

**erase** — Erase a disk file

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## Syntax

```
{ erase | rm } ["] filename ["]
```

Note: Double quotes must be used to enclose *filename* if the name contains spaces.

## Description

The **erase** command erases files stored on disk. **rm** is a synonym for **erase** for the convenience of Mac and Unix users.

Stata for Mac users: **erase** is permanent; the file is not moved to the Trash but is immediately removed from the disk.

Stata for Windows users: **erase** is permanent; the file is not moved to the Recycle Bin but is immediately removed from the disk.

## Remarks and examples

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The only difference between Stata's **erase** (**rm**) command and the DOS DEL or Unix **rm(1)** command is that we may not specify groups of files. Stata requires that we erase files one at a time.

Mac users may prefer to discard files by dragging them to the Trash.

Windows users may prefer to discard files by dragging them to the Recycle Bin.

### ▶ Example 1

Stata provides seven operating system equivalent commands: **cd**, **copy**, **dir**, **erase**, **mkdir**, **rmdir**, and **type**, or, from the Unix perspective, **cd**, **copy**, **ls**, **rm**, **mkdir**, **rmdir**, and **cat**. These commands are provided for Mac users, too. Stata users can also issue any operating system command by using Stata's **shell** command, so you should never have to exit Stata to perform some housekeeping detail.

Suppose that we have the file **mydata.dta** stored on disk and we wish to permanently eliminate it:

```
. erase mydata
file mydata not found
r(601);
. erase mydata.dta
. _
```

Our first attempt, **erase mydata**, was unsuccessful. Although Stata ordinarily supplies the file extension for you, it does not do so when you type **erase**. You must be explicit. Our second attempt eliminated the file. Unix users could have typed **rm mydata.dta** if they preferred.



## Also see

- [D] **cd** — Change directory
- [D] **copy** — Copy file from disk or URL
- [D] **dir** — Display filenames
- [D] **mkdir** — Create directory
- [D] **rmdir** — Remove directory
- [D] **shell** — Temporarily invoke operating system
- [D] **type** — Display contents of a file
- [U] **11.6 Filenaming conventions**