5144.95              | 7713.516 |
|       | 4    | 6071.5   | 402.9585  | 5267.409             | 6875.591 |
|       | 5    | 5913     | 788.6821  | 4339.209             | 7486.791 |

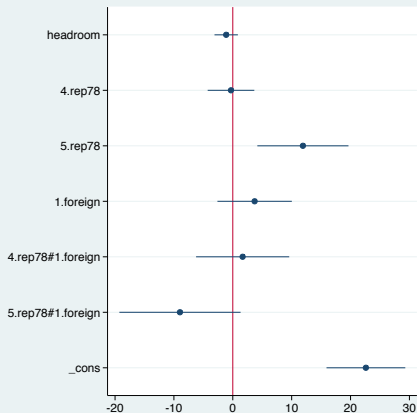
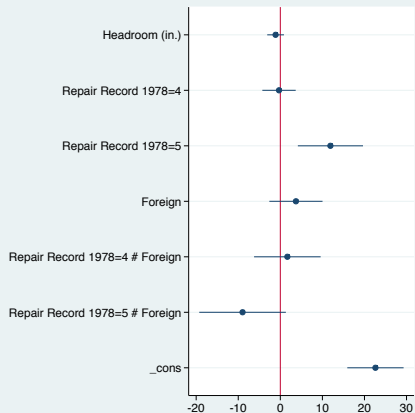
# Basic usage: Plotting results from matrix

```
. coefplot (mean) (matrix(median[,1]), ci((median[,2] median[,3]))), ytitle(Repair Record 1978)
```



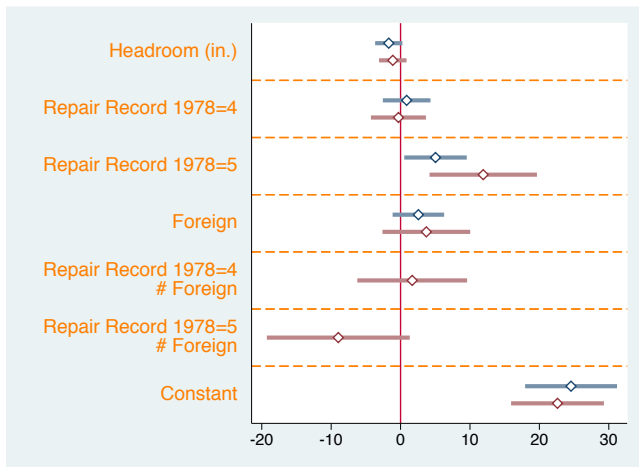
# Labels: Factor variables and interactions

```
. quietly sysuse auto, clear  
. quietly keep if rep78>=3  
. quietly regress mpg headroom i.rep##i.foreign  
. coefplot, xline(0) name(a)  
. coefplot, xline(0) name(b) nolabels  
. graph combine a b, xsize(8)
```



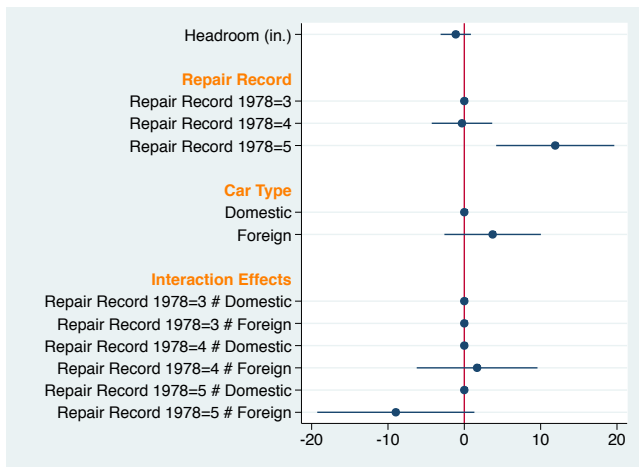
# Labels: Custom labels, wrapping, grid, offsets, styling

```
. quietly eststo m1: regress mpg headroom i.rep i.foreign
. quietly eststo m2: regress mpg headroom i.rep##i.foreign
. coefplot (m1, offset(.15)) (m2, drop(**) offset(-.15)) (m2, keep(**) pstyle(p2)), ///
> xline(0) legend(off) msymbol(D) mfcolor(white) ciopts(lwidth(*3) lcolor(*.6)) ///
> grid(between glcolor(orange) glpattern(dash)) ///
> coeflabels(_cons = "Constant", wrap(20) notick labcolor(orange) labsize(medlarge) labgap(3))
```



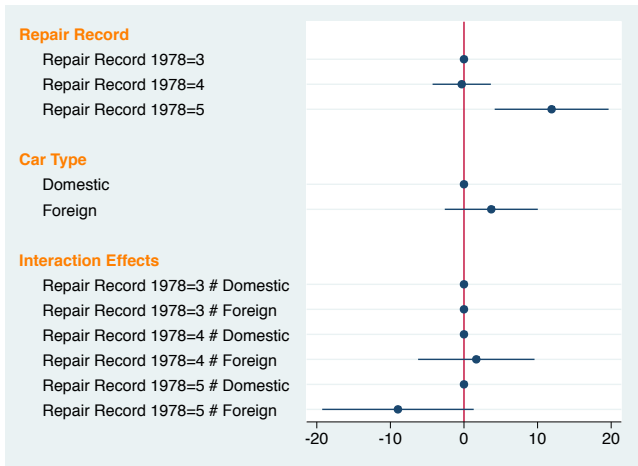
# Labels: Headings

```
. coefplot, xline(0) drop(_cons) omitted baselevels ///  
>   headings(3.rep78 = "{bf:Repair Record}" 0.foreign = "{bf:Car Type}" ///  
>   3.rep78#0.foreign = "{bf:Interaction Effects}", labcolor(orange))
```



# Labels: Left-aligned (possible, but a bit complicated)

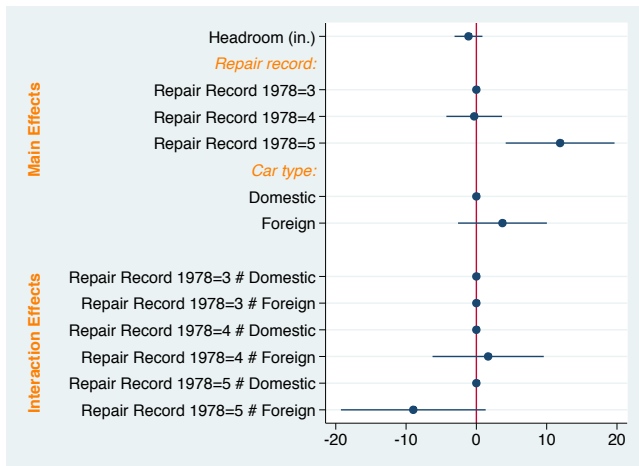
```
. coefplot, xline(0) drop(headroom _cons) omitted baselevels ///  
> graphregion(margin(1=65)) yscale(alt noline) coeflabels(, labgap(-125) notick) ///  
> headings(3.rep78 = "{bf:Repair Record}" 0.foreign = "{bf:Car Type}" ///  
> 3.rep78#0.foreign = "{bf:Interaction Effects}", labcolor(orange) labgap(-130))
```





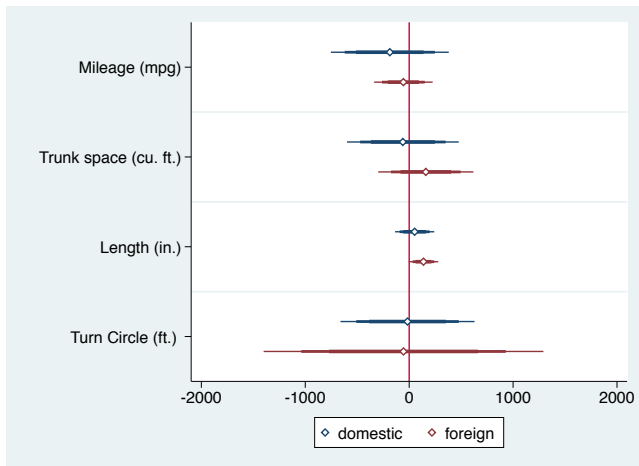
# Labels: Headings and groups

```
. coefplot, xline(0) drop(_cons) omitted base ///  
>   headings(3.rep78 = "{it:Repair record:}" 0.foreign = "{it:Car type:}" ///  
>     , nogap labcolor(orange)) ///  
>   groups(headroom 1.foreign = "{bf:Main Effects}" ///  
>     ?.rep78?.foreign = "{bf:Interaction Effects}", labcolor(orange))
```



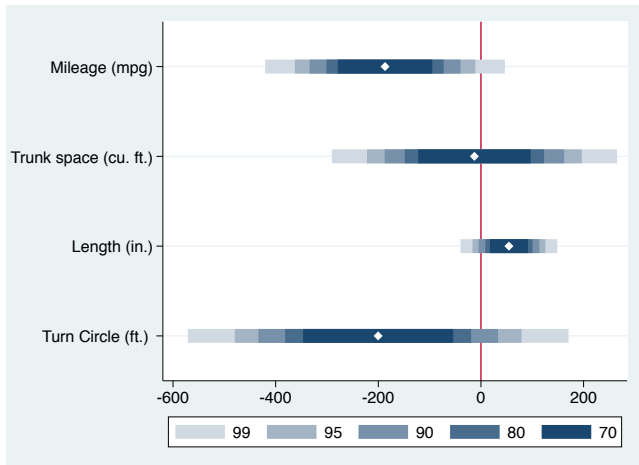
# Confidence intervals: Multiple levels

```
. quietly sysuse auto, clear  
. quietly eststo domestic: regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==0  
. quietly eststo foreign: regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==1  
. coefplot domestic foreign, drop(_cons) xline(0) msymbol(d) mfcolor(white) levels(99.9 99 95)
```



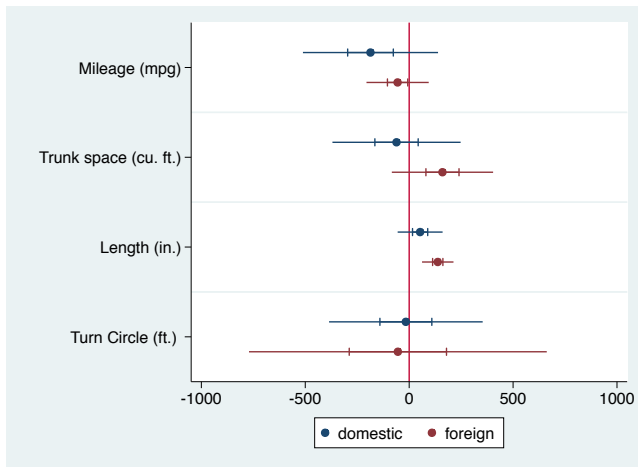
# Confidence intervals: Harrell style

```
. quietly regress price mpg trunk length turn  
. coefplot, drop(_cons) xline(0) msymbol(d) mcolor(white) ///  
>   levels(99 95 90 80 70) ciopts(lwidth(3 ..) lcolor(*.2 *.4 *.6 *.8 *1)) ///  
>   legend(order(1 "99" 2 "95" 3 "90" 4 "80" 5 "70") row(1))
```



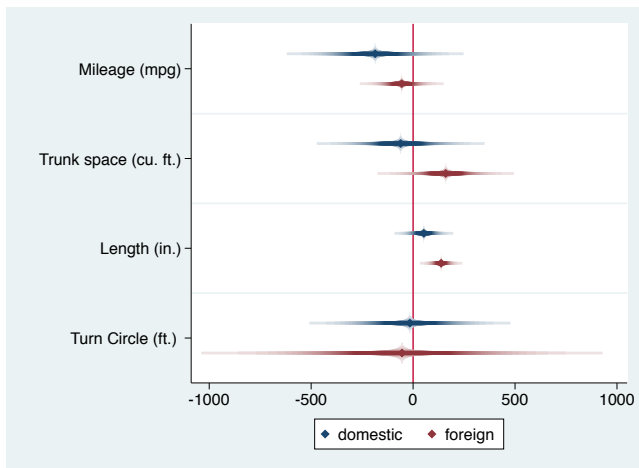
# Confidence intervals: Cleveland style

```
. coefplot domestic foreign, drop(_cons) xline(0) levels(95 50) ciopts(recast(. rcap))
```



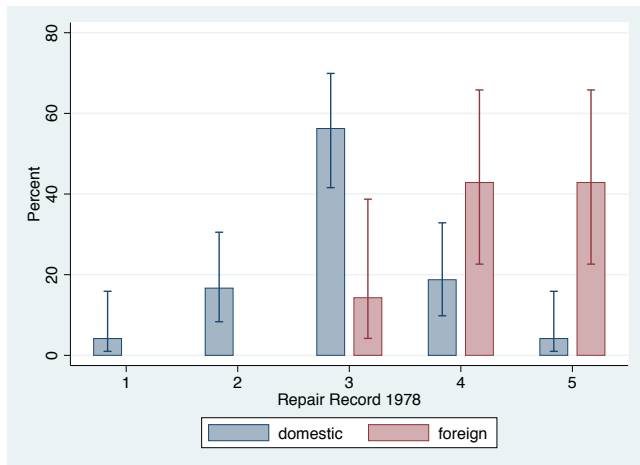
# Confidence intervals: Smoothed

```
. quietly regress price mpg trunk length turn  
. coefplot domestic foreign, drop(_cons) xline(0) msymbol(d) cismooth
```



# The recast option: Extremely useful!

```
. quietly eststo domestic: proportion rep if foreign==0  
. quietly eststo foreign: proportion rep if foreign==1  
. coefplot domestic foreign, vertical xtitle(Repair Record 1978) rescale(100) ytitle(Percent) ///  
> recast(bar) barwidth(0.25) fcolor(*.5) ciopts(recast(rcap)) citop citeye(logit)
```

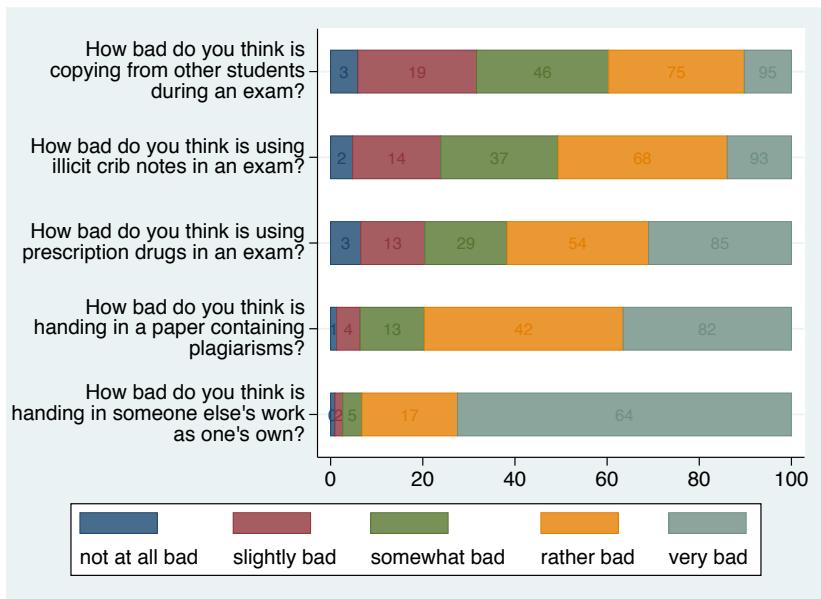


# The recast option: A more complicated bar chart

```
. use ftp://repec.sowi.unibe.ch/files/wp8/ASQ-ETHBE-2011.dta, clear
(Online Survey on "Exams and Written assignments" 2011)
. matrix r = J(5, 5, .)
. matrix colnames r = q21_1 q21_2 q21_3 q21_4 q21_5
. matrix rownames r = 1 2 3 4 5
. local i 0
. foreach v of var q21_1 q21_2 q21_3 q21_4 q21_5 {
2.     local ++i
3.     quietly proportion `v'
4.     matrix r[1,`i'] = e(b)
5. }
. mata: st_replacematrix("r", mm_colrunsum(st_matrix("r")))
. mata: st_matrix("l", (J(1,5,0) \ st_matrix("r")[1:4,]))
. matrix m = r
. mata: st_replacematrix("m", (st_matrix("l") :+ st_matrix("r"))/2)
. coefplot (matrix(m[1]), ci((l[1] r[1]))) ///
>     (matrix(m[2]), ci((l[2] r[2]))) ///
>     (matrix(m[3]), ci((l[3] r[3]))) ///
>     (matrix(m[4]), ci((l[4] r[4]))) ///
>     (matrix(m[5]), ci((l[5] r[5]))) ///
>     , noffset ms(i) mlabel mlabpos(0) rescale(100) format(%9.0f) coeflabels(, wrap(30)) ///
>     ciopts(recast(rbar) barwidth(0.5)) legend(rows(1) span stack order(1 "`: lab q21_ 1'" ///
>     3 "`: lab q21_ 2'" 5 "`: lab q21_ 3'" 7 "`: lab q21_ 4'" 9 "`: lab q21_ 5'"))
```

(OK, probably too complicated. I guess I should provide a wrapper for that.)

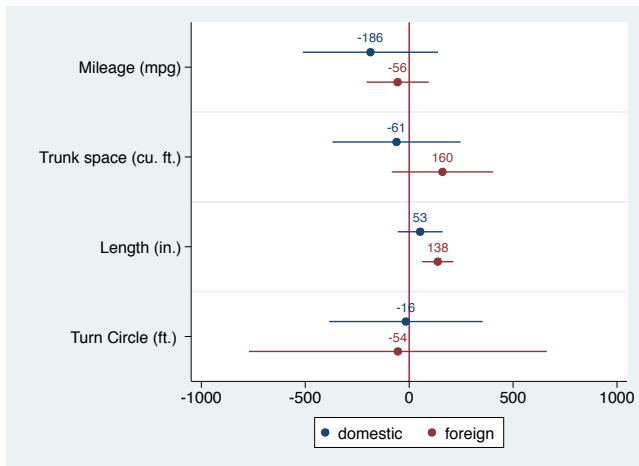
## The recast option: A more complicated bar chart





# Marker labels

```
. quietly sysuse auto, clear  
. quietly eststo domestic: regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==0  
. quietly eststo foreign: regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==1  
. coefplot domestic foreign, drop(_cons) xline(0) mlabel format(%9.0f) mlabposition(12) mlabgap(*2)
```

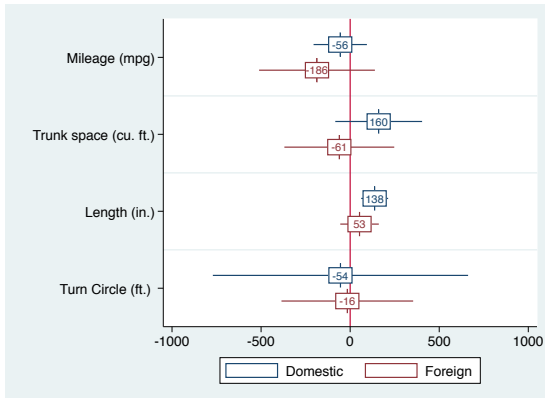


# Marker labels: A slightly involved example

```
. quietly regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==0
. mata: st_matrix("e(box)", (st_matrix("e(b)") :- 65 \ st_matrix("e(b)") :+ 65))
. mata: st_matrix("e(spike)", (st_matrix("e(b)") :- 1e-9 \ st_matrix("e(b)") :+ 1e-9 ))
. estimates store foreign

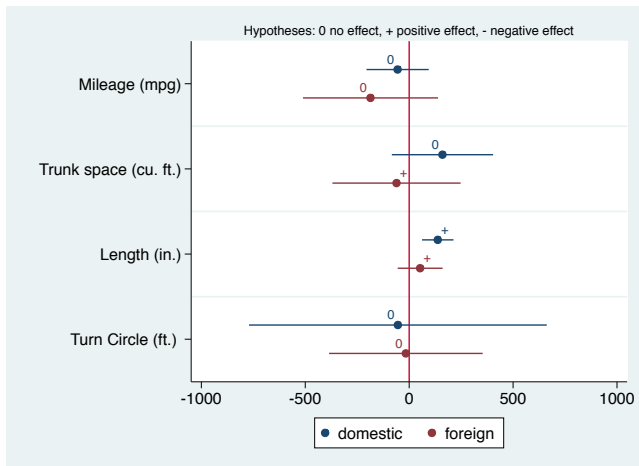
. quietly regress price mpg trunk length turn if foreign==1
. mata: st_matrix("e(box)", (st_matrix("e(b)") :- 65 \ st_matrix("e(b)") :+ 65))
. mata: st_matrix("e(spike)", (st_matrix("e(b)") :- 1e-9 \ st_matrix("e(b)") :+ 1e-9 ))
. estimates store domestic

. coefplot domestic foreign, drop(_cons) xline(0) legend(order(3 "Domestic" 7 "Foreign")) ///
> msymb(i) mlabel format(%9.0f) mlabposition(0) ci(95 spike box) ///
> ciopts(recast(. rbar rbar) barwidth(. 0.3 0.2) fcolor(. . white) lwidth(. medium medium))
```



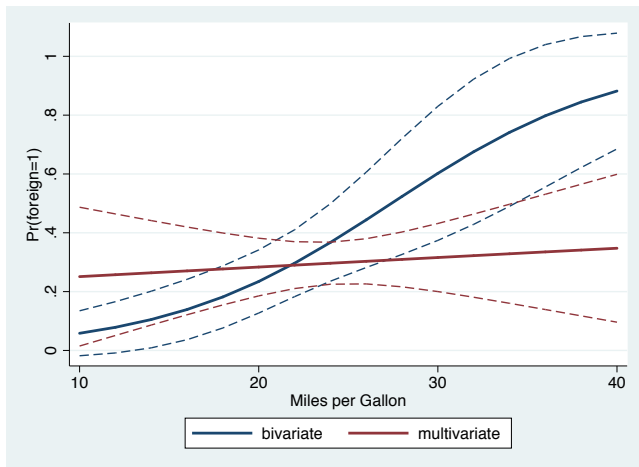
# Marker labels: Custom labels

```
. coefplot (domestic, mlabels(length = 1 "+" * = 11 "0"))      ///  
>          (foreign, mlabels(trunk length = 1 "+" * = 11 "0"))  ///  
>          , drop(_cons) xline(0)                               ///  
>          subti("Hypotheses: 0 no effect, + positive effect, - negative effect", size(small))
```



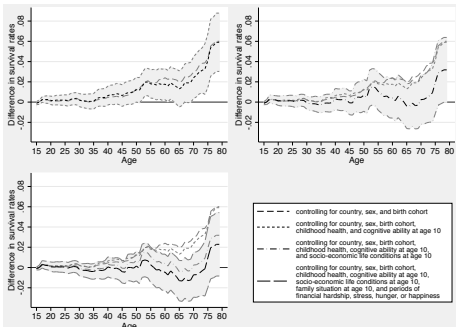
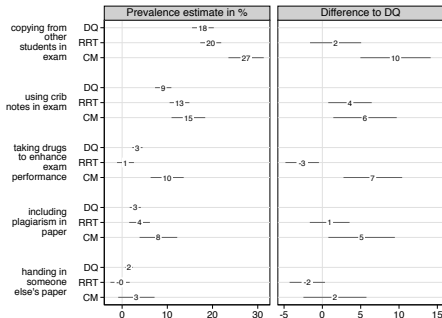
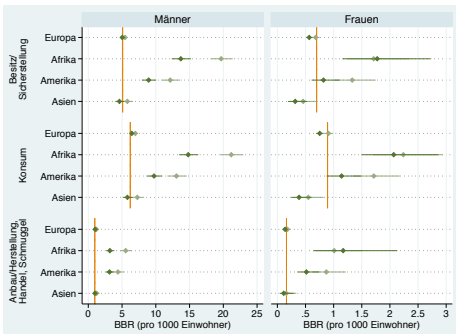
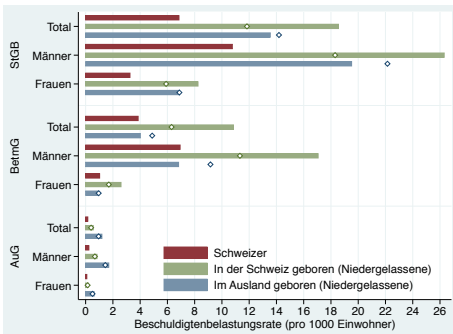
# The at option

```
. quietly logit foreign mpg
. quietly eststo bivariate: margins, at(mpg=(10(2)40)) post
. quietly logit foreign mpg turn price
. quietly eststo multivariate: margins, at(mpg=(10(2)40)) post
. coefplot bivariate multivariate, at ytitle(Pr(foreign=1)) xtitle(Miles per Gallon) ///
>   recast(line) lwidth(*2) ciopts(recast(rline) lpattern(dash))
```



and so on ...

see <http://ideas.repec.org/p/bss/wpaper/1.html>



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