

erase — Erase a disk file

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Description

The `erase` command erases files stored on disk. `rm` is a synonym for `erase` for the convenience of Mac and Unix users.

Stata for Mac users: `erase` is permanent; the file is not moved to the Trash but is immediately removed from the disk.

Stata for Windows users: `erase` is permanent; the file is not moved to the Recycle Bin but is immediately removed from the disk.

Quick start

Delete `mylog.smcl` from current directory in Stata for Windows

```
erase mylog.smcl
```

Same as above for Mac and Unix

```
rm mylog.smcl
```

Delete `mydata.dta` from current directory in Stata for Windows

```
erase mydata.dta
```

Same as above for Mac and Unix

```
rm mydata.dta
```

Delete `mylog.smcl` from `C:\my dir\my folder` in Stata for Windows

```
erase "c:\my dir\my folder\mylog.smcl"
```

Same as above for Mac and Unix

```
rm "~/my dir/my folder/mylog.smcl"
```

Syntax

```
{ erase | rm } ["] filename ["]
```

Note: Double quotes must be used to enclose *filename* if the name contains spaces.

Remarks and examples

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The only difference between Stata's `erase` (`rm`) command and the Windows command prompt `DEL` or Unix `rm(1)` command is that we may not specify groups of files. Stata requires that we erase files one at a time.

Mac users may prefer to discard files by dragging them to the Trash.

Windows users may prefer to discard files by dragging them to the Recycle Bin.

▷ Example 1

Stata provides seven operating system equivalent commands: `cd`, `copy`, `dir`, `erase`, `mkdir`, `rmdir`, and `type`, or, from the Unix perspective, `cd`, `copy`, `ls`, `rm`, `mkdir`, `rmdir`, and `cat`. These commands are provided for Mac users, too. Stata users can also issue any operating system command by using Stata's `shell` command, so you should never have to exit Stata to perform some housekeeping detail.

Suppose that we have the file `mydata.dta` stored on disk and we wish to permanently eliminate it:

```
. erase mydata
file mydata not found
r(601);
. erase mydata.dta
. _
```

Our first attempt, `erase mydata`, was unsuccessful. Although Stata ordinarily supplies the file extension for you, it does not do so when you type `erase`. You must be explicit. Our second attempt eliminated the file. Unix users could have typed `rm mydata.dta` if they preferred.

◀

Also see

- [D] [cd](#) — Change directory
- [D] [copy](#) — Copy file from disk or URL
- [D] [dir](#) — Display filenames
- [D] [mkdir](#) — Create directory
- [D] [rmdir](#) — Remove directory
- [D] [shell](#) — Temporarily invoke operating system
- [D] [type](#) — Display contents of a file
- [U] [11.6 Filenaming conventions](#)

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