

## Tips for data entry using Stata

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1) if you're reading in the data file directly from the website (i.e. using `http://`) please check that you have the URL right. In most browsers you can actually directly copy that path using a RIGHT click on the link. (in Internet Explorer, it's "Copy Shortcut", in both Firefox and Safari it's "copy link") The most common error is to have the wrong filename extension: e.g. ".txt" rather than ".dat".

2) please try both *insheet* and *infile*. "insheet" will do more for you (for example, it handles variable names and categorical variables), but it requires a specific file format. "infile" does less, but works in more cases.

3) please check the data description on the website for variable names and in particular the order of variable names. Stata usually won't know the order of the variables until you tell it which is which in the *infile* or *insheet* command.

4) if all else fails, you can probably open the file in Excel. Make a copy of the file on your computer, then open Excel and use the import wizard (you might have to change the delimiter or play with it in other ways). Then you can cut-and-paste the file directly into the data editor, and change the variable names after looking at the data description.

5) If you had lots of issues getting the file into Stata, you can save it once it's in there as a Stata-proprietary .dta file and use that from then on.