

For users with SPSS experience

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Below, *ishr2* section numbers refer to An Introduction to Stata for Health Researchers.¹

Stata and SPSS have many similarities, both using a rectangular data structure with variables and observations (cases in SPSS terminology). Among the differences are:

- Stata is case-sensitive; this applies both to command names and to variable names. The official command names are in lowercase: `list` is a valid command name, `List` is not. `sex`, `Sex`, and `SEX` are different variable names. See *ishr2* section 4.1.
- In SPSS, a period terminates each command. Stata has no command terminator; a command, by default, ends when the line ends. On solutions for long commands, see *ishr2* section 4.8.
- In SPSS you can define any numeric code as a missing value, Stata's user-defined missing values are special codes; see *ishr2* section 5.3.
- Stata's missing values are high-end numbers, and they are treated as such in logical expressions. This may lead to mistakes if you are not careful; see *ishr2* section 5.3.
- SPSS executes all transformation commands up to a procedure command, one case at a time; Stata performs each command for the entire data set before proceeding to the next command. This may lead to different behaviour when combining selections (`keep if`; `drop if`) with observation numbers (`[_n]`).
- Stata has two kinds of equal signs. The assignment equal sign is `=` as in:

```
generate bmi = weight/(height^2)
```

In logical expressions, the relational equal sign is `==` as in:

```
generate y = 2 if sex == 1
```

In the following table I show selected SPSS commands with their (sometimes approximate) Stata counterpart. You find a more extensive description at the UCLA website:

http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/stata/faq/spss_command_to_stata.htm.

¹ Juul S. *An Introduction to Stata for Health Researchers*, 2nd ed. College Station, TX: Stata Press, 2008. See <http://www.stata-press.com/books/ishr2.html>.

SPSS command	Similar Stata command	<i>ishr2</i> section
Data management commands		
TEMPORARY. SELECT IF (sex=1).	<code>command if sex==1</code>	4.4
WEIGHT	Weights can be included in most commands.	4.5
SPLIT FILE	<code>by...:</code>	4.7
COMMENT; *	* or //	4.8
FORMAT sex (F1.0).	<code>format sex %1.0f</code>	5.2
GET FILE	<code>use</code>	6.1
SAVE OUTFILE	<code>save</code>	6.1
DATA LIST	<code>infile; infix; insheet</code>	6.3
VARIABLE LABEL	<code>label variable</code>	7.1
VALUE LABEL	<code>label define</code> followed by <code>label values</code>	7.1
DOCUMENT	<code>note</code>	7.1
COMPUTE	<code>generate; replace; egen</code>	8.1
IF (sex=1) y=2.	<code>generate y=2 if sex==1</code>	8.1
RECODE a (5 thru 9=5) INTO agr.	<code>recode a (5/9=5) , generate(agr)</code>	8.4
SELECT IF	<code>keep if; drop if</code>	9.2
SAMPLE 0.1.	<code>sample 10</code>	9.2
SORT CASES BY	<code>sort</code>	9.4
ADD FILES	<code>append</code>	9.5
MATCH FILES	<code>merge</code>	9.5
AGGREGATE	<code>collapse; contract</code>	9.6
DO REPEAT ... END REPEAT	<code>foreach; forvalues</code>	17.4
Analysis commands		
DISPLAY DICTIONARY	<code>describe; codebook</code>	10.1
DESCRIPTIVES	<code>summarize</code>	10.1
LIST	<code>list</code>	10.2
FREQUENCIES	<code>tab1</code>	10.3
CROSSTABS	<code>tab2</code>	10.3
MEANS bmi BY agegrp.	<code>oneway bmi agegrp , tabulate</code>	10.4
T-TEST	<code>ttest</code>	10.4

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