

# 5 Editions of Stata

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## 5.1 StataNow

First and foremost, StataNow is Stata. It is a continuous-release version of Stata that offers new features as soon as they are ready. StataNow is the result of our ongoing effort to deliver the best Stata—the most current Stata—to our users.

Before StataNow, most new features became available only at the time of a major release such as Stata 17, Stata 18, and so on. StataNow provides access to new features sooner. For instance, StataNow contains features that will also be part of a future major release, Stata 19. View the list of the latest StataNow features at <https://www.stata.com/new-in-stata/#statanow>.

The features in StataNow are fully tested, fully certified, well documented, and [version controlled](#) (if needed), as well as polished to our customary high [quality](#). These features are prioritized in the development cycle to be released as soon as they are ready so that users can take advantage of them right away. As always, all versions of Stata are updated regularly with any corrections and necessary improvements.

The new features in StataNow are released continuously throughout the current release until the next major release. They are not released according to any preset schedule. All StataNow features are marked as such throughout the Stata documentation and the Stata website.

Because StataNow is Stata, when we mention “Stata” throughout our documentation and website, we also mean “StataNow”. We will be specific about StataNow for features available only in StataNow. And because StataNow is Stata, it is available in all [editions](#) (StataNow/MP, StataNow/SE, and StataNow/BE) and on all supported [platforms](#) (Windows, Mac, and Linux). Throughout the documentation and website, we will usually refer to just Stata/MP, Stata/SE, and Stata/BE for simplicity. If you have a StataNow license, you can take this to mean StataNow/MP, StataNow/SE, and StataNow/BE.

For more information, see <https://www.stata.com/statanow/>.

## 5.2 Platforms

Stata is available for a variety of systems, including

Stata for Windows, 64-bit x86-64

Stata for Mac, 64-bit x86-64

Stata for Linux, 64-bit x86-64

Which version of Stata you run does not matter—Stata is Stata. You instruct Stata in the same way and Stata produces the same results, right down to the random-number generator. Even files can be shared. A dataset created on one computer can be used on any other computer, and the same goes for graphs, programs, or any file Stata uses or produces. Moving files across platforms is simply a matter of copying them; no translation is required.

Some computers, however, are faster than others. Some computers have more memory than others. Computers with more memory, and faster computers, are better.

When you purchase Stata, you may install it on any of the above platforms. Stata licenses are not locked to a single operating system.

## 5.3 Stata/MP, Stata/SE, or Stata/BE

Stata is available in three editions, although perhaps sizes would be a better word. The editions are, from largest to smallest, Stata/MP, Stata/SE, and Stata/BE. (Prior to Stata 17, the various editions of Stata were called flavors, and Stata/BE was called Stata/IC.) If you have a StataNow license, you can take Stata/MP, Stata/SE, and Stata/BE to mean StataNow/MP, StataNow/SE, and StataNow/BE, respectively.

Stata/MP is the multiprocessor version of Stata. It runs on multiple CPUs or on multiple cores, from 2 to 64. Stata/MP uses however many cores you tell it to use (even one), up to the number of cores for which you are licensed. Stata/MP is the fastest version of Stata. Even so, all the details of parallelization are handled internally and you use Stata/MP just like you use any other editions of Stata. You can read about how Stata/MP works and see how its speed increases with more cores at <https://www.stata.com/statamp/>.

Stata/SE is like Stata/MP, but for single CPUs. Stata/SE will run on multiple CPUs or multiple-core computers, but it will use only one CPU or core. SE stands for standard edition.

In addition to being the fastest version of Stata, Stata/MP is also the largest. Stata/MP allows up to 1,099,511,627,775 observations in theory, but you can undoubtedly run out of memory first. You may have up to 120,000 variables with Stata/MP. Statistical models may have up to 65,532 variables.

Stata/SE allows up to 2,147,583,647 observations, assuming you have enough memory. You may have up to 32,767 variables with Stata/SE. Statistical models may have up to 10,998 variables.

Stata/BE is the basic version of Stata. Up to 2,147,583,647 observations and 2,048 variables are allowed, depending on memory. Statistical models may have up to 800 variables.

### 5.3.1 Determining which version you own

Check your License and Activation Key. Included with every copy of Stata is a License and Activation Key that contains codes that you will input during installation. This determines which editions of Stata you have and for which platform.

Contact us or your distributor if you want to upgrade from one edition to another. Usually, all you need is an upgraded License and Activation Key with the appropriate codes.

If you purchased one edition of Stata and want to use a lesser version, you may. You might want to do this if you had a large computer at work and a smaller one at home. Please remember, however, that you have only one license (or however many licenses you purchased). You may, both legally and ethically, install Stata on both computers and then use one or the other, but you should not use them both simultaneously.

### 5.3.2 Determining which version is installed

If Stata is already installed, you can find out which Stata you are using by entering Stata as you normally do and typing about:

```
. about
StataNow/MP 18.5 for Windows (64-bit x86-64)
Revision date
Copyright 1985-2023 StataCorp LLC
Total usable memory: 8388608 KB
Stata license: 10-user 32-core network perpetual
Serial number: 18
Licensed to: Stata Developer
             StataCorp LLC
```

## 5.4 Size limits of Stata/MP, SE, and BE

Stata/MP allows more variables and observations, longer macros, and a longer command line than Stata/SE. Stata/SE allows more variables, larger models, longer macros, and a longer command line than Stata/BE. The longer command line and macro length are required because of the greater number of variables allowed. The larger model means that Stata/MP and Stata/SE can fit statistical models with more independent variables. See [R] [Limits](#) for the maximum size limits for Stata/MP, Stata/SE, and Stata/BE.

## 5.5 Speed comparison of Stata/MP, SE, and BE

We have written a white paper called the Stata/MP Performance Report, which compares the performance of Stata/MP with Stata/SE. The paper is available at <https://www.stata.com/statamp/>. The white paper includes command-by-command performance measurements.

In summary, on a dual-core computer, Stata/MP will run commands in 71% of the time required by Stata/SE. There is variation; some commands run in half the time and others are not sped up at all. Statistical estimation commands run in 59% of the time. Numbers quoted are medians. Average performance gains are higher because commands that take longer to execute are generally sped up more.

Stata/MP running on four cores runs in 50% (all commands) and 35% (estimation commands) of the time required by Stata/SE. Both numbers are median measures.

Stata/MP supports up to 64 cores.

Stata/BE is slower than Stata/SE, but those differences emerge only when processing datasets that are pushing the limits of Stata/BE. Stata/SE has a larger memory footprint and uses that extra memory for larger look-aside tables to more efficiently process large datasets. The real benefits of the larger tables become apparent only after exceeding the limits of Stata/BE. Stata/SE was designed for processing large datasets.

The differences are all technical and internal. From the user's point of view, Stata/MP, Stata/SE, and Stata/BE work the same way.

## 5.6 Feature comparison of Stata/MP, SE, and BE

The features of MP, SE, and BE editions of Stata on all platforms are the same. The differences are in speed and in limits as discussed above. To learn more, type `help stata/mp`, `help stata/se`, or `help stata/be`.

The StataNow version of Stata contains additional features as listed at <https://www.stata.com/new-in-stata/#statanow>. These features are the same across the MP, SE, and BE editions of StataNow on all platforms.

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