

## LABELING & MISSING VALUES

Every variable in your data set should have a label. Because it is often difficult to summarize in just 8 characters what the variable captures, a more lengthy label is useful, and this will be included in most of the output whenever you use the variable to help your interpretation. Here is the basic syntax. You specify a variable, then in single quotes give it a label. You can label multiple variables on the same command, just put a period at the end of the last variable:

```
variable labels ach100 'Achievement, 100 cases'  
sex 'Sex 1=m 2=f'  
grp4 'Exp. group' .
```

In addition, any variables that are categorical should receive value labels, as shown below. Provide a variable name, then list each possible value in turn, following each with a label in single quotes. At the end of each variable, put a slash to let SPSS know that these are all the possible values for that variable. After the last variable, put a period:

```
value labels sex 1 'male' 2 'female' /  
grp4 1 '4 SP' 2 '2 SP' 3 '2 SP, 3 WP' 4 '2 SP, 6 WP' / .
```

Finally, to provide for the possibility that there may be some missing data within your file, you should assign a code to represent missing values for each variable. Typically, a 9 is used. If, however, 9 could potentially be a legitimate value (for example, if the variable is age and your research involves children), then you can use 99 or perhaps a negative number. All that matters is that you specify this and are perfectly consistent when entering data, so that SPSS knows which values represent missing data and it does not include them in analyses. Here's an example in which the value of 9 is coded as missing for both variables:

```
missing values ach100 grp4 (9) .
```

After labeling and assigning missing values to all variables, you should check that this was carried out properly. To quickly check a continuous variable, you can use the `descriptives` command:

```
desc vars = ach100 .
```

## Descriptives

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Achievement, 100 cases	106	.090	.566	.37929	8.7445E-02
Valid N (listwise)	106				

To quickly check a categorical variable, you can use the `frequencies` command:

```
freq vars = sex grp4 .
```

## Frequencies

### Statistics

		Sex 1=m 2=f	Exp. group
N	Valid	106	106
	Missing	0	0

### Frequency Table

#### Sex 1=m 2=f

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	28	26.4	26.4	26.4
	female	78	73.6	73.6	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

#### Exp. group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	4 SP	26	24.5	24.5	24.5
	2 SP	27	25.5	25.5	50.0
	2 SP, 3 WP	27	25.5	25.5	75.5
	2 SP, 6 WP	26	24.5	24.5	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	