

17 Setting font and window preferences

Changing and saving fonts and sizes and positions of your windows

You may find that you would like to change the fonts and display style of Stata's windows, depending on your monitor resolution and personal preferences. At the same time, there could be requirements for font usage, say, when you submit graphs to journals. Stata accommodates both of these by allowing sets of preferences for how windows are displayed.

We will first cover what can be changed in each window and then talk about what you can manage with your preferences.

Graph window

The preferences for the Graph window can be changed by right-clicking on the Graph window and choosing **Preferences...** from the contextual menu. The settings can then be set for how graphs are displayed in Stata. The settings that should be used when printing can be set using the **Printer** item.

The Graph preferences allow different schemes that control the look of graphs. These schemes provide a quick way to optimize graphs for printing or to display on a screen. There are even schemes defined for *The Economist* and the *Stata Journal* so that you can get the details for these publications right without much fuss. Changing the scheme does not change the current graph—it applies the settings to future graphs.

All other windows

You can change the display font and font size for most types of windows in Stata.

If fonts and font sizes for a window can be changed, they can be changed by right-clicking on the window and selecting **Preferences...** from the contextual menu. Doing so will bring up the *Preferences* dialog, from which you can pick the font and size of your choice. You should take care to choose a fixed-width font for the Results, Viewer, Data Editor, and Do-file Editor windows. You are not prevented from choosing other fonts, but if you do choose a proportional-width font, output and numbers will not align as they should.

Changing color schemes

In addition to changing the fonts themselves, you can also change the background and foreground colors of text being displayed. In the Do-file Editor, you can choose the colors for syntax highlighting, allowing, say, Stata commands to be displayed in a different color from arbitrary text.

The Results and Viewer windows have color schemes that control the display of input, text, results, errors, links, and highlighted text. Each has its color scheme set in the same fashion: you can right-click on the window and select or design your own color scheme. The default setting for both the Results window and the Viewer is the built-in *Standard* scheme, which uses a white background and dark text. There are other built-in schemes as well as slots for custom schemes. The settings for the Viewer affect all Viewer windows at once.

Managing multiple sets of preferences

Stata's preferences are automatically saved when you exit Stata, and they are reloaded when Stata is launched. However, sometimes you may wish to rearrange Stata's windows and then revert to your preferred arrangement of windows. You can do this by saving your preferences to a file and loading them later. Any changes you make to Stata's preferences after loading a preferences file do not affect the file; the file remains untouched unless you specifically overwrite it.

To manage preferences, open the **Edit > Preferences > Manage preferences** menu, and do any of the following:

- Select **Open preferences...** to open a saved preference file.
- Select **Save preferences** to save the current window arrangement and preferences to disk. By default, these are saved in the `.user_prefs` folder in your home directory. If you save your preferences to this default folder, they will appear in the **Edit > Preferences > Manage preferences** menu the next time you view it.

Closing and opening windows

You can close the Viewer, Graph, Do-file Editor, and Data Editor windows. If you want to open a closed window, open the **Window** menu and select the desired window. You cannot close the Command window or the Results window.