Data Acquisition Toolbox
Quick Reference Guide

Getting Started

If you have a sound card installed, you can run the following code, which collects one second of data.

```
ai = analoginput('winsound');
addchannel(ai,1);
set(ai,'SampleRate',11025)
set(ai,'SamplesPerTrigger',11025)
start(ai)
data = getdata(ai);
plot(data)
delete(ai)
clear ai
```

To list all the toolbox functions and demos, type

```
help daq
```

To display the command line help for a function, type

```
daqhelp function_name
```

Toolbox Components

The Data Acquisition Toolbox consists of the three components listed below.

Component	Purpose
M-files	Create device objects, acquire or output data, configure property values, and evaluate your acquisition status and resources.
Engine	Store device objects and their property values, control the storage of acquired or queued data, and control the synchronization of events.
Adaptors	Pass properties, data, and events between the hardware and the engine.

These components are shown below.
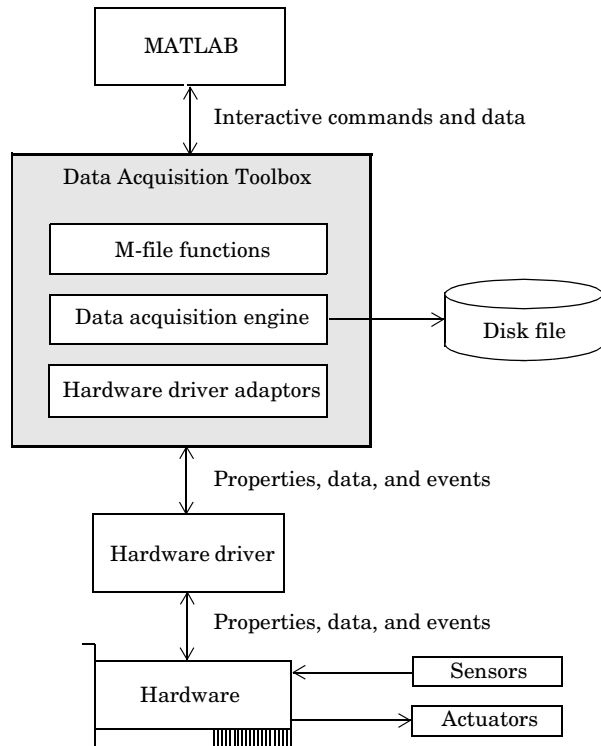
Device Objects

Device objects allow you to access specific hardware subsystems. The device objects supported by the toolbox include analog input (AI), analog output (AO), and digital I/O (DIO) objects.

1
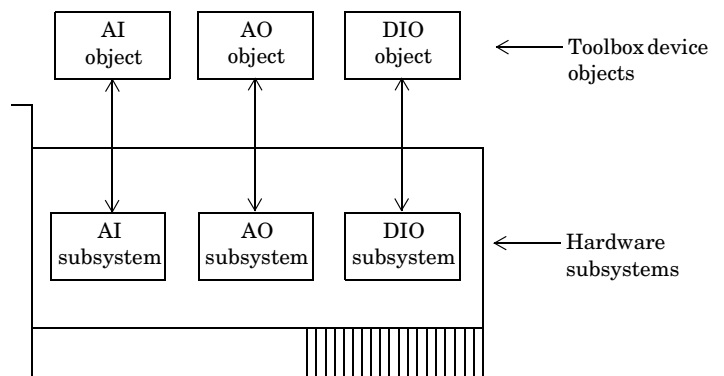
The Data Acquisition Session

A complete data acquisition session consists of five steps:

1 Creating a device object

2 Adding channels or lines to the device object

3 Configuring property values to control the behavior of your data acquisition application

4 Acquiring data (AI) or outputting data (AO)

5 Cleaning up

Creating a Device Object

To create a device object, you must call the appropriate creation function (constructor). As shown below, creation functions are named for the device object they create.

Subsystem Type	Creation Function
Analog input	`analoginput('adaptor',ID);`
Analog output	`analogoutput('adaptor',ID);`
Digital I/O	`digitalio('adaptor',ID);`

`ID` is the hardware device identifier. This is an optional argument for sound cards with an `ID` of `0`. `adaptor` is the name of the hardware driver adaptor. The supported adaptors are shown below.

Hardware Vendor	Adaptor Name
Agilent Technologies	`hpe1432`
Keithley Instruments	`keithley`
Measurement Computing	`mcc`
National Instruments	`nidaq`
Parallel port	`parallel`
Windows sound cards	`winsound`

For example, to create the analog input object `ai` for a sound card:

```
ai = analoginput('winsound');
```

Adding Channels or Lines

Before you can use a device object, you must add at least one channel or line to it. To add channels to a device object, you must use the `addchannel` function. For example, to add two channels to `ai`:

```
chans = addchannel(ai,1:2);
```

You can think of a device object as a channel or line container, the added channels as a channel group, and the added lines as a line group.

The relationship between an analog input object and the channels it contains is shown below.
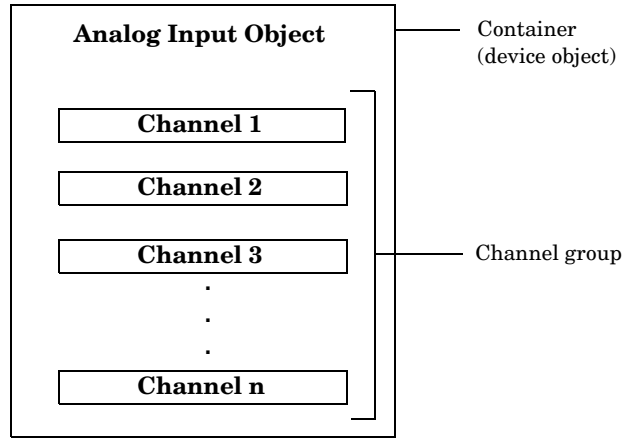
For digital I/O objects, this diagram looks the same except that lines replace channels.

Configuring Properties

You can control the behavior of your data acquisition application by configuring properties. The rules associated with configuring properties include

- Property names are not case sensitive.
- You can abbreviate property names.
- `set(ai)` returns all settable properties for `ai`, while `set(ai.Channel(index))` returns all settable properties for the specified channel.
- `get(ai)` returns the current property values for `ai`, while `get(ai.Channel(index))` returns the current property values for the specified channel.

Property Types

Toolbox properties are divided into these two main types:

- Common properties that apply to every channel or line contained by a device object
- Channel/line properties that you can configure for individual channels or lines

Common and channel/line properties are divided into these two types:

- Base properties that apply to all supported hardware subsystems of a given type (AI, AO, DIO)
- Device-specific properties that apply to the specific hardware you are using

`set` and `get` display the base properties followed by the device-specific properties.

Property Syntax

You can configure and return property values three ways: the get or set functions, dot notation, or named indexing.

The get and set syntax is similar to the Handle Graphics® get and set syntax.

```
out = get(ai,'SampleRate');
set(ai,'SampleRate',11025)
```

The dot notation has the following syntax:

```
out = ai.SampleRate;
ai.SampleRate = 11025;
```

Named indexing allows you to associate a descriptive name with a channel or line. For example, to associate the name Chan1 with the first channel contained by ai:

```
set(ai.Channel(1),'ChannelName','Chan1');
out = ai.Chan1.UnitsRange;
ai.Chan1.UnitsRange = [0 10];
```

Acquiring or Outputting Data

To acquire (AI) or output (AO) data, you must

1 Start the device object.

2 Log or send data.

3 Stop the device object.

Starting the Device Object

To start the device object, use the start function.

```
start(ai)
```

After the device object is started, the Running (AI) or Sending (AO) property is automatically set to On.

Issuing a Trigger

To log data to the engine or a disk file (AI), or to output data from the engine (AO), a trigger must occur. The trigger types supported for all hardware are given below.

Trigger Type	Description
Immediate	The trigger occurs just after you issue start. This is the default trigger type.
Manual	The trigger occurs after you manually issue the trigger function.
Software (AI only)	The trigger occurs when a signal satisfying the specified condition is detected. You must specify a channel as a trigger source.

After the trigger occurs, the Logging (AI) or Sending (AO) property is automatically set to On.

Stopping a Device Object

A device object stops when the requested data is acquired (AI) or output (AO), a run-time error occurs, or you issue the stop function.

```
stop(ai)
```

Managing Data

Previewing Data

While an AI object is running, you can preview acquired data with the peekdata function. For example, to preview 1000 samples for ai:

```
out = peekdata(ai,1000);
```

peekdata returns execution control immediately to MATLAB and does not extract data from the engine.

Extracting Data

At any time after data is acquired by an AI object, you can extract it from the engine with the getdata function. For example, to extract 1000 samples for ai:

```
out = getdata(ai,1000);
```

getdata returns execution control to MATLAB only when all requested samples are returned.

Outputting Data

To output data, you must first queue it in the engine with the putdata function. For example, to queue 1000 samples for the analog output object ao:

```
putdata(ao,[1:1000]')
```

Once data is queued, you can start the AO object.

Reading and Writing Digital Values

Transferring digital values to and from a DIO subsystem is not clocked at a specific rate in the way that data is sampled by an analog input subsystem. Instead, values are either written directly to digital lines with putvalue, or read directly from digital lines with getvalue.

Additionally, DIO objects do not store data in the engine. Therefore, they do not require starting or triggering. For example, to write the value 23 to eight DIO lines:

```
dio = digitalio('nidaq',1);
addline(dio,0:7,'out');
data = 23;
putvalue(dio,data)
getvalue(dio)
```

Events and Callbacks

An event occurs at a particular time after a condition is met. Unless an error occurs, all AI and AO data acquisition sessions contain a start, trigger, and stop event.

You can access event information with the `EventLog` property:

```
Events = ai.EventLog;
EventTypes = {Events.Type}
EventTypes =
    'Start'    'Trigger'    'Stop'
```

When an event occurs, you can execute an M-file *callback function*. You can select the callback function to be executed by specifying the name of the M-file as the value for the associated callback property.

For example, the following commands configure `ai` so that the M-file `daqcallback` is executed when a trigger, run-time error, or stop event occurs.

```
set(ai,'TriggerFcn',@daqcallback)
set(ai,'RuntimeErrorFcn',@daqcallback)
set(ai,'StopFcn',@daqcallback)
```

To see how you construct a callback function, type

```
type daqcallback
```

Deleting and Clearing Device Objects

The `delete` function removes the specified device object from the engine but not from the MATLAB workspace.

```
delete(ai)
```

`ai` still exists in the MATLAB workspace, but is an invalid object since it is no longer associated with hardware. You should remove invalid device objects with the `clear` command.

```
clear ai
```

If you clear a valid device object, the object no longer exists in the workspace, but does exist in the engine. You can return device objects from the engine with the `daqfind` function.

```
out = daqfind;
ai = out(1);
```

Saving and Loading Device Objects

You can save a device object to a MAT-file with the `save` command.

```
save ai
```

You can load a device object into the MATLAB workspace with the `load` command.

```
load ai
```

You can convert a device object to equivalent MATLAB code with the `obj2code` function.

```
obj2code(ai,'ai_save')
```

You can recreate the device object by running the M-file.

```
ai = ai_save
```

Logging Information to Disk

For an AI object, you can log acquired data, events, device objects, and hardware information to a disk file using these properties.

```
set(ai,'LoggingMode','Disk&Memory')
set(ai,'LogFileName','data.daq')
set(ai,'LogToDiskMode','Index')
```

You can retrieve information from an existing log file using the `daqread` function. To retrieve all logged data:

```
data = daqread('data.daq');
```

To retrieve only object and hardware information:

```
daqinfo = daqread('data.daq','info');
```

Getting Information and Help

You can obtain information or help about installed hardware, driver adaptors, device objects, functions, or properties using the functions shown below.

Function	Description
daqhelp	Display help for device objects, constructors, adaptors, functions, and properties.
daqhwinfo	Display data acquisition hardware information.
propinfo	Return property characteristics for device objects, channels, or lines.

PDF and HTML versions of the *Data Acquisition Toolbox User's Guide* are available through the Help browser.

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Functions

Toolbox functions and the device objects they are associated with are organized into the groups shown below. The supported device objects include analog input (AI), analog output (AO), and digital I/O (DIO).

Creating Device Objects		AI	AO	DIO
analoginput	Create an analog input object.	✓		
analogoutput	Create an analog output object.		✓	
digitalio	Create a digital I/O object.			✓

Adding Channels and Lines		AI	AO	DIO
addchannel	Add hardware channels to an analog input or analog output object.	✓	✓	
addline	Add hardware lines to a digital I/O object.			✓
addmuxchannel	Add hardware channels when using a multiplexer board.	✓		

Getting and Setting Properties		AI	AO	DIO
get	Return device object properties.	✓	✓	✓
set	Configure or display device object properties.	✓	✓	✓
setverify	Configure and return the specified property.	✓	✓	✓

Executing the Object		AI	AO	DIO
start	Start a device object.	✓	✓	✓
stop	Stop a device object.	✓	✓	✓
trigger	Manually execute a trigger.	✓	✓	
waittilstop	Wait for the device object to stop running.	✓	✓	

Working with Data		AI	AO	DIO
flushdata	Remove data from the data acquisition engine.	✓		
getdata	Extract data, time, and event information from the data acquisition engine.	✓		
getsample	Immediately acquire one sample.	✓		
getvalue	Read values from lines.			✓
peekdata	Preview most recent acquired data.	✓		
putdata	Queue data in the engine for eventual output.		✓	

Working with Data		AI	AO	DIO
putsample	Immediately output one sample.		✓	
putvalue	Write values to lines.			✓

Getting Information and Help		AI	AO	DIO
daqhelp	Display help for device objects, constructors, adaptors, functions, and properties.	✓	✓	✓
daqhwinfo	Display data acquisition hardware information.	✓	✓	✓
daqpropedit	Open the Data Acquisition Property Editor.	✓	✓	✓
propinfo	Return property characteristics for device objects, channels, or lines.	✓	✓	✓

General Purpose		AI	AO	DIO
binvec2dec	Convert binary vector to decimal value.			✓
clear	Remove device objects from the MATLAB workspace.	✓	✓	✓
daqcallback	A callback function that displays event information for the specified event.	✓	✓	✓
daqfind	Return device objects, channels, or lines from the data acquisition engine to the MATLAB workspace.	✓	✓	✓
daqmem	Allocate or display memory resources.	✓	✓	
daqread	Read a Data Acquisition Toolbox (.daq) file.	✓		
daqregister	Register or unregister a hardware driver adaptor.	✓	✓	✓
daqreset	Remove device objects and data acquisition DLLs from memory.	✓	✓	✓
dec2binvec	Convert decimal value to binary vector.			✓
delete	Remove device objects, channels, or lines from the data acquisition engine.	✓	✓	✓
disp	Display summary information for device objects, channels, or lines.	✓	✓	✓
ischannel	Check for channels.	✓	✓	✓
isdioline	Check for lines.	✓	✓	✓
isvalid	Determine whether device objects, channels, or lines are valid.	✓	✓	✓
length	Return the length of a device object, channel group, or line group.	✓	✓	✓
load	Load device objects, channels, or lines into the MATLAB workspace.	✓	✓	✓
makenames	Generate a list of descriptive channel or line names.	✓	✓	✓
muxchanidx	Return multiplexed scanned channel index.	✓		
obj2mfile	Convert device objects, channels, or lines to MATLAB code.	✓	✓	✓
save	Save device objects to a MAT-file.	✓	✓	✓
showdaqevents	Display event log information.	✓	✓	
size	Return the size of a device object, channel group, or line group.	✓	✓	✓

Analog Input Base Properties

Analog input base properties are divided into two main categories: common properties and channel properties. Common properties apply to every channel contained by the analog input object, while channel properties can be configured for individual channels.

Common Properties

Analog Input Basic Setup Properties	
SamplesPerTrigger	Specify the number of samples to acquire for each channel group member for each trigger that occurs.
SampleRate	Specify the per-channel rate at which analog data is converted to digital data.
TriggerType	Specify the type of trigger to execute.

Analog Input Logging Properties	
LogFileName	Specify the name of the disk file to which information is logged.
Logging	Indicate whether data is being logged to memory or to a disk file.
LoggingMode	Specify the destination for acquired data.
LogToDiskMode	Specify whether data, events, and hardware information are saved to one disk file or to multiple disk files.

Analog Input Trigger Properties	
InitialTriggerTime	Indicate the absolute time of the first trigger.
ManualTriggerHwOn	Specify that the hardware device starts when a manual trigger is issued.
TriggerFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute when a trigger occurs.
TriggerChannel	Specify the channel serving as a trigger source.
TriggerCondition	Specify the condition that must be satisfied before a trigger executes.
TriggerCondition Value	Specify one or more voltage values that must be satisfied before a trigger executes.
TriggerDelay	Specify the delay value for data logging.
TriggerDelayUnits	Specify the units in which trigger delay data is measured.
TriggerRepeat	Specify the number of additional times the trigger executes.
TriggersExecuted	Indicate the number of triggers that execute.
TriggerType	Specify the type of trigger to execute.

Analog Input Status Properties

Logging	Indicate whether data is being logged to memory or to a disk file.
Running	Indicate whether the device object is running.
SamplesAcquired	Indicate the number of samples acquired per channel.
SamplesAvailable	Indicate the number of samples available per channel in the engine.

Analog Input Hardware Configuration Properties

ChannelSkew	Specify the time between consecutive scanned hardware channels.
ChannelSkewMode	Specify how the channel skew is determined.
ClockSource	Specify the clock used to govern the hardware conversion rate.
InputType	Specify the analog input hardware channel configuration.
SampleRate	Specify the per-channel rate at which analog data is converted to digital data.

Analog Input Callback Properties

DataMissedFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute when data is missed.
InputOverRangeFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute when acquired data exceeds the valid hardware range.
RuntimeErrorFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute when a run-time error occurs.
SamplesAcquiredFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute every time a predefined number of samples is acquired for each channel group member.
SamplesAcquired FcnCount	Specify the number of samples to acquire for each channel group member before a samples acquired event is generated.
StartFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute just before the device object starts running.
StopFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute just after the device object stops running.
TimerFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute whenever a predefined period of time passes.
TimerPeriod	Specify the period of time between timer events.
TriggerFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute when a trigger occurs.

Analog Input General Purpose Properties

BufferingConfig	Specify the per-channel allocated memory.
BufferingMode	Specify how memory is allocated.
Channel	Contain hardware channels added to the device object.
EventLog	Store information for specific events.
Name	Specify a descriptive name for the device object.
Tag	Specify a device object label.
Timeout	Specify an additional waiting time to extract data.
Type	Indicate the device object type.
UserData	Store data that you want to associate with a device object.

Channel Properties

Analog Input Channel Properties

ChannelName	Specify a descriptive channel name.
HwChannel	Specify the hardware channel ID.
Index	Indicate the MATLAB index of a hardware channel.
InputRange	Specify the range of the analog input subsystem.
NativeOffset	Indicate the offset to use when converting between the native data format and doubles.
NativeScaling	Indicate the scaling to use when converting between the native data format and doubles.
Parent	Indicate the parent (device object) of a channel.
SensorRange	Specify the range of data you expect from your sensor.
Type	Indicate a channel.
Units	Specify the engineering units label.
UnitsRange	Specify the range of data as engineering units.

Analog Output Base Properties

Analog output base properties are divided into two main categories: common properties and channel properties. Common properties apply to every channel contained by the analog output object, while channel properties can be configured for individual channels.

Common Properties

Analog Output Basic Setup Properties

SampleRate	Specify the per-channel rate at which digital data is converted to analog data.
TriggerType	Specify the type of trigger to execute.

Analog Output Trigger Properties

InitialTriggerTime	Indicate the absolute time of the first trigger.
TriggerFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute when a trigger occurs.
TriggersExecuted	Indicate the number of triggers that execute.
TriggerType	Specify the type of trigger to execute.

Analog Output Status Properties

Running	Indicate whether the device object is running.
SamplesAvailable	Indicate the number of samples available per channel in the engine.
SamplesOutput	Indicate the number of samples output per channel from the engine.
Sending	Indicate whether data is being sent to the hardware device.

Analog Output Hardware Configuration Properties

ClockSource	Specify the clock used to govern the hardware conversion rate.
SampleRate	Specify the per-channel rate at which digital data is converted to analog data.

Analog Output Data Management Properties

MaxSamplesQueued	Indicate the maximum number of samples that can be queued in the engine.
RepeatOutput	Specify the number of additional times queued data is output.
Timeout	Specify an additional waiting time to queue data.

Analog Output Callback Properties

RuntimeErrorFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute when a run-time error occurs.
SamplesOutputFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute every time a predefined number of samples is output for each channel group member.
SamplesOutput FcnCount	Specify the number of samples to output for each channel group member before a samples output event is generated.
StartFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute just before the device object starts running.
StopFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute just after the device object stops running.
TimerFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute whenever a predefined period of time passes.
TimerPeriod	Specify the period of time between timer events.
TriggerFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute when a trigger occurs.

Analog Output General Purpose Properties

BufferingConfig	Specify the per-channel allocated memory.
BufferingMode	Specify how memory is allocated.
Channel	Contain hardware channels added to the device object.
EventLog	Store information for specific events.
Name	Specify a descriptive name for the device object.
OutOfDataMode	Specify how the value held by the analog output subsystem is determined.
Tag	Specify a device object label.
Type	Indicate the device object type.
UserData	Store data that you want to associate with a device object.

Channel Properties

Analog Output Channel Properties

ChannelName	Specify a descriptive channel name.
DefaultChannel Value	Specify the value held by the analog output subsystem.
HwChannel	Specify the hardware channel ID.
Index	Indicate the MATLAB index of a hardware channel.
NativeOffset	Indicate the offset to use when converting between the native data format and doubles.
NativeScaling	Indicate the scaling to use when converting between the native data format and doubles.
OutputRange	Specify the range of the analog output hardware subsystem.
Parent	Indicate the parent (device object) of a channel.
Type	Indicate a channel.
Units	Specify the engineering units label.
UnitsRange	Specify the range of data as engineering units.

Digital I/O Base Properties

Digital I/O base properties are divided into two main categories: common properties and line properties. Common properties apply to every line contained by the digital I/O object, while line properties can be configured for individual lines.

Common Properties

Digital I/O Common Properties

Line	Contain hardware lines added to the device object.
Name	Specify a descriptive name for the device object.
Running	Indicate whether the device object is running.
Tag	Specify a device object label.
TimerFcn	Specify the M-file callback function to execute whenever a predefined period of time passes.
TimerPeriod	Specify the period of time between timer events.
Type	Indicate the device object type.
UserData	Store data that you want to associate with a device object.

Line Properties

Digital I/O Line Properties

Direction	Specify whether a line is used for input or output.
HwLine	Specify the hardware line ID.
Index	Indicate the MATLAB index of a hardware line.
LineName	Specify a descriptive line name.
Parent	Indicate the parent (device object) of a line.
Port	Specify the port ID.
Type	Indicate a line.