



How to Convert Dates from Text to Date Format using SPSS

Based on SPSS v24

The syntax in this document is designed to assist SPSS data users with converting dates stored in string variables to date formatted variables. Select the syntax below based on the format of the date in text (i.e., for text dates that are in mmddyyyy format you would select and modify the first set of syntax).

* Assuming a string variable 8 characters long, e.g., "01012004". The new variable will have a date formatted as mm/dd/yyyy (e.g., 01/01/2004)

```
COMPUTE newvar = date.mdy( number(substr(oldvar,1,2), f2.0),  
number(substr(oldvar,3,2), f2.0), number(substr(oldvar,5,4), f4.0)  
).
```

```
FORMATS newvar (adate11).
```

```
EXECUTE.
```

* Assuming a string variable 8 characters long, e.g., "01/01/04". The new variable will have a date formatted as mm/dd/yyyy (e.g., 01/01/2004).

```
COMPUTE newvar = date.mdy( number(substr(oldvar,1,2), f2.0),  
number(substr(oldvar,4,2), f2.0), number(substr(oldvar,7,2), f2.0)  
).
```

```
FORMATS newvar (adate11).
```

```
EXECUTE.
```

* Extracts the year from a string date variable 8 characters long, so the existing variable must be exactly "01012004" with no spaces before the first digit. The new variable will capture the last four digits of the year as yyyy (e.g., 2004).

```
COMPUTE year = number(substr(TxtDate,5,4),F4.0).
```

```
FORMATS year (F4.0).
```

```
EXECUTE.
```

Please email questions to NDACANsupport@cornell.edu.