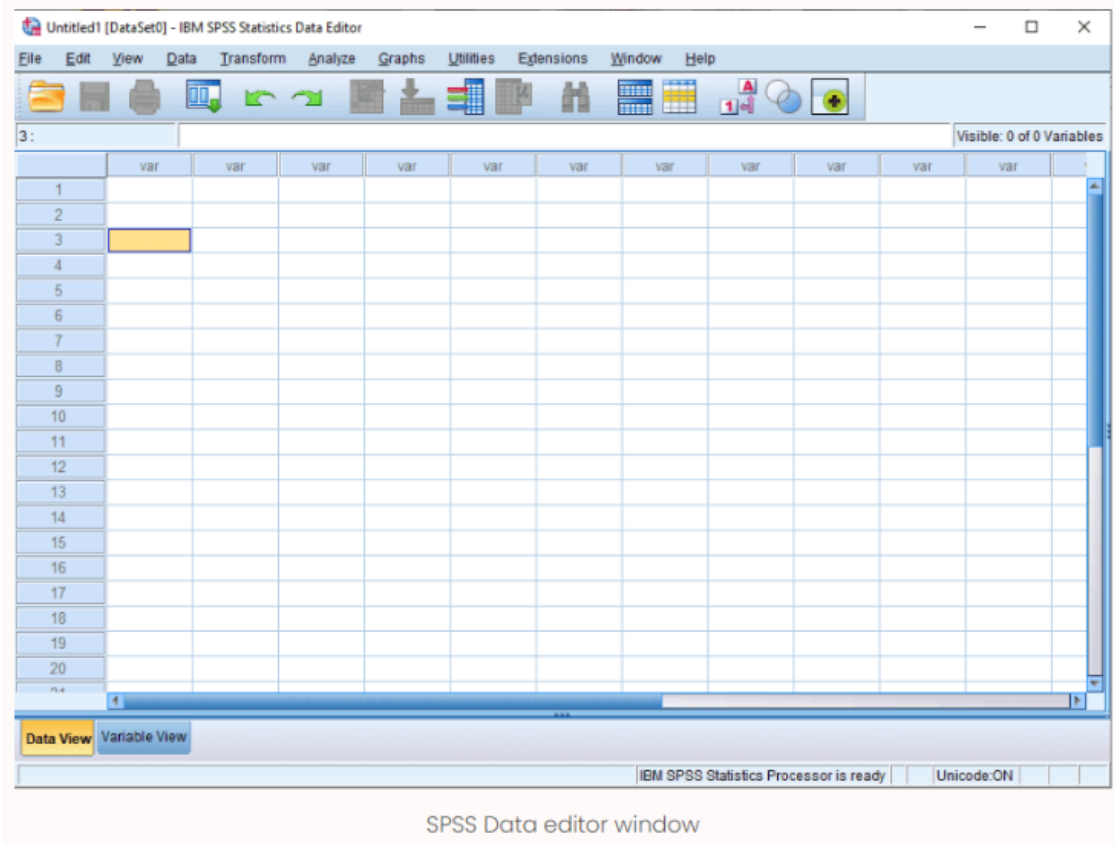
The Six Windows of the SPSS Interface

The SPSS interface comprises six (6) windows that allow the user to access all the functions and functionality of SPSS. In the following section, we briefly describe these six windows.

1. The Data Editor

The Data Editor is a foundational and central component of SPSS. It is the primary interface that allows users to enter, view, manipulate, and prepare their data before analyzing it and generating reports. Preparing the data in the Data Editor is a basic and essential step in the data analysis process. The analysis of the data is also done in the Data Editor.

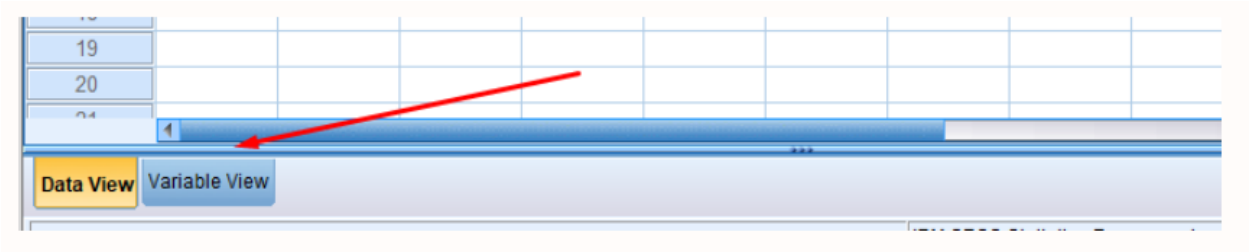
When you open SPSS, the Data Editor is the first window that will greet you, and you will see your data displayed in spreadsheet format. Below is a shot of the Data Editor window.



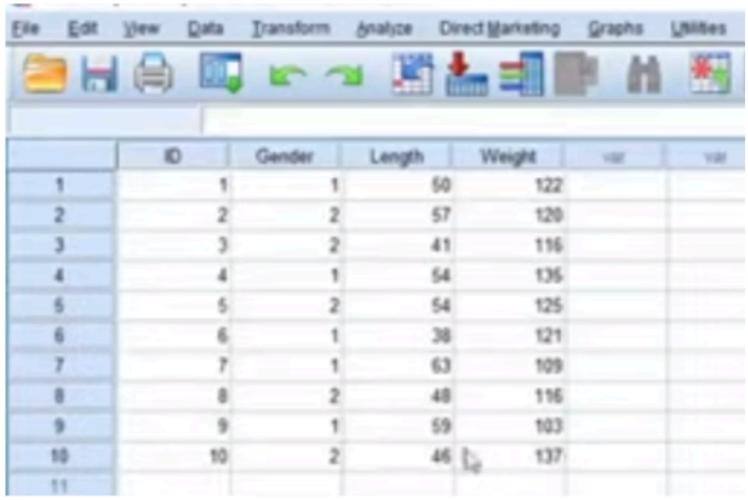
SPSS Data editor window

In the Data Editor, you enter your data and define the properties of your data variables. In its spreadsheet, variables are in the columns, and observations are in the rows. If you have not yet saved your data, you will see “Untitled” in the title bar. If you have saved the data, the name of the displayed file will appear in the title bar.

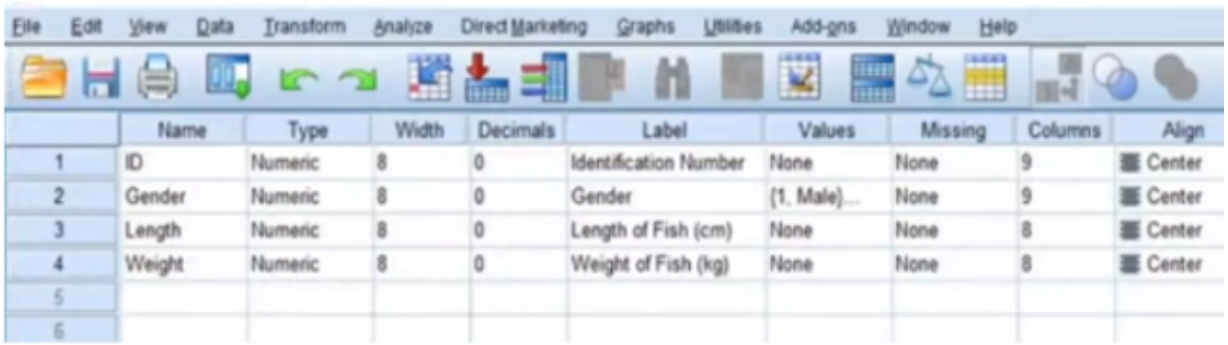
An important feature of the data editor window is that it has two tabs (shown below) that present two views: **Data View** and **Variable View**.



Data View is where you can edit the data you loaded into SPSS. An example of the screen in this view is shown here.



Variable View allows you to define and modify the properties of your variables, such as their names, data types (numeric, string, date, etc.), measurement levels (nominal, ordinal, interval, ratio), and variable labels. Variable View is where you assign labels to your variables that give descriptive information about them and their values. An example of a screen in this view is shown below.



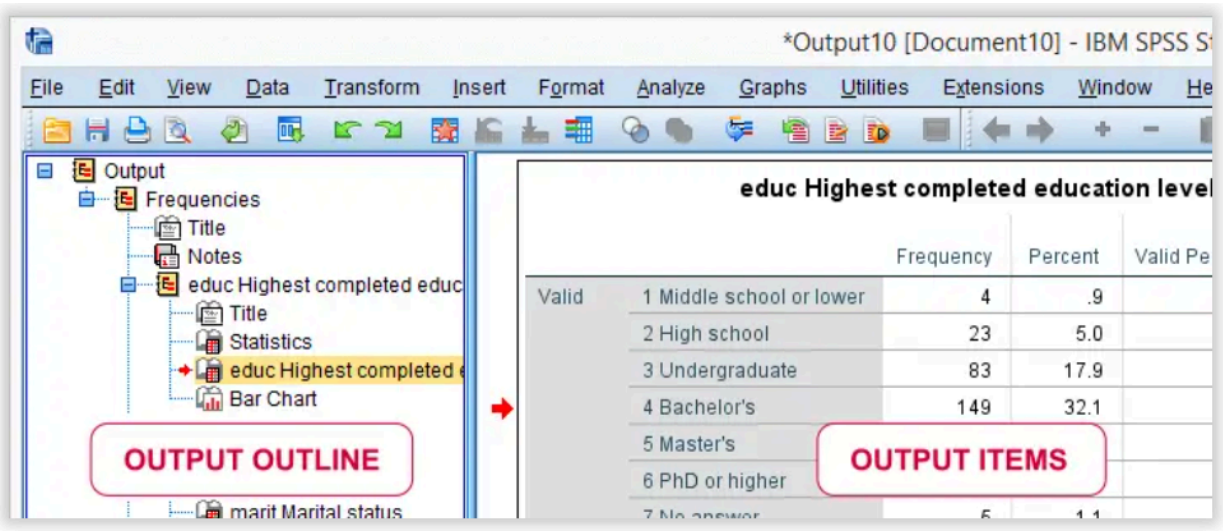
	Name	Type	Width	Decimals	Label	Values	Missing	Columns	Align
1	ID	Numeric	8	0	Identification Number	None	None	9	Center
2	Gender	Numeric	8	0	Gender	{1, Male}...	None	9	Center
3	Length	Numeric	8	0	Length of Fish (cm)	None	None	8	Center
4	Weight	Numeric	8	0	Weight of Fish (kg)	None	None	8	Center
5									
6									

A crucial part of data analysis is accuracy; a critical part of accuracy is ensuring that missing data is properly managed. In Variable View, you can define specific symbols to represent missing or undefined values for each variable. You can also validate (check for errors and inconsistencies), sort data, transform data, and create new variables by performing calculations on existing variables in Variable View.

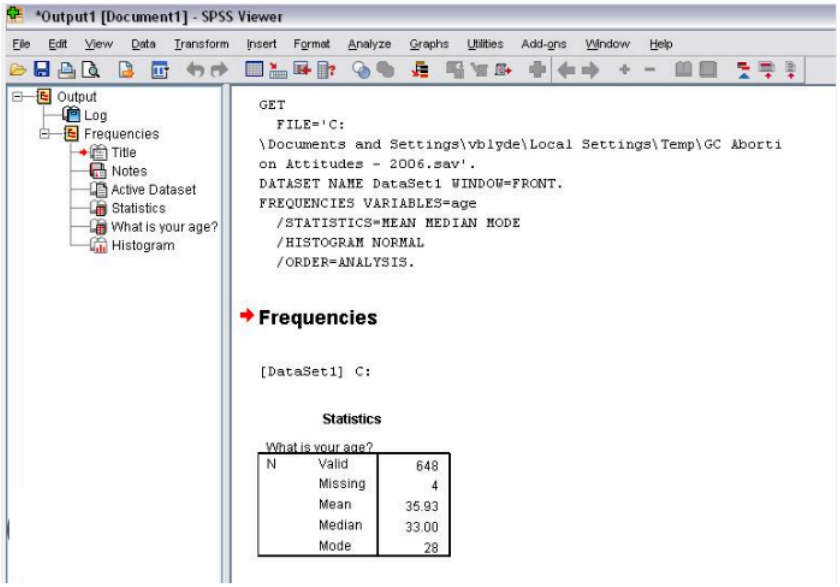
2. The Output Viewer

The Output Viewer displays charts, graphs, tables, descriptive statistics, inferential statistics results, and any other output generated by various statistical analyses.

It also provides a detailed summary of the analyses performed. This window, called the Output Navigator, is shown below with a table as output.

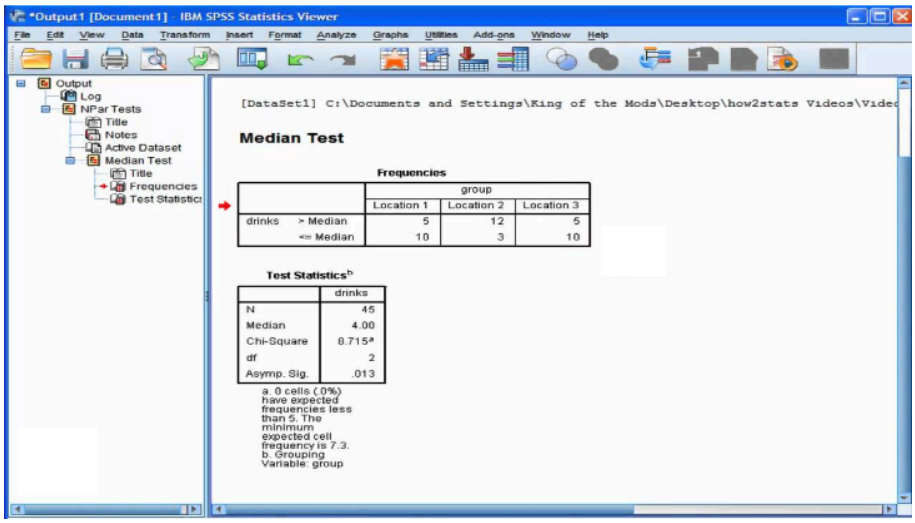


In a section alongside the results, the Output Viewer shows the syntax or commands used to generate those results. This is extremely helpful for users who prefer to work with SPSS using its syntax language.



You can see the exact commands executed to produce the displayed output.

The Output Viewer organizes results into different sections. Each section corresponds to a specific analysis or operation. This organized structure helps users easily locate and review the output.

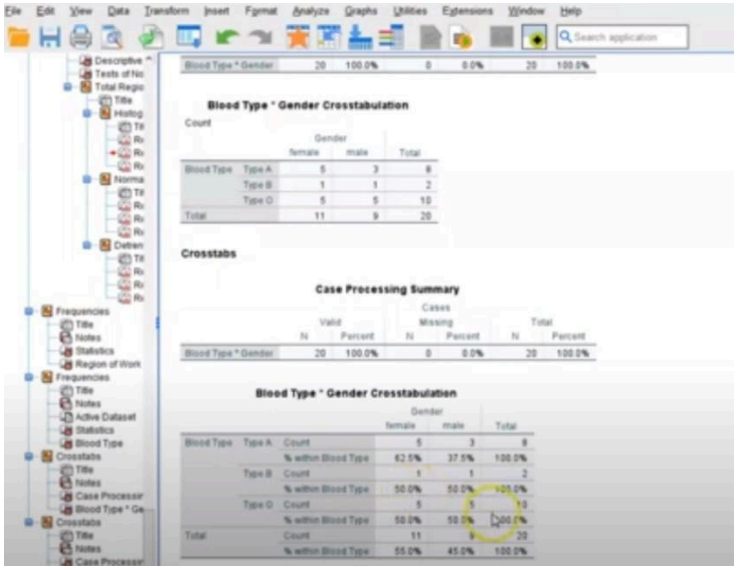


You can save the entire output or specific sections as files. This is useful for documentation, sharing results with colleagues, or incorporating the results into reports and presentations. Additionally, you can export specific tables or charts in various formats, such as Excel, PDF, or images, for further use outside of SPSS.

The Output Viewer provides interactive features such as hyperlinks, making it easy to navigate between sections and quickly locate specific tables or charts within the output.

3. The Pivot Table Editor

Output displayed in pivot tables can be modified in many ways with the Pivot Table Editor. You can edit text, swap data in rows and columns, add color, create multidimensional tables, and selectively hide and show results.



4. The Chart Editor

The Chart Editor provides control over the appearance of charts and allows users to customize and modify charts and graphs created within SPSS. With the Chart Editor, you can customize chart elements, change chart types, format data series, add annotations, preview in real-time, save customized chart templates, change settings for importing and exporting, and perform many more functions. The Chart Editor is shown below.

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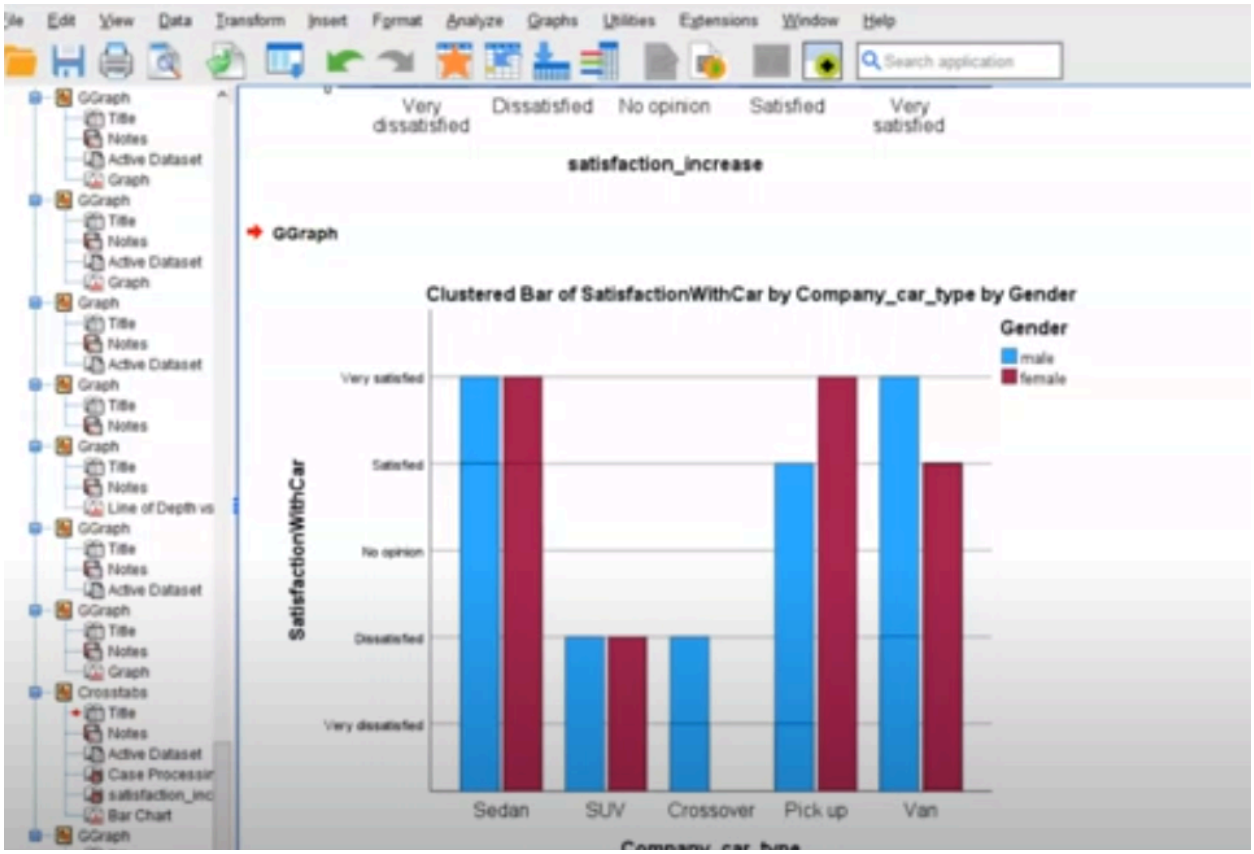
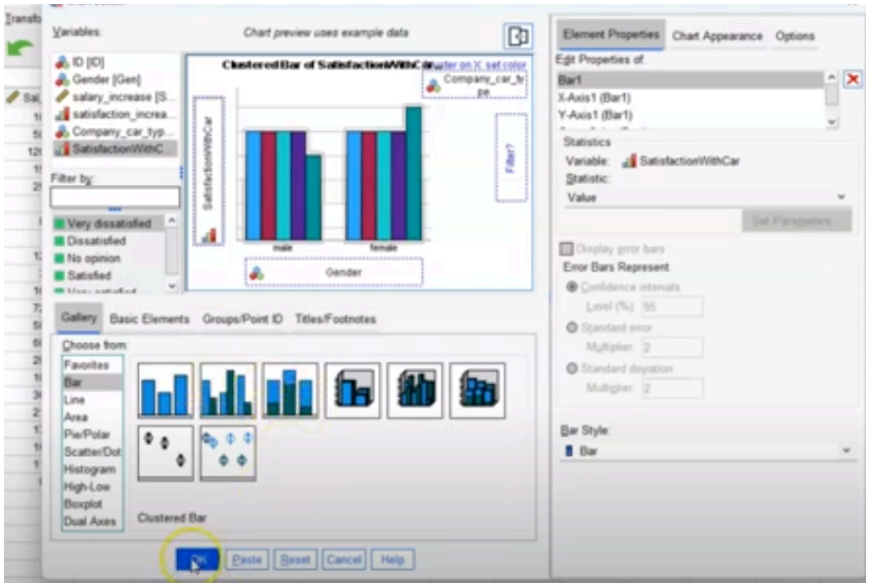
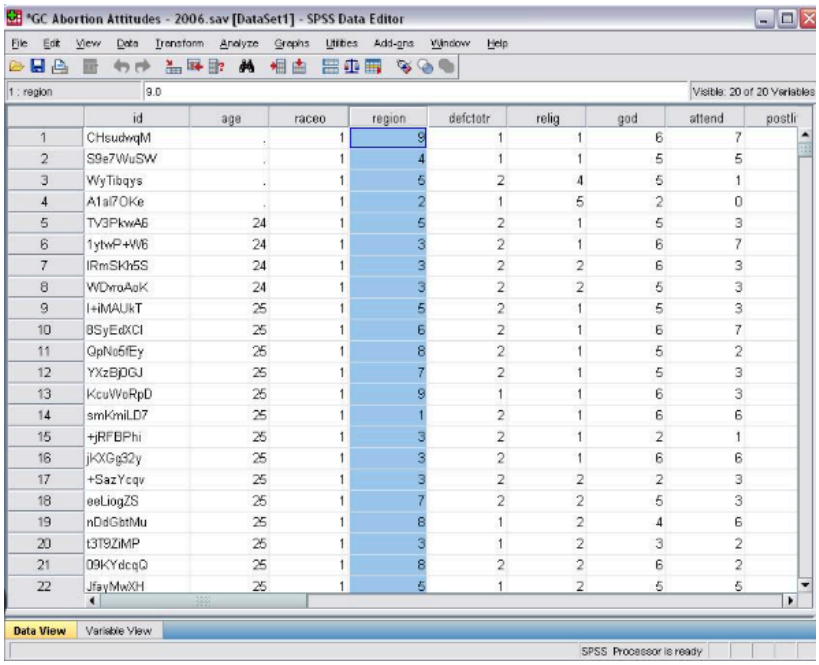


A picture of a dialog box with some Chart Editor options appears below.



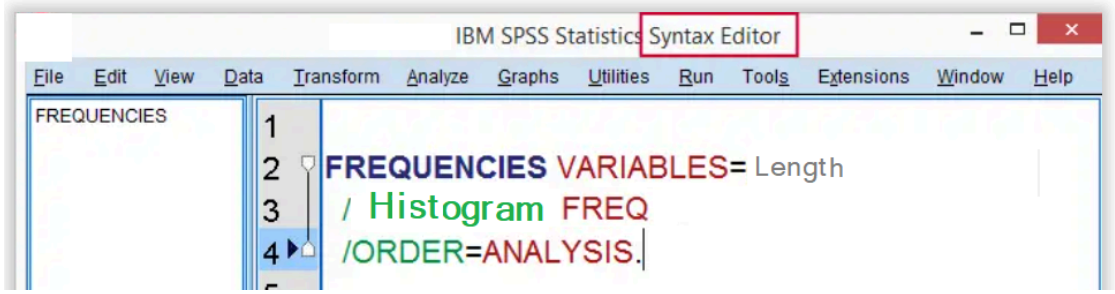
5. The Text Output Editor

After you run statistical procedures, the Text Output Editor will display the results of your analysis, any syntax or commands used, and any error messages and warnings. It makes navigation highly interactive, saves and prints any part of the display directly, and copies and paste results into other applications and formats. See a picture of the text editor screen below.



6. The Syntax Editor

The Syntax Editor allows users to communicate and interact with SPSS using commands instead of the Graphical Interface (GUI). Using scripts, the Syntax Editor can automate, reproduce, and perform advanced analyses, handle missing data, perform macro programming, and offer conditional processing.



The Syntax Editor also provides detailed documentation of every step you took in your analysis.