

Quick Guide for Using Data Sets for Census Research

Go to [American Fact Finder](#) and click on **Data Sets** .

1. **Select SF 1 or SF 3**

SF (summary file) 1 contains the data gathered from the short form of the Census questionnaire sent 04/01/2000 to 100% of households. It is intended to be a 100% count of all people.

It contains data only on: name, sex, race, ethnicity, age, relationship to head of household, own/rent home.

SF 1 data is available down to the block level.

SF 3 contains data gathered from the long form of the Census questionnaire that was sent to 1 in 6 households. The data obtained then is sample data, an estimate for the total population based on the 1 in 6 (17%) sample.

SF 3 data deals with all matters NOT covered in SF 1 data, especially socio-economic data.

SF 3 data is available down to the block group level.

2. **Select Quick or Detailed Tables**

The Quick tables display the data for each geographic area separately, one after another down the screen. They do include the tabulations for percentages for each data item provided. The Detailed tables display several geographic areas together across a screen but omit percentages.

3. **Select the Geographic Units for your research**

Primary Census Divisions: Secondary Census Divisions:

Nation Places (Cities, Towns)

Regions Metro Statistical Areas

States Primary Metro Statistical Areas

Counties Urban Area

County Subdivisions Congressional District

Census Tracts American Indian Area

Block Groups 3-Digit or 5-Digit Zip Code

Blocks (SF-1 only)

4. **Add the topics (variables) to be researched using:**

- the drop down menu listing the available tables
- the Subject search (Census terminology)
- the Keyword search (free text)

Now click on **Show Result** to produce the statistical table.

To add new geographic locations to your table, click on **Geography** on the top tool bar.

To add a new subject to your table, click on **Tables** on the top tool bar.

To switch between SF1 and SF 3, click on **All Data Sets** on the top tool bar.

You may save the table you created, or entire Census data sets, to Excel for further work on the data.

1. **To create a Thematic Map for data for a geographic area:**

- Open [American Fact Finder](#)
- Click on [Data Sets](#)
- Choose SF 1 or SF 3 depending on your research topic
- Click on [Thematic Maps](#)
- Select the geographic area desired
- Select the topic of your research using the drop-down menu, Subject or Keyword search

A basic thematic map will appear on the screen. You can improve the map by changing the geography; for example, changing from County to Census Tract or Block Group. You can zoom in by clicking on the area of interest in the map. You can customize the map by clicking on Legend. You can copy and paste the map and the legend into Word or another program.