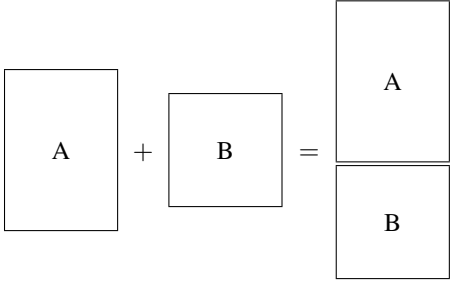


# 22 Combining datasets

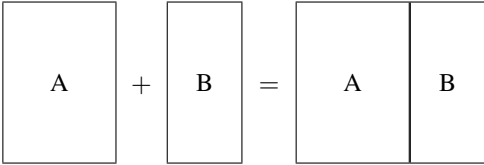
You have two datasets that you wish to combine. Below, we will draw a dataset as a box where, in the box, the variables go across and the observations go down.

See [D] **append** if you want to combine datasets vertically:



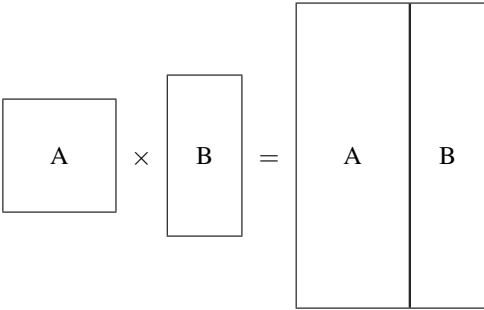
**append** adds observations to the existing variables. That is an oversimplification because **append** does not require that the datasets have the same variables. **append** is appropriate, for instance, when you have data on hospital patients and then receive data on more patients.

See [D] **merge** if you want to combine datasets horizontally:



**merge** adds variables to the existing observations. That is an oversimplification because **merge** does not require that the datasets have the same observations. **merge** is appropriate, for instance, when you have data on survey respondents and then receive data on part 2 of the questionnaire.

See [D] **joinby** when you want to combine datasets horizontally but form all pairwise combinations within group:



**joinby** is similar to **merge** but forms all combinations of the observations where it makes sense. **joinby** would be appropriate, for instance, where A contained data on parents and B contained data on their children. **joinby familyid** would form a dataset of each parent joined with each of his or her children.

Also see [D] [cross](#) for a less frequently used command that forms every pairwise combination of two datasets.

See [Mitchell \(2010, chap. 6\)](#) for more information on combining datasets in Stata.

## References

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- Gould, W. W. 2011a. Merging data, part 1: Merges gone bad. The Stata Blog: Not Elsewhere Classified. <http://blog.stata.com/2011/04/18/merging-data-part-1-merges-gone-bad/>.
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