

After covering this section, you have the basic tools needed to use Stata. You know how to create datasets, label the variables and the values, delete observations, create new variables, and produce basic summary statistics about the variables.

Of course, the commands that we have used so far have many options, and we have barely touched upon these. Commands in Stata allow the user to retain a lot of control over what sort of information is displayed. The best way to get to know these options is to play around with the data yourselves and to refer to the help files when you need to. There is, however, one very important topic that we still did not talk about, and that is programming. The commands that we have used so far are all part of the Stata programming language. Programming is not difficult, but it is also not easy. However, there is one important programming tool that you should learn at this point because it will allow you to automate everything that you have done so far. The purpose of the next section is to introduce you to this tool.