

Stata tip 57: How to reinstall Stata

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Sometimes disaster, quite unbidden, may strike your use of Stata. Computers break, drives fail, viruses attack, you or your system administrator do silly—even stupid—things, and Stata stops working or, worse, only partially works, recognizing some commands but not others. What is the solution? You need to reinstall Stata. It will be easier than you may fear.

1. If Stata is still working, get a list of the user-written ado-files you have installed. Bring up your broken Stata and type

```
. ado dir
```

That should list the packages. `ado dir` is a built-in command of Stata, so even if the ado-files are missing, `ado dir` will work. Assuming it does work, let's type the following:

```
. log using installed.log, replace  
. ado dir  
. log close
```

Exit Stata and store the new file `installed.log` in a safe place. Print the file, too. In the worst case, we can use the information listed to reinstall the user-written files.

2. With both your original CD and your paper license handy, take a deep breath and reinstall Stata. If you cannot find your original license codes, call Stata Technical Services.
3. Launch the newly installed Stata. Type `ado dir`. That will either (1) list the files you previously had installed or (2) list nothing. Almost always, the result will be (1).
4. Regardless, **update** your Stata: Type `update query` and follow the instructions.
5. Now you are either done, or, very rarely, you still need to reinstall the user-written files. In that case, look at the original `ado dir` listing we obtained in step 1. One line might read

```
[1] package mf_invtokens from http://fmwww.bc.edu/RePEc/bocode/m  
     'MF_INVOKENS': module (Mata) to convert ...
```

so you would type

```
. net from http://fmwww.bc.edu/RePEc/bocode/m  
. net install mf_invtokens
```

In the case where the package is from <http://fmwww.bc.edu>, easier than the above is to type

```
. ssc install mf_invtokens
```

Both will do the same thing. `ssc` can be used only to install materials from <http://fmwww.bc.edu/>. In other cases, type the two `net` commands.

Anyway, work the list starting at the top.

Unless you have had a disk failure, it is exceedingly unlikely that you will lose the user-written programs. If you do not have a backup plan in place for your hard disk, it is a good idea to periodically log the output of `ado dir` and store the output in a safe place.