

# Lab 1: Introduction to SPSS

## Startup

Look for “IBM SPSS Statistics” under “All programs”. Choose the newest version. Exit out of all pop-up windows, until you see an empty Excel-like spreadsheet.

## Import new data

Use for data that is not in the native SPSS format. Only use *the first time you import that data*.

For data from the web, make sure to download the files rather than view them in the web browser.

- Menu: **File -> Read Text Data**
- Find the downloaded file. Make sure it looks OK in the little data window.
- If you cannot find your file, change the “Files of Type” setting.
- Wizard step 2: Mark if variable names are included. Typically choose comma-separated format.
- Wizard step 4: Check for misalignment/other weird values. Adjust the “delimiters” settings if anything is off.
- Wizard step 5: Check variable settings. Can make special arrangements for date/time variables.
- Save the imported file. In the future you can open that file via **File -> Open**.

## Variable properties

Use to set up properties like missing values and labels.

- Menu: **Data -> Define Variable Properties**
- Use Ctrl-A to select all variables. Move to other side.
- In the variable properties window, select which variable to work with on the left.
- Set **Label** at top right for the variable’s label in tables and graphs.
- Check the **Measurement Level**
- Check for missing values in the table below, mark them if any.
- For coded variables, add **value labels** next to the corresponding values.
- Save after exiting that window!

## Sorting the data

Use to find exceptional values for a variable.

Right-click a variable, and choose **Sort Ascending** or **Sort Descending**.

## Frequency Tables

Menu: **Analyze -> Descriptive Statistics -> Frequencies**

- Make sure **Display frequency tables** is selected.
- Select the variables you want and click OK.
- Resulting table includes, counts, percentages and cumulative percentages.

## Basic Graphs

Always use **Graphs -> Chart Builder**

- Click OK if you get a pop-up. You should now be staring at the “Chart Builder” window.
- Choose general graph type from the list at the bottom left.
- Choose the graph type in order to convey appropriate information.
- Choose particular graph by double-clicking at images at the bottom right. Usually you want to choose the first image.
- Drag variables onto the axes as appropriate.
- For single variable graphs (bargraph, histogram), do NOT put any variable on the *y* axis. If you do, use **Reset**.
- Some variables may have been marked as incorrect type. Right-click them to temporarily change it.
- Output viewer window will come up. Different from the data window. Keep both open and switch back and forth as needed.

## Editing Graphs

Double-click on the graph in the output viewer.

- Click on graph elements to select them and bring up their properties.

- Use the property window to make changes. Click Apply to make those changes stick.
- Typical things to change: Color, axis ranges, histogram bins, point labels, reference lines.