Chapter 8
Labeling Observations

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Chapter 8
Labeling Observations

*Labels* identify observations in plots. You can label observations by number or by the value of a variable. You can assign temporary or permanent labels.

Figure 8.1. Labeling Observations
Temporary and Permanent Labels

When you click on an observation, you display its temporary label. To see this, follow these steps.

⇒ Open the GPA data set.

⇒ Choose Analyze: Scatter Plot (Y X).

This displays a scatter plot variables dialog, as shown in Figure 8.2.

⇒ Select SATM and SATV as X variables and GPA as the Y variable.

![Figure 8.2. Scatter Plot Variables Dialog](image)

⇒ Click the OK button.

This creates two scatter plots, as shown in Figure 8.3.

⇒ Click on an observation in one of the plots.

The observation is highlighted in both plots, and a label appears beside the observation in the plot in which you clicked. This label is temporary; it disappears when you deselect the observation.
Figure 8.3. Temporary Label

You can turn this label into a permanent label.

Choose Edit: Observations: Label in Plots.
This labels the observation in all plots, and the label remains if you deselect the observation.

Figure 8.4. Edit: Observations Menu
Figure 8.5. Permanently Labeled Observations

Notice in the data window that the observation is displayed with a picture of a label. This indicates that a label will always be displayed for this observation in all plots.

If you change your mind, you can remove the permanent label by choosing Edit:Observations:UnLabel in Plots.
Using Label Variables

SAS/INSIGHT software shows the observation number as the label by default. You can choose a variable to supply the label text by specifying a label variable.

Choose Edit:Windows:Renew to redisplay the scatter plot variables dialog.

In the dialog, select SEX and then click the Label button.
Click the OK button.

Now the value of **SEX**, instead of the observation number, labels the observation.

![Figure 8.8. Observation Labeled by SEX](image)

**Figure 8.8.** Observation Labeled by **SEX**
Setting a Default Label Variable

In addition to specifying label variables for individual plots, you can specify a label variable that will automatically be used in all future plots.

⇒ Click on the upper left corner of the variable SEX in the data window.
This displays a pop-up menu. Choose Label from the pop-up menu.

![Figure 8.9. Variable Role Pop-up Menu](image)

Now SEX is the default label variable, and future plots will use SEX for labels. In the data window, the word Label appears above the variable name, as shown in Figure 8.10.

![Figure 8.10. Label Variable Role](image)

Related Reading: Variable Roles, Chapter 31, “Data Windows.”