

Characters to Numbers in SAS¹

It is possible to create numeric variables out of character variables. Following is an example of how to do this with SAS.

```
* numchar.sas ;
data one ; input charvar1 $;
cards ;
0039504383
01
X
10
;
data two ; set one ;
** Initialize a variable as a number by assigning it a numeric missing value "." ;
** Next assign it the values in your character variable ;
** Note that variables that have non-numeric values will
** be given missing values. This is true for for any case
** that has any character "0" instead of the number "0". ;
** Also note that preceding zeros will be dropped. ;
numvar1 = . ;
numvar1 = charvar1 ;
proc print ; run ;
```

You will get the following message when a non-numeric value is encountered.

NOTE: Character values have been converted to numeric values at the places given by:

(Line):(Column).

86:11

NOTE: Invalid numeric data, charvar1='01' , at line 86 column 11.

charvar1=01 numvar1=. _ERROR_=1 _N_=2

NOTE: Invalid numeric data, charvar1='X' , at line 86 column 11.

charvar1=X numvar1=. _ERROR_=1 _N_=3

NOTE: There were 4 observations read from the data set WORK.ONE.

The output for this program follows.

| Obs | charvar1 | numvar1 |
|-----|----------|---------|
| 1 | 00395043 | 395043 |
| 2 | 01 | . |
| 3 | X | . |
| 4 | 10 | 10 |

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