Title

Missing values — Quick reference for missing values

Description

This entry provides a quick reference for Stata's missing values.

Remarks and examples

Stata has 27 numeric missing values:

., the default, which is called the *system missing value* or sysmiss

and

.a, .b, .c, ..., .z, which are called the *extended missing values.*

Numeric missing values are represented by large positive values. The ordering is

$$\text{all nonmissing numbers} < \text{.} < \text{.a} < \text{.b} < \cdots < \text{.z}$$

Thus the expression

$$\text{age} > 60$$

is true if variable age is greater than 60 or missing.

To exclude missing values, ask whether the value is less than '.'.

    . list if age > 60 & age < .

To specify missing values, ask whether the value is greater than or equal to '.'. For instance,

    . list if age >=.

Stata has one string missing value, which is denoted by "" (blank).

References

Cox, N. J. 2010. Stata tip 84: Summing missings. *Stata Journal* 10: 157–159.

——. 2015. Speaking Stata: A set of utilities for managing missing values. *Stata Journal* 15: 1174–1185.

Also see

[U] 12.2.1 Missing values

For suggested citations, see the FAQ on citing Stata documentation.