

2.1: Why jamovi?

The open-source (meaning free!) software, jamovi, offers statistical analysis. It is user-friendly and intuitive but sophisticated enough to allow for advanced analyses and sophisticated data transformation and recording.

It is now being used in a lot of undergraduate statistics programs and is being adopted by many universities.

How is it Different from SPSS and Other Statistical Software out There?

SPSS, developed by IBM, is a very common statistical software that many universities use for their programs. I went through my undergraduate program using SPSS, and while I am well-versed with this software, its pricing makes me wince. As an educator who promotes open knowledge, getting students to pay for statistical software does not align with my values.

The business model for SPSS and most statistical software companies is to sell “student versions” of their software at a low price and then charge a high price for “educational versions” and even higher prices for commercial licenses (Navarro and Foxcroft, 2022).^[1] This can lead to students becoming reliant on these tools and feeling obligated to continue paying high fees after they graduate. One way to avoid this is by using open-source software like jamovi, which is free and does not require payment of licensing fees.

How is it Different from R (a Statistical Programming Language)?

I know some students would be horrified if I asked them to code AND learn statistics. While I believe that coding and programming are the best ways to learn statistics, I don’t want to add to the mental load that students already experience when learning statistics.

As a graphical statistical spreadsheet, jamovi is different from R, which is a programming language. However, jamovi and R are compatible because the analyses in jamovi are written in R. In fact, users can switch to “syntax mode” in jamovi to view the equivalent R code for the analyses, or they can use the Rj editor to type and run R code directly within the spreadsheet. This feature is useful for those who want to transition from using a spreadsheet to learning R. Overall, jamovi is a good starting point for those who prefer a graphical spreadsheet but are interested in learning R.

To change to syntax mode, select the Application menu at the top right of jamovi (a button with three vertical dots) and click the “Syntax mode” checkbox there. You can turn off syntax mode by clicking this a second time.

In syntax mode, analyses continue to operate as before but now they produce R syntax and ‘ASCII output’ like an R session. Like all results objects in jamovi, you can right-click on these items (including the R syntax) and copy and paste them, for example, into an R session. At present, the provided R syntax does not include the data import step, so this must be performed manually in R. There are many resources explaining how to import data into R and if you are interested we recommend you take a look at these – just search on the interweb.

Chapter attribution

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1. Navarro, D. J., & Foxcroft, D. R. (2022). *Learning statistics with jamovi: A tutorial for psychology students and other beginners* (Version 0.75). <https://doi.org/10.24384/hgc3-7p15> ↵
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