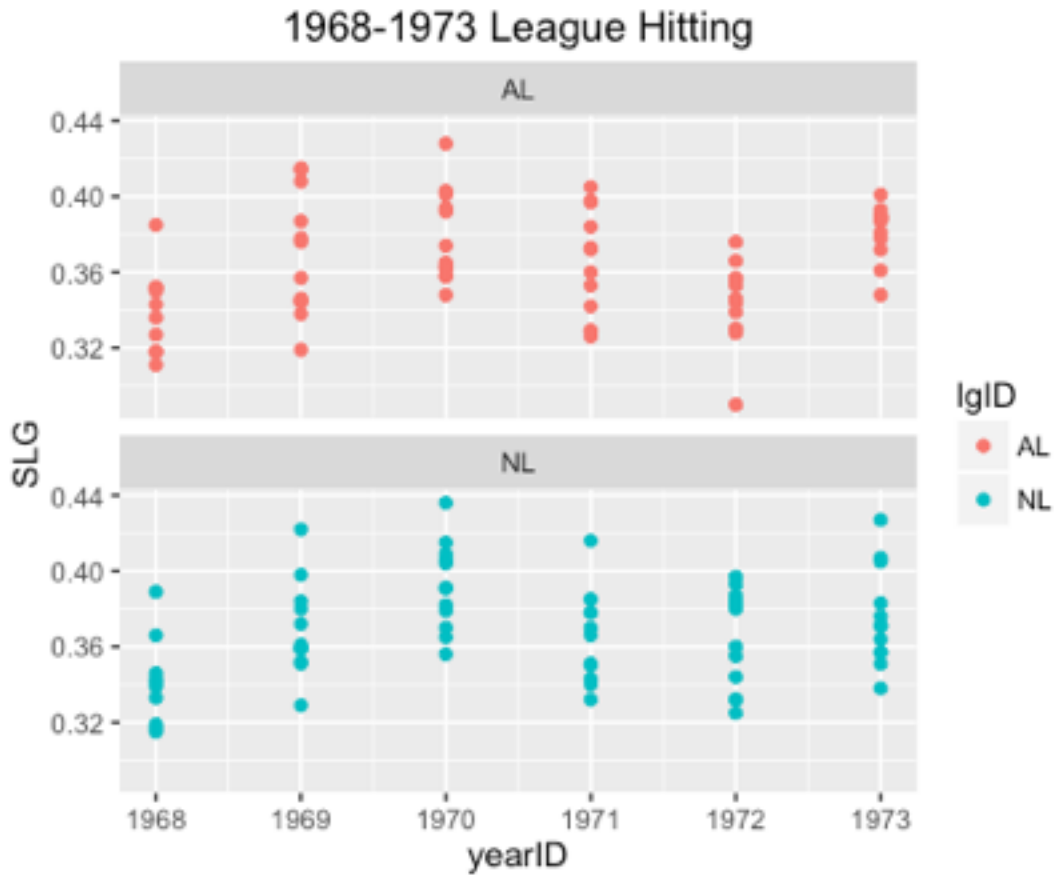


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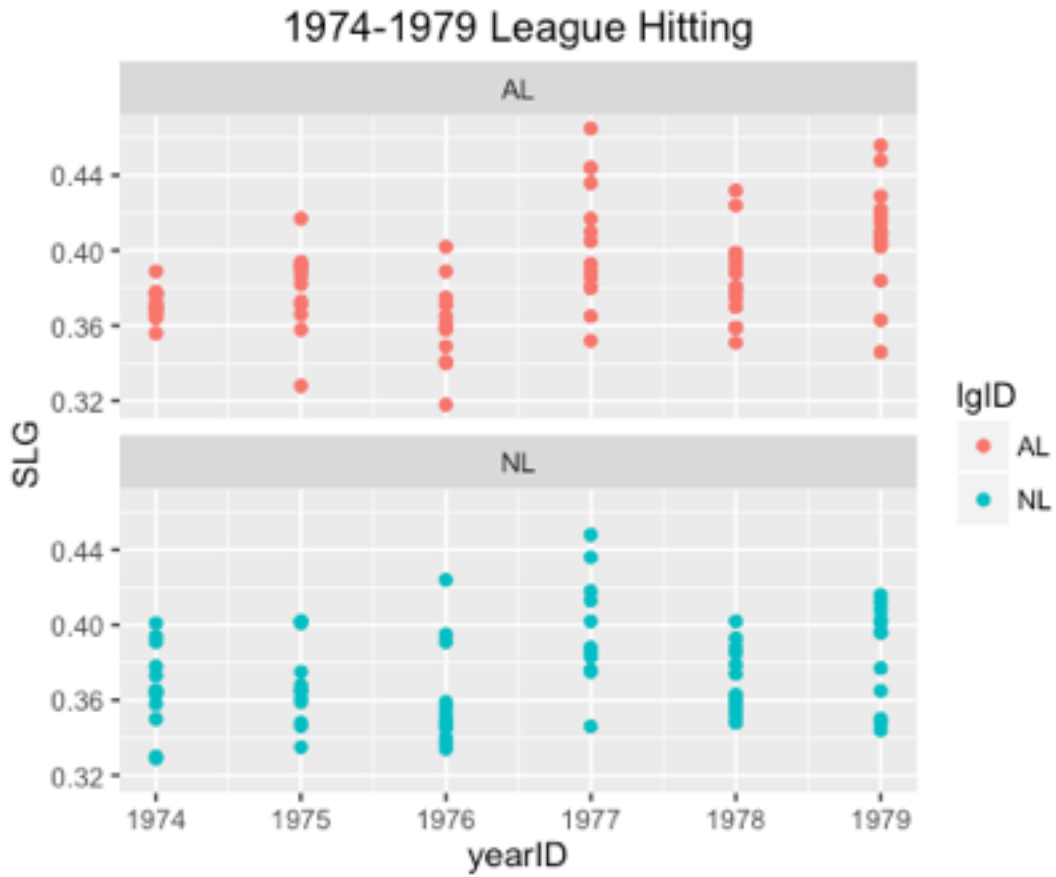
AL vs NL hitting

Introduction:

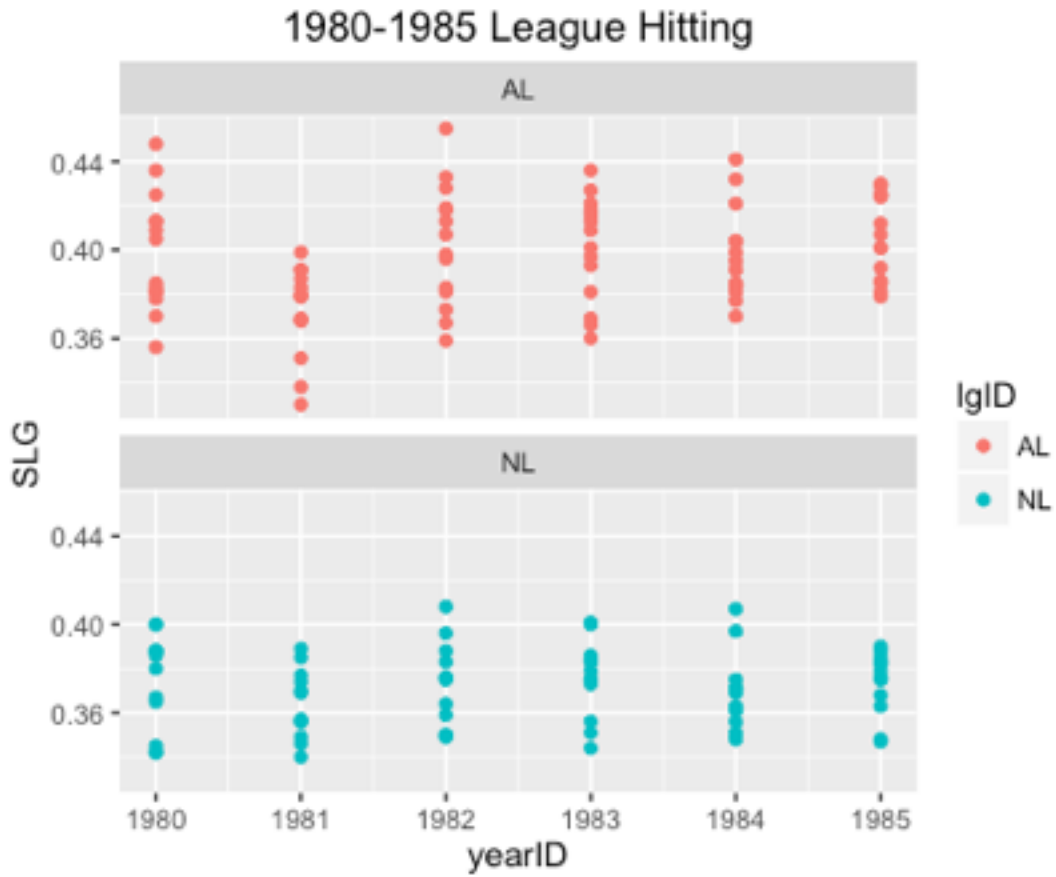
The Designated Hitter (DH) has been a topic of great discussion for many baseball enthusiasts. In a game where hitting is the main source of offense and a key component to a team's success, the DH has developed into an important part of Major League Baseball. The American League instituted the DH in the 1973. Prior to this season both leagues would use their pitchers as hitters in the line-up. In our study we looked at hitting statistics of both leagues six years prior to the year of the DH and continued forward in six-year increments up to 1997. We wanted to see if the DH made any difference in team's performance at the plate and whether or not it offered an advantage to AL teams. Also the use and role of the DH has changed over time. The statistic we used to compare both leagues is referred to as the slugging percentage. Slugging percentage is a popular statistic used to measure the power of a hitter or a team. It is calculated by taking the total number of bases divided by the number of at bats.



In the five years prior to use of the DH by the American League both the AL and NL's slugging percentages are fairly similar. It seems that with both leagues using pitchers in their lineups neither had an advantage at the plate.

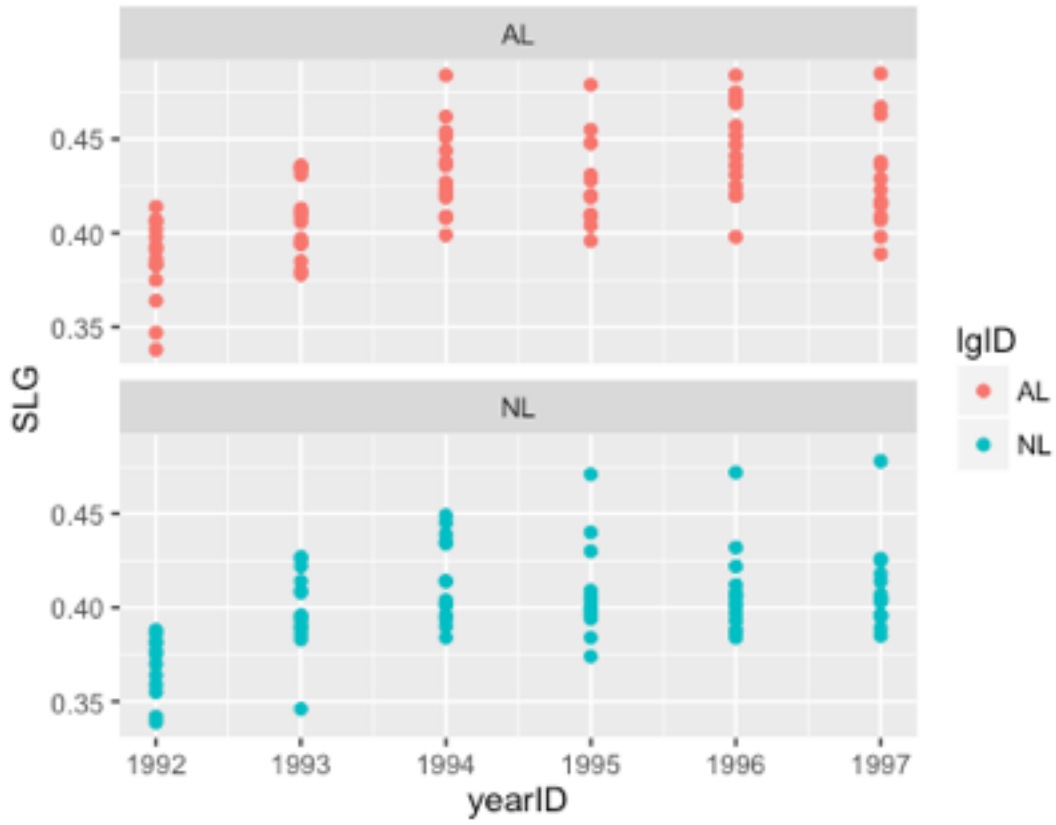


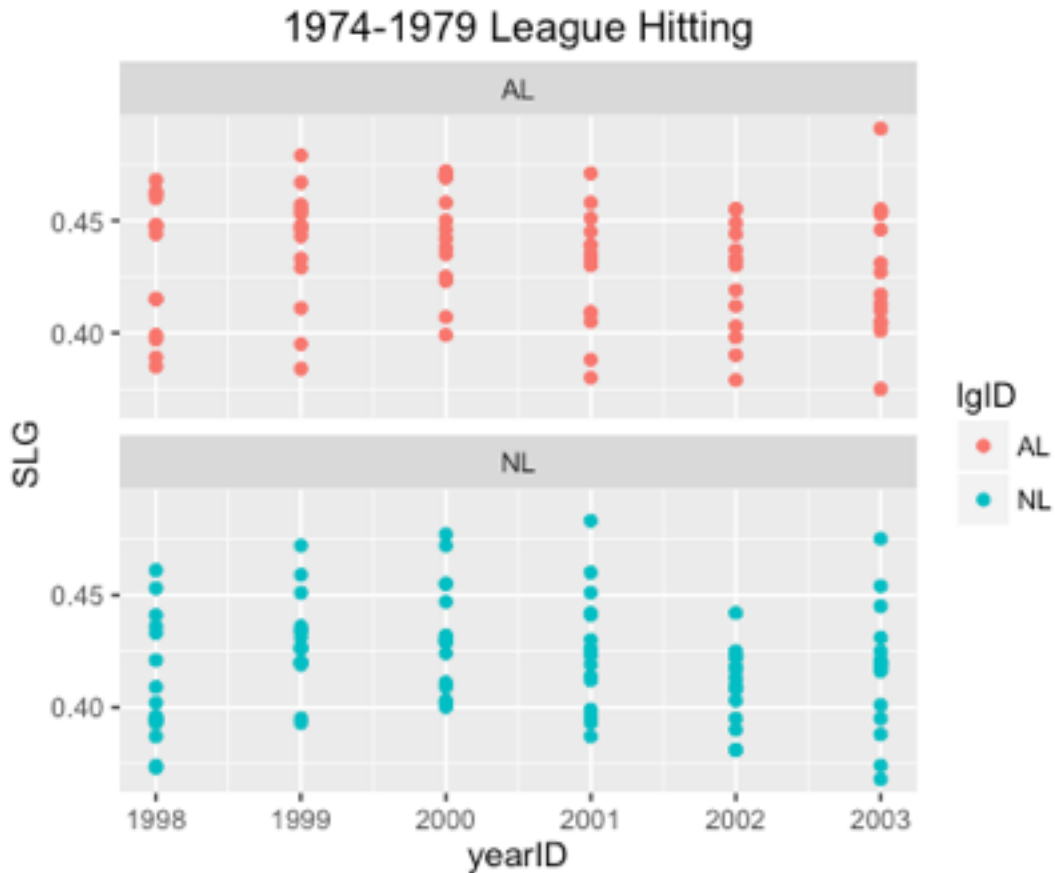
Looking at the six years after the initial introduction of the DH we found that the AL performed a little better at the plate compared to the NL.



Moving six years further the AL continues its higher performance at the plate, however, the 1981's slugging percentages are similar. An apparent year of struggle for the AL.

1992-1997 League Hitting





In our opinion the introduction of the Designated Hitter has in fact given the American an advantage over the National League. Post 1973 the American leagues slugging percentage has for the most part been greater than the National leagues'. There were also years where the two leagues slugging percentages were fairly similar. We assume that this was due to a drop in the American Leagues plate performance rather than an increase in the National Leagues'.