

# Title

**compare** — Compare two variables

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## Description

compare reports the differences and similarities between *varname*<sub>1</sub> and *varname*<sub>2</sub>.

## Quick start

Describe differences in missing and defined values of *v1* and *v2*

```
compare v1 v2
```

As above, but only for observations where *catvar* is equal to 3

```
compare v1 v2 if catvar==3
```

As above, but for each level of *catvar*

```
by catvar: compare v1 v2
```

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## Syntax

```
compare varname1 varname2 [if] [in]
```

by is allowed; see [\[D\]](#) [by](#).

## Remarks and examples

### ▶ Example 1

One of the more useful accountings made by `compare` is the pattern of missing values:

```
. use https://www.stata-press.com/data/r17/fullauto
(Automobile models)
. compare rep77 rep78
```

	Count	Difference		
		Minimum	Average	Maximum
rep77<rep78	16	-3	-1.3125	-1
rep77=rep78	43			
rep77>rep78	7	1	1	1
Jointly defined	66	-3	-.2121212	1
rep77 missing only	3			
Jointly missing	5			
Total	74			

We see that both `rep77` and `rep78` are missing in 5 observations and that `rep77` is also missing in 3 more observations.



### □ Technical note

`compare` may be used with numeric variables, string variables, or both. When used with string variables, the summary of the differences (minimum, average, maximum) is not reported. When used with string and numeric variables, the breakdown by `<`, `=`, and `>` is also suppressed.



## Also see

[D] [cf](#) — Compare two datasets

[D] [codebook](#) — Describe data contents

[D] [inspect](#) — Display simple summary of data's attributes