

What is VALS?

VALS (Values and Lifestyles) is a **segmentation system** designed by Stanford Research Institute (SRI), to **categorize U.S. adult consumers** into mutually exclusive groups **based on their psychology and several key demographics**. 35 VALS statements were **added to the MRI Product Questionnaire starting with Wave 43**. Beginning with the 2000 Fall MRI study, all MRI subscribers have access to the “net agrees” (people who “agree somewhat” OR “agree mostly” with each statement) and “net disagrees” (“disagree somewhat” OR “disagree mostly”) to all the VALS statements.

How Should I Look At the VALS Data?

Use the VALS Weighting

Only about 50% of MRI Respondents answer the VALS Questions, which makes projecting their answers to the general population more complicated than it would be otherwise. When looking at responses to VALS statements, it is only appropriate to include VALS respondents in the analysis, but we still need those respondents to predict the behavior of the entire adult population. **The solution? Recalculate the weights for the VALS respondents so that they make up the difference.** So if only half the respondents answer the VALS questions, their weightings must be, on average, twice as high to scale to the same number of adults.

To address this issue, **a special weight scheme has been made available** in your software that enables the relatively small number of VALS respondents to project to the entire adult population. **Make sure you use this weight scheme** whenever you work with VALS data.

Use the VALS Base

The crosstab paradigm has three dimensions: bases, columns and rows. Rows and columns are easy for most people to visualize and understand, but bases are less often used and commonly misunderstood.

Choosing a base other than “all” in Crosstab **restricts the unweighted respondents** displayed in the upper left-hand corner of the Crosstab. This **reduces the base projected count (000)**, which is **the basis for all vertical percentages, horizontal percentages and indices** calculated on that Crosstab view.

Choosing the VALS weighting ensures that the non-VALS respondents do not influence the projected (000) counts. However, it **does not remove non-VALS respondents** from the unweighted counts – for that, **you must change the base to include only the VALS respondents**. **If you don’t, you may end up using unstable data** without realizing it.

How Will the Numbers Be Affected If I Use the Wrong Weight and/or Base?

The table below demonstrates the results that the different weight/base combinations have on the numbers.

Statement: "I am often interested in theories"

Selected Weight	Selected Base	Average Weight	Base Unwgt'd	Base (000)	Agree Unwgt'd	Agree (000)	Agree %
Population (000)	All	7804	26120 ×	203836 ✓	8091 ✓	60355 ×	29.61 ×
Population (000)	VALS	7949	13370 ✓	106284 ×	8091 ✓	60355 ×	56.79 ×
VALS	All	7804	26120 ×	203836 ✓	8091 ✓	117697 ✓	57.74 ✓
VALS	VALS	15246	13370 ✓	203836 ✓	8091 ✓	117697 ✓	57.74 ✓

2002 Spring MRI

WEIGHT: POPULATION (000), BASE: ALL

This is **the default weight-base combination** when dealing with MRI data, but it is **not appropriate when dealing with VALS data**, for two reasons: (1) the base **includes MRI respondents who are not VALS respondents** (making some things appear to be stable that really aren't), and (2) **the weightings for the VALS respondents** (based on projecting to all adults from the larger base of respondents) **are lower than they need to be to project to the general population.**

WEIGHT: POPULATION (000), BASE: VALS:

If we screen out the non-VALS respondents, we see the **correct number of respondents, but the wrong base (000) value**, since the weights were designed to project a larger base of respondents to the same goal. The agree (000) value is affected in the same direction, but to a slightly different degree, ending in the result of an **incorrect agree % value** of 56.79%.

WEIGHT: VALS, BASE: ALL

By changing the weight, **you get all the correct projected counts, and all percentages that are based on those counts** (such as the 57.74% of people who agree with the statement "I am often interested in theories") **will therefore be correct, too. But the base unweighted count is too high, which means you won't always know when you're working with unstable data.** (Note: to avoid this problem, recent MEMRI² versions – 2.11 and later – automatically "force" the VALS base restriction when you select the VALS weight).

WEIGHT: VALS, BASE: VALS

This is **the correct way to code when using VALS data. All values are correct.** So you can see that based on the answers of 13,370 respondents projecting to 203,836,000 people, 8,091 respondents representing 117,697,000 people, or 57.74% of adults, agree with the statement "I am often interested in theories."

What Additional Data is Available for Subscription?

SRI uses the responses to the statements to create a **proprietary segmentation system**, which is available by **subscription only**. Additional information about the statements and the segmentation system can be found at <http://www.sric-bi.com/VALS/types.shtml>. Anyone interested in subscribing to the segmentation system should **contact an MRI Sales Representative** for more details.

VALS

Include the VALS base c*c-p definition: Card 3 col. 62-1

Population weight - Card 4 Cols. 56-61 (XXXX.XX)
Household weight - Card 14 Cols. 25-30 (XXXX.XX)

Unweighted respondent counts and projected populations are as follows:

	ADULTS	MEN	WOMEN
Unweighted respondents	26,131	12,549	13,582
Projected respondents	213,310,000	102,477,000	110,832,000
Total			
Projected households	111,745,000		

VALS Source Questions

- 7 Agree
- 8 Disagree

- 146 *45 I am often interested in theories.
- *46 I like outrageous people and things.
- *47 I like a lot of variety in my life.
- *48 I love to make things I can use everyday.
- *49 I follow the latest trends and fashions.
- *50 Just as the Bible says, the world literally was created in six days.
- *51 I like being in charge of a group.
- *52 I like to learn about art, culture, and history.
- *53 I often crave excitement.
- *54 I am really interested in only a few things.
- *55 I would rather make something than buy it.
- *56 I dress more fashionably than most people.
- *57 The federal government should encourage prayer in public schools.
- *58 I have more ability than most people.
- *59 I consider myself an intellectual.
- *60 I must admit that I like to show off.
- *61 I like trying new things.
- *62 I am very interested in how mechanical things such as engines work.
- *63 I like to dress in the latest fashions.
- *64 There is too much sex on television today.
- *65 I like to lead others.
- *66 I would like to spend a year or more in a foreign country.
- *67 I like a lot of excitement in my life.
- *68 I must admit that my interests are somewhat narrow and limited.
- *69 I like making things from wood, metal, or other such material.
- *70 I want to be considered fashionable.
- *71 A woman's life is fulfilled only if she can provide a happy home for her family.
- *72 I like the challenge of doing something I have never done before.
- *73 I like to learn about things that may never be of any use to me.
- *74 I like to make things with my hands.
- *75 I am always looking for a new thrill.
- *76 I like doing things that are new and different.
- *77 I like to look through hardware or automotive stores.
- *78 I would like to understand more about how the universe works.
- *79 I like my life to be pretty much the same from week to week.