Comparing SQL and the DATA Step

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The DATA step and SQL each have their own strengths, and it is helpful to know how to use both for processing data. There are some situations where one might be easier or more efficient than the other. This list highlights some of the strengths of each.

DATA Step

- provides more control of reading, writing, and manipulating data
- can create multiple tables in one step
- includes looping and array processing

PROC SQL

- ANSI-standard language used by most databases
- code can be more streamlined
- can manipulate, summarize, and sort data in one step

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