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## Wrap-Up (Sampling)

In this short section we learned various techniques by which one can choose a sample of individuals from an entire population to collect data from. This is seemingly a simple step in the big picture of statistics, but it turns out that it has a crucial effect on the conclusions we can draw from the sample about the entire population (i.e., inference).

Generally speaking, a probability sampling plan (such as a simple random sample, cluster, or stratified sampling) will result in a nonbiased sample, which can be safely used to make inferences. Moreover, the inferential procedures that we will learn later in this course assume that the sample was chosen at random. That being said, other (nonrandom) sampling techniques are available, and sometimes using them is the best we can do. It is important, though, when these techniques are used, to be aware of the types of bias that they introduce, and thus the limitations of the conclusions that can be drawn from the resulting samples.

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