

SPSS 15 Printing Hint to Save Money (revised October 15, 2008)

Note: SPSS really wastes a lot of paper while printing. To save printing costs and print 4 pages on one page (From Output):

Click on File > Page Setup > Options > Options > Printed Chart Size > Quarter Page Height

Step One - Data Input

To input data, click on File, then New, then click on Data. You'll be putting the data in fields across the screen.

Note: You can input data using Excel, Lotus, or dBASE. However, it is just as easy to input the data directly from SPSS. If you do use some other package, then in SPSS, click on Open, then choose the correct file type from the pull down menu at the bottom of the dialog screen (where it says "Files of type." You will then have to define the variables for SPSS.

The rest of this section assumes that you are going to put in the data directly from SPSS. Follow these instructions carefully and completely.

1. Define the first variable.
 - a. Double click on the first variable field. This opens the Define Variable dialog box.
 - b. Type in a variable name (like "gender").
 - c. Go over to Values, and click on the little dots. Then input what the various numbers mean (e.g. If 1=female, and 2=male you would do the following: Put "1" in "Value" tab down to "Value Label" and put in "female". Click Add. Now put "2" in "Value" tab down to "Value Label" and put in "male."). Note: You can use Copy and Paste to copy values to several variables.
 - d. Go to missing values, click on discrete missing values, and tell the system what you are using for a missing number (e.g. 9). Click on ok .
 - e. Click ok to end defining this variable.
2. Go through this same process outlined in number 1 above for each and every variable you have.
3. After you're through, save your data file by clicking on File, then Save, then name it (e.g. Steve.sav). I would save my data often, just to protect myself. Remember to never remove your disk while SPSS is running. You can save it to the server using your personal FTP server.
4. Once you've set up the variables, you are ready to input the data. Just type in the numbers in the correct column. Each questionnaire will be one line (row) of data.

Step Two - Make Sure You Did Step 1 Correctly--Basic Frequencies

When finished inputting data, the first thing you should do is to run frequencies and make sure you didn't screw anything up when inputting the data. To do this:

1. Click on Analyze
2. Click on Descriptive Statistics.
3. Click on Frequencies.
4. Choose the variables you want to include with the arrow in the middle of the dialog box.
5. Choose Statistics if you want to see the mean, median, mode, etc.
6. Click OK to run the procedure.
7. You'll now have output. What do all of those things mean in your handout? Remember, you can use Results Coach to find out. Just right click while your cursor is inside a table you want to better understand. Here is what some things mean: **Frequency** is just the number of people who answered in each way. **Percent** is the percent of the whole sample who answered this way. **Valid percent** (better to use than percent) takes out the missing values before computing the percentages. **Cumulative Percent** just gives a cumulative percentage (by adding the percent to the total percent already there).
8. Compare your output results with what the valid numbers for each variable could be. For example, if it is impossible to have a "7" for gender, that's an error. Find it and correct it.
9. When you're through with this process, you should have a clean data file and you're ready to do the actual number crunching to answer the research questions.