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Command for invoking Mata from Stata:

[M-3] Entry	Command	Description
mata	. mata	invoke Mata

Once you are running Mata, you can use the following commands from the colon prompt:

[M-3] Entry	Command	Description
mata help	: mata help	execute help command
mata clear	: mata clear	clear Mata
mata describe	: mata describe	describe contents of Mata's memory
mata memory	: mata memory	display memory-usage report
mata rename	: mata rename	rename matrix or function
mata drop	: mata drop	remove from memory matrix or function
mata mosave	: mata mosave	create object file
mata mlib	: mata mlib	create function library
mata matsave	: mata matsave	save matrices
mata matsave	: mata matuse	restore matrices
mata matsave	: mata matdescribe	describe contents of matrix file
mata which	: mata which	identify function
mata set	: mata query	display values of settable parameters
mata set	: mata set	set parameters
mata stata	: mata stata	execute Stata command
end	: end	exit Mata and return to Stata

Description

When you type something at the Mata prompt, it is assumed to be a Mata statement—something that can be compiled and executed—such as

```
: 2+3  
5
```

The `mata` command, however, is different. When what you type is prefixed by the word `mata`, think of yourself as standing outside of Mata and giving an instruction that affects the Mata environment and the way Mata works. For instance, typing

```
: mata clear
```

says that Mata is to be cleared. Typing

```
: mata set matastrict on
```

says that Mata is to require that programs explicitly declare their arguments and their working variables; see [\[M-2\] declarations](#).

Remarks and examples

stata.com

The `mata` command cannot be used inside functions. It would make no sense to code

```
function foo(...)  
{  
    ...  
    mata query  
    ...  
}
```

because `mata query` is something that can be typed only at the Mata colon prompt:

```
: mata query  
(output omitted)
```

See [\[M-1\] how](#).

Also see

[\[M-0\] intro](#) — Introduction to the Mata manual