

How to Get the Online Information You Need: An Overview of "What's Where" for SAS® System Help, SAS Online Doc®, SAS Online Tutor®, and the Web

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Abstract

This paper describes where to look for information about the SAS® System, Version 8. Books and SAS OnlineDoc®, the SAS Help system, SAS Online Tutor™, Books by Users, Solutions@Work®, and the Publications Home page are discussed.

SAS OnlineDoc

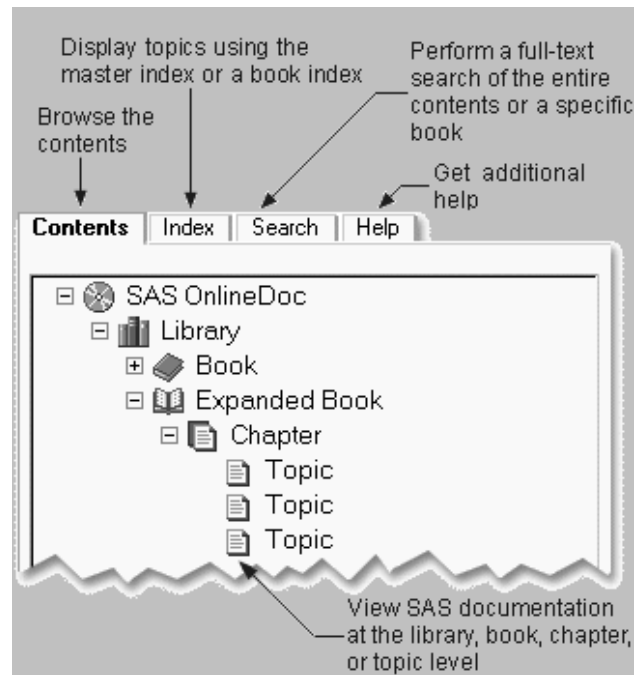
SAS OnlineDoc contains the reference information that you need in order to use the SAS System. For example, it includes descriptions of functions, statements, and procedures; documentation for specific operating environments; and (where applicable) information about basic SAS tasks and concepts. In other words, SAS OnlineDoc contains the type of "dictionary style" information that has proved most useful and easiest to use in an online format. *Version 8 SAS OnlineDoc* also includes User's Guides and Administrator's Guides for some products.

SAS OnlineDoc increases the efficiency of your entire organization by giving every user at your site access to the most current edition of SAS System reference documentation at no additional cost to your organization. It is designed for use on your internal web, or you can access it directly from a local CD-ROM drive on a PC.

In a Java-enabled browser environment, SAS OnlineDoc provides a search engine that has full-text search capabilities, as well as a detailed table of contents and index. A plain HTML interface is also available for use in browsers that are not Java-enabled.

A Quick Tour of SAS OnlineDoc

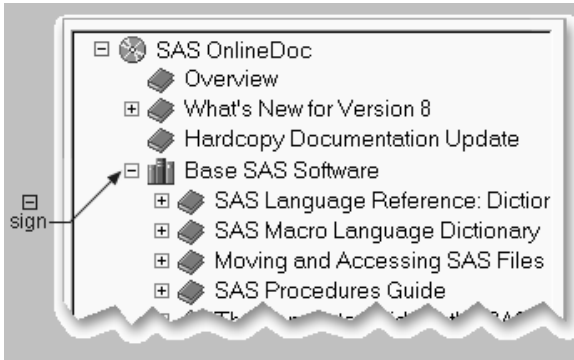
SAS OnlineDoc enables you to access SAS documentation through a variety of ways: a table of contents, an index, or a full-text search.



Contents Tab You can browse the table of contents for the books by selecting the **Contents** tab. Select the + sign to expand the table of contents.



Select the - sign to contract the table of contents.



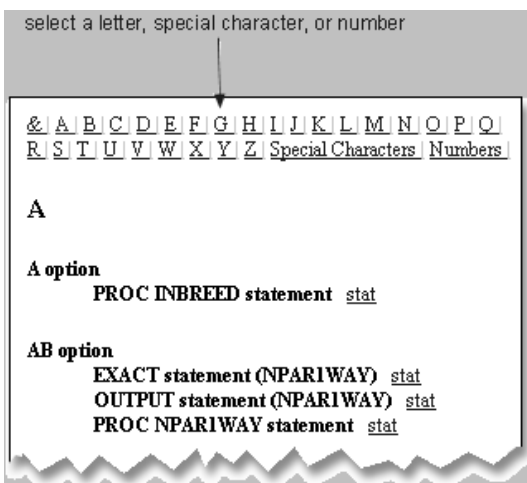
Index Tab The **Index** tab gives you access to either a master index to all of the books in SAS OnlineDoc or to a book-specific index.

To access the Master Index, select the **Index** tab.



If you want to display an index for a specific book, use **Index for ...** to select the book.

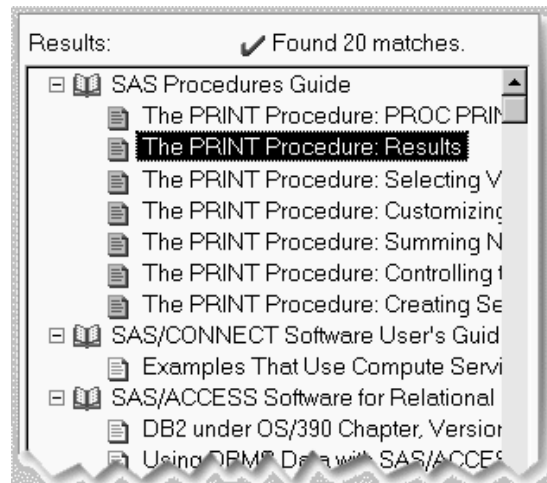
The index appears in the window that displays the documents.



Search Tab The **Search** tab gives you access to full-text searching across all of the SAS OnlineDoc books. Select the **Search** tab and enter the words you want to search for in the Words field.



Click **Search** to see a list of items that match the search criteria. The first item in the list appears in the window that displays the document.



Just the FAQs, Ma'am

- How many books are on the *SAS Online Doc, Version 8 CD*?
55 books, over 21,000 pages of reference documentation
- What is "reference" information?
Reference information contains descriptions of SAS language elements, product interfaces, as well as concept information.
- How much is it?
Free with your Version 8 software. If you want to purchase *SAS OnlineDoc with PDF Files*, it can be ordered from Fulfillment Services, 1-800-727-3228 (U.S. only), or call your local SAS office.
- What are the requirements for *SAS OnlineDoc, Version 8 with PDF Files*?

SAS OnlineDoc has the same browser requirements as the html version has, and we strongly recommend using the Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.0, which is a new release and can be downloaded in about 3 minutes from the Adobe Web site at www.adobe.com

- How can I distribute SAS OnlineDoc?
SAS OnlineDoc can be distributed at your site in the same manner and to the same extent as you are authorized to copy and distribute SAS software. SAS OnlineDoc can be accessed from your CD-ROM drive or installed on your company Intranet.
- Can I get the books on the CD-ROM in hard copy?
Yes. Call Fulfillment Services 1-800-727-3228 (U.S. only) or your local SAS office.
Exception: SAS/AF Class Dictionary is not available in hard copy. However, it is in Help and on the CD.
- Will any hard copy books be shipped with Version 8?
Yes, you will receive *Getting Started with the SAS System*, *The Little SAS Book: A Primer, Second Edition*, and *Painless Windows: A Handbook for SAS Users, Second Edition* (WIN sites only).
- How big is SAS OnlineDoc, Version 8?
It is about 335 meg
- Can I load just the books I need?
No, you must load the entire CD.
- Do I need to have SAS running to use the CD?
No.
- Can I make bookmarks and annotations?
No. You cannot bookmark within the SAS OnlineDoc CD, but you can make a shortcut using your browser. Go to the information you want to mark. Right-click and make a shortcut to your desktop. You can rename your shortcut on your desktop, and use that as your bookmark
- Can I cut and paste from the CD to my SAS session?
Yes. Some users have had trouble with text wrap. You might want to experiment with it.
- Are there PDF files so I can print chapters?
You can purchase *SAS OnlineDoc, Version 8 With PDF Files* and print specific chapters from the PDF files on the CD-ROM or you can print all the chapters to make your own book. When you order this product, you get both the HTML and PDF files - two CDs.
- Who should order the EBCDIC version?
Users who are at a 'pure' mainframe site. In other words, they do not access SAS from the desktop. Most mainframe sites access the mainframe by using a PC or UNIX.

SAS System Help

SAS System Help contains a wealth of information about SAS software products. This information varies from product to product -

- Some products, such as SAS/GIS[®], SAS/EIS[®], and SAS/ASSIST[®], have tutorials.
- Products that are procedural code-based, such as base SAS and Macro language, have the basic syntax elements for the language.
- Object-oriented languages and application-building languages, such as SAS/AF[®], have the full reference information for each class and method in Help.

Information offered in the SAS Help System also includes access to

- SAS OnlineDoc
- sample SAS programs and applications
- using SAS solutions and tools
- a complete listing of SAS products
- how to get help after you are within a SAS product
- SAS User Support.

Feature Set

SAS System Help contains a rich feature set for both Java-enabled and non-Java enabled browsers. (You can check your browser "Options" or "Preferences" to determine if your browser supports Java). For Java-enabled browsers, there is an applet-driven interface that consists of

- a navigation bar frame (forward, backward, reload, print topic, close)
- a frame that facilitates accessing the contents, index, and search facilities
- a topics frame that contains the actual Help text.

The non-Java interface is similar, however, there is only an HTML version of the TOC and Index. There is no Search facility.

The Navigation Bar The navigation bar has features that help provide context as you move through Help System information:

- *Backward*: displays the topic previously displayed in the frame.
- *Forward*: displays the topic that immediately follows the current topic in the history list.

- *Reload*: the frame returns to the initial display prior to any topic expansion.
- *Print topic*: causes the topic in the "topic frame" to be sent to the printer.
- *Close*: closes the browser window.

Contents, Index, and Search Help provides access through a variety of ways: a table of contents, an index, or a full-text search.

- *Contents* information is provided in the "TOC" tab for the window. Here you can browse a list of topics about SAS products and product areas.
- *Index* is synonymous with keyword search for topics. Upon start-up, the SAS System Help main index is displayed. Using the "Index For..." push button, you can choose to display a different, product-specific index on this tab. You may also find specific portions of an index and request a keyword listing of all keywords for a specific index.
- *Search* enables full-text searching for Help System product topics. The search navigates through all the text for the selected Help product. A later version of Help will provide searching across the entire Help System.

Mainframe Systems

The Help System is available for our mainframe users by means of a mainframe host browser used specifically with SAS software. Access to Help information is offered in the context of the interface functionality that is available for mainframes. (If you are accessing the SAS System from a Windows client by using a mainframe server, then, of course, help will appear as noted in the Feature Set section.)

National Language Support

The Help System is translated into several languages. This is an important effort designed to provide our worldwide customers with software and information in selected non-English languages.

SAS OnlineTutor for Version 8

SAS OnlineTutor for Version 8 is the next generation of SAS System training. This new product brings training to your desktop and requires only a standard Web browser. Course content is designed specifically for Version 8 SAS software. If you have Version 8 installed at your site, you have the added benefit of guided practices that enable you to practice in the SAS environment. The SAS OnlineTutor programming course contains 35 lessons that teach you how to use the SAS environment and write programming

code to access, manage, analyze, and present data. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced SAS programmer, SAS OnlineTutor has lessons for you, ranging from basic concepts to features such as producing drill-down graphs and customized tables with enhanced HTML output. You can take these lessons right now. SAS OnlineTutor offers you the training that you need, when you need it, at your own pace.

SAS OnlineTutor provides you with

- 50-60 hours of training that is appropriate for all SAS platforms
- graphics and functionality designed for fast Web delivery cost-effective training
- a way to strengthen your instructor-based training experience
- an easy-to-use browser-based interface
- guided learning paths to fit your level of expertise
- an expandable table of contents
- a full-text search facility
- interactive questions and feedback
- guided practices and data so you can work in your own SAS environment (if you have SAS System Version 8 installed)
- a video overview of the SAS System
- a "Resume" button to return where you left off
- quizzes at the end of lessons to measure your mastery
- access to our "Ask the Experts" Q+A site.

Certification

The Institute recently introduced a global Certification program. Of the many ways to prepare for the certification exams, consider the new, Web-based SAS Certified Professional Training Guide. Here's why -

1. Focus on exam objectives

The *SAS Certified Professional Training Guide, Version 6* is the only training guide from the professionals at SAS Institute. It is designed to teach you the objectives that are covered in the SAS Certified Professional V6 Exam (A00-001).

2. Stay productive while you study

You can learn at your own pace and at your own convenience. You will have more time to spend on your job and with your customers.

3. Practice what you learn

In addition to covering all the exam objectives, the *SAS Certified Professional Training Guide*

provides real-world guided practices that enable you to practice skills in your actual SAS software environment (if you have installed one of Releases 6.07 through 6.12 of SAS software, Version 6.). Practicing in this context promotes long-term retention of knowledge and enables you to apply what you've learned.

4. Get ready - stay ready

Get ready to take the first-level certification exam by using the *SAS Certified Professional Training Guide, Version 6*. As a SAS Certified Professional, you have successfully transformed your knowledge of SAS software into globally recognized credentials. As the demand for IT professionals grows, you're ready to increase your career opportunities and marketability to employers worldwide.

The SAS Certification Training Guide is available at www.sas.com/certguide.

On the Web: www.sas.com/pubs

www.sas.com/pubs is the one address for your SAS documentation needs. If it's published at SAS, it's available at **/pubs**. The Web will be the primary vehicle through which you can find out about the latest published information from SAS. Given the fluid nature of the Web, the information found at **/pubs** will change over time, however, at the time of publishing this paper, the **/pubs** site is divided into three primary groups:

- *Online Information*
- *Services*
- *Publications Catalog*

Online Information is the location where you will find the published information that can be downloaded, or accessed or read directly from the Web. In addition, we provide links to various pages within the SAS site where you can find published information from other resources at SAS (such as, Sample Programs from Technical Support; R&D information from the developers, and SUGI papers).

Services is where you will find details about publishing with us (the Books by Users (BBU) program). Real-time order tracking and information about online ordering are also available in the *Services* section.

A feature of the *Services* section is *SelecText*, our custom publishing program. *SelecText* is available to college professors interested in creating custom text books for use in the classroom.

The Web-based *Publications Catalog* is the other major heading. Available in 27 different countries, you can order the latest books from SAS Institute, read a book review, learn about an author, or simply browse the documentation that is available for your products.

Two new features will be added in the year 2000. *Bargain Books* will go "live" in February, 2000. Books that are returned to our warehouse will be made available for purchase at a 50

Also new for 2000 will be a feature that lets you see only the products and services that relate to your area of interest. Simply register within the catalog to personalize your view of our products and services.

The Web continues to be the primary focus for providing customers with the most current and complete information about documentation from SAS Institute.

For hard copy books, there is no better place than the Books by Users (BBU) program. An in-house publishing effort, the BBU program has published more than 60 books and has established the Institute as leader in computer book publishing.

In summary, our goal for the future is to provide complete flexibility in your documentation options. We want you to have the information that you need, when you need it, and in your choice of format or delivery mechanism.

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