

How can I select the first N rows of a dataset in SAS?

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Selecting the first N rows of a dataset in SAS can be achieved by using the "obs=" option in the "set" statement. This option allows the user to specify the number of observations to be read from the dataset. By setting the value of "obs=" to N, the first N rows of the dataset will be selected and displayed. This functionality is particularly useful when dealing with large datasets and wanting to view only a specific number of rows. Additionally, the "obs=" option can also be combined with other SAS statements and procedures to perform various data manipulation tasks on the selected rows.

Select the First N Rows of a Dataset in SAS

Here are the two most common ways to select the first N rows from a dataset in SAS:

Method 1: Select First Row

```
data first_row;  
set original_data;  
if _N_ = 1 then output;  
run;
```

Method 2: Select First N Rows

```
data first_N_rows;  
set original_data;  
if _N_ <= 5 then output; /*select first 5 rows*/run;
```

The following examples show how to use each method with the following dataset in SAS:

```
/*create dataset*/  
data original_data;  
input team $ points rebounds;  
datalines;  
Warriors 25 8  
Wizards 18 12  
Rockets 22 6  
Celtics 24 11  
Thunder 27 14  
Spurs 33 19  
Nets 31 20  
Mavericks 34 10  
Kings 22 11  
Pelicans 39 23  
;  
run;  
  
/*view dataset*/proc printdata=original_data;
```

Obs	team	points	rebounds
1	Warriors	25	8
2	Wizards	18	12
3	Rockets	22	6
4	Celtics	24	11
5	Thunder	27	14
6	Spurs	33	19
7	Nets	31	20
8	Maverick	34	10
9	Kings	22	11
10	Pelicans	39	23

Example 1: Select First Row

The following code shows how to select just the first row of the dataset:

```
/*create new dataset that contains only the first row*/  
data first_row;  
set original_data;  
if _N_ = 1 then output;  
run;
```

```
/*view new dataset*/proc print data=first_row;
```

Obs	team	points	rebounds
1	Warriors	25	8

We can see that the new dataset contains only the first row of the original dataset.

Example 2: Select First N Rows

The following code shows how to select the first five rows of the dataset:

```
/*create new dataset that contains first 5 rows of  
original dataset*/  
data first_N_rows;  
set original_data;  
if _N_ <= 5 then output;  
run;  
  
/*view new dataset*/proc print data=first_N_rows;
```

Obs	team	points	rebounds
1	Warriors	25	8
2	Wizards	18	12
3	Rockets	22	6
4	Celtics	24	11
5	Thunder	27	14

To select a different number of starting rows, simply change the value after `_N_` in the code above.

Additional Resources

The following tutorials explain how to perform other common tasks in SAS:

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