

Previously, to take a look at the data in Stata, we opened the data editor or browser window. This is very useful, but sometimes we don't need to see all of the observations. Sometimes we need to take a look at certain records. The **list** command tells Stata to display whichever observations we wish to see. Go ahead and execute the following:

*list*

We can see that Stata displays all of the records for us. We can also see that each record is numbered with the last record having a number of 818. Records are numbered in sequence and the first record is assigned the number 1. These numbers are very useful because they allow us to specify a single record. In order to allow us to do this, Stata creates an invisible variable which is called `_n`. This variable is not listed in the table on the right-hand side, but it is there. For the first observation `_n` is one. In our case, for the last observation, `_n` is 818. If we wanted Stata to show us the first ten records, we could run the command:

*list in 1/10*

This command tells Stata to list the observations with `_n` values from 1 to 10. We can accomplish this task using another command. To tell Stata to list the first ten observations without having to refer to their `_n` values, we can run the command:

*list in f/10*

This command tells Stata to list the first ten observations. We can also tell Stata to list observations that do not start with the very first one. For example, the following command lists observations starting with the fifth one and ending with the 15<sup>th</sup> one:

*list in 5/15*

What if we wanted to list the last observations? Since we know that the last observation has a `_n` value of 818, we could run the command:

*list in 810/818*

This command lists the observations starting with the 810<sup>th</sup> up to and including the 818<sup>th</sup>. We can also accomplish the same but with the following command:

*list in 810/l*

This command is telling Stata to list the observations starting with the 810<sup>th</sup> and ending with the very last one (this is an L-letter, not the number one). If we wanted to tell Stata to list the last seven observations without referring to their `_n` values, we can use the following command:

*list in -7/l*

As you can see, Stata provides a lot of flexibility in choosing which observations to list. I have included a PDF document with this lesson that provides some examples about different syntaxes and what they result in. Most have already been covered here, so you can consider the sheet as a summary.

## An Introduction to Stata – Section 4.2

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If we wanted Stata to show us only some of the variables, we can specify which variables we want to see. For example, to display only the variables `major`, `level`, and `gender`, we can run the command:

```
list major level gender
```

Notice in the output that there are dots. As we previously mentioned, the dots represent missing values. If we want to see these variables but only for the first nine observations, we could type:

```
list major level gender in f/9
```