

Contents

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
lmbuild	. lmbuild	easily 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

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

Stata, Stata Press, and Mata are registered trademarks of StataCorp LLC. Stata and Stata Press are registered trademarks with the World Intellectual Property Organization of the United Nations. StataNow and NetCourseNow are trademarks of StataCorp LLC. Other brand and product names are registered trademarks or trademarks of their respective companies. Copyright © 1985–2025 StataCorp LLC, College Station, TX, USA. All rights reserved.

For suggested citations, see the FAQ on [citing Stata documentation](#).

