

expand — Duplicate observations

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Syntax

```
expand [=] exp [if] [in] [, generate(newvar) ]
```

Menu

Data > Create or change data > Other variable-transformation commands > Duplicate observations

Description

`expand` replaces each observation in the dataset with n copies of the observation, where n is equal to the required expression rounded to the nearest integer. If the expression is less than 1 or equal to *missing*, it is interpreted as if it were 1, and the observation is retained but not duplicated.

Option

`generate(newvar)` creates new variable *newvar* containing 0 if the observation originally appeared in the dataset and 1 if the observation is a duplicate. For instance, after an `expand`, you could revert to the original observations by typing `keep if newvar==0`.

Remarks and examples

stata.com

▶ Example 1

`expand` is, admittedly, a strange command. It can, however, be useful in tricky programs or for reformatting data for survival analysis (see examples in [ST] [epitab](#)). Here is a silly use of `expand`:

```
. use http://www.stata-press.com/data/r13/expandxmpl
. list
```

	n	x
1.	-1	1
2.	0	2
3.	1	3
4.	2	4
5.	3	5

```
. expand n
(1 negative count ignored; observation not deleted)
(1 zero count ignored; observation not deleted)
(3 observations created)
```

```
. list
```

	n	x
1.	-1	1
2.	0	2
3.	1	3
4.	2	4
5.	3	5
6.	2	4
7.	3	5
8.	3	5

The new observations are added to the end of the dataset. `expand` informed us that it created 3 observations. The first 3 observations were not replicated because `n` was less than or equal to 1. `n` is 2 in the fourth observation, so `expand` created one replication of this observation, bringing the total number of observations of this type to 2. `expand` created two replications of observation 5 because `n` is 3.

Because there were 5 observations in the original dataset and because `expand` adds new observations onto the end of the dataset, we could now undo the expansion by typing `drop in 6/1`.

◀

Reference

Cox, N. J. 2013. [Stata tip 114: Expand paired dates to pairs of dates](#). *Stata Journal* 13: 217–219.

Also see

[D] [contract](#) — Make dataset of frequencies and percentages

[D] [expandcl](#) — Duplicate clustered observations

[D] [fillin](#) — Rectangularize dataset