**Import data from Excel into SPSS**

In this video I’m going to show you how you can import data from excel into SPSS. Now there’s a couple of things you need to do with your data file before you put them into SPSS. The first thing is you need to make sure your variable names are across the first row in excel. That means the row labelled ‘one’, not just the top of your file but literally row one of excel. The second thing is your data must start in row two. No gaps between the variable name and your data. So variable names have to start in row one and data has to start in row two. If you don’t do this, for example, if you have a gap here, and you’ve got your variable names and a space and your data, SPSS will still read row two as data but it will class it as string which means text, and it won’t be stored as numeric which it needs to be stored as. So let’s delete that gap. Okay, so once we’ve got our data aligned properly, we need to make sure it’s coded. So you can see here my data is not coded, I’ve only got numbers for travel time because its time measured in minutes, noting that my units for minutes are in the title, not in my cells with my data, so this is 35 minutes, 42 minutes etc, so if you’re going to use units such as currency, time, weight, whatever it may be, its best to put the units inside of your title.

So I need to code this first, so I’ve got male/female, and I’ve got mode of transport, so what’s the main mode of transport people take into work, TFL, that’s Transport for London, so public transport do they drive a car, do they cycle, do they walk, and this is a Likert scale so how much someone agrees with the statement that their journey causes them to feel stressed. Okay, so I’ve got my data already coded here in this file here called Survey Data and now I’m ready to import my data into SPSS. It’s okay that I have missing data, it will just be classed as missing once I put it into SPSS. In order to import it, my file must be closed, so I’m going to go ahead and close my excel file, and in SPSS, we’re going to go to the folder, or you can go to the file open menu, so file open data. Now in order for us to see our excel file, we need to choose from files of type, excel. Okay, so files of type you must choose excel or you won’t be able to see you file. Okay and then go ahead and choose your excel file.

Okay here’s my commuting survey.xls (and you can see here that you can import xls files as well. So that’s good if you’re downloading data from the intranet, or the internet as a lot of files are still in xls format. Go ahead and click open. Okay, and then you’ll get this dialogue box here. You want to leave the first box ticked if you want variable names read. So it’s saying it’s going to read them from the first row of the data file, and the second thing is choose the work sheet that has the data you want to import, so I’ve got two worksheets here, one is my uncoded data and one is my coded data. I want the coded data so I’m going to leave it with survey data. Go ahead and click ‘okay’, and now you can see that my data has been imported into SPSS. If I have a look at the variable view, all of my variable names have been entered in the first column, and the variable travel time has a label, it is the only one with a label, and that’s because in my excel file, I had travel time with minutes in brackets, and spaces and special characters such as brackets aren’t allowed for variable names, so SPSS took out those special characters and made a new variable name- TravelTimeMin, and it put my name as the label. So do keep that in mind, especially if you’re downloading data from the internet and the names are long or it’s the whole question from your survey. Think about what’s going to happen. It may show up well on your label but you’re variable name isn’t going to be a very long string of letters. After you import it in, you’ll need to make sure to define your variables. So do you want to correct the number of decimal places? Make sure to put in a good label, anything that’s categorised like gender needs to have value labels, and also you need to make sure to change the level of measurement to be correct for your data. So that’s how you import data from excel into SPSS.

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