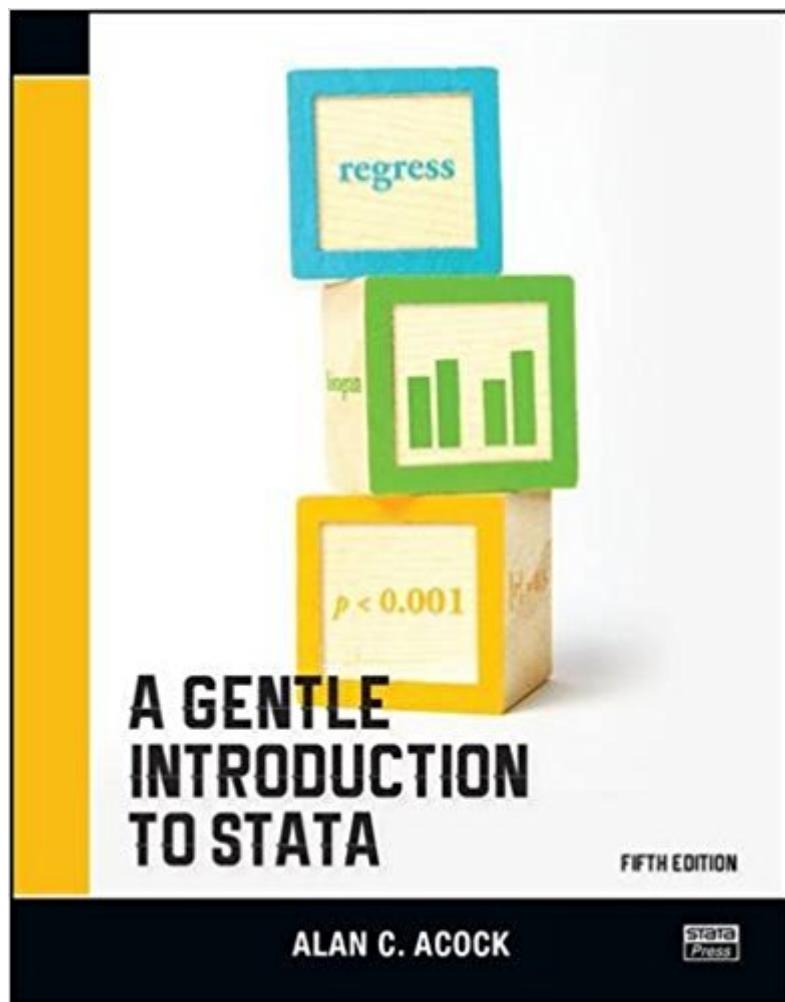


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# A Gentle Introduction To Stata, Fifth Edition



## Synopsis

Alan C. Acock's *A Gentle Introduction to Stata, Fifth Edition*, is aimed at new Stata users who want to become proficient in Stata. After reading this introductory text, new users will be able not only to use Stata well but also to learn new aspects of Stata. Acock assumes that the user is not familiar with any statistical software. This assumption of a blank slate is central to the structure and contents of the book. Acock starts with the basics; for example, the portion of the book that deals with data management begins with a careful and detailed example of turning survey data on paper into a Stata-ready dataset on the computer. When explaining how to go about basic exploratory statistical procedures, Acock includes notes that will help the reader develop good work habits. This mixture of explaining good Stata habits and good statistical habits continues throughout the book. Acock is quite careful to teach the reader all aspects of using Stata. He covers data management, good work habits (including the use of basic do-files), basic exploratory statistics (including graphical displays), and analyses using the standard array of basic statistical tools (correlation, linear and logistic regression, and parametric and nonparametric tests of location and dispersion). He also successfully introduces some more advanced topics such as multiple imputation and structural equation modeling in a very approachable manner. Acock teaches Stata commands by using the menus and dialog boxes while still stressing the value of do-files. In this way, he ensures that all types of users can build good work habits. Each chapter has exercises that the motivated reader can use to reinforce the material. The tone of the book is friendly and conversational without ever being glib or condescending. Important asides and notes about terminology are set off in boxes, which makes the text easy to read without any convoluted twists or forward-referencing. Rather than splitting topics by their Stata implementation, Acock arranges the topics as they would appear in a basic statistics textbook; graphics and postestimation are woven into the material in a natural fashion. Real datasets, such as the General Social Surveys from 2002 and 2006, are used throughout the book. The focus of the book is especially helpful for those in the behavioral and social sciences because the presentation of basic statistical modeling is supplemented with discussions of effect sizes and standardized coefficients. Various selection criteria, such as semipartial correlations, are discussed for model selection. Acock also covers a variety of commands available for evaluating reliability and validity of measurements. The fifth edition of the book includes two new chapters that cover multilevel modeling and item response theory (IRT) models. The multilevel modeling chapter demonstrates how to fit linear multilevel models using the `mixed` command. Acock discusses models with both random intercepts and random coefficients, and he provides a variety of examples that apply these models to longitudinal data. The IRT chapter

introduces the use of IRT models for evaluating a set of items designed to measure a specific trait such as an attitude, value, or a belief. Acock shows how to use the irt suite of commands, which are new in Stata 14, to fit IRT models and to graph the results. In addition, he presents a measure of reliability that can be computed when using IRT.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

As a starter in social science research, I really love this book. Before I read it, I knew all the statistical knowledge it includes and I had some Stata experience. But this book is great because it showed me how to conduct social science research using these statistical knowledge and Stata, from raw dataset to running statistical tests. Some books only told you Stata commands or statistical theories, but this one combines them together and gives me a real feeling of doing research using Stata step by step. That is why I love this book. Sometimes I think knowing all the Stata commands is not important, well, not possible, but knowing how and when to use them in research and generate the output you want is more important.

I am currently writing my dissertation and I purchased this book because my Chair prefers STATA. I completed my course work 5 years ago and didn't remember much about STATA. This book has saved my sanity and my life! If you are doing anything with STATA you will be so thankful that you purchased this book. I plan on thanking Dr. Acock in the acknowledgement section when the dissertation is completed. Thank you so much. If you are reading this, I have never written a review but feel I owe it to anyone out there struggling like I was - don't hesitate its worth its weight in gold!

Great step by step instructions to get started with STATA. It definitely helped me a lot and I frequently return to it anytime I can't recall a certain command.

This was a really helpful manual to navigating Stata. I had no prior experience with any quant. data software programs, and was able to navigate through this manual when I had really specific questions and concerns. I would recommend this book for any new users, or those looking for a reliable reference point for their research projects.

So this is THE book that you want to get if you are just learning Stata. I know there are tons of manuals and user groups for Stata. But is is really nice to have the book. And looking through the book you will learn things you didn't know to ask for on the user groups.

Great book. Explains in detail Stata operations. Could have been written in a lot more easier language though...

This book is very helpful. I am a graduate student and I have never used STATA software before, the book provides a good introduction and explanation of the procedures.

perfect and useful

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