snapshot –	 Save an 	d restore	data	snapshots
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Description	Quick start	Menu	Syntax
Option	Remarks and examples	Stored results	Also see

Description

snapshot saves to disk and restores from disk copies of the data in memory. snapshot's main purpose is to allow the Data Editor to save and restore data snapshots during an interactive editing session. A more popular alternative for programmers is preserve; see [P] preserve.

Snapshots are referred to by a *snapshot#*. If no snapshots currently exist, the next snapshot saved will receive a *snapshot#* of 1. If snapshots do exist, the next snapshot saved will receive a *snapshot#* one greater than the highest existing *snapshot#*.

snapshot save creates a temporary file containing a copy of the data currently in memory and attaches an optional label (up to 80 characters) to the saved snapshot. Up to 1,000 snapshots may be saved.

snapshot label changes the label on the specified snapshot.

snapshot restore replaces the data in memory with the data from the specified snapshot.

snapshot list lists specified snapshots.

snapshot erase erases specified snapshots.

Quick start

Save a temporary copy of the data to disk, and label the snapshot mylabel1

snapshot save, label(mylabel1)

List snapshot numbers and labels snapshot list _all

Restore snapshot mylabel1 with number 1 snapshot restore 1

Change label of snapshot 1 to mylabel2 snapshot label 1 "mylabel2"

Delete all current snapshots, and begin renumbering new snapshots from 1 snapshot erase _all

Menu

Data > Data Editor > Data Editor (Edit)

Syntax

```
Save snapshot
snapshot save [, label("label")]
```

Change snapshot label

snapshot label snapshot# "label"

Restore snapshot

snapshot restore snapshot#

List snapshots

snapshot list [_all | numlist]

Erase snapshots

snapshot erase _all | numlist

collect is allowed with snapshot save; see [U] 11.1.10 Prefix commands.

Option

label("label") is for use with snapshot save and allows you to label a snapshot when saving it.

Remarks and examples

snapshot was created to allow a user using the Data Editor to save and restore snapshots of their data while editing them interactively. It is similar to a checkpoint save in a video game, where after you have made a certain amount of progress, you wish to make sure you will be able to return to that point no matter what may happen in the future.

snapshot does not overwrite any copies of your data that you may have saved to disk. It saves a copy of the data currently in memory to a temporary file and allows you to later restore that copy to memory.

snapshot saves the date and time at which you create a snapshot. It is a good idea to also give a snapshot a label so that you will be better able to distinguish between multiple snapshots should you need to restore one.

Technical note

Although we mention above the use of the Data Editor and we demonstrate below the use of snapshot, we recommend that data cleaning not be done interactively. Instead, we recommend that data editing and cleaning be done in a reproducible manner through the use of do-files; see [U] 16 Do-files.

Example 1

You decide to make some changes to auto.dta. You make a snapshot of the data before you begin making changes, and you make another snapshot after the changes:

```
. use https://www.stata-press.com/data/r19/auto
(1978 automobile data)
. snapshot save, label("before changes")
snapshot 1 (before changes) created at 19 Apr 2024 21:32
. generate gpm = 1/mpg
. label variable gpm "Gallons per mile"
. snapshot save, label("after changes")
snapshot 2 (after changes) created at 19 Apr 2024 21:34
```

You go on to do some analyses, but then, for some reason, you accidentally drop the variable you previously created:

. drop gpm

Luckily, you made some snapshots of your work:

```
. snapshot list
snapshot 1 (before changes) created at 19 Apr 2024 21:32
snapshot 2 (after changes) created at 19 Apr 2024 21:34
. snapshot restore 2
. describe gpm
Variable
                                    Value
              Storage
                         Display
                                    label
                                                Variable label
   name
                 type
                         format
                float
                         %9.0g
                                               Gallons per mile
gpm
```

Stored results

snapshot save stores the following in r():

```
Scalars
```

r(snapshot) sequence number of snapshot saved

Also see

[D] edit — Browse or edit data with Data Editor

[P] **preserve** — Preserve and restore data

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