



Introduction

This document is one of two volumes that together provide complete reference information for language features in Version 7 and Version 8 of base SAS software:

- *SAS Language Reference: Dictionary*
- *SAS Language Reference: Concepts*.

SAS Language Reference: Dictionary provides detailed reference information for the six major language elements of base SAS software:

- data set options
- formats
- functions and CALL routines
- informats
- statements
- SAS system options.

It also includes additional "look-up" information in three appendices on the following topics:

- SAS rules for words and names
- SAS operators
- the DATA step debugger.

SAS Language Reference: Concepts covers conceptual information about the SAS System and the SAS language, including the DATA step. It provides detailed information in three categories:

- the SAS System:
 - primary language elements: data set options, formats, functions, informats, statements, and SAS system options
 - BY-group processing
 - WHERE-expression processing
 - SAS expressions
 - SAS listing and log files
 - external files
 - error processing and debugging
 - date and time values
 - the year 2000.
- the DATA step:
 - DATA step processing
 - reading raw data

- combining and modifying SAS data sets
- array processing
- storing and compiling DATA steps.
- SAS files:
 - SAS data libraries
 - SAS data sets: SAS data files and SAS data views
 - file compatibility between Version 8 and earlier releases of base SAS software.
 - SAS data views
 - file protection
 - dictionary tables and access descriptors
 - SAS catalogs.