

order — Reorder variables in dataset

[Description
Options](#)[Quick start
Remarks and examples](#)[Menu
Also see](#)[Syntax](#)

Description

`order` relocates *varlist* to a position depending on which option you specify. If no option is specified, `order` relocates *varlist* to the beginning of the dataset in the order in which the variables are specified.

Quick start

Move `v1` to the beginning of the dataset

```
order v1
```

Same as above, but instead move `v1` to the end of the dataset

```
order v1, last
```

Move `v3` before `v2`

```
order v3, before(v2)
```

Move `x` and `z` after `y`

```
order x z, after(y)
```

Alphabetize `y`, `x`, and `z`, and move them to the beginning of the dataset

```
order y x z, alphabetic
```

Alphabetize `x`, `y`, `z`, `v3`, `v2`, and `v1`, and sort numbers in sequential order

```
order x y z v*, sequential
```

Menu

Data > Data utilities > Change order of variables

Syntax

```
order varlist [, options]
```

<i>options</i>	Description
<code>first</code>	move <i>varlist</i> to beginning of dataset; the default
<code>last</code>	move <i>varlist</i> to end of dataset
<code>before(<i>varname</i>)</code>	move <i>varlist</i> before <i>varname</i>
<code>after(<i>varname</i>)</code>	move <i>varlist</i> after <i>varname</i>
<code>alphabetic</code>	alphabetize <i>varlist</i> and move it to beginning of dataset
<code>sequential</code>	alphabetize <i>varlist</i> keeping numbers sequential and move it to beginning of dataset

Options

`first` shifts *varlist* to the beginning of the dataset. This is the default.

`last` shifts *varlist* to the end of the dataset.

`before(varname)` shifts *varlist* before *varname*.

`after(varname)` shifts *varlist* after *varname*.

`alphabetic` alphabetizes *varlist* and moves it to the beginning of the dataset. For example, here is a varlist in `alphabetic` order: a x7 x70 x8 x80 z. If combined with another option, `alphabetic` just alphabetizes *varlist*, and the movement of *varlist* is controlled by the other option.

`sequential` alphabetizes *varlist*, keeping variables with the same ordered letters but with differing appended numbers in sequential order. *varlist* is moved to the beginning of the dataset. For example, here is a varlist in `sequential` order: a x7 x8 x70 x80 z.

Remarks and examples

[stata.com](https://www.stata.com)

► Example 1

When using `order`, you must specify a *varlist*, but you do not need to specify all the variables in the dataset. For example, we want to move the `make` and `mpg` variables to the front of the `auto` dataset.

```
. use https://www.stata-press.com/data/r18/auto4
(1978 automobile data)
```

```
. describe
```

```
Contains data from https://www.stata-press.com/data/r18/auto4.dta
Observations:      74                1978 automobile data
Variables:         6                 6 Apr 2022 00:20
```

Variable name	Storage type	Display format	Value label	Variable label
price	int	%8.0gc		Price
weight	int	%8.0gc		Weight (lbs.)
mpg	byte	%8.0g		Mileage (mpg)
make	str17	%-17s		Make and model
length	int	%8.0g		Length (in.)
rep78	byte	%8.0g		Repair record 1978

```
Sorted by:
```

```
. order make mpg
```

```
. describe
```

```
Contains data from https://www.stata-press.com/data/r18/auto4.dta
Observations:      74                1978 automobile data
Variables:         6                 6 Apr 2022 00:20
```

Variable name	Storage type	Display format	Value label	Variable label
make	str17	%-17s		Make and model
mpg	byte	%8.0g		Mileage (mpg)
price	int	%8.0gc		Price
weight	int	%8.0gc		Weight (lbs.)
length	int	%8.0g		Length (in.)
rep78	byte	%8.0g		Repair record 1978

```
Sorted by:
```

We now want `length` to be the last variable in our dataset, so we could type `order make mpg price weight rep78 length`, but it would be easier to use the last option:

```
. order length, last
```

```
. describe
```

```
Contains data from https://www.stata-press.com/data/r18/auto4.dta
Observations:      74                1978 automobile data
Variables:         6                 6 Apr 2022 00:20
```

Variable name	Storage type	Display format	Value label	Variable label
make	str17	%-17s		Make and model
mpg	byte	%8.0g		Mileage (mpg)
price	int	%8.0gc		Price
weight	int	%8.0gc		Weight (lbs.)
rep78	byte	%8.0g		Repair record 1978
length	int	%8.0g		Length (in.)

```
Sorted by:
```

We now change our mind and decide that we prefer that the variables be alphabetized.

```
. order _all, alphabetic
. describe
```

```
Contains data from https://www.stata-press.com/data/r18/auto4.dta
Observations:      74          1978 automobile data
Variables:         6           6 Apr 2022 00:20
```

Variable name	Storage type	Display format	Value label	Variable label
length	int	%8.0g		Length (in.)
make	str17	%-17s		Make and model
mpg	byte	%8.0g		Mileage (mpg)
price	int	%8.0gc		Price
rep78	byte	%8.0g		Repair record 1978
weight	int	%8.0gc		Weight (lbs.)

Sorted by:



□ Technical note

If your data contain variables named `year1`, `year2`, . . . , `year19`, `year20`, specify the `sequential` option to obtain this ordering. If you specify the `alphabetic` option, `year10` will appear between `year1` and `year11`.



Also see

- [D] **describe** — Describe data in memory or in a file
- [D] **ds** — Compactly list variables with specified properties
- [D] **edit** — Browse or edit data with Data Editor
- [D] **rename** — Rename variable

Stata, Stata Press, and Mata are registered trademarks of StataCorp LLC. Stata and Stata Press are registered trademarks with the World Intellectual Property Organization of the United Nations. Other brand and product names are registered trademarks or trademarks of their respective companies. Copyright © 1985–2023 StataCorp LLC, College Station, TX, USA. All rights reserved.

