

+++ title = "Add a data source variable" aliases = ["/docs/grafana/latest/variables/add-data-source-variable.md"]  
weight = 500 +++

# Add a data source variable

*Data source* variables allow you to quickly change the data source for an entire dashboard. They are useful if you have multiple instances of a data source, perhaps in different environments.

## Enter General options

1. Navigate to the dashboard you want to make a variable for and then click the **Dashboard settings** (gear) icon at the top of the page.
2. On the Variables tab, click **New**.
3. Enter a **Name** for your variable.
4. In the **Type** list, select **Datasource**.
5. (optional) In **Label**, enter the display name of the variable dropdown. If you don't enter a display name, then the dropdown label will be the variable name.
6. Choose a **Hide** option:
  - **No selection (blank)** - The variable dropdown displays the variable **Name** or **Label** value. This is the default.
  - **Label** - The variable dropdown only displays the selected variable value and a down arrow.
  - **Variable** - No variable dropdown is displayed on the dashboard.

## Enter Data source options

1. In the **Type** list, select the target data source for the variable. For more information about data sources, refer to [Add a data source]({{< relref "../datasources/add-a-data-source.md" >}}).
2. (optional) In **Instance name filter**, enter a regex filter for which data source instances to choose from in the variable value drop-down list. Leave this field empty to display all instances.
3. (optional) Enter [Selection Options]({{< relref "../variable-selection-options.md" >}}).
4. In **Preview of values**, Grafana displays a list of the current variable values. Review them to ensure they match what you expect.
5. Click **Add** to add the variable to the dashboard.