# Loading Data into Stata

When we think of data, the first thing that pops into your head is probably data in Excel:



Above, you see a dataset in Excel with cars produced in 1978. Each row represents a car produced in 1978, while the columns display the attributes of the associated cars.

Stata thinks about data in the same way as Excel. Data is stored in Stata as one big matrix, like how Excel kept the data above.

In order to load data into Stata, we need to choose the right method for bringing in data from different sources.

1. If you are loading data from a Stata dataset (files that end in the extention “.dta”):

use “/path/to/data.dta”, clear

1. If you are loading data from a CSV file:

insheet using “/path/to/data.csv”, clear

1. If you are loading data from a tab delimited file:

insheet using “/path/to/data.txt”, tab clear

Stata also has a few datasets built-in to make things easier for learning. For getting to know Stata, we can use that data.

Type the following to load the 1978 car data, one of the datasets that is built into Stata:

sysuse auto, clear