



Wichita State University Libraries

American FactFinder



About American FactFinder -- <http://factfinder.census.gov>

American FactFinder is an interactive searchable database on the Internet that is used to find population, housing, industry and business statistics from the U.S. Census. It is authored and maintained by the U.S. Census Bureau. American FactFinder allows the user to compile census data into tables, maps and downloadable files, which can be viewed or printed. A large selection of pre-made tables and maps satisfies many information requests.

American FactFinder is the best place to look for both 1990 and 2000 census data, as well as Economic Census data. As the American Community Survey (ACS) continues to expand and become more comprehensive, American FactFinder will also provide that data.

How to Use the Basic Facts Feature

The Basic Facts feature allows the user to locate and manipulate data from many pre-made tables or maps. This is a useful search if you want data on a popular topic, such as population, race or sex. This box is located at the top of the main page.

	Alaska	Hawaii
Under 1 year	42,457	3,756
1 and 2 years	115,738	23,143
3 and 4 years	185,138	29,962
5 years	252,318	11,846
6 years	43,278	13,022

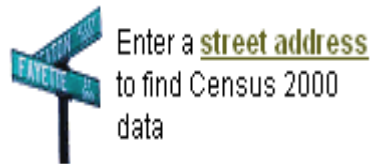
To begin a search, click the button for tables at the top of the box. Then choose a topic from the pull-down menu (if you want Census 2000 data, make sure you choose it under that category). For example, choose "Population, Age and Sex," which is under Census 2000 geographic comparison tables. This allows you to compare information for smaller areas, such as tracts. The quick tables and maps only contain larger areas, such as cities. Choose "county – census tract" for the area. After the page reformats, select Kansas for the state and Sedgwick for the county. You must wait for the page to reload each time you select something. Do not click "go" until you have selected all of the geographic information, including the county, or you will get the table for the last selected geography (such as the entire U.S. or Kansas). After you select the county, then click "go."

The resulting table shows information for each tract in Sedgwick County. Once data is captured in a table or map, it may be viewed, printed or downloaded. Follow the instructions located under the print/download button at the top, right corner of the page. "Related Items," also located at the top, right corner are useful suggestions. For example, you can progress immediately to thematic maps about "age" or "sex."

How to Use the Search Box

The Search Box allows the user to quickly locate any type of information in FactFinder.

The keyword search is the first of two radio buttons in the yellow search box at the upper left hand corner of the main page. Use this search if you want to see what types of sources are available on a topic. Try a search and enter in “commuting.” At the top of the result screen, you can choose which census to search in. Select Census 2000.



Next, you can either search using the keyword “commuting” or you can look to see if there is a subject for your topic. Look through the pull-down box of subjects – there is one for “commuting.” Click “go.” At the bottom of the page are various sources that have information on this topic. For example, there is a summary table on “Journey to Work: 2000.” To access the data, just click on the link. This search is a good way to see the wide variety of information and formats available in American FactFinder. However, it is not useful for searching specific geographic areas.

The geography search is also available from a radio button in the yellow search box. It only includes counties, places and cities, not tracts or blocks. Select the radio button for “geography,” and search for Wichita. On the results page will be a list of all the places that have that name. Choose “Wichita city, Sedgwick County, Kansas,” under “Select Geography” and click “OK” to the far right. Scroll down the results screen to see the wide variety of information that is available. Or, clicking on “Map It” brings up a map of the area.

The street address search produces a list of all the geography files containing that address, down to the tract and block level. Select a geographic area and click on “Map It,” or click on “Go” to review the data products available. A variety of reference and thematic maps, as well as tables, are available.

Data Sets

Using Data Sets

In Data Sets, you can access all available tables for the Decennial Censuses for 1990 and 2000, American Community Survey, conducted annually since 1996, the Economic Census for 1997, and Population Estimates conducted annually beginning in July, 2000. Data Sets are in the middle of the main page. Remember that the following data are in the summary files:

- Summary File 1 – Complete geographic detail to the block level.
- Summary File 2 – Subjects for up to 249 race or ethnic groups.
- Summary File 3 – Social, economic and housing data to the block group level.

Three things are usually necessary when locating census data: 1) Specify geographies, 2) Specify subjects, and 3) Merge the geographies and subjects to retrieve relevant statistics. “Data Sets” allows you to access 1) Detailed Tables, 2) Geographic Comparison Tables, 3) Quick Tables, 4) Thematic Maps, 5) Reference Maps, and 6) Custom Maps. These summary data products are derived from data sets with pre-aggregated, or summarized, data records. Extraction of the data sets is also possible.

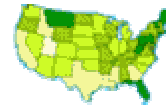
Maps

Using Maps

You can use FactFinder to create, print, and download two types of maps – Reference Maps and Thematic Maps. Customizable options such as Boundaries, Features, and Title are available for both types of maps. Data Classes is a customizable option offered only for Thematic Maps.



Reference Maps provide state, county, city, and Congressional district boundaries as well as the boundaries and numbers of Census tracts, block groups and blocks, school districts and zip codes. Once you obtain your map, you can zoom, pan, change geographies, change data sets, and add or subtract physical features (such as schools) using the legend. If you have a “where is” question, use a reference map.



Thematic Maps show interesting facts about places by using colors or patterns to shade areas on the map. You use Thematic Maps when you want to see statistical data, such as population or median income, displayed on a map. To create a Thematic Map, you select the geographic area and the theme for the map. For example, you could create a thematic map showing the number of people over 65 years of age in Kansas by county. If you have a “how many” or “what percent” question that is related to a specific geographic area, use a thematic map.

Map Navigation Features: FactFinder provides a number of map navigation features to help you locate or view the geographic area that you want. Using these features, you can:

1. Select the geographic area you want using the Change Selections menu.
2. Zoom the map in or out.
3. Recenter the map, or recenter and zoom in.
4. Pan in a specific direction.
5. Use the “Go to selection” hyperlink to quickly return the focus of a Thematic Map to the geographic area that is currently selected.

You can customize your map in many ways and also add a title. For complete instructions, review the Tutorial titled “Creating and Using Maps” in the Help Section at the Banner of FactFinder.

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Other American FactFinder Features:

- On the Banner – Main Page (you can return here at any time); FAQs, Glossary and the Help page. Tutorials are featured in the Help page and well worth studying.
- Column on the Left – What’s New, Items of Interest, Site Tour, Census 2000 in Spanish for Puerto Rico, and the Kid’s Page.

U.S. Census Bureau

<http://www.census.gov/>

Don’t overlook the wealth of information at the main Census Site.