

# How can I handle the “no room to add more observations” error in Stata?

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## RECOMMENDED CITATION

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The "no room to add more observations" error in Stata occurs when the maximum number of observations allowed in the dataset has been reached. This error can be handled by either increasing the maximum number of observations allowed or by freeing up space in the dataset by deleting unnecessary variables or observations. Additionally, using a larger dataset storage format or splitting the data into smaller subsets can also help to avoid this error. It is important to regularly check and manage the dataset size to prevent this error and ensure smooth functioning of Stata.

## How can I handle the "no room to add more observations" error? | Stata FAQ

You may go to use a data file in Stata and get the error...

no room to add more observations  
r(901);

Stata is probably telling you that Stata has not allocated enough

memory to read the data file. You can check to see how much memory is

allocated to hold your data using the memory command. I am running

Stata under Windows, and this is what the memory command told me.

memory

Total memory 1,024,000 bytes 100.00%

```
overhead (pointers) 0 0.00%
data 0 0.00%
-----
data + overhead 0 0.00%

programs, saved results, etc. 368 0.04%
-----
Total 368 0.04%

Free 1,023,632 99.96%
```

This tells me that I have a little bit under 1 megabyte free for reading in a data file. I have a data file called `bigfile.dta` that I want to read that is about 1.7 megabytes, so that is why I was getting the no room to add more observations error. I will allocate 5 megabytes of memory with the `set` memory command below, and then try using my file.

```
set memory 5m
(5120k)
```

```
use bigfile
```

Now that I have allocated enough memory, I am able to read the file. If you want to allocate 5m (five megabytes) every time I start Stata, you can type

**set memory 5m, permanently**

And then Stata will allocate this amount of memory every time you start Stata.

If you routinely use very large datasets then you might want to consider setting the memory allocated to Stata to be a much larger value, say...

**set memory 100m, permanently**

You can permanently set the memory to any value that you require and that your computer can manage. It is also possible to set the permanent memory size from the Stata preferences page for your system.