

## Lining up the years

The table below summarizes the fat files, the first character of variable names, and RAND HRS waves associated with each interview year. References to “raw” data mean the data as publicly released by HRS.

Note that for years affected by overlap cases, there are two versions of the Fat Files, one with the original respondent IDs from the raw public release data, and the other with the most recent IDs as found on the Tracker and RAND HRS Data file. For most cases the IDs are identical on both files, and if you drop all overlap cases they are essentially the same.

In the RAND HRS Data file both Ahead 1993 and HRS 1994 data are assigned to Wave 2. In the codebook, we distinguish between the two by using “Wave 2A” for Ahead 1993 and “Wave 2H” for HRS 1994. Similarly we use “Wave 3A” for Ahead 1995 and “Wave 3H” for HRS 1996.

In the raw public release data for 1992 and 1993 most variable names begin with “V”. In order to make unique variable names when merging 1992 and 1993 data together, the variables in the 1993 Fat File that have names like Vnnnn, e.g., V1234, have been renamed to begin with “B”, e.g., B1234.

Fat file names follow the following naming convention: [A/H][D]yy[E/F][vers]  
where

- A is for Ahead and H is for HRS
- “D” if present, indicates the version of the fat file that will merge more easily with RAND HRS data
- “yy” is the interview year
- E is for early release and F is for final release
- vers indicates the version of the HRS public release and of the RAND release

For example, h04f1a is the fat file for HRS 2004, HRS Final Release Version 1, RAND version A, and h06f2a is the fat file for HRS 2006, HRS Final Release Version 2, RAND version A.

Interview Year	Fat File		Associated First Letter(s) of Variables (raw and Tracker)	RAND HRS Wave
	<i>IDs as in public release</i>	<i>IDs as on Tracker, RAND HRS</i>		
1992	H92F1B	HD92F1B	A (tracker) and V (raw, fat files)	Wave 1
1993	A93F2A	AD93F2A	B (tracker, fat files) and V (raw)	Wave 2 (2A in codebook)
1994	H94F1A		C (tracker) and W (raw, fat files)	Wave 2 (2H in codebook)
1995	A95F2A	AD95F2A	D	Wave 3 (3A in codebook)
1996	H96F4A		E	Wave 3 (3H in codebook)
1998	H98F2B	HD98F2B	F	Wave 4
2000	H00F1C		G	Wave 5
2002	H02F2A		H	Wave 6
2004	H04F1A		J	Wave 7
2006	H06F2A		K	Wave 8

[*Note: This table lists RAND files specific to those associated with Version 1 of the RAND HRS Data File.*]