

Some Guidance for Learners New to the Specialization

If this is your first course from the specialization, and you have not yet chosen a data set to work with, you should do that first. Data set descriptions and codebooks can be found in Week 1 in the Software Setup and Course Supporting Materials section under Course Codebooks and Data. You are also welcome to use your own data set or a data set from a different source if you're comfortable doing that.

You can check out the data sets codebooks to learn more about the studies, and identify a basic research question that interests you (for example, "Is there an association between depression and binge drinking in adolescents?"). Once you have a basic research question, you can think about other variables that might explain your association. For example, what else might explain why an adolescent has depression and/or binge drinks? I might want to see whether there are variables that ask about peer drinking, parent drinking, other substance use, and so on.

As you continue in the course you will probably want to add more variables, or you may decide that you want to change how you measure a variable. You might even want change your data set or research question if you feel it's necessary. No problem! You are welcome to make changes as the course progresses.