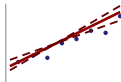


Inference for Slopes

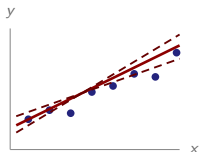
AP Statistics ■ Unit 9

AP Statistics



What we will cover

- 1 The slope is a statistic
- 2 Confidence interval for a slope
- 3 Test for a slope
- 4 Selecting the right procedure



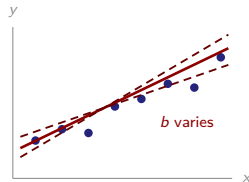


The slope is a statistic

A regression line comes from *one* sample, so the sample **slope** b has a **sampling distribution**.

- true population slope β is fixed but unknown
- b estimates β , bouncing sample to sample

Inference measures the **uncertainty** in b to speak about the **true** relationship.





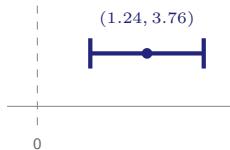
Confidence interval for a slope

Build a t -interval on the true slope β . Check the conditions – **LINER**: **L**inear, **I**ndependent, **N**ormal, **E**qual spread, **R**andom.

$$b \pm t^* \cdot SE_b$$

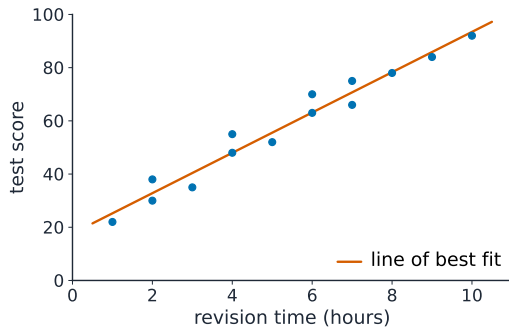
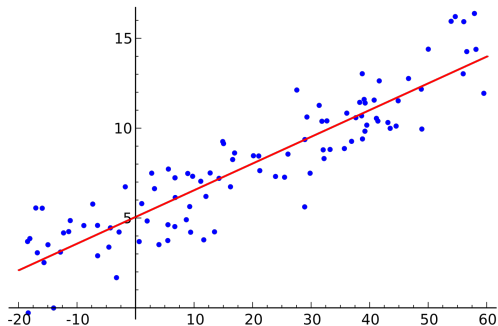
- read b and SE_b from computer output
- $df = n - 2$ (a line uses a and b)

If the interval excludes 0, there is a real linear relationship.



$$b = 2.5, SE_b = 0.6, df = 18.$$

Least-squares regression: the line that minimises



Slope inference is based on the least-squares regression line through the points

Least-squares regression: the line that minimises the sum of squared residuals



Test for a slope

The test asks directly whether the slope is zero:

- **null** $H_0 : \beta = 0$ (no linear relationship)
- **alternative** $H_a : \beta >, <, \text{ or } \neq 0$

$$t = \frac{b}{SE_b}, \quad df = n - 2$$

$\beta = 0$ means a flat line – x has no straight-line effect on y .

Study time

$b = 2.5$, $SE_b = 0.6$, $n = 20$:

$$t = \frac{2.5}{0.6} \approx 4.17$$

$df = 18$, $p \approx 0.0006$: reject – a real linear link.



Selecting the right procedure

The whole course in one decision – read the **type of data** first:

Proportions

categorical: one/two-sample z

Means

quantitative: one/two-sample or paired t

Count tables

χ^2 : fit, homogeneity, independence

Slope

two quantitative vars: t for β

Select the procedure, **implement** with conditions, **communicate** in context.

Choosing the right inference procedure

1. what is estimated a proportion, a mean, a difference, a distribution of counts, or a slope

2. how many samples one, two independent, or paired

3. interval or test an interval estimates a value; a test judges a claim

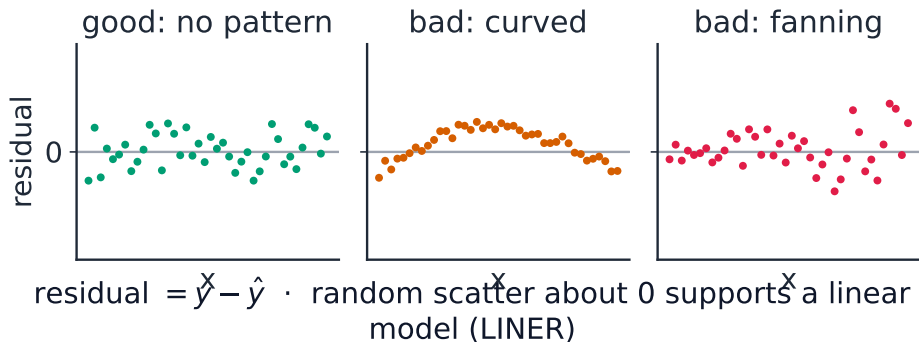
4. which model z for proportions, t for means, χ^2 for counts

5. the conditions random, independent (10% rule), and normal or large enough

then name the procedure explicitly before any calculation

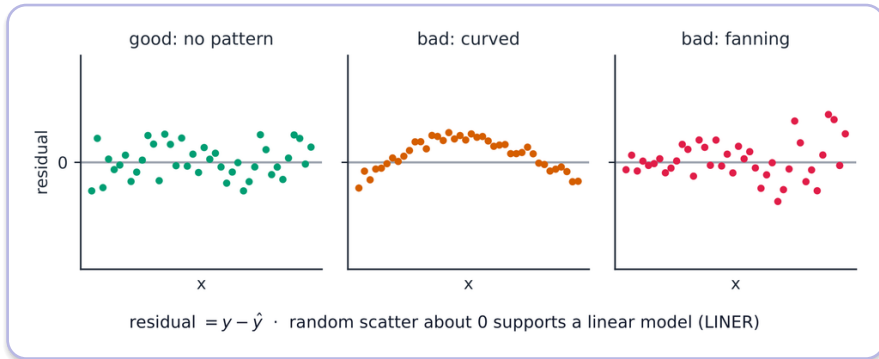
Naming the procedure and checking its conditions is worth marks **before any arithmetic**. On the free-response paper it is often the larger half.

Confidence Interval for a Slope, continued



A random, patternless residual plot supports the conditions; a curve or a fan does not

Setting Up a Test for a Slope



Check residual plots before trusting a slope CI or test

Do Those Points Align?

A sample **scatterplot** gives a **sample slope** b for the least-squares **regression** line – but a different sample would give a slightly different slope.

So b is a statistic with **sampling variability**, estimating the **true (population) slope** β .

Exam tips

- Inference for a **slope** tests whether the true slope is 0 (no linear relationship).
- If a slope's confidence interval **includes 0**, you cannot conclude a real **linear** relationship – the variables may still be related in a curved way.
- Read the slope, standard error, t-statistic, and p-value straight from computer output – but the printed p-value is **two-tailed**, so halve it for a one-tailed H_a .
- Check the regression conditions (linearity, independence, roughly normal residuals, equal spread) via the residual plot.
- Interpret the interval and test in context, tied to the true slope.



Unit 9 – key takeaways

1

Slope varies

b estimates the true slope β ; it has a sampling distribution

2

Interval

$b \pm t^* SE_b$, $df = n - 2$; LINER conditions

3

Test

$H_0 : \beta = 0$; $t = b/SE_b$; excludes 0
 $\Rightarrow$ real link

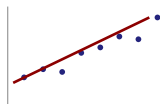
4

Choose

data type picks z , t , χ^2 , or slope- t

Check yourself

- 1 What are the degrees of freedom for a slope t -procedure?
- 2 What does the LINER “E” stand for?
- 3 What null value of β means no linear relationship?
- 4 Two quantitative variables and a relationship: which test?



Answers 1. $n - 2$ 2. Equal spread 3. $\beta = 0$ 4. a t -test for the slope