

## EDAT User's Guide

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### What is EDAT?

The Education Data Analysis Tool (EDAT) allows you to download NCES survey datasets to your computer. EDAT guides you through 1) selecting a survey, 2) tagging variables relevant to your analysis, 3) downloading a data set to your computer, and 4) downloading syntax files.

You will select a statistical software package (SAS, SPSS, Stata, R, or S-Plus) or a generic file format (ASCII or CSV) for your dataset. If you select a statistical software package, EDAT will use your selections to generate a custom syntax file for use with your selected software. If you choose a generic file format, EDAT will generate a layout file to help you use them. In either case, EDAT will generate a codebook file with codes, labels, descriptions, and frequencies for your reference.

#### **IMPORTANT**

Selecting a statistical software package (e.g., SAS, SPSS, Stata, R, or S-Plus) for your dataset and syntax file requires that you have access to that particular software. If you choose to work with a generic file format (e.g., ASCII or CSV), you may use any software or programming language you wish to conduct your analysis.

There are three **Main File Types** used in EDAT:

- **Data Files**  
Data files can be in a format specific to any one of several statistical software packages (SAS, SPSS, Stata, R, or S-Plus) or in a generic file format (ASCII or CSV). A dataset comprises one or more data files. Each dataset contains all of the data for a particular population within an NCES survey. There may be several data files for a given NCES survey.
- **Syntax Files**  
A syntax file is written in the language of your selected software package. It is created by EDAT and used to subset the full survey dataset into a smaller targeted dataset to support your specific analysis. The syntax file is essentially a list of your selected variables, design weights, identification variables, and the population subset needed to create your custom dataset. Once downloaded to your computer, these syntax files can be read by statistical software packages such as SAS, SPSS, Stata, R, and S-Plus.
- **Tag Files**  
Tag files provide a convenient method for saving and re-using groups of tagged variables. Through the use of tag files, the user can 1) save tag files, 2) import tag files into their current session, 3) merge tag files, and 4) access tag files that have been made public by other users of the EDAT system. Each user of the EDAT system will have a unique user ID (e-mail address) and password (of your choosing). Under this e-mail and password system, the user will be able to save and retrieve tag files.

And two **Supplementary File Types**:

- **Codebooks**  
A codebook is essentially a dictionary-style reference for each of the variables included in your syntax files and ultimately, your custom dataset. **A codebook is automatically included with every syntax file you create.**
- **Layout Files**  
A layout file is important if you wish to use a generic data file (ASCII or CSV). These data file types do not have syntax files and must be formatted manually. The layout file will provide the variable names, descriptions, file positions, and frequencies to aid you in using these data files.

### Why Do I Need a Syntax File?

Advanced users may download and work directly with complete datasets, layout files, and codebooks without further use of EDAT or the syntax files it creates. However, EDAT provides detailed descriptions, questionnaire wording, and frequencies of variables in an easily-searched data dictionary to help you identify and select the particular variables appropriate to your specific analysis. Your syntax file is run against the complete dataset on your computer to produce a smaller dataset that is easier to use for your analysis. A complete NCES dataset may contain thousands of variables while your analysis may only require a couple of dozen.

Note: The syntax file will not reduce the size of the dataset that you will download to your computer. Depending on your selected software, after unzipping, you will need anywhere from 11MB to 800MB free. The unzipped dataset size will be displayed on the download screen.

### How Does It Work?

You simply specify the survey (e.g., ELS:2002/06) and the particular variables (e.g., demographic variables, design weights) needed for your analysis dataset into your [tag file](#). EDAT will then provide the survey dataset (system file) in the format of your choosing (statistical software or generic file) and any supporting files needed to use it. If you choose a statistical software package format, EDAT will create a [syntax file](#) that will be used to extract the user-selected variables from the overall dataset (e.g., ELS 2002-06 v1\_0 SPSS Datasets) to create a custom dataset with just the variables you selected and accompanying weight and identifying variables. If you choose a generic data file format, EDAT will create a [layout file](#) that describes the variables you selected and the accompanying weighting and identifying variables.

Click to view an [example of an EDAT-generated SAS syntax file](#).

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## Selecting a Survey

### What is a Survey?

A survey is a data collection created to support particular research needs. To find information on NCES surveys, [click here](#). There are typically multiple components within a selected NCES data collection (e.g., students, teachers, principals, parents in ELS:2002/06).

### Selecting a Survey

This option allows the user to select the data set that he/she wishes to work with in the current session. You can only work with one survey at a time. If, for example, you select the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002, you will only have access to that survey's data; you will not have access to data from other surveys, like the Schools and Staffing Survey.

### Which Surveys Are Available?

Currently, the EDAT application contains ECLS-K (Early Childhood Longitudinal Study - Kindergarten Class of 1998-99), ELS (Education Longitudinal Study of 2002), HSLs (High School Longitudinal Study of 2009), NELS (National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988), NHES (National Household Education Survey), SASS (Schools and Staffing and Teacher Follow-up Surveys), and SSOCS (School Survey on Crime and Safety) datasets. Additional datasets will be added in the near future.

Select a Survey Screen

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## Selecting a Population of Analysis

This is the population that you are targeting (e.g., students, teachers, principals, parents). You may choose only one population at a time. Not every survey requires you to select a population. For example, the ELS:2002/06 survey does not break up its components into populations while

ECLSK:1998/99 includes three populations (K-8 Child, Base Year Teacher, Base Year School).

Select a Population of Analysis

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## Searching for Variables

### What is a Variable?

A variable is a data element that represents either a question (e.g., BYS20F - Teachers are interested in students) or a statistical element (e.g., BYSTUWT - Student design weight) related to a survey.

### Variable Search

There are 3 types of variable searches; [Review Specific Sections](#), [Search by Word or Phrase](#), and [Search by Variable Name](#). Some search methods may not apply to the survey you select and will be omitted. Click on the drop-down box under the title VARIABLE SEARCH to choose from the search options.

If your search returns more than 500 variables, EDAT will group your results into pages of up to 500 variables. You will see a page description (e.g. Displaying variables 1 - 500 of 690) and link buttons for navigation to either the previous or next page. You may also type in your desired page number into the page text box and click the [Enter] key.

Each search is being performed on the entire population, not just the active section.

### Review Specific Sections

All surveys are divided into sections and displayed using a tree structure. Use these content trees to find variables within logical groupings. Following each tree title, enclosed in parentheses, is the number of variables included in that section. Clicking on the section title for each section will display those variables in the search results tab to the right.

Example of Section Tree for ELS:2002/06

### Search by Word or Phrase

Enter a word or phrase into the search text box. This can be the full or partial text you are searching for. Then select the appropriate match type and

search fields.

Example of Search By Word or Phrase

#### Example:

Finding either the word "student" or the word "school" in either the label or description of variables within your selected survey:

Enter "student school" or "student,school" in the search text box, select "One or more words" from the MATCH options, then select "Label" and "Description" from the SEARCH options. Click the **SEARCH** button when you are done. All matching variables will be displayed in the search results tab to the right.

#### Search by Variable Name

If you already know the names of the variables you need, you can do a full or partial name search. Enter multiple variable names separated by a comma.

Tag	Compare	Detail	Name	Label	Type	Section
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	BYMOTHE	Mother's highest level of education-composite	Composite	Student > BY Weights and Composites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	BYNONUSG	Number of grades completed outside U.S. (K-10)	Composite	Student > BY Weights and Composites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	BYNELS2M	ELS-NELS 1992 scale equated sophomore math score	Composite	Student > BY Weights and Composites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	BYNELS2R	ELS-NELS 1992 scale equated sophomore reading score	Composite	Student > BY Weights and Composites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	BYNELS0M	ELS-NELS 1990 scale equated sophomore math score	Composite	Student > BY Weights and Composites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	BYMATHSE	BY mathematics self-efficacy	Composite	Student > BY Weights and Composites

Example of Search By Variable Name

#### Example:

To find all variables with names starting with 'BYM' or 'BYN', enter "bym,byn" in the text field. Set the SEARCH radio button to 'Partial Name Search' and click the **SEARCH** button.

#### Search Results

The search results tab will display all variables matching your search selections from the panels on the left. Each row will have a checkbox (  ) used to tag a variable, a  icon used to select a variable for comparison (see [Comparing Variables](#)), and a  icon to view a variable's details (containing full description and frequencies). If you do not see a variable you are looking for in the search results, you may make changes to your search selections at any time. Changing your search options will not affect your tagged variables.

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#### Variable Details

To view details about a single variable, including the full description and frequencies, click the  icon next to the variable name in the search results or tag file tabs.

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### Comparing Variables

To compare details about multiple variables at the same time, click the  icon next to the variables of interest. You may select up to 10 variables for comparison at a time. When you are ready to compare them, click the  icon above your variable list.

From within the Variable Compare Tabs screen, you may click the 'Compare Frequencies' or 'Compare Descriptions' links. This will display the variables side-by-side focusing on either their frequencies or descriptions.

At any time, you may click the [Print](#) button to print the details of all of the variables you are comparing. If you do this on either of the 'Compare Frequencies' or 'Compare Descriptions' views, that option will be printed and the other will be omitted.

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### Tagging Variables


By "Tagging" a variable, the variable will be included in your [tag file](#) and then the syntax file if you so choose. You may tag up to 1,000 variables. Tag a variable by clicking the checkbox next to the variable in the search results tab. Click the checkbox again to untag. To tag or untag all of the variables returned by your search, click the [Tag All](#) or [Untag All](#) buttons in the search results tab. To untag all variables selected in your tag file, click the [Untag All](#) button in the tag file tab.

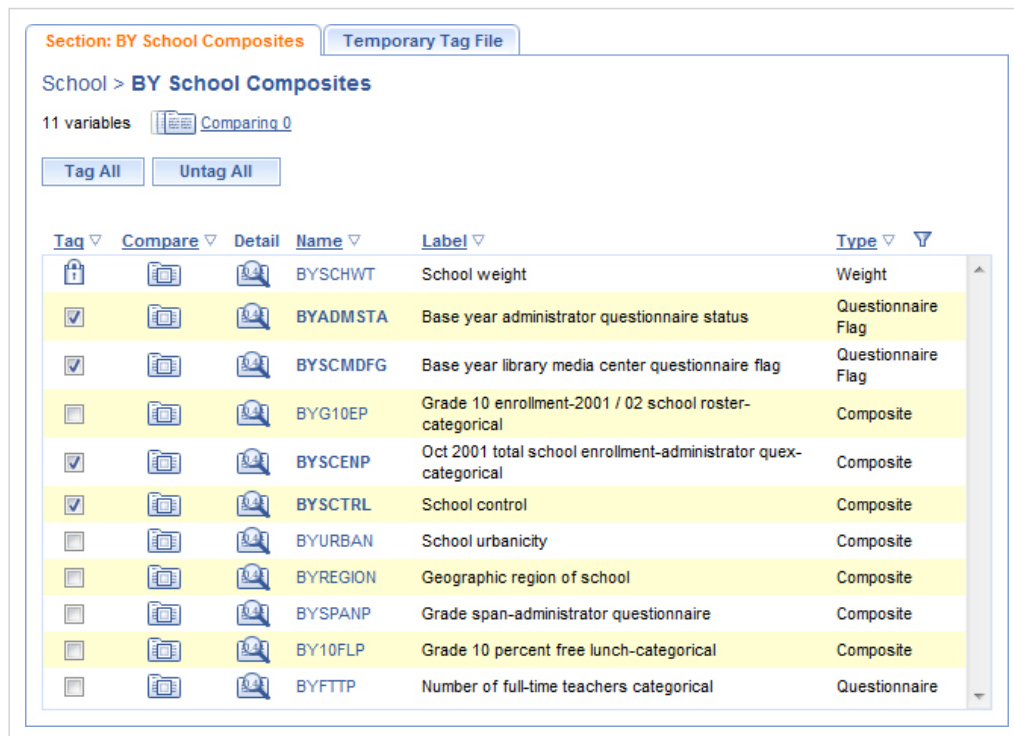
At any time, you may view the number of tagged variables or review your tag file by clicking the tab on the right corresponding to your tag file.

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### Required Variables


Some data collections have identification or weight variables that have been determined to be necessary for most analyses. Any required variables in a dataset from which you have selected variables will be automatically included in your tag and syntax files. In place of a checkbox (  ), a padlock icon (  ) indicates that you cannot undo the selection.

The screen capture below shows required variables (  ), selected variables (  ) and not selected variables (  ).


























Section: **BY School Composites** Temporary Tag File

School > **BY School Composites**

11 variables  Comparing 0

[Tag All](#) [Untag All](#)

Tag	Compare	Detail	Name	Label	Type
			BYSCHWT	School weight	Weight
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			BYADMSTA	Base year administrator questionnaire status	Questionnaire Flag
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			BYSCMDFG	Base year library media center questionnaire flag	Questionnaire Flag
<input type="checkbox"/>			BYG10EP	Grade 10 enrollment-2001 / 02 school roster-categorical	Composite
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			BYSCENP	Oct 2001 total school enrollment-administrator quex-categorical	Composite
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			BYCTRL	School control	Composite
<input type="checkbox"/>			BYURBAN	School urbanicity	Composite
<input type="checkbox"/>			BYREGION	Geographic region of school	Composite
<input type="checkbox"/>			BYSPANP	Grade span-administrator questionnaire	Composite
<input type="checkbox"/>			BY10FLP	Grade 10 percent free lunch-categorical	Composite
<input type="checkbox"/>			BYFTTP	Number of full-time teachers categorical	Questionnaire

Examples of required, selected, and not selected variables

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## Working With Tag Files

### What is a Tag File?

A tag file is a list of the variables you have selected using EDAT. Each time you select or 'tag' a variable by clicking/checking a box, it is automatically added to your [current tag file](#). The tag file is then used to build your syntax file. Tag files are automatically updated as you tag and untag variables; there is no need for you to save them.

### Temporary Tag File

By default, each time you start EDAT, your [current tag file](#) is a tag file called 'Temporary Tag File'. If you do not [rename](#) this temporary tag file which saves the file, it will not be saved for future use.

### current tag file

Your current tag file is the file in which variables you select are being placed. The name of your current tag file shows on the tab next to the search results tab. You can switch between tag files by going to the [Tag File Options](#) menu at the top of the screen and selecting [New Tag File](#) (to start a new tag file) or [Open Tag File](#) to open an existing (previously saved) file.

### Managing Tag Files

A user may elect to only work within the Temporary Tag File. If you have not saved this Temporary Tag file before logging out of your current session, you will be given the option of saving it when you log off. There are various other options for managing your tag files.

### Tag File Options

- **New Tag File**  
Allows you to create a new empty tag file. Your current tag file will still be available under [Open Tag File](#). Your compared variables stay selected in your new tag file.
- **Open Tag File**  
Allows you to open a previously saved Tag File. You will not lose your current tag file or any of its tagged variables.
- **Save Temporary Tag File**  
Allows you to save your temporary tag file for future use. Any changes you make will be saved automatically. You do not need to save it again.
- **Rename current tag file** (Only displayed after tag file is saved)  
Allows you to rename the current tag file. You will not lose any of its tagged variables.
- **Copy current tag file**  
Allows you to save a **new copy** of the current tag file with a name of your choosing. The current tag file will remain intact.
- **Share current tag file**  
Sets the current tag file as SHARED. This allows other EDAT users to merge it into their own Tag Files using your e-mail address. You may remove the SHARED setting at any time.  
  
NOTE: You may not share a Temporary Tag File until it has been saved (i.e., given a name).
- **Do Not Share current tag file** (Only displayed if tag file is shared)  
Removes the SHARED setting from the current tag file. Other EDAT users will not longer be able to merge it into their own Tag Files. This option is available for SHARED tag files only.
- **Merge Tag File**  
Merges the variables of an existing Tag File (your previously saved, other user's shared, or public) with the variables tagged in your current tag file.
- **Unmerge Tag File**  
Unmerges (removes) all variables in an existing Tag File (your previously saved, other user's shared, or public) from your current tag file.
- **Delete Tag File(s)**  
Allows you to delete your previously saved Tag Files.

### Shared Tag Files

By default, the tag files you create can only be used with your EDAT login ID and password. You can make a tag file accessible to others by going to the [Tag File Options](#) menu and selecting [Share current tag file](#). It will then be displayed with "(shared)" after the name. You can remove a tag file from public access by going to the Tag File Options menu and selecting [Do Not Share current tag file](#).

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### Start Over

At any time, you may restart your session. To do this, click on the 'Start Over' link at the top, right of the page. This will clear all selections and tag files and return you to the EDAT homepage.

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## Downloading Files

Under the [Download Options](#) menu, you can choose to download both [data files](#) and [syntax files](#) together or you may choose to download them separately (See [Why Do I Need a Syntax File?](#)).

Although you may only download a syntax file after you have selected variables, it is not necessary to select variables to download a data file by itself. It is only necessary to download a data file one time. Any syntax file you create for a survey component runs against the same data file. Each data file provided by EDAT is the complete set of data (e.g., all populations and variables) for the survey component you selected.

### Download Options

- **Download Data and Syntax Files**

This option allows users to download [data files](#) and [syntax files](#).

- **Download Data, Codebook, and Layout Files**

**IMPORTANT** This option does not include a syntax file. Other than the codebook and layout files provided in this download, there is no guidance for using the dataset.

This option includes only [data files](#).

- **Download Syntax Files**

**IMPORTANT** This option does not include data files. Please download the data files before attempting to use syntax file.

This option includes only [syntax files](#).

If you choose to download syntax files, you will first be shown a list of tag files to be included in your syntax. By default, your current tag file is included. To add more, click 'Add/Remove Tag Files' to view the 'My Tag Files' select box. You may then add or remove tag files by highlighting them and clicking on the  or  buttons as appropriate. When you are ready, click the  button.

**Download Data and Syntax Files**

**Step 1 - Select Tag Files**  
 Step 2 - Select File Format  
 Step 3 - Download ELS Dataset  
 Step 4 - Download Syntax Files

**Tag Files Included**

Tag File 3 (9 variables)

**Tag Files NOT Included**

Tag File 1 (16 variables)  
 Tag File 2 (10 variables)

Download Files - Select Tag Files

In the next step, you will be asked to choose a file format. This will determine the format of any [data files](#) or [syntax files](#) you download.

**Download Data and Syntax Files**

Step 1 - Select Tag Files  
**Step 2 - Select File Format**  
 Step 3 - Download ELS Dataset  
 Step 4 - Download Syntax Files

**Statistical Software Data Files**

SPSS       Stata  
 SAS       R  
 S-Plus       SUDAAN (layout file)

**Generic Format Data Files**

ASCII (layout file)       CSV (layout file)

Prev Step      Next Step      Cancel

Download Files - Select File Format

In the next step, you will be presented with 2 options. The first option is a button that will download the dataset files (compressed into 1 Zip file). A note below this button will describe the number of files and the total size after decompressing (unzipping) the file.

**Download Data and Syntax Files**

Step 1 - Select Tag Files  
 Step 2 - Select File Format  
**Step 3 - Download ELS Dataset**  
 Step 4 - Download Syntax Files

- Click on the button below to download the zip file containing your dataset
- Extract (unzip) the ELS dataset onto your local hard drive (recommended location c:\EDAT\ELS)

For more instructions, [read EDAT Help - Downloading Dataset](#)

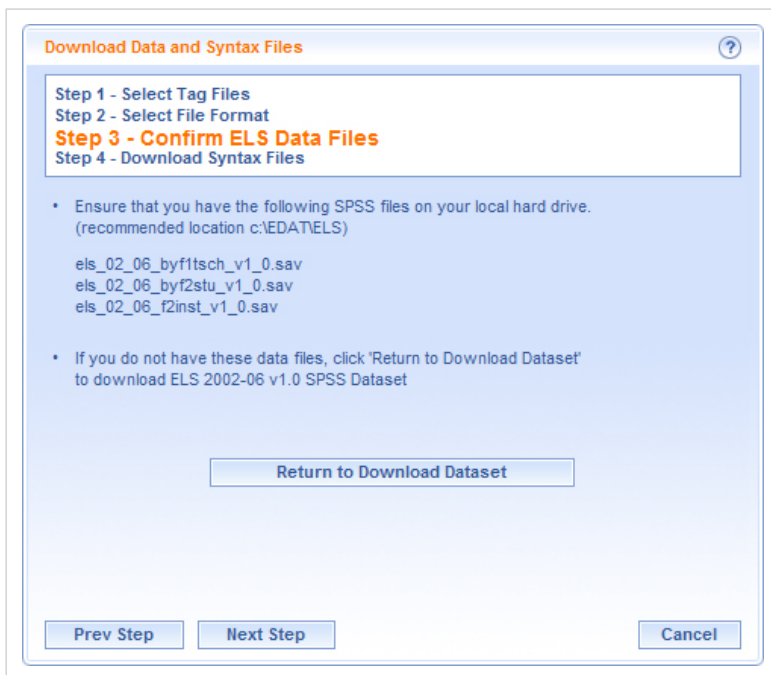
**Download ELS 2002-06 v1.0 SPSS Dataset (ZIP 11.1 MB)**  
 Decompressed (unzipped) - 3 files (52.91 MB)

**Already have these data files?**  
[Click to ensure that you have the data files on your local hard drive](#)

Prev Step      Next Step      Cancel

Download Files - Download Datasets

If you have already downloaded the dataset to your current computer, click the link below the download button. You will be asked to ensure that you have the necessary dataset files on your local hard drive (the file names will be displayed).



Download Files - Confirm Datasets

If you have not previously downloaded the necessary dataset files, you will need to download a Zip file containing the dataset and save it on your local hard drive. The dialogue box you see when downloading will look something like this. Click 'Save'.



File Download

Note: The file type may be different depending on your configuration. The file size may be different depending on the version of the file.

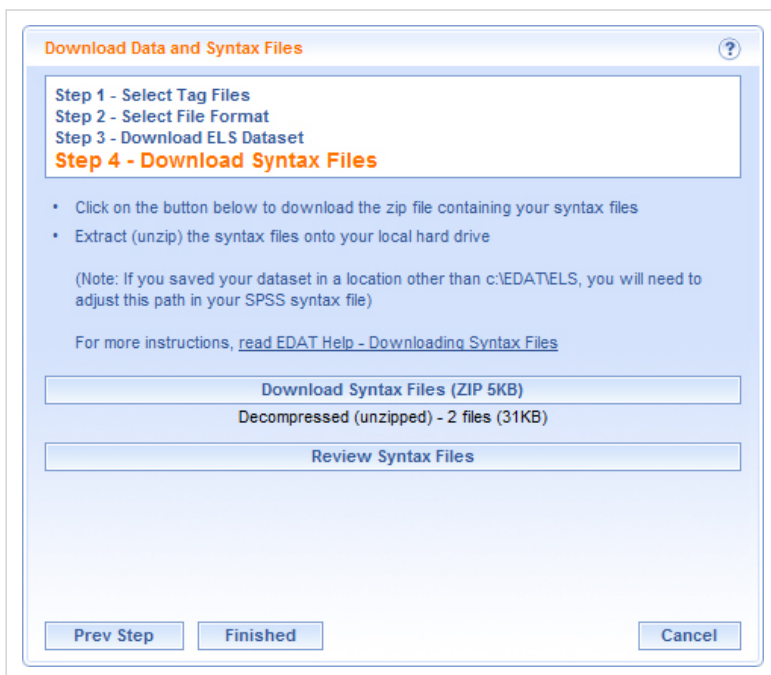
Your system will then ask where you want to save the file. It is recommended that you save the file to the folder "C:\EDAT\[Survey Name]". In the example below, the survey name is ELS. If you save this file in a location other than C:\EDAT\ELS, you will need to edit your syntax files accordingly.



Save As

When you have successfully downloaded the dataset, click the Next Step button to Download Syntax Files.

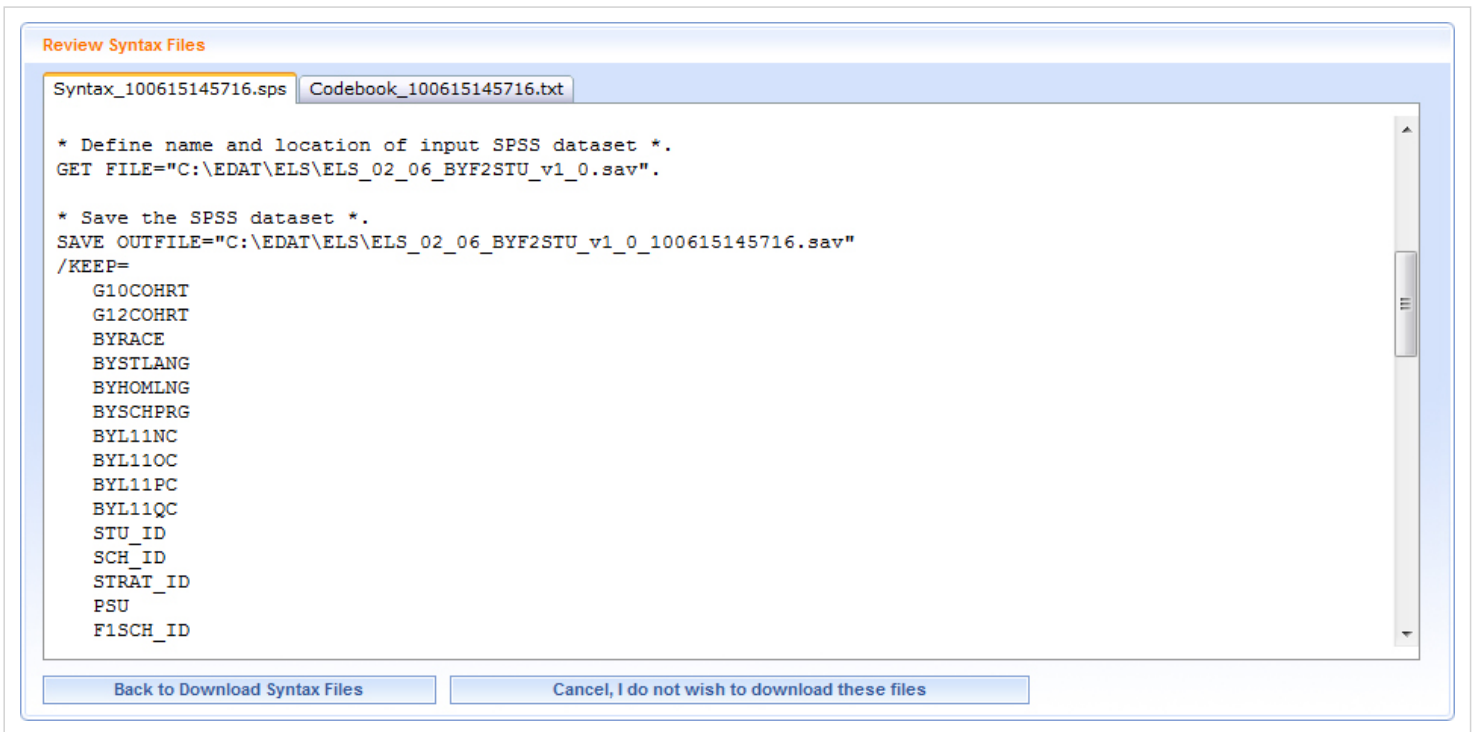
In this Step, you will download the syntax and/or documentation files.



Create Syntax Files - Download Syntax Files

### Reviewing Your Syntax Files

Before downloading your syntax files, you may want to review the file contents. To do this, click the [Review Syntax Files](#) button. Each of the files contained in the zip file will be displayed in their own tab. If you are satisfied with your syntax files, click the [Back to Download Syntax Files](#) button. Otherwise, to return to the selected variables screen, click the [Cancel, I do not wish to download these files](#) button.



Review Syntax Files

### Downloading Your Syntax Files

The syntax files are files written in the syntax of your selected statistical software. The download dialogue is the same as that for the dataset. You may save it anywhere as long as this location has access to the location of your dataset. After downloading the system and syntax files, you will need to decompress (or [unzip](#)) them both before using them.

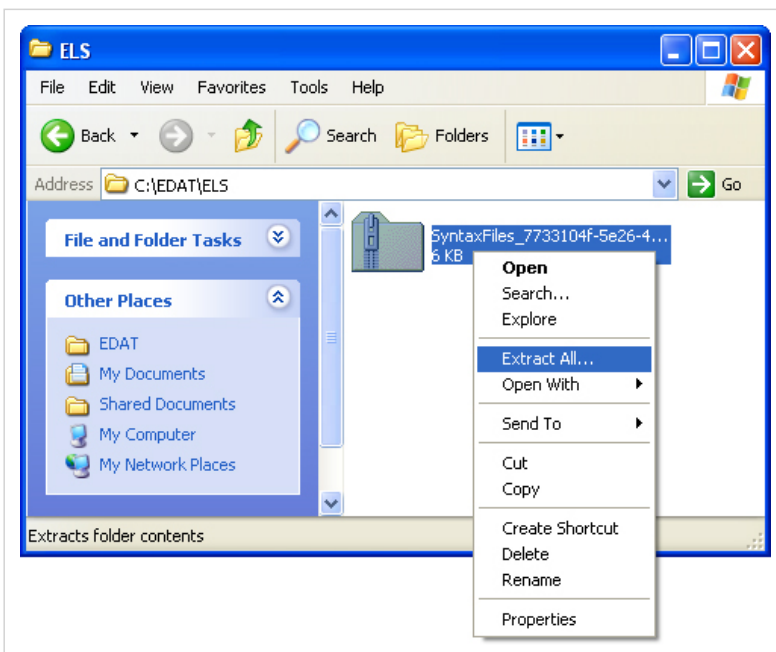
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## Unzipping a File

### Unzipping with Windows

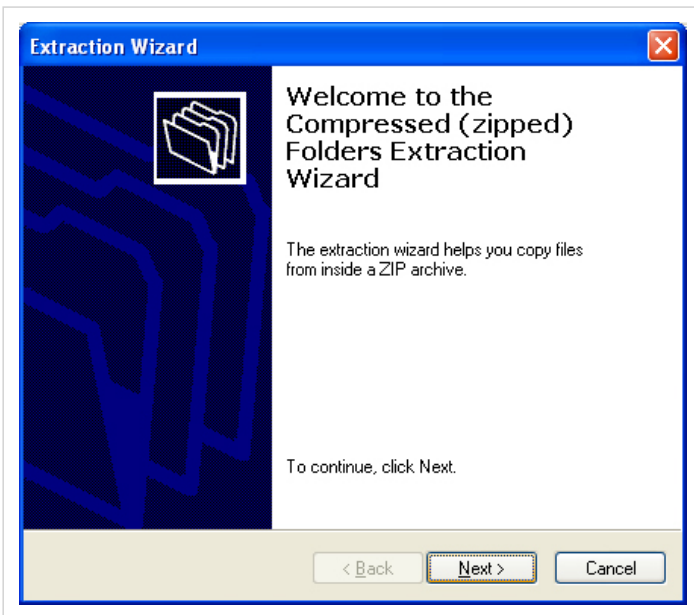
NOTE - System configurations vary. Your experience may be slightly different.

Locate your zip file on your local hard drive. Right-click the zip file and select 'Extract All'.



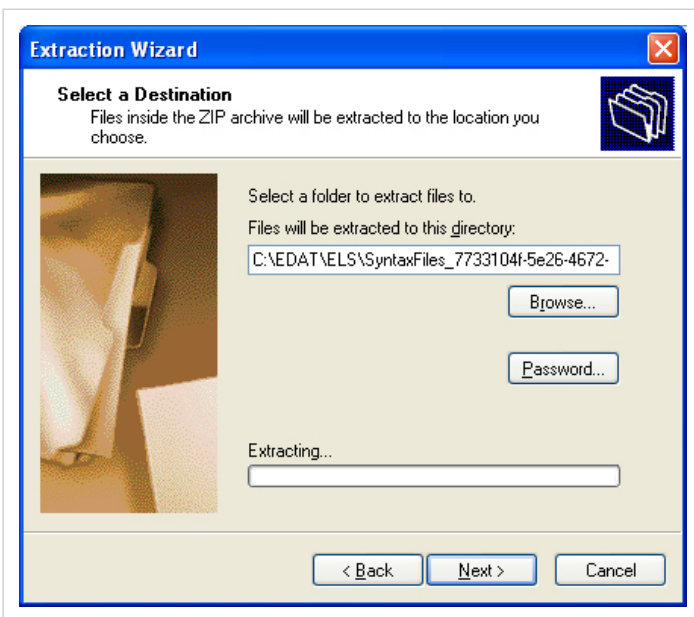
Right-Click File and Click Extract All

The Windows Extraction Wizard will appear. Click 'Next'.



Extraction Wizard

On the 'Select a Destination' screen, the default destination folder will have the same name as the zip file (see below).



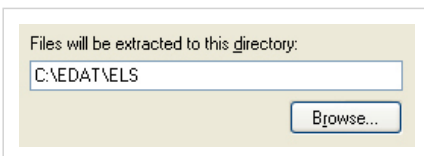
Extraction Wizard - Select a Destination

Delete the default folder name from the destination directory, leaving ONLY the location of the file (see below).

Example:

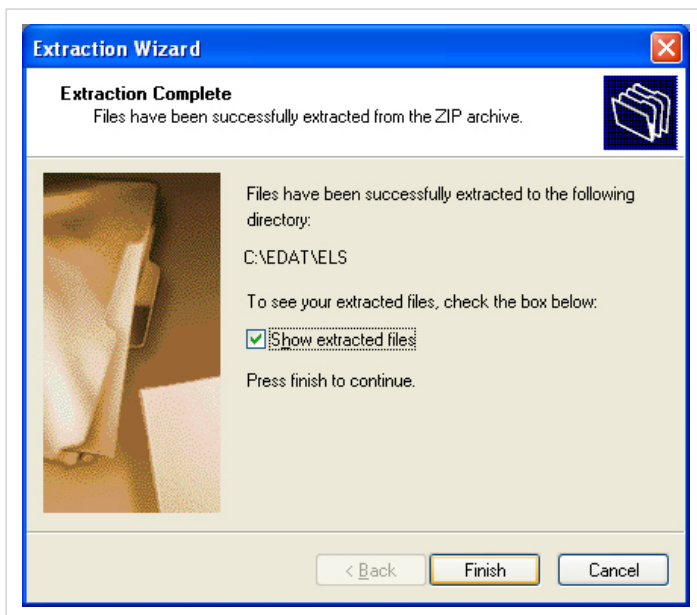
Location including default folder: C:\EDAT\ELS\SyntaxFiles\_7733104f-5e26-4672-bb7c-58682c1257c7

Location after deleting default folder: C:\EDAT\ELS



Extraction Wizard - After Deleting Default Folder From Destination

Click 'Next'.



Extraction Wizard - Finish

Click 'Finish'. Your files are now unzipped. You may delete your Zip file if you wish.

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### Syntax File Problems

If you are having problems with your syntax files, please check the following common problems

#### **Make sure your datasets are in the same location as referenced in your syntax files**

Please open your syntax files to ensure that they are referencing the correct location on your local computer (recommended location is C:\EDAT\[Survey Name]).

#### **Make sure you have the correct dataset version**

The dataset file(s) referenced in your syntax file(s) will be the newest version available. Please open your syntax files to ensure that they are referencing the dataset filename located on your local computer (recommended location is C:\EDAT\[Survey Name]).

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### Contact EDAT Support

If you are having problems using EDAT that cannot be solved by the EDAT Help, please contact [Elise Christopher](#).

If you have questions or issues regarding the survey data or finding the best variables for your research, please contact the appropriate person for your chosen survey.

Survey	Description	Contact
ECLS-K	Early Childhood Longitudinal Study - Kindergarten Class of 1998-99	<a href="#">Gail Mulligan</a>
ELS	Education Longitudinal Study of 2002	<a href="#">Elise Christopher</a>
HSLs	High School Longitudinal Study of 2009	<a href="#">Elise Christopher</a>
NELS	National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988	<a href="#">Elise Christopher</a>
NHES	National Household Education Survey	<a href="#">Sarah Grady</a>
SASS	Schools and Staffing and Teacher Follow-up Surveys	<a href="#">Andrew Zukerberg</a>
SSOCS	School Survey on Crime and Safety	<a href="#">Rachel Hansen</a>

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