

**import spss** — Import and export SPSS files[Description](#)[Syntax](#)[Remarks and examples](#)[Quick start](#)[Options for import spss](#)[Stored results](#)[Menu](#)[Option for export spss](#)[Also see](#)

## Description

`import spss` reads into memory a version 16 or higher IBM SPSS Statistics (.sav) file or a version 21 or higher compressed IBM SPSS Statistics (.zsav) file. `import spss` can import up to 32,766 variables at one time (up to 2,048 in Stata/BE). If your SPSS file contains more variables than this, you can break up the SPSS file into multiple Stata datasets.

`export spss` writes Stata's data to an IBM SPSS Statistics (.sav) file.

## Quick start

Import the IBM SPSS Statistics file `myfile.sav` into Stata

```
import spss myfile
```

Same as above, but replace the data in memory

```
import spss myfile, clear
```

Same as above, but import only variables `x1` and `x4`

```
import spss x1 x4 using myfile, clear
```

Import the compressed IBM SPSS Statistics file `compfile.zsav` into Stata

```
import spss compfile, zsav
```

Same as above, but read variable names as lowercase

```
import spss compfile, zsav case(lower)
```

Export data in memory to `mydata.sav`

```
export spss mydata
```

Same as above, but export only variables `v1` and `v2`

```
export spss v1 v2 using mydata
```

## Menu

### **import spss**

File > Import > SPSS data (\*.sav)

### **export spss**

File > Export > SPSS data (\*.sav)

## Syntax

Load an IBM SPSS Statistics file (\*.sav)

```
import spss [using] filename [, options]
```

Load a compressed IBM SPSS Statistics file (\*.zsav)

```
import spss [using] filename, zsav [ options]
```

Load a subset of an IBM SPSS Statistics file (\*.sav)

```
import spss [namelist] [if] [in] using filename [, options]
```

Load a subset of a compressed IBM SPSS Statistics file (\*.zsav)

```
import spss [namelist] [if] [in] using filename, zsav [ options]
```

Save data in memory to an IBM SPSS Statistics file (\*.sav)

```
export spss [using] filename [if] [in] [, replace]
```

Save subset of variables in memory to an IBM SPSS Statistics file (\*.sav)

```
export spss [varlist] using filename [if] [in] [, replace]
```

If *filename* is specified without an extension, .sav is assumed unless you specify the zsav option, in which case extension .zsav is assumed. If *filename* contains embedded spaces, enclose it in double quotes.

*namelist* specifies SPSS variable names to be imported.

*options*

Description

---

```
case(lower | upper | preserve) read variable names as lowercase or uppercase;
the default is to preserve the case
```

```
clear replace data in memory
```

```
encoding("encoding") specify the file encoding; see help encodings
```

---

collect is allowed with import spss; see [U] 11.1.10 Prefix commands.

encoding() does not appear in the dialog box.

## Options for import spss

`zsav` indicates the file to load is a compressed IBM SPSS Statistics file.

`case(lower|upper|preserve)` specifies the case of the variable names after import. The default is `case(preserve)`.

`clear` specifies that it is okay to replace the data in memory, even though the current data have not been saved to disk.

The following option is available with `import spss` but is not shown in the dialog box:

`encoding("encoding")` specifies the encoding of the file. If your file has an incorrect encoding specified in the file header, you can use this option to specify the correct encoding. See [help encodings](#) for details.

## Option for export spss

`replace` specifies that *filename* be replaced if it already exists.

## Remarks and examples

[stata.com](http://stata.com)

`import spss` reads into memory a version 16 or higher IBM SPSS Statistics (`.sav`) file or a version 21 or higher compressed IBM SPSS Statistics (`.zsav`) file. If an SPSS variable name from the file does not conform to a Stata variable name, a generic `v#` name will be assigned, and the original variable name will be stored as a characteristic for the variable. If an SPSS variable label is too long, it will be truncated to 80 characters, and the original variable label will be stored as a variable characteristic. All value labels for string variables will be ignored. Value labels for numeric variables will be named `labels#` and attached to the corresponding variable.

`export spss` exports the Stata dataset in memory, or a subset of the dataset, to an IBM SPSS Statistics (`.sav`) file.

### ▷ Example 1: Importing an SPSS file into Stata

We can import SPSS files into Stata, either by selecting the entire file or by selecting subsets of the data, with `import spss`. For example, we have the SPSS file `auto.sav`, which contains data on automobiles. Below, we demonstrate how to import these data into Stata. To follow along, download this file to your working directory by typing the `copy` command below:

```
. copy https://www.stata.com/sampledata/auto.sav auto.sav
```

We first load the entire `auto.sav` file into Stata by typing

```
. import spss auto  
(12 vars, 74 obs)
```

```
. describe
```

Contains data

Observations: 74

Variables: 12

---

Variable name	Storage type	Display format	Value label	Variable label
make	str17	%17s		
price	int	%5.0f		
mpg	byte	%2.0f		
rep78	byte	%1.0f		
headroom	double	%3.1f		
trunk	byte	%2.0f		
weight	int	%4.0f		
length	int	%3.0f		
turn	byte	%2.0f		
displacement	int	%3.0f		
gear_ratio	double	%4.2f		
foreign	byte	%1.0f		

---

Sorted by:

Note: Dataset has changed since last saved.

We can instead import only variables `make` and `weight` into memory from `auto.sav`. We include the `clear` option to replace the data in memory without saving them.

```
. import spss make weight using auto, clear
(2 vars, 74 obs)
```

```
. describe
```

```
Contains data
```

```
Observations:      74
```

```
Variables:         2
```

Variable name	Storage type	Display format	Value label	Variable label
<code>make</code>	<code>str17</code>	<code>%17s</code>		
<code>weight</code>	<code>int</code>	<code>%4.0f</code>		

```
Sorted by:
```

```
Note: Dataset has changed since last saved.
```



## ► Example 2: Export all Stata data to an SPSS file

We have a data on food consumption. The data is currently in the Stata `.dta` format. We would like to export the data to an IBM SPSS Statistics file. We first load the Stata dataset and then export the data to a file named `food_consumption.sav`:

```
. use https://www.stata-press.com/data/r18/food_consumption, clear
(Food consumption)
```

```
. export spss food_consumption
file food_consumption.sav saved
```



## Stored results

`import spss` stores the following in `r()`:

Scalars

```
r(N)      number of observations imported
```

```
r(k)      number of variables imported
```

## Also see

[D] [import](#) — Overview of importing data into Stata

[D] [export](#) — Overview of exporting data from Stata

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