

## Quick Guide to Preparing Your Data for Analysis

Before we begin any analysis, it's important that the data is structured and tidy. Clean data ensures you get the most out of your analysis. We've listed some tips below to ensure your dataset is analysis-ready.

### Top 5 Data Cleaning Tips

#### 1. Use a Clean Layout

- Each row = one observation/record/subject
- Each column = one variable

#### 2. Be Consistent

- Use consistent formatting for dates, codes and categories
- E.g. don't mix "Yes", "Y", "yes", "1" - pick one format

#### 3. Name Things Clearly

- Avoid spaces or special characters in file/column names
- Make sure column names are unique
- Use names like Age\_Group instead of Age Group
- Use standard labels for missing values (e.g., NA)

#### 4. Avoid Formatting Tricks

- Don't use colour, bold text or merged cells to communicate meaning
- Instead, use an extra column to indicate categories, flags or special notes

#### 5. Remove Clutter

- Delete blank rows/columns
- Remove duplicate entries and irrelevant metadata

### Data Privacy Reminder

Please ensure your data is anonymised before sharing it with us. If you need to share personal data, a Data Transfer Agreement will need to be organised. If you're unsure, we're happy to advise you before you send it.

### Need More Help?

We provide hands-on support for clients who need help cleaning or preparing their data. We can also perform the data cleaning process for you. Get in touch with us if you would like access to our full Data Cleaning Guide. This is a detailed, practical document that walks you through every step of cleaning and structuring your data for analysis.