This is the user interface that you see when you launch Stata. It is divided into several sections. In the middle of the screen you can see a large rectangular area. This is the area where the output will be displayed. Most Stata commands generate output. The generated output is going to be displayed in this rectangular area. Below this area you can see a rectangle with the title "Command" above it. This is where the user enters the commands. You can run commands in Stata using two different methods. The first method, and the one that will be used in the course, is by entering commands into this command area. You type a command and then you press enter. For example, there is a command in Stata called **about**. Running this command will result in Stata giving you information about the specific license that you have. Go ahead and try it. Type **about** and press enter.

about

As you can see, Stata has displayed the output generated by the command in the large rectangle in the middle. There is another way to run Stata commands and that is by using the point-and-click interface. I know that this might sound strange at this point, but it is much better to use the command mechanism than to use the point-and-click interface. Users would usually prefer to use point-and-click because it is simpler, faster, and you don't have to memorize the names of the commands. This, however, is not true. As you will see later, entering commands is much easier than using the point-and-click interface because it allows for greater customization. Stata allows users to customize what output is shown after a command is run. Doing so using the commands is easier than doing so using the point-and-click interface. Using commands is also faster because you will be able to create files that contain a large number of commands that you would want to execute consecutively. These files can then be executed all at once without the user having to enter each command by itself. This way, you can re-run a bunch of commands by entering a single command. This is something that we will learn how to do in this course. The last thing that I want to say about Stata commands is that they are easy to remember. All it takes is practice. Humans are really good any remembering names, and fortunately, command names in Stata are easy and intuitive. For example, if you need help, all you have to do is to run the command **help**. Go ahead and try it.

help

If you take a look to the left-hand side of the screen, you will notice that the previous commands that we executed are listed in this rectangle. This part of Stata tells us which commands we executed. However, it also serves another, and more useful, function, which is to allow us to re-run some commands by double clicking on them. If we double click on the command **about** we see that Stata runs the command again. This feature will be very useful when you need to re-run some longer and more complex commands.

Finally, if you look at the right-hand side of the screen you will see a rectangle that is currently empty. The reason why it is empty is that there is no dataset in memory. We just launched Stata, and when you launch Stata, its memory will be empty. If there was a dataset in the memory, this rectangle will display the variables included in the dataset. For example, if I had a dataset that contained the name and grade of each student, I will be able to see the names of both variables in this area. I will also be able to see the label of each variable. Variable names are usually made up

of one word and in some instances it will not be 100% clear what the variable records. This is why to make your dataset more readable, it is very good practice to label each variable using a statement that clearly identifies what this variable is. Continuing with our student grades example, it is possible that the name of the variable will be *grade*, and this will be displayed over here, and the label attached to this variable will be something like "The final grade achieved by the student by the end of the course".

If we now look below this area, we see a small table. This table is also empty because there is no data in memory. If I load a dataset, and I click on the name of a variable in this dataset, this table will show me important information about the variable. So while the top part tells me what are the variables included in the dataset, the bottom part will give me specific information about each and every variable when I click the variable. One of the most important pieces of information about any variable is the type of the variable. Some variables are numeric, such as age, weight, and height, while other variables contain a combination of text and numbers, such as names and addresses. In addition, not all numeric values have the same type, because some variables can only take on integer values, like the number of customers who entered the shop today. This variable can be 0, 1, 2, 3 and so on. It cannot hold a value of 3.4. Other variables however can contain decimal points, like weight. Someone can have a weight of 80.5 kg.

As you can see, the user interface in Stata is not complicated and it is divided in a visually appealing way. In the next video, we will load a dataset into the memory in order to see what the user-interface looks like when there is data.