

REMOVESYMBOLS Function

Removes all characters from a string that are not letters, numbers, accented Latin characters, or whitespace.

NOTE: Non-Latin letters are also removed.

Tip: This function also removes common punctuation, such as the following:

```
. , ! & ?
```

To preserve these characters, you might replace them with an alphanumeric text string. For example, the question mark might be replaced by:

```
zzQUESTIONMARKzz
```

After the function has been applied, you can replace these strings with the original values.

Basic Usage

Column reference example:

```
derive type:single value:REMOVESYMBOLS(MyName)
```

Output: The value of the `MyName` column value with all non-alphanumeric characters removed.

String literal example:

```
derive type:single value:REMOVESYMBOLS('Héllö, Wörlds!?!?')
```

Output: The string `Héllö Wörlds` is written to the new column.

Wildcard example:

```
set col:* value:REMOVESYMBOLS($col)
```

Output: Strips all non-alphanumeric or space characters from all columns in the dataset.

Syntax and Arguments

```
derive type:single value:REMOVESYMBOLS(column_string)
```

Argument	Required?	Data Type	Description
<code>column_string</code>	Y	string	Name of the column or string literal to be applied to the function

For more information on syntax standards, see *Language Documentation Syntax Notes*.

column_string

Name of the column or string constant to be trimmed of symbols.

- Missing string or column values generate missing string results.
- String constants must be quoted ('Hello, World').
- Multiple columns and wildcards are not supported.

Usage Notes:

Required?	Data Type	Example Value
Yes	String literal or column reference	myColumn

Examples

Tip: For additional examples, see *Common Tasks*.

Example - String cleanup functions together

The following example demonstrates functions that can be used to clean up strings. These functions include the following:

- TRIM - remove leading and trailing whitespace. See *TRIM Function*.
- REMOVEWHITESPACE - remove leading and trailing whitespace and all whitespace in between. See *REMOVEWHITESPACE Function*.
- REMOVESYMBOLS - remove all characters that are not alpha-numeric or whitespace. See *REMOVESYMBOLS Function*.

Source:

In the following (space) and (tab) indicate space keys and tabs, respectively. Carriage return and newline characters are also supported by whitespace functions.

Strings	source
String01	this source(space)(space)
String02	(tab)(tab)this source
String03	(tab)(tab)this source(space)(space)
String04	this source's?
String05	Why, you @\$%^&*(!)
String06	this sōurce
String07	(space)this sōurce
String08	à mañana

Transform:

The following transforms generate new columns using each of the string cleanup functions:

```
derive type:single value: TRIM(source) as: 'trim_source'
```

```
derive type:single value: REMOVEWHITESPACE(source) as: 'removewhitespace_source'
```

```
derive type:single value: REMOVESYMBOLS(source) as: 'removesymbols_source'
```

Results:

Strings	source	removesymbols_source	removewhitespace_source	trim_source
String01	this source(space)(space)	this source(space)(space)	thissource	this source
String02	(tab)(tab)this source	(tab)(tab)this source	thissource	this source
String03	(tab)(tab)this source(space) (space)	(tab)(tab)this source(space) (space)	thissource	this source
String04	this source's?	this sources	thissource's?	this source's?
String05	"Why, you @\$%^&*()!"	Why you	Why,you@\$%^&*()!	Why, you @\$%^ ^&*()!
String06	this sörce	this sörce	thissörce	this sörce
String07	(space)this sörce	(space)this sörce	thissörce	this sörce
String08	à mañana	à mañana	àmañana	à mañana