Connect STATA to MySQL using unixODBC on Ubuntu

Getting STATA to connect to MySQL on Ubuntu isn't difficult so long as one critical step isn't missed out. I couldn't find this step on any guides so hopefully this will help others save some time on most 'NIX systems. This guide doesn't cover installing MySQL or STATA.

The steps are:

1. Install libmyodbc
2. Install unixODBC
3. Configure ODBC
4. Test the connection
5. Connect STATA

Let's get started.

Install libmyodbc and unixodbc

```
$ sudo apt-get install libmyodbc
$ sudo apt-get install unixodbc
$ sudo apt-get install unixodbc-dev # The critical step - without this STATA ODBC does not work
```

Check contents of /etc/odbcinst.ini are as follows

```
$ cat /etc/odbcinst.ini
[ODBC Drivers]
MySQL = Installed

[MySQL]
Driver = /usr/lib/odbc/libmyodbc.so
Setup  = /usr/lib/odbc/libodbcmyS.so
```

Add the MySQL database as a data source in ~/.odbc.ini

```
$ vi ~/.odbc.ini
...
[ODBC Data Sources]
database_name = MySQL # for simplicity I've used the database name here too

[database_name]
Description = A description
Driver      = MySQL
database     = database_name
server       = 127.0.0.1 # Connecting on the same machine
user         = your_mysql_username
password     = your_password # optional - this is plain text!
```

If you store your database password in ~/.odbc.ini set the permission so only you have access

```
$ chmod 700 ~/.odbc.ini
```

Test the connection

```
$ isql database_name
+------------------------------------+
|  Connected!                        |
|                                    |
|  sql-statement                     |
|  help [tablename]                  |
|  quit                              |
|                                    |
+------------------------------------+
SQL>
```

You should now be able to run SQL commands try running:

```
SQL> show tables;
+------------------------------------------------------------------+
|  Tables_in_database_name                                         |
+------------------------------------------------------------------+
|...                                                               |
|                                                             ...|
+------------------------------------------------------------------+
```
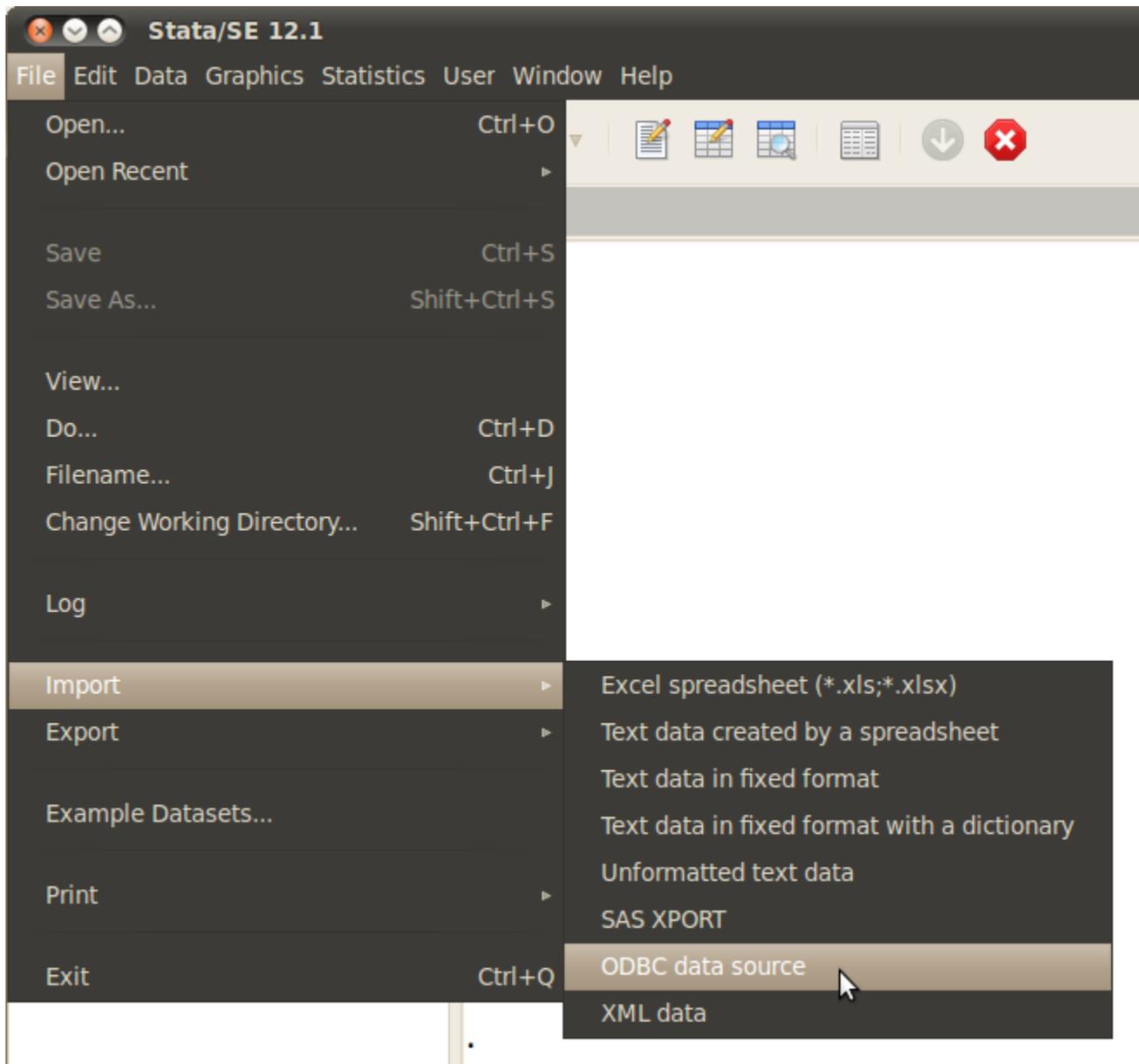
Quit isql

```
SQL> quit
$ _
```

Launch STATA and set the ODBC manager in the command window - permanently is optional

```
set odbcmgr unixodbc[, permanently]
```

Import the database into STATA by going to File -> Import -> ODBC data source

The database should be listed as an ODBC data source - make your selection. Done!

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