clonevar — Clone existing variable

Description	Quick start	Menu	Syntax
Remarks and examples	Acknowledgments	Also see	

Description

clonevar generates *newvar* as an exact copy of an existing variable, *varname*, with the same storage type, values, and display format as *varname*. *varname*'s variable label, value labels, notes, and characteristics will also be copied.

Quick start

```
Copy contents, label, and value label of v1 to newv1
```

clonevar newv1 = v1

Copy observations from v2 to newv2 where v2 is less than 30

clonevar newv2 = v2 if v2 < 30

Copy the first 20 observations of v3 to newv3

clonevar newv3 = v3 in f/20

Same as above

clonevar newv3 = v3 in 1/20

Menu

Data > Create or change data > Other variable-creation commands > Clone existing variable

Syntax

```
clonevar newvar = varname [if] [in]
```

Remarks and examples

clonevar has various possible uses. Programmers may desire that a temporary variable appear to the user exactly like an existing variable. Interactively, you might want a slightly modified copy of an original variable, so the natural starting point is a clone of the original.

▶ Example 1

We have a dataset containing information on modes of travel. These data contain a variable named mode that identifies each observation as a specific mode of travel: air, train, bus, or car.

. use https://www.stata-press.com/data/r19/travel (Modes of travel)

. describe mode

Variable name	_	Display format	Value label	Variable label	
mode	byte	%8.0g	travel	Travel mode alternatives	
. label list travel					

travel:

1 Air 2 Train

3 Bus

4 Car

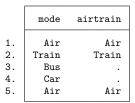
To create an identical variable identifying only observations that contain air or train, we could use clonevar with an if qualifier.

. clonevar airtrain = mode if mode == 1 | mode == 2 (420 missing values generated)

. describe mode airtrain

Variable	Storage	Display	Value	Variable label
name	type	format	label	
mode	byte	%8.0g	travel	Travel mode alternatives Travel mode alternatives
airtrain	byte	%8.0g	travel	

. list mode airtrain in 1/5



The new airtrain variable has the same storage type, display format, value label, and variable label as mode. If mode had any characteristics or notes attached to it, they would have been applied to the new airtrain variable, too. The only differences in the two variables are their names and values for bus and car.

4

□ Technical note

The if qualifier used with the clonevar command in example 1 referred to the values of mode as 1 and 2. Had we wanted to refer to the values by their associated value labels, we could have typed

. clonevar airtrain = mode if mode == "air":travel | mode == "train":travel

For more details, see [U] 13.11 Label values.

Acknowledgments

clonevar was written by Nicholas J. Cox of the Department of Geography at Durham University, UK, who is coeditor of the Stata Journal and author of Speaking Stata Graphics. He in turn thanks Michael Blasnik of Nest Labs and Ken Higbee of StataCorp for very helpful comments on a precursor of this command.

Also see

- [D] generate Create or change contents of variable
- [D] **separate** Create separate variables

Stata, Stata Press, Mata, NetCourse, and NetCourseNow are registered trademarks of StataCorp LLC. Stata and Stata Press are registered trademarks with the World Intellectual Property Organization of the United Nations. StataNow is a trademark of StataCorp LLC. Other brand and product names are registered trademarks or trademarks of their respective companies. Copyright © 1985–2025 StataCorp LLC, College Station, TX, USA. All rights reserved.



For suggested citations, see the FAQ on citing Stata documentation.