

University of Guelph

How to export your LimeSurvey data into SPSS

LimeSurvey Drill Down Document

Note: The author of this guide is the University of Guelph's Computing and Communication Services and was downloaded from this website: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/ccs/software/supported-products/limesurvey>

Although this is an annotated version created to be compatible with our LimeSurvey Website, the authorship and credit for this entire document is to be considered unchanged.

Identifying annotations: 1) insertions are in red font, 2) deletions are marked ~~like this~~, and other comments are in red-framed text boxes.

Travis Seymour, April 2013

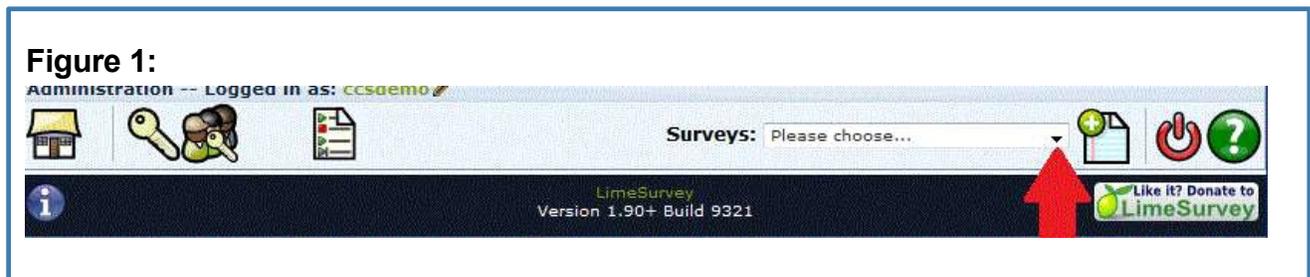
Getting your survey's data from LimeSurvey into SPSS is done by first creating two files:

- (1) a SPSS syntax file (a collection of SPSS commands), and
- (2) a raw data file (the raw data file holds your actual survey responses).

You then run the SPSS syntax file in SPSS. The commands in the SPSS syntax file read the raw data from the raw data file, and create a SPSS dataset with variable names, variable labels and value labels that correspond to the question code, question text and answer options for the questions in your survey. You can then use SPSS's various commands such as *Descriptives* to analyze the data in your SPSS dataset.

To create the SPSS syntax file and raw data file in LimeSurvey:

Step 1: On the Administration toolbar, select your survey from the drop down list pointed to by the red arrow in Figure 1 below.



Step 2: On the resulting Survey toolbar, move your mouse over the Responses icon (pointed to by red arrow 1 in figure 2 below) and click the *Responses & statistics* choice from the resulting submenu as pointed to by red arrow 2 in figure 2 below.

Figure 2:



Step 2: Click the *Export results to a SPSS/PASW command file* icon as shown below in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3



Step 3: Create the SPSS syntax file and raw data file by (referring to Figure 4 below):

First, clicking on the *Export syntax* button (this action will create the SPSS syntax file). Follow your operating system's prompts to save this file on your computer.

Once the syntax file has been created,

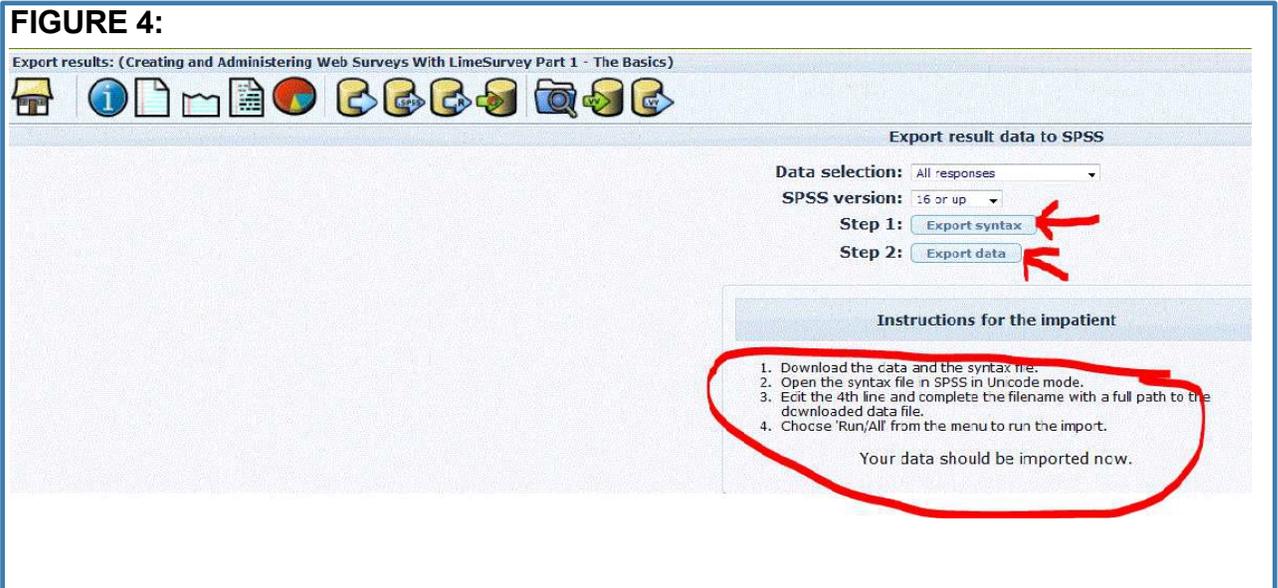
Second, clicking on the *Export data* button (this action will create the raw data file). Again, follow your operating system's prompts to save this file on your computer.

The location of the *Export syntax* and *Export data* buttons are shown below in Figure 4.

Make a note of where the syntax file and raw data file are stored on your computer - if you are using Windows 7 these files will be saved to your "Downloads" directory on your PC. You can then use Windows Explorer to copy the files to a more convenient location if you wish.

Note as well the instructions circled in red in Figure 4 below.

FIGURE 4:



Export results: (Creating and Administering Web Surveys With LimeSurvey Part 1 - The Basics)

Export result data to SPSS

Data selection: All responses

SPSS version: 16 or up

Step 1: Export syntax

Step 2: Export data

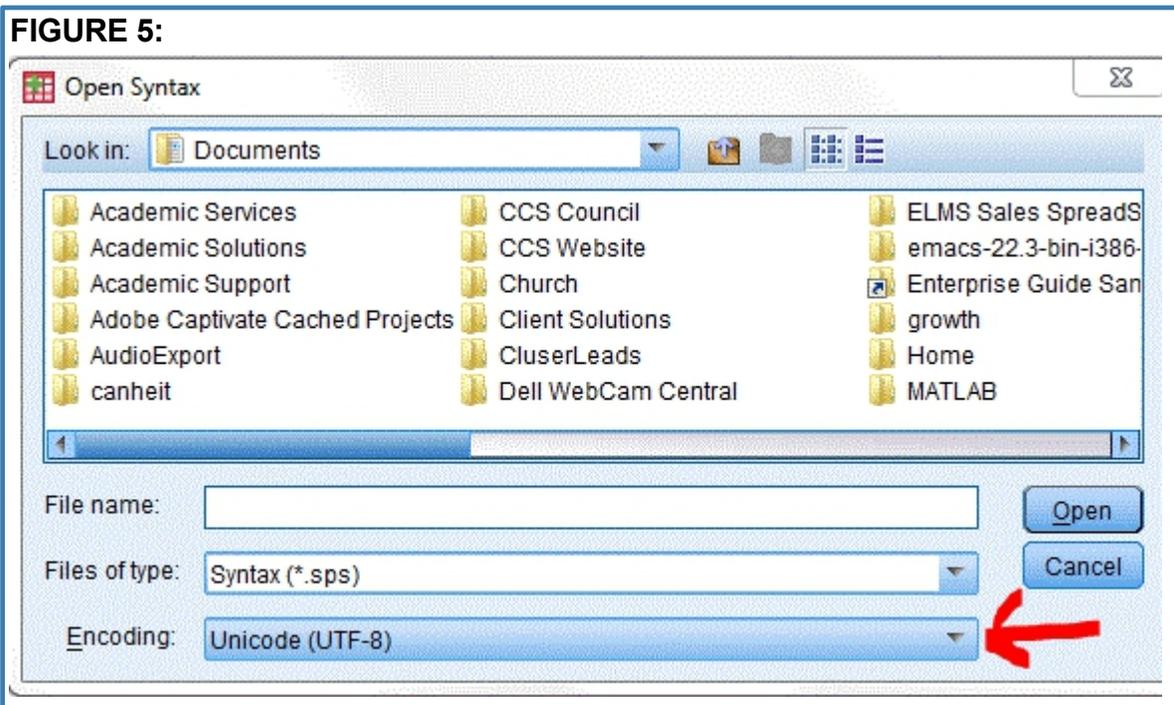
Instructions for the impatient

1. Download the data and the syntax file.
2. Open the syntax file in SPSS in Un code mode.
3. Edit the 4th line and complete the filename with a full path to the downloaded data file.
4. Choose Run/All from the menu to run the import.

Your data should be imported now.

Step 4: Start SPSS and import the syntax file via: *File...Open...Syntax*

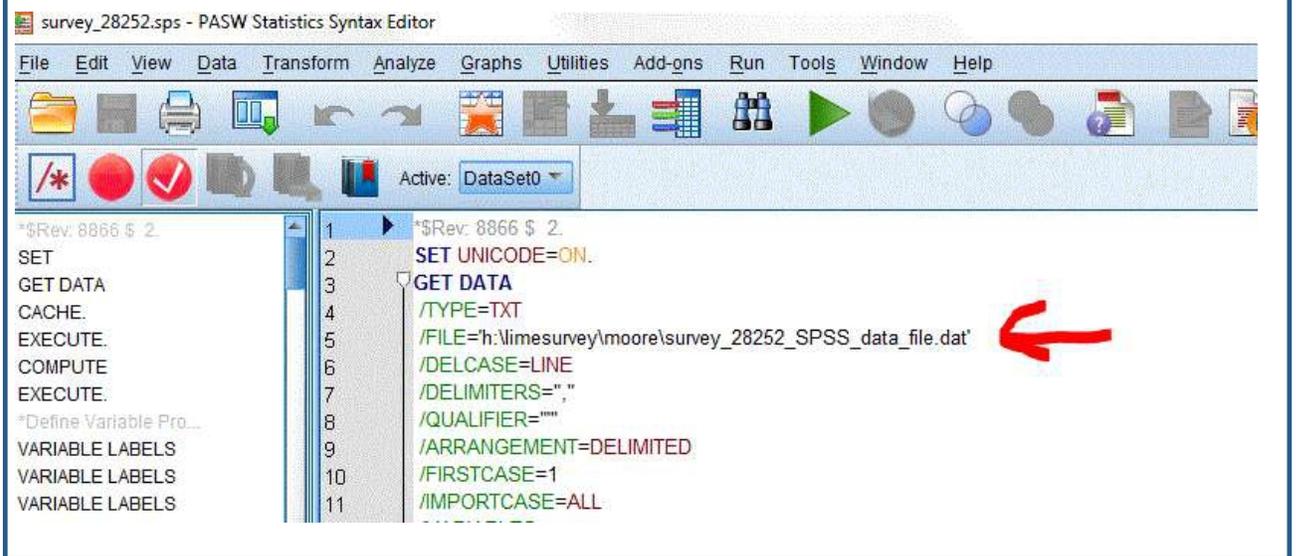
Make sure the encoding is *Unicode (UTF-8)* as illustrated below in Figure 5.



SPSS will import your syntax file into the SPSS syntax editor window. (Recall that a syntax file is a collection of program statements in the SPSS language).

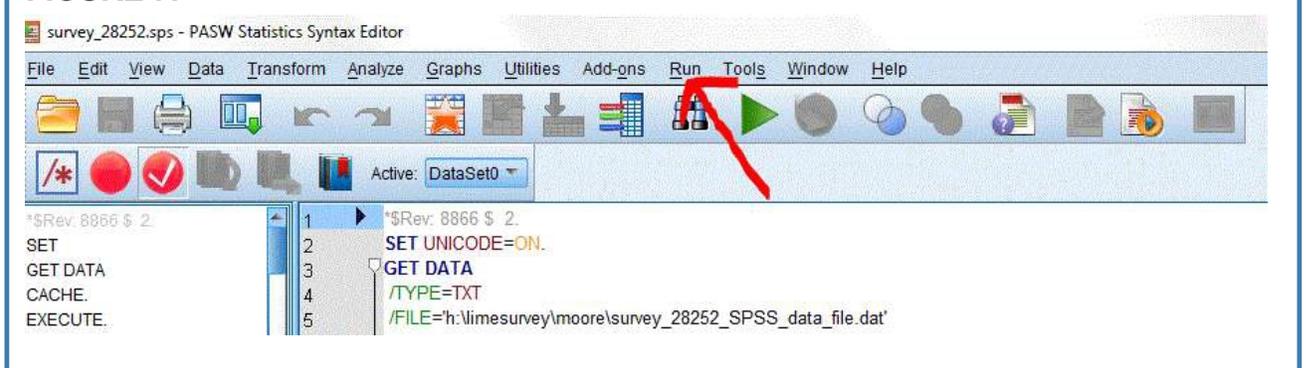
When viewing your syntax file, change the 5th line of the file's contents to include the full path and filename of your raw data file in your computer. i.e. you will need to add the full path to your raw data file name that you'll see on line 5 of the syntax.

See Figure 6 below for the specific line you need to modify. The full path and filename of the raw data file in this example is specified in the illustration in Figure 6 (see the syntax line pointed to by the red arrow in Figure 6) - your path will be different. In the example illustrated in Figure 6 below, the filename is: **survey_28252_SPSS_data_file.dat** The file is located in the directory: **h:\limesurvey\moore** so the full path and filename is as pointed to by the red arrow in the Figure.

FIGURE 6:

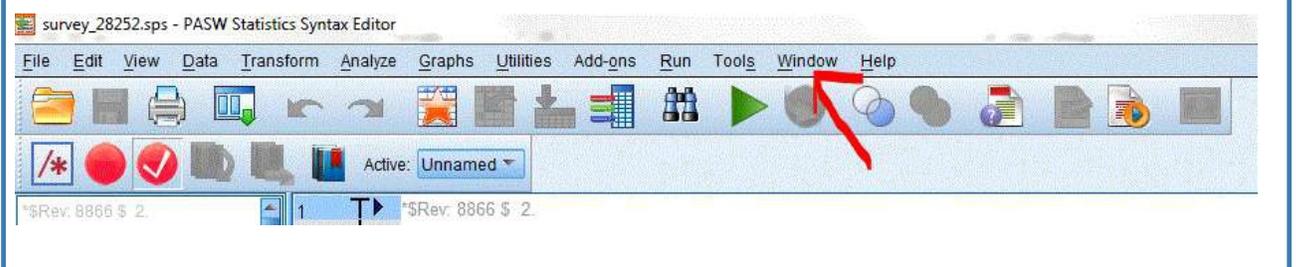
Step 5: Add the SPSS statement **EXECUTE.** to the bottom of your SPSS syntax file. Note the statement must end with a period.

Step 6: Choose *Run...All* to submit the commands in the Syntax Editor window. Your SPSS dataset will be created. See Figure 7 below for the location of the *Run* command.

FIGURE 7:

Step 7: If your SPSS Data window is not visible, you can access it via *Window...PASW Statistics Data Editor*. See Figure 8 below for the location of the *Window* command. You will see your survey's data (i.e. your responses) in the rows and columns of the Data window.

FIGURE 8:



TIP: Often while developing your survey you may wish to generate the SPSS syntax file to determine how your question types, question text, sub-questions, codes, answer options, etc. will map to the SPSS concepts of variable names, variable labels, and value labels. However you cannot access the *Browse responses* toolbar before your survey has been activated. To generate the SPSS syntax file periodically while you are still developing your survey (i.e. your survey is not yet active):

First:

Activate your survey by clicking on the *Activate this survey* icon on the *Survey* toolbar. The location of the icon is pointed to by the red arrow in Figure 9.

Figure 9: The location of the *Activate this survey* icon on the *Survey* toolbar.



Second:

You can now generate the SPSS syntax file as per the steps in this document. You can open the syntax file in SPSS, WordPad, Windows, etc. to review its content and determine how your question components are mapped to SPSS equivalents.

Third:

Deactivate your survey so you can continue developing/modifying content, by clicking on the *Deactivate this survey* icon pointed to by the red arrow in Figure 10. You will receive a warning message that your data will not be accessible if you deactivate your survey, but you can ignore this warning as your survey will not contain any data at this point in its development.

Figure 10: The location of the *Deactivate this survey* icon on the Survey toolbar.



If you have questions about the LimeSurvey procedure for exporting your survey results to SPSS, or other issues related to SPSS, please contact the Data Resource Centre, via email to drcheip@uqguelph.ca **contact** <mailto:ucscpsychsurvey@gmail.com>

Sorry, but the Psych research pool administrators are not staffed for this kind of help.