UNIX / LINUX - SHELL STRING OPERATORS EXAMPLE

The following string operators are supported by Bourne Shell.

Assume variable **a** holds "abc" and variable **b** holds "efg" then –

Operator	Description	Example
=	Checks if the value of two operands are equal or not; if yes, then the condition becomes true.	[$a = $b] is not true.
!=	Checks if the value of two operands are equal or not; if values are not equal then the condition becomes true.	[$a != $b] is true.
-z	Checks if the given string operand size is zero; if it is zero length, then it returns true.	[-z $a] is not true.
-n	Checks if the given string operand size is non-zero; if it is nonzero length, then it returns true.	[-n $a] is not false.
str	Checks if **str** is not the empty string; if it is empty, then it returns false.	[$a] is not false.

Example

Here is an example which uses all the string operators –

Live Demo

```
#!/bin/sh

a="abc"
b="efg"

if [ $a = $b ]
then
   echo "$a = $b : a is equal to b"
else
   echo "$a = $b: a is not equal to b"
fi

if [ $a != $b ]
then
   echo "$a != $b : a is not equal to b"
else
   echo "$a != $b: a is equal to b"
fi

if [ -z $a ]
then
   echo "-z $a : string length is zero"
else
   echo "-z $a : string length is not zero"
fi

if [ -n $a ]
```

```
then
   echo "-n $a : string length is not zero"
else
   echo "-n $a : string length is zero"
fi

if [ $a ]
then
   echo "$a : string is not empty"
else
   echo "$a : string is empty"
fi
```

The above script will generate the following result –

```
abc = efg: a is not equal to b
abc != efg : a is not equal to b
-z abc : string length is not zero
-n abc : string length is not zero
abc : string is not empty
```

The following points need to be considered while using the operator –

- There must be spaces between the operators and the expressions. For example, 2+2 is not correct. It should be written as 2 + 2.
- **if...then...else...fi** statement is a decision-making statement which has been explained in the next chapter.