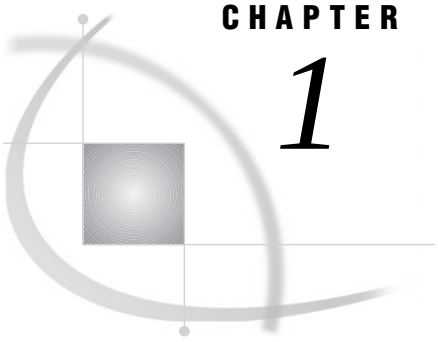

CHAPTER

1

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.

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