

# How to Recode Variables in SPSS: A Step-by-Step Guide

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## RECOMMENDED CITATION

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Recoding variables in SPSS refers to the process of changing the values of a variable to different numerical or categorical values. This is often done to simplify data analysis or to group data into different categories. For example, if a survey question asks for the respondent's age in years, it might be more useful to recode this variable into age groups (e.g. 18-25, 26-35, etc.) for analysis. To recode variables in SPSS, you can use the "Recode" function under the "Transform" menu. You can then specify the old and new values for each category and create a new variable with the recoded values.

Often you may want to **recode** the values of certain variables in SPSS.

For example, you may want to recode all "Yes" values to **1** and all "No" values to **0** for a certain variable.

The easiest way to recode variables in SPSS is to use **Transform > Recode into Same Variables**.

The following example shows how to do so in practice.

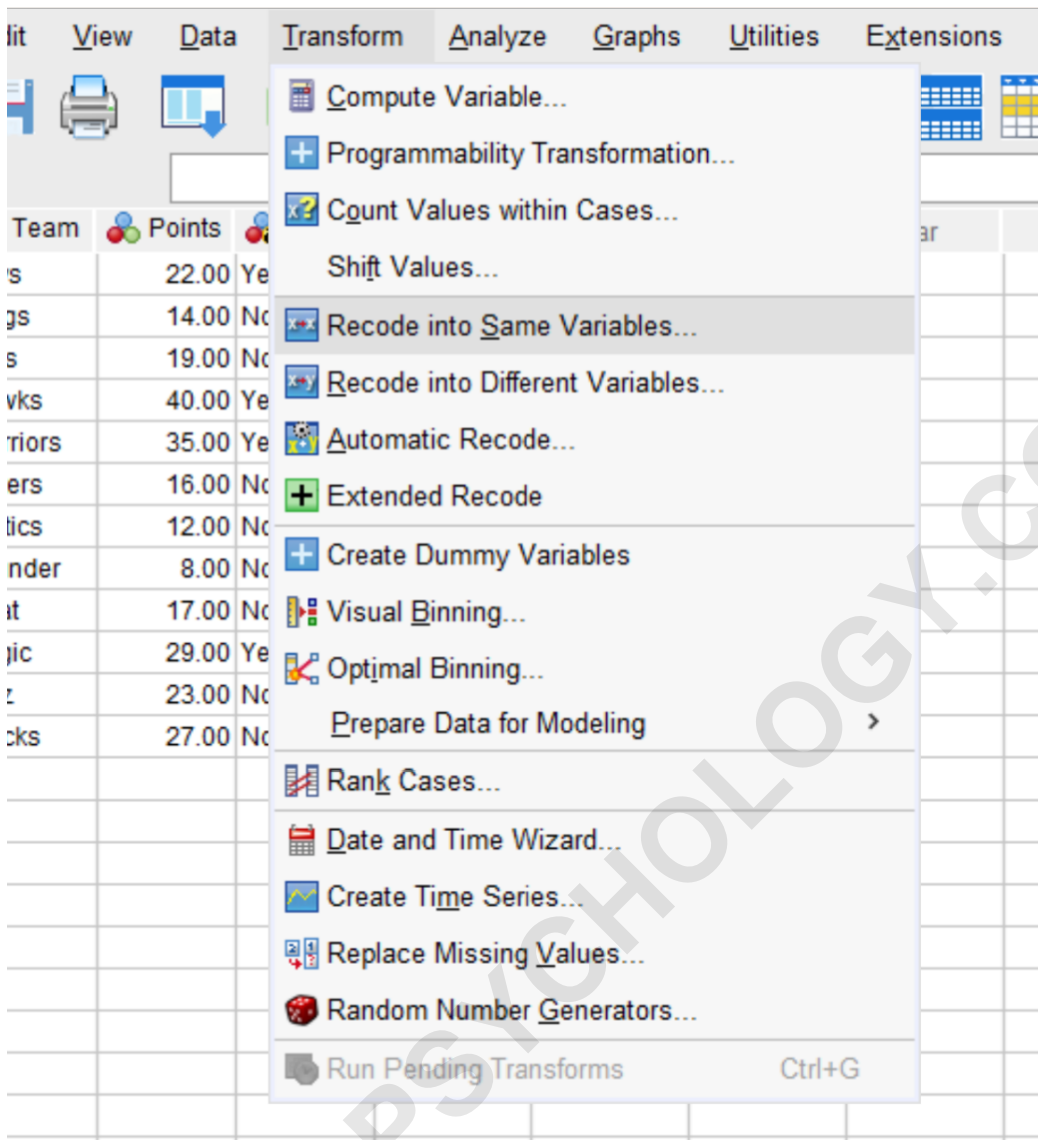
## Example: How to Recode Variables in SPSS

Suppose we have the following dataset in SPSS that contains information about various basketball players:

	Team	Points	AllStar	var	var
1	Mavs	22.00	Yes		
2	Kings	14.00	No		
3	Nets	19.00	No		
4	Hawks	40.00	Yes		
5	Warriors	35.00	Yes		
6	Lakers	16.00	No		
7	Celtics	12.00	No		
8	Thunder	8.00	No		
9	Heat	17.00	No		
10	Magic	29.00	Yes		
11	Jazz	23.00	No		
12	Knicks	27.00	No		
13					
14					
15					
16					

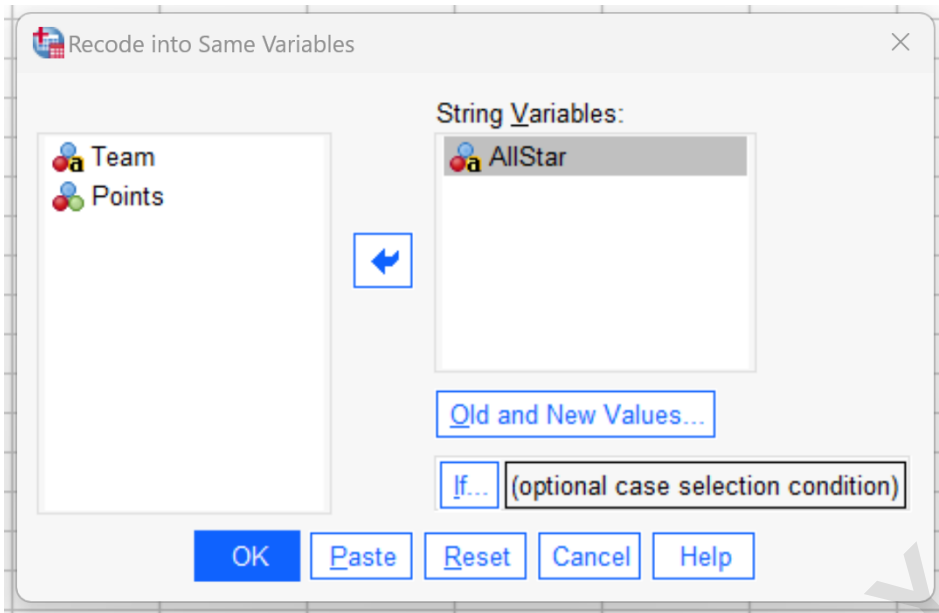
Suppose that we would like to recode each **Yes** to 1 and each **No** to 0 in the **AllStar** column.

To do so, click the **Transform** tab, then click **Recode into Same Variables**:



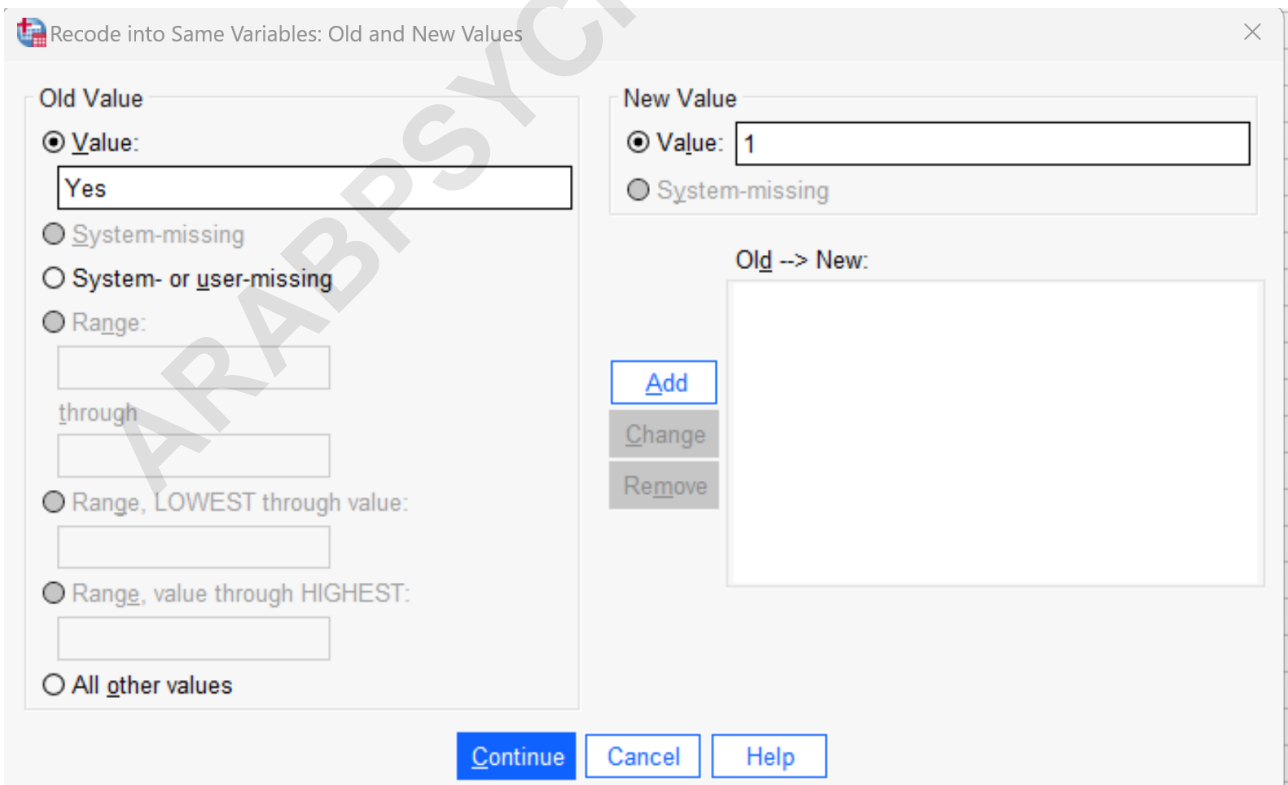
**Note:** If you would rather create a new variable that contains these recoded values then you can instead click **Recode into Different Variables**.

In the new window that appears, drag the **AllStar** variable into the **String Variables** box:

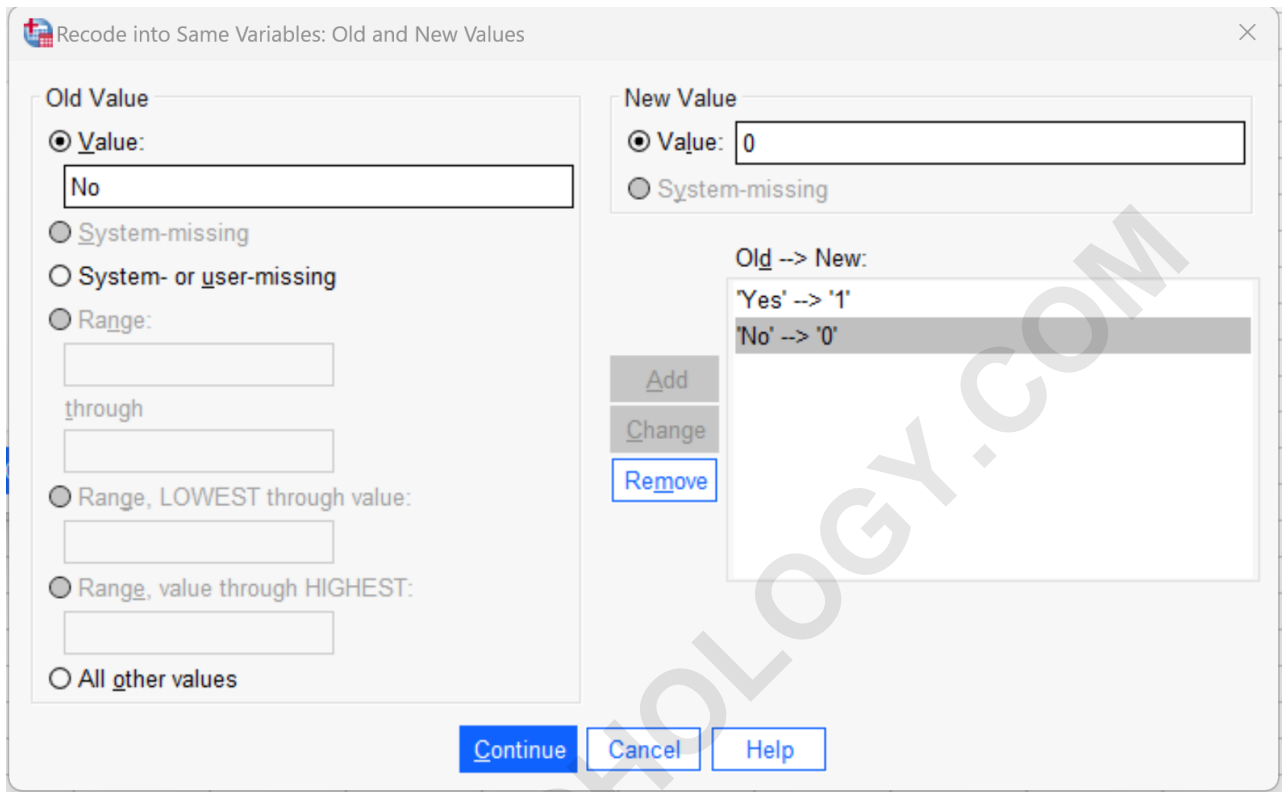


Then click the **Old and New Values** button.

In the new window that appears, type **Yes** into the **Old Value** box and then type **1** into the **New Value** box, then click the **Add** button:



Then type **No** into the **Old Value** box and then type **0** into the **New Value** box, then click the **Add** button:



These two new recoding rules will be shown in the **Old -> New** box.

Lastly, click **Continue**. Then click **OK**.

The **Yes** and **No** values will now be shown as **1** and **0**, respectively, in the **AllStar** column:

	Team	Points	AllStar	var	var
1	Mavs	22.00	1		
2	Kings	14.00	0		
3	Nets	19.00	0		
4	Hawks	40.00	1		
5	Warriors	35.00	1		
6	Lakers	16.00	0		
7	Celtics	12.00	0		
8	Thunder	8.00	0		
9	Heat	17.00	0		
10	Magic	29.00	1		
11	Jazz	23.00	0		
12	Knicks	27.00	0		
13					
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18					
19					

Note that in this example we only recoded two values, but you can use this same process to recode as many values as you'd like for your own variables.

The following tutorials explain how to perform other common operations in SPSS: