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## Lining up the years

The table below summarizes the RAND HRS Fat Files, the first character of variable names, and RAND HRS survey waves associated with each interview year. References to "raw" data mean the Core Interview data as publicly released by HRS.

Note that for years affected by overlap cases, there are two versions of the RAND HRS 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 Longitudinal 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 raw public release data for 1992 and 1993, most variable names begin with "V". 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]

- "A" is for Ahead and "H" is for HRS
- "D" if present, indicates the version of IDs that will merge best with other RAND HRS data products
- "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, h16f2c is the RAND HRS Fat File for HRS 2016, HRS Final Release Version 2.0, RAND version C.

Interview Year	RAND HRS Fat File		Associated First Letter(s) of Variables (raw and Tracker)	RAND HRS Longitudinal File Wave
	<i>IDs as in public release</i>	<i>IDs as on Tracker, RAND HRS</i>		
1992	h92flb	hd92flb	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	h94fla		C (tracker) and W (raw, fat files)	Wave 2 (2H in codebook)
1995	a95f2b	ad95f2b	<b>D</b>	Wave 3 (3A in codebook)
1996	h96f4a		<b>E</b>	Wave 3 (3H in codebook)
1998	h98f2c	hd98f2c	<b>F</b>	Wave 4
2000	h00fld		<b>G</b>	Wave 5
2002	h02f2c		<b>H</b>	Wave 6
2004	h04flc		<b>J</b>	Wave 7
2006	h06f4a		<b>K</b>	Wave 8
2008	h08f3a		<b>L</b>	Wave 9
2010	h10f6a	hd10f6a	<b>M</b>	Wave 10
2012	h12f3a		<b>N</b>	Wave 11
2014	h14f2b		<b>O</b>	Wave 12
2016	h16f2c		<b>P</b>	Wave 13
2018	h18f2b		<b>Q</b>	Wave 14
2020	h20fla		<b>R</b>	Wave 15