

Finding Demographic Information

The U.S. government collects an enormous amount of useful data on a wide variety of subjects. Perhaps the most widely used of this information is demographic data. When searching for demographic information, the U.S. Census bureau is the best place to start:

- ▶ **American Factfinder** (www.factfinder.census.gov)
American Factfinder is an online resource provided by the U.S. Census Bureau. It contains population, geographic, housing, and economic data. Factfinder allows you to search for information on topics such as population, race, ancestry, income, disability, education, employment, language, marital status, occupation, poverty status, housing characteristics and more. It covers most geographic areas, from state, county, city/town, place, all the way down to specific ZIP codes and offers geographic reference maps.
- ▶ **Census Data Sets**
Available through American Factfinder, the census data sets (also called summary tables or summary files) are an efficient method for locating the most detailed demographic information available from the census.
- ▶ **County and City Data Book**
For less detailed demographic information, the *County and City Data Book* is a good source. Arranged as a series of tables, the book is available in the reference section of the 4th floor under call number HA 202 .A36 or over the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/statab/www/ccdb.html>.
- ▶ **Economic Census**
Contains economic data available by geographic area. Unfortunately, so far detailed data sets have only been released for Arkansas, Florida, Texas, and Louisiana.

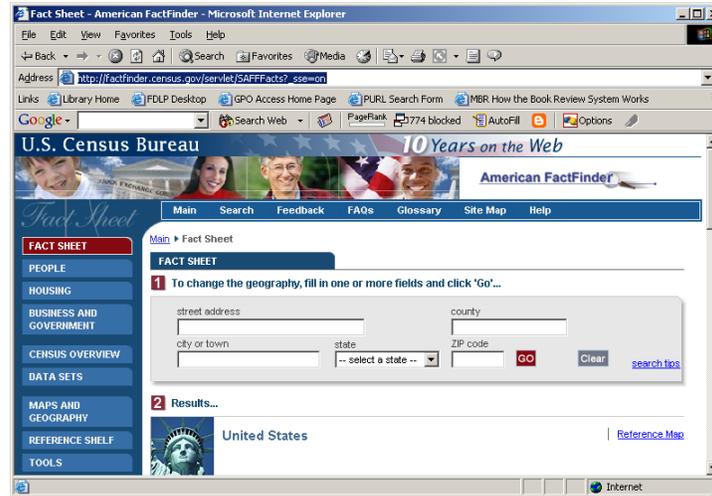
Finding Information on Government Agencies

- ▶ **Firstgov** (www.firstgov.gov)
Firstgov is web portal created and maintained by the U.S. government to be the official gateway to all U.S. government information. Firstgov allows you to search millions of web pages from federal and state government agencies. Firstgov makes it easy to find government agencies in your area by using their "Locate In-Person Services Near You" feature at http://www.firstgov.gov/Citizen/Find_Services.shtml.

Searching the Census

Quick Search:

From the FactFinder home page, using the menu at the left of the page, select the first option labeled “Fact Sheet”. This will bring up a page from which you can search by geographic area.

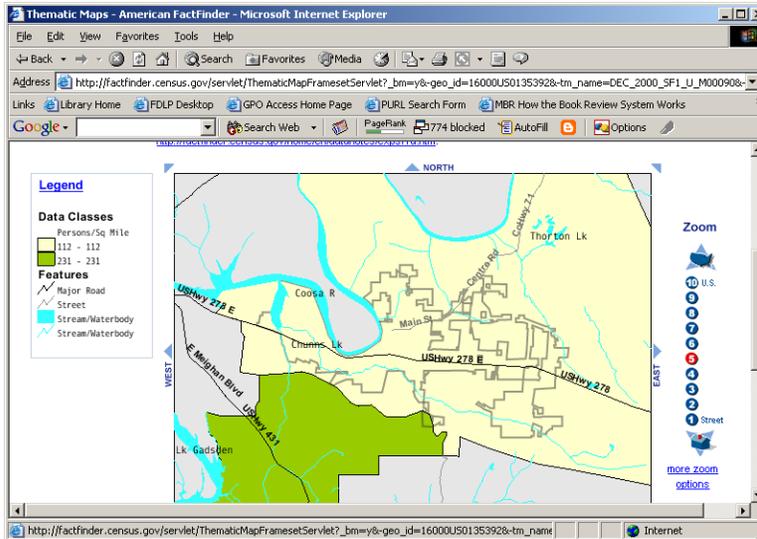


Enter your search query in the appropriate boxes, and your results will be displayed. By scrolling down, you can see general, social, economic, and housing characteristics.

The screenshot shows the American FactFinder 'Fact Sheet' results page. The table displays general characteristics for the United States. The table has columns for 'Number', 'Percent', and 'U.S.'. The data is as follows:

Characteristic	Number	Percent	U.S.
Total population	4,149	100.0	100%
Male	2,007	48.4	48.1%
Female	2,142	51.6	50.9%
Median age (years)	38.9	(0)	35.3
Under 5 years	244	5.9	6.8%
18 years and over	3,198	77.1	74.3%
65 years and over	634	15.3	12.4%
One race	4,133	99.6	97.6%
White	4,107	99.0	75.1%
Black or African American	4	0.1	12.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	9	0.2	0.9%
Asian	3	0.1	3.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0	0.1%
Some other race	10	0.2	5.5%
Two or more races	16	0.4	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	19	0.5	12.5%
Average household size	2.53	(0)	2.59
Average family size	2.93	(0)	3.14
Total housing units	1,721	100.0	100.0%
Occupied housing units	1,638	95.2	91.0%
Owner-occupied housing units	1,415	86.4	86.2%
Renter-occupied housing units	223	13.6	33.8%
Vacant housing units	83	4.8	9.0%

Each group of characteristics can be expanded by clicking the “show more” button next to the heading. Underlined words in blue can be clicked on to provide a pop-up window with a definition of the word. Clicking on “map” will bring up a color-coded map showing the geographic distribution of the selected demographic information.



For example, this map shows population distribution. The number of persons per square mile is given, along with major features such as roads and bodies of water. By using the zoom feature at right, you can zoom in or out, all the way up to a map of the entire United States, or all the way down to the street

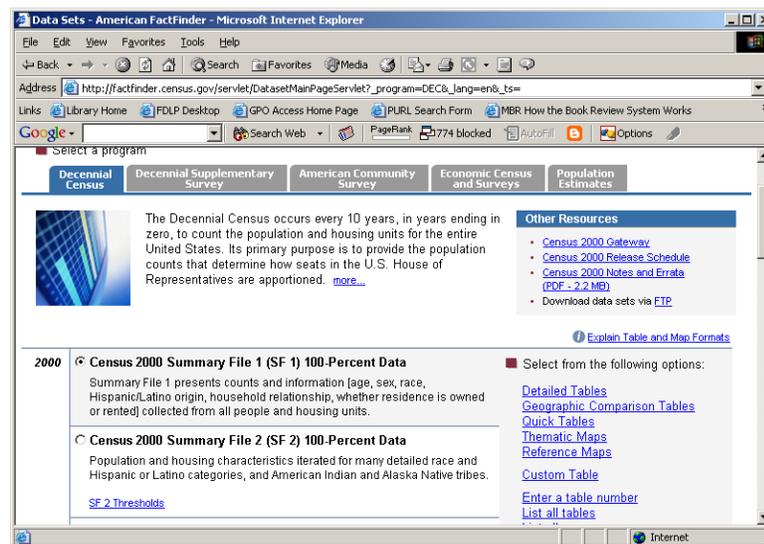
level of the town. The map can also be repositioned using the forms at the bottom of the page.

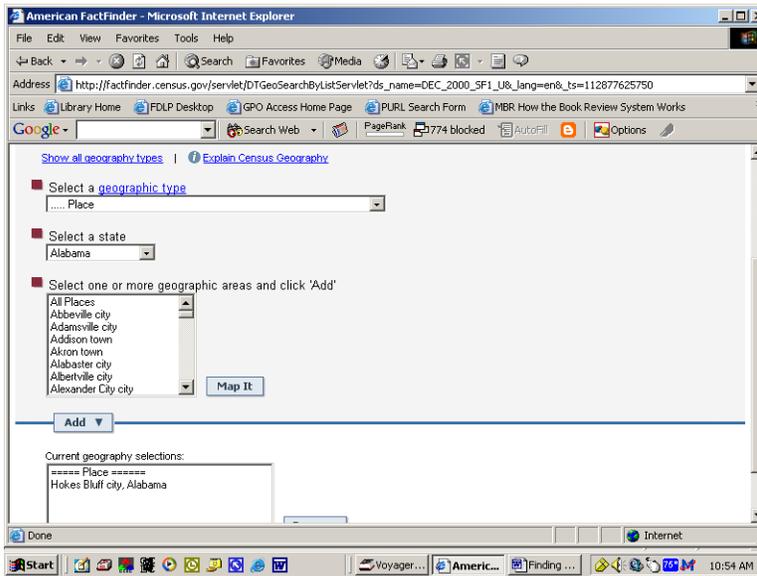
Advanced Search Using Data Sets:

Using census data sets and interpreting their results is the best way to get the most detailed information from the census. From the Factfinder home page, using the menu at left and select "data sets". This will bring up all available data sets.

The data sets you will be manipulating come from the Decennial

Census done in 2000. Data sets are gleaned from Summary Files, each of which contains a different type of data. For the most exact data, you will want to select Summary Files 1 & 2, which use data from 100% of the population; other summary files use data from only a small sampling of the population. For detailed information about what each summary file contains/covers, click on the link at the right labeled "About this data set". When you have selected the desired summary file, click on detailed table to bring up the page where you may begin entering a query.





Using the pull down menus, select a geographic area. For city/town information, select “place.” Then select the proper states, and the cities/towns in that area will be listed. Click on the town you want, then click add. It will then appear in the current geography selections box. Click next. The next page

allows you to select from detailed census tables. Scroll down through the list of tables and select the one that contains the information you want. If unsure if a specific table contains what you want, select the table and then click on the “what’s this” button on the right and a pop-up window will show you exactly what the table contains. Select the table you want, click add, and click show result. This will bring up the table.