

# 18 Learning more about Stata

## Where to go from here

You now know plenty enough to use Stata. There is still much, much more to learn, because Stata is a rich environment for doing statistical analysis and data management. What should you do to learn more?

- Get an interesting dataset and play with Stata.
  - a. Use the menus and dialog system to experiment with commands. Notice what commands show up in the Results window. You will find that Stata's simple and consistent command syntax will make the commands easy to read so that you will know what you have done and easy to remember so that typing some commands will be faster than using menus.
  - b. Play with graphs and the Graph Editor.
- If you venture into the Command window, you will find that many things will go faster. You will also find that it is possible to make mistakes where you cannot understand why Stata is balking.
  - a. Try `help commandname` or **Help > Stata Command...** and entering the command name.
  - b. Look at the command syntax and the examples in the help file, and compare them with what you typed. Compare them closely: small typographical errors make commands impossible for Stata to parse.
- Explore Stata by selecting **Help > Search...** You will uncover many statistical routines that could be of great use.
- Look through the *Combined subject table of contents* in the *Glossary and Index*.
- Read and work your way through the *User's Guide*. It is designed to be read from cover to cover, and it contains most of the information you need to become an expert Stata user. It is well worth reading. If you are not this ambitious and instead prefer to sample the *User's Guide* and the references, there is some advice later in this chapter for you.
- Browse through the reference manuals to read about statistical methods you like to use, making use of the links to jump to other topics. The reference manuals are not meant to be read from cover to cover—they are meant to be referred to as you would an encyclopedia. You can find the datasets used in the examples in the manuals by selecting **File > Example Datasets...** and then clicking on `Stata 13 manual datasets`. Doing so will enable you to work through the examples quickly.
- Stata has much information, including answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), at <http://www.stata.com/support/faqs/>.
- There are many useful links to Stata resources at <http://www.stata.com/links/>. Be sure to look at these materials because many outstanding resources about Stata are listed here.
- Join [Statalist](#), a forum devoted to discussion of Stata and statistics.
- Read the official Stata blog [Not Elsewhere Classified](#) to read articles written by people at Stata about all things Stata. You can find the Stata blog at <http://blog.stata.com>.
- Visit Stata on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/statacorp>, join Stata on Google+ at <https://plus.google.com/+stata/posts>, and follow Stata on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/stata> to keep up with Stata.
- Subscribe to the *Stata Journal*, which contains reviewed papers, regular columns, book reviews, and other material of interest to researchers applying statistics in a variety of disciplines. Visit <http://www.stata-journal.com>.

- Many supplementary books about Stata are available. Visit the Stata bookstore at <http://www.stata.com/bookstore/>.
- Take a Stata NetCourse<sup>®</sup>. NetCourse 101 is an excellent choice for learning about Stata. See <http://www.stata.com/netcourse/> for course information and schedules.
- Attend a public training course taught by StataCorp at third-party sites. Visit <http://www.stata.com/training/public> for course information and schedules.
- Watch Stata videos at <http://www.youtube.com/user/statacorp>.

## Suggested reading from the User's Guide and reference manuals

The *User's Guide* is designed to be read from cover to cover. The reference manuals are designed as references to be sampled when necessary.

Ideally, after reading this *Getting Started* manual, you should read the *User's Guide* from cover to cover, but you probably want to become at least somewhat proficient in Stata right away. Here is a suggested reading list of sections from the *User's Guide* and the reference manuals to help you on your way to becoming a Stata expert.

This list covers fundamental features and points you to some less obvious features that you might otherwise overlook.

### Basic elements of Stata

[U] [11 Language syntax](#)

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[U] [13 Functions and expressions](#)

### Data management

[U] [6 Managing memory](#)

[U] [21 Entering and importing data](#)

[D] [import](#) — Overview of importing data into Stata

[D] [append](#) — Append datasets

[D] [merge](#) — Merge datasets

[D] [compress](#) — Compress data in memory

### Graphics

[G] [Stata Graphics Reference Manual](#)

### Useful features that you might overlook

[U] [28 Using the Internet to keep up to date](#)

[U] [16 Do-files](#)

[U] [19 Immediate commands](#)

[U] [23 Working with strings](#)

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[U] [25 Working with categorical data and factor variables](#)

[U] [13.5 Accessing coefficients and standard errors](#)

[U] [13.6 Accessing results from Stata commands](#)

[U] [26 Overview of Stata estimation commands](#)

[U] [20 Estimation and postestimation commands](#)

[R] [estimates](#) — Save and manipulate estimation results

## Basic statistics

- [R] **anova** — Analysis of variance and covariance
- [R] **ci** — Confidence intervals for means, proportions, and counts
- [R] **correlate** — Correlations (covariances) of variables or coefficients
- [D] **egen** — Extensions to generate
- [R] **regress** — Linear regression
- [R] **predict** — Obtain predictions, residuals, etc., after estimation
- [R] **regress postestimation** — Postestimation tools for regress
- [R] **test** — Test linear hypotheses after estimation
- [R] **summarize** — Summary statistics
- [R] **table** — Flexible table of summary statistics
- [R] **tabulate oneway** — One-way table of frequencies
- [R] **tabulate twoway** — Two-way table of frequencies
- [R] **ttest** —  $t$  tests (mean-comparison tests)

## Matrices

- [U] **14 Matrix expressions**
- [U] **18.5 Scalars and matrices**
- [M] *Mata Reference Manual*

## Programming

- [U] **16 Do-files**
- [U] **17 Ado-files**
- [U] **18 Programming Stata**
- [R] **ml** — Maximum likelihood estimation
- [P] *Stata Programming Reference Manual*
- [M] *Mata Reference Manual*

## System values

- [R] **set** — Overview of system parameters
- [P] **creturn** — Return c-class values

## Internet resources

The Stata website (<http://www.stata.com>) is a good place to get more information about Stata. You will find answers to FAQs, ways to interact with other users, official Stata updates, and other useful information. You can also join Statalist, a forum devoted to discussion of Stata and statistics.

You will also find information on Stata NetCourses<sup>®</sup>, which are interactive courses offered over the Internet that vary in length from a few weeks to eight weeks. Stata also offers in-person training sessions. Visit the Stata website for more information.

At the website is the Stata Bookstore, which contains books that we feel may be of interest to Stata users. Each book has a brief description written by a member of our technical staff explaining why we think this book may be of interest.

We suggest that you take a quick look at the Stata website now. You can [register](#) your copy of Stata online and request a free [subscription](#) to the *Stata News*.

Visit <http://www.stata-press.com> for information on books, manuals, and journals published by Stata Press. The datasets used in examples in the Stata manuals are available from the Stata Press website.

Also visit <http://www.stata-journal.com> to read about the *Stata Journal*, a quarterly publication containing articles about statistics, data analysis, teaching methods, and effective use of Stata's language.

Visit Stata's official blog at <http://blog.stata.com> for news and advice related to the use of Stata. The articles appearing in the blog are individually signed and are written by the same people who develop, support, and sell Stata. The Stata Blog also has links to other blogs about Stata, written by Stata users around the world.

Follow Stata on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/statacorp>, Twitter at <http://twitter.com/stata>, and Google+ at <https://plus.google.com/+stata/posts>. These are good ways to stay up-to-the-minute with the latest Stata information. Watch short example videos of using Stata on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/user/statacorp>.

See [GSW] 19 **Updating and extending Stata—Internet functionality** for details on accessing official Stata updates and free additions to Stata on the Stata website.