

THE STATA NEWS

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Stata 8 ships week of January 6th

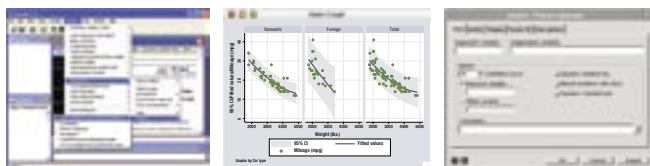
A new release of Stata begins shipping the week of January 6th. You may place your order now.

Stata 8 is the most significant upgrade to Stata ever. The big news is

- Stata's new Graphical User Interface (GUI) and
- Stata's all-new graphics.

Other new features include

- ODBC support (Stata for Windows)
- new statistical capabilities including MANOVA and MANCOVA and stochastic frontier models
- new time-series analysis capabilities including VARs and SVARs
- new cross-sectional time-series capabilities including Hausman–Taylor and Amemiya–MaCurdy IV estimators
- new survival-analysis capabilities including Cox with frailty
- new survey-analysis capabilities including Heckman selection models
- new cluster-analysis capabilities including Ward's method
- 26 new missing values codes (. a, . b, ..., . z)
- new programming features

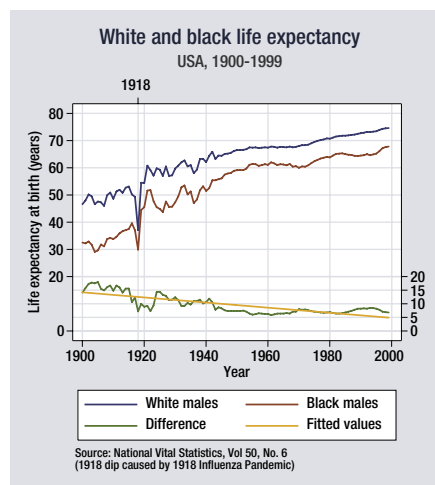


and there is more. Just listing all the additions would require 26 pages.

In addition, programs implemented as ado-files run about 17 to 43% faster, making this the fastest Stata ever.

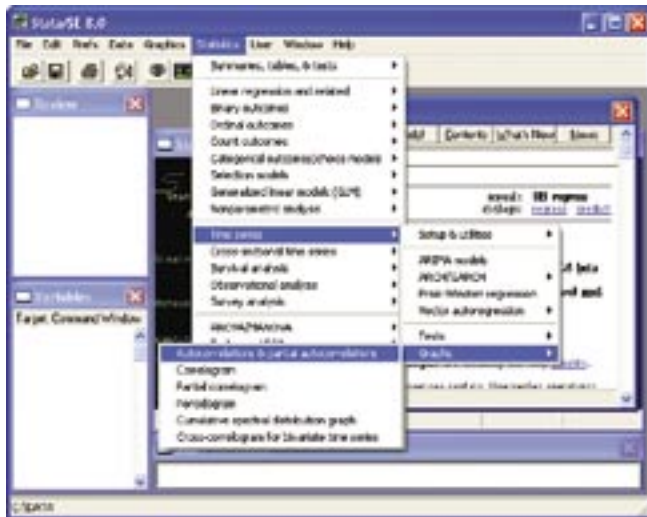
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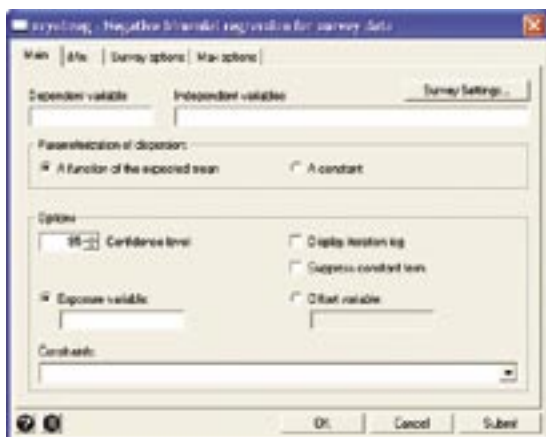


New GUI

Almost every Stata command has been implemented as a dialog and can be accessed from menus that are organized by topic. Just select a command from the **Statistics**, **Graphics**, or **Data** menu, fill in the dialog, and the command will be submitted to Stata. With Stata's new dialogs and menus, you do not have to know the name of the command you wish to use, nor do you have to know the syntax of the command itself.



Besides making Stata easier to use, the GUI also allows you to discover features you never knew existed just by exploring its extensive menus. And to make it even easier, there is an all-new topical index built into the online help system. You can also quickly obtain help for a command by clicking on the help button from its dialog.

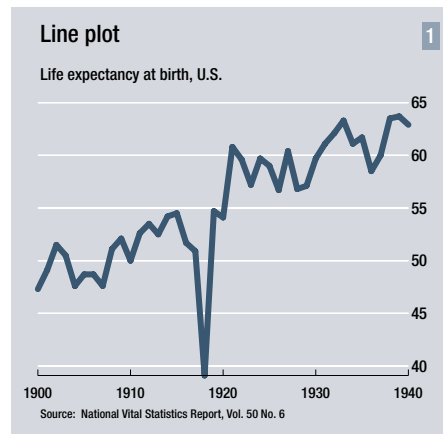


Even command-line aficionados will find the GUI useful for rarely used commands. The GUI makes commands you are using for the first time easier to learn by showing you the command and the proper syntax for the operation you wish to perform.

The same tools Stata uses to create its GUI are available to you as well. You can extend the GUI by creating your own dialogs and adding your own menus and have them work across all versions of Stata 8 regardless of computer platform.

New Graphics

Stata 8 produces publication-quality graphics in both color and monochrome. To emphasize that point, the following graph



would be suitable for publication in *The Economist* magazine, being a mirror of the style they use. You, however, probably publish in other places and so will find Stata's default scheme more appropriate.

Stata's new graphics provide not just flexibility in look, but also flexibility in content. Graphs can contain fitted or smoothed lines, shaded confidence regions, and other graphical components based on and calculated from data.

And there is more: Stata's graphs are implemented in Stata's new object-oriented programming language, and that means that motivated users can add new schemes (such as the Economist scheme illustrated above), new styles, new types, and new features. These new additions can be obtained and automatically installed over the Internet using Stata's existing `net` and `update` features.

Stata's new graphics has an almost limitless number of options, and Stata's GUI provides an easy-to-use interface to those options through its dialogs. The new graph dialogs allow you to easily change titles, colors, marker symbols, grid lines, etc. without requiring any external graphics editors to get the look you want. Graphs can also be exported to other formats such as PostScript and PNG (Portable Network Graphics). Running 500 pages and containing over 200 illustrated examples, the new *Graphics Reference Manual* explains these new capabilities.

New ODBC support

Stata for Windows can now import data from any available ODBC source, such as Microsoft Access, Microsoft Excel, etc. Stata 8 supports full SQL selection statements.

New time-series methods

- Vector autoregression and structural vector autoregression (VAR and SVAR)

- Smoothing of time series
- Estimation, tabulation, and graphing of impulse–response functions (IRFs) and forecast-error variance decompositions
- more

New cross-sectional time-series methods

- Hausman–Taylor and Amemiya–MaCurdy instrumental variable (IV) estimation
- Stochastic frontier models with panel data
- more

New survival methods

- Cox with gamma-distributed shared frailty
- Graphing of smoothed hazard function, both nonparametric and after semiparametric Cox estimation
- Parametric models with shared frailty
- more

New survey methods

- Heckman selection model for continuous and for discrete outcomes
- Negative-binomial and generalized negative-binomial regression
- Automatic support for survey weights, stratification, and estimation on a subpopulation for user-programmed likelihood functions
- more

New cluster methods

- Ward's method, weighted-average, centroid, and median linkage hierarchical clustering
- Cluster stopping rules
- more

New statistical methods

- MANOVA and MANCOVA
- Rank-ordered logit models
- Stochastic frontier models
- Multivariable fractional polynomial model selection
- Improved, easier to use bootstrapping with biased-corrected and accelerated confidence intervals
- Permutation tests based on simulation
- Estimates and standard errors for nonlinear transformations of estimated parameters
- Standard errors for nonlinear, observation-by-observation predictions
- Seemingly unrelated estimation for nonlinear models
- Additional regression diagnostics including Szroeter's test for heteroskedasticity
- more

New missing values

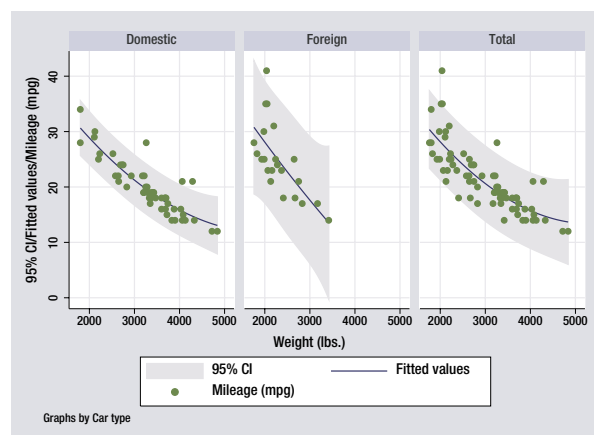
At the top of the user-request list has been additional missing values codes. Now, in addition to ., available are .a, .b, ..., .z, so you can distinguish refused-to-answer from not-asked. You may assign value labels to the new codes.

New programming features

The two big programming additions correspond to the two big additions to Stata: graphics and GUI. Object-oriented programming has been added to Stata through a class system as well. This class system provides inheritance, encapsulation of data structures and programs, and program-name overloading. Stata's new graphics are written in this object-oriented language, which all users may use. Stata also provides a new GUI programming language, and this is the language we used to implement Stata's new GUI.

There are 39 other programming-language enhancements including constructs such as `'x++'` and `'x--'`.

For more information about all the new features included in Stata 8, visit <http://www.stata.com>.



System requirements

The hardware requirements for Stata 8 include

- 40 MB of harddisk space
- 128 MB of memory

The supported operating systems include

- Windows XP, 2000, NT 4, ME, 98
- Mac OS X 10.1 or better
- HP/Compaq Tru64
- HP-UX
- IBM AIX
- Linux (Intel)
- SGI IRIX (64-bit and 32-bit)
- Sun Solaris (64-bit and 32-bit)

Stat/Transfer 7 ships same day

Stata 8 has a new dataset format although, of course, it continues to read and write old-format datasets.

Along with support for Stata 8, Stat/Transfer 7 adds support for SAS version 9 and SYSTAT for the Macintosh. In addition, Stat/Transfer 7 will write fixed-format ASCII data files and programs for use with Stata, SAS, and SPSS. Stat/Transfer 7 will be available for Windows, Mac OS X, and many popular Unix platforms.

Order now

See the enclosed upgrade order form. You may also place your order by visiting us online at

<http://www.stata.com>

or by calling

800-782-8272	(800-STATAPC)	(USA)
800-248-8272		(Canada)
979-696-4600		(Worldwide)
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or by calling your local distributor.

Upgrade ordering is a little more complicated than previously because you must decide which manuals you want. Stata's entire Documentation Set has grown to over 4,500 pages, and so that you do not have to pay for manuals you will not use, you may now choose which manuals you wish to receive. There are 10:

[GS]	Getting Started with Stata (190 pages)
[U]	User's Guide (420 pages)

Reference manuals:

[R]	Base (4 volumes, 1,830 pages)
[G]	Graphics (500 pages)
[P]	Programming (470 pages)
[CL]	Cluster Analysis (120 pages)
[XT]	Cross-sectional Time-Series (240 pages)
[SVY]	Survey Data (101 pages)
[ST]	Survival Analysis & Epidemiological Tables (350 pages)
[TS]	Time-Series (340 pages)

Of course, we recommend you get them all, but remember that you can always purchase them later. Whatever manuals you choose, you get all the software and all the online help.

Manuals [GS], [U], [R], and [G] are considered the Base Documentation Set.

THE STATA NEWS is published 4 times a year. It is free to all registered users of Stata.



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