

standard deviation and N-1

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In high school, I learned that the formula for standard deviation has n in the denominator, but in college the book has $N-1$ in the denominator. What is the reason for this?

So far, I found this in my book (By Yates, Moore, McCabe):

Why do we average by dividing by $n-1$ rather than n ? Because the sum of deviations is always zero, the last deviation can be found once we know the other $n-1$. So we are not averaging n unrelated numbers. Only $n-1$ of the squared deviations can vary freely, and we average by dividing by the total by $n-1$. The $n-1$ is called the degrees of freedom of the variance or standard deviation.

I sort of understand that, but could someone explain in simpler terms and expand on that? I'm still a little puzzled as to why $n-1$.

Thanks.