Guide for Using Census Bureau Resources

The Census Bureau provides a number of data products. Two of the most commonly used are the Decennial Census and the American Community Survey.

The Decennial Census is useful because it presents detailed information about the District of Columbia (using census tracts, block groups and blocks and more). Topics covered include demographic, economic, social, and housing data. It covers ten year intervals with the most recent conducted in 2000, 1990 and 1980.

The American Community Survey (ACS) is useful because it provides more current information. The ACS has data as recent as 2004 covering a range of social, economic, housing and demographic issues. The limitation of the ACS is that it currently only presents data for the entire City.

Guide for Using the Decennial Census

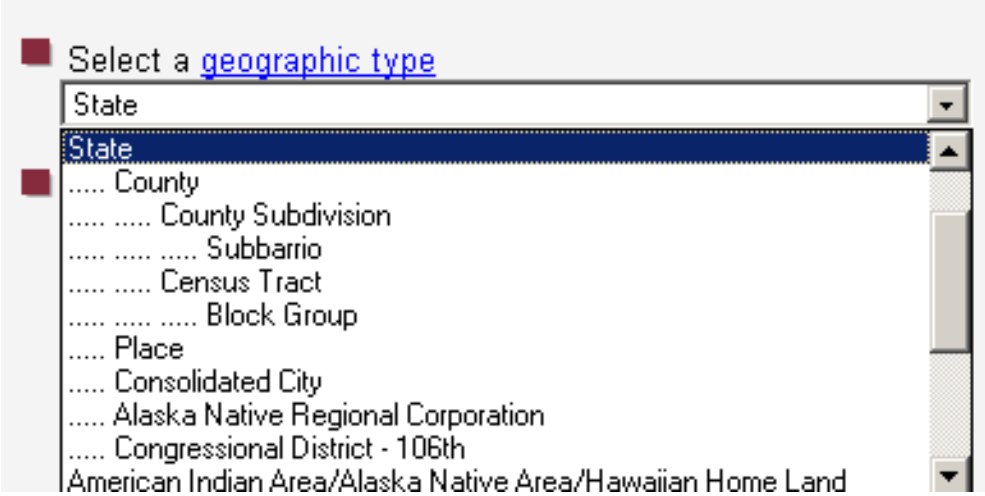
- Get on the internet and go to www.census.gov.
- In the left column of your screen, click on **American FactFinder**:

.
- To learn more about the Decennial Census such as its purpose and coverage, click the "learn more" link under Decennial Census in the "Getting Detailed Data" box.

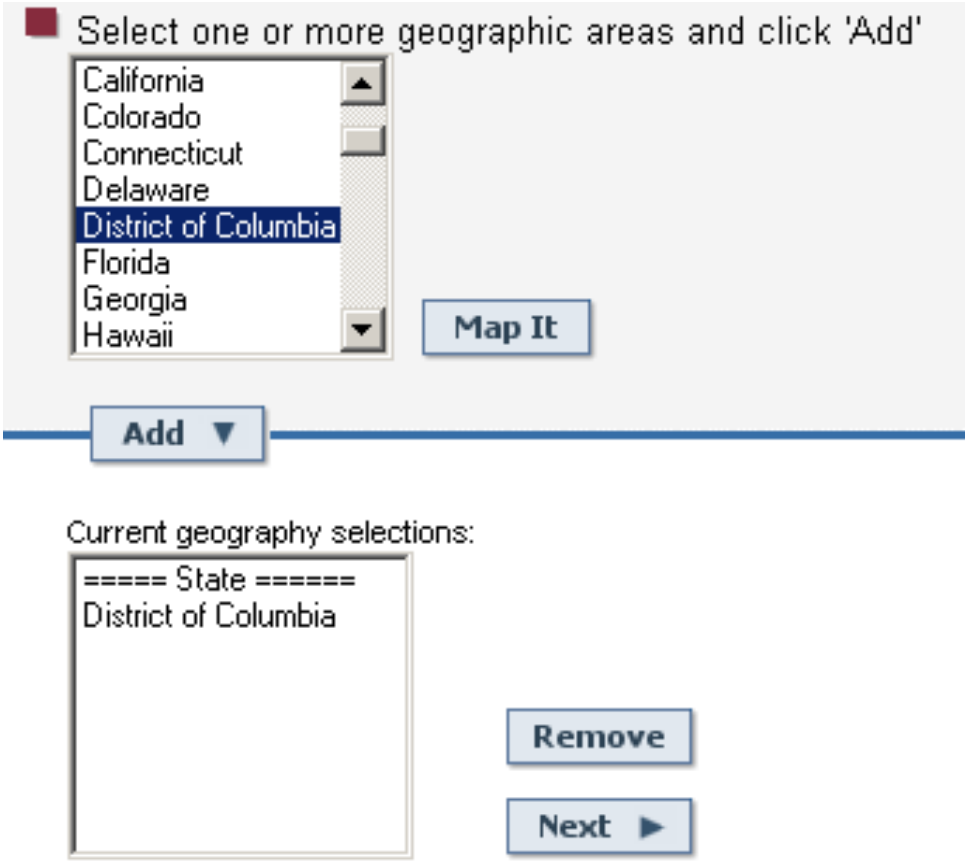
- Click on the "get data" link to reach the screen below. You will see the option to select from several files from either 2000 or 1990. Each file is described and contains specific information and data types. The file you should choose depends on your particular needs. For this guide, choose the 2000 Summary File 3 (SF-3) and click the "Quick Tables" link on the right side of the screen.

Explain Table and Map Formats
2000
Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1) 100-Percent Data
Summary File 1 presents counts and information [age, sex, race, Hispanic/Latino origin, household relationship, whether residence is owned or rented] collected from all people and housing units.
Census 2000 Summary File 2 (SF 2) 100-Percent Data
Population and housing characteristics iterated for many detailed race and Hispanic or Latino categories, and American Indian and Alaska Native tribes.
SF 2 Thresholds
Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data
Summary File 3 presents detailed population and housing data (such as place of birth, education, employment status, income, value of housing unit, year structure built) collected from a 1-in-6 sample and weighted to represent the total population.
Comparing SF 3 Estimates with Corresponding Values in SF 1 and SF 2
Select from the following:
Detailed Tables
Geographic Comparison Tables
Quick Tables
Thematic Maps
Reference Maps
Custom Table
Enter a table number
List all tables
List all maps
About this data set
Technical Documentation (PDF)
Census 2000 Summary File 4 (SF 4) - Sample Data
Summary File 4 contains tabulations of population and housing data collected from a sample of the population. The data are shown down to the census tract level for 336 race, Hispanic or Latino, American Indian and Alaska Native, and ancestry categories.
SF 4 Thresholds
Census 2000 American Indian and Alaska Native Summary File (AIANSF) - Sample Data
The American Indian and Alaska Native Summary File contains tabulations of population and housing data collected from a sample of the population. The data are shown for the U.S., regions, divisions, states, and selected metropolitan areas for many specified American Indian and Alaska Native tribes.
109th Congressional District Summary File (Sample)
Data from the Census 2000 Summary File 3 have been retabulated for the newly drawn 109th Congressional District boundaries

- After selecting “Quick Tables”, on the screen that appears next click on the drop-down arrow under “Select a geographic type” and choose the state level. (The District of Columbia is included as a state.)

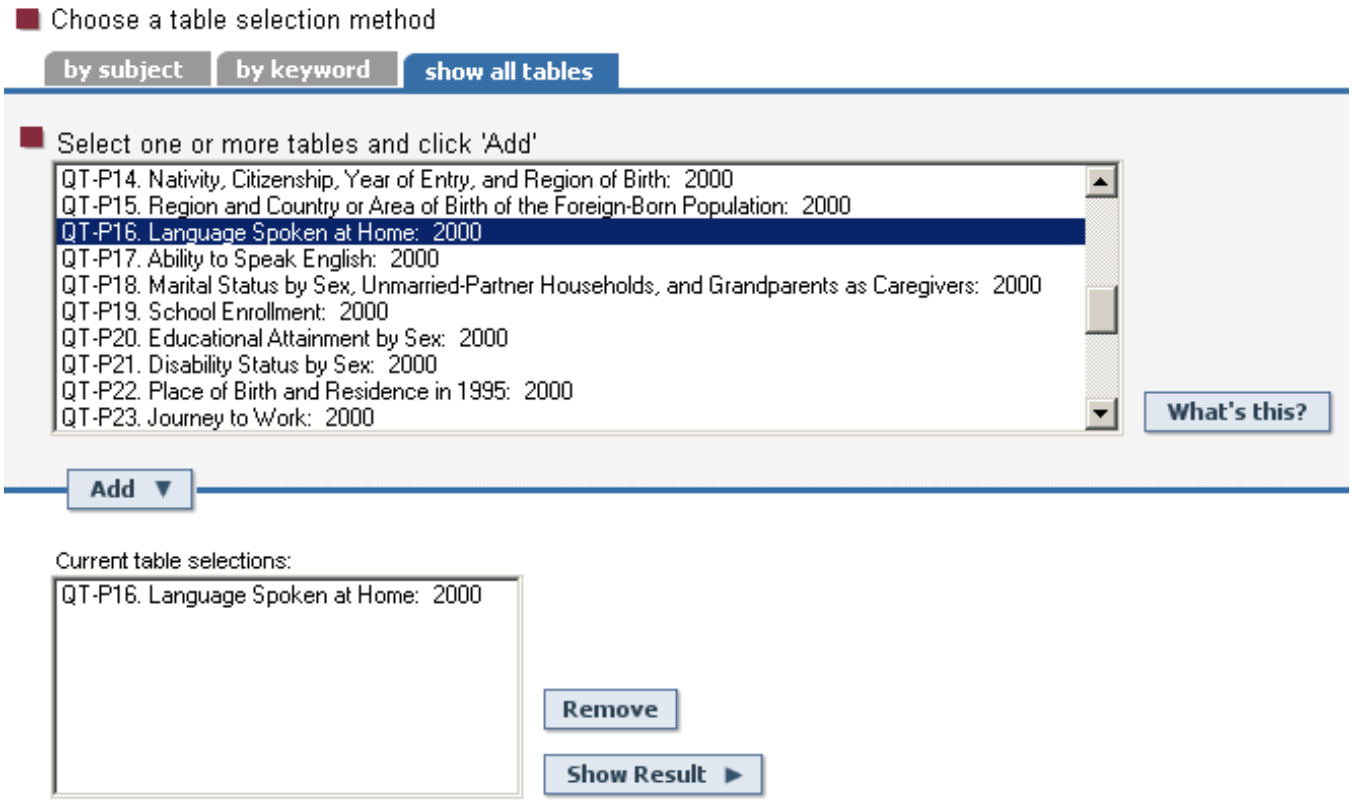


- The 50 states and DC will appear as options in the box below. Scroll down and select District of Columbia, then click the box labeled “Add.”



- "District of Columbia" will appear in the box labeled "current geography selections. Click on the button labeled "Next."

- This will give you a list of all of the tables available in the SF-3 file for the District of Columbia. Choose a table and click the "Add" button. Once the table name appears in the box labeled "Current table selections" click the "Show result" button.

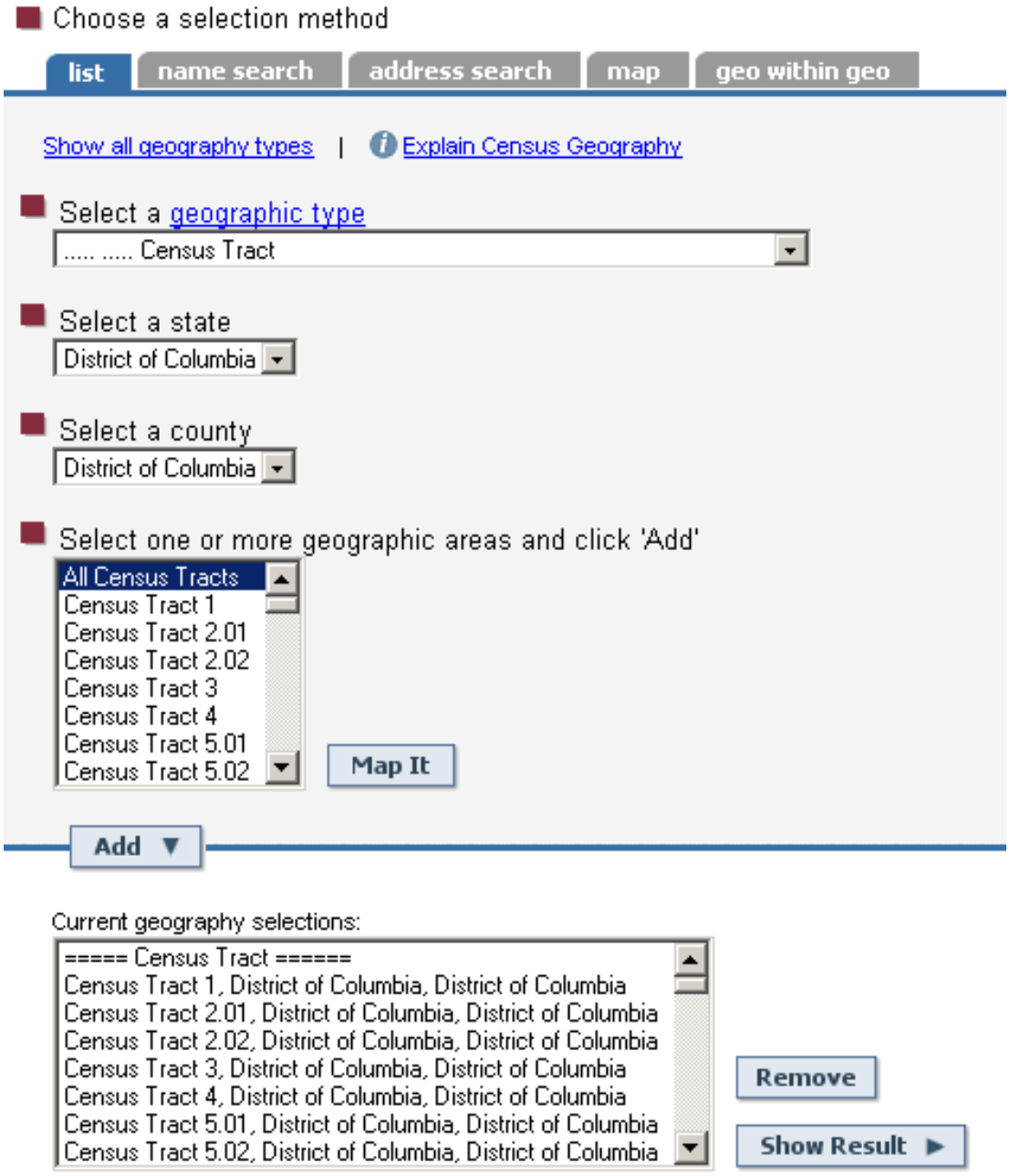


- The next page will include the table you have selected, in this example Language Spoken at Home in the District of Columbia.

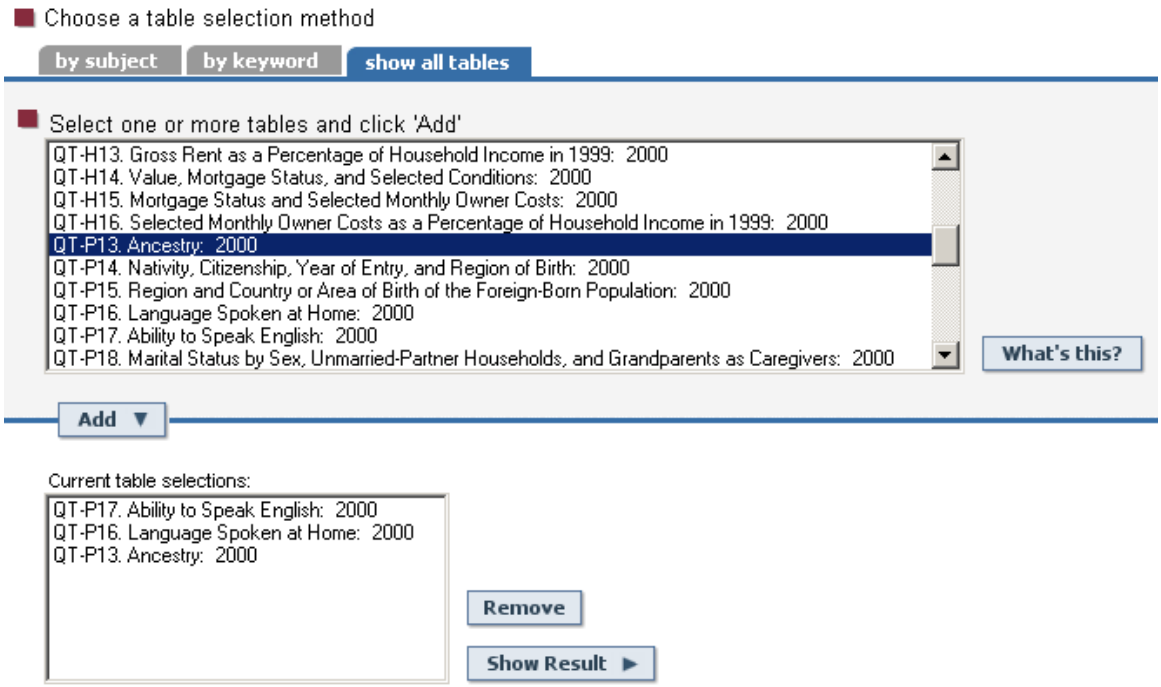
Language	Number	Percent
Population 5 years and over	**539,658**	**100.0**
Speak only English	449,241	83.2
Speak a language other than English	90,417	16.8
Speak a language other than English	**90,417**	**16.8**
Spanish or Spanish Creole	49,461	9.2
French (incl. Patois, Cajun)	9,085	1.7
French Creole	598	0.1
Italian	1,723	0.3
Portuguese or Portuguese Creole	1,013	0.2
German	2,695	0.5
Yiddish	117	0.0
Other West Germanic languages	454	0.1
Scandinavian languages	637	0.1
Greek	791	0.1
Russian	1,110	0.2
Polish	371	0.1
Serbo-Croatian	781	0.1
Other Slavic languages	896	0.2
Armenian	87	0.0
Persian	585	0.1
Gujarathi	179	0.0
Hindi	477	0.1
Urdu	605	0.1
Other Indic languages	549	0.1
Other Indo-European languages	968	0.2
Chinese	2,913	0.5
Japanese	926	0.2
Korean	709	0.1
Mon-Khmer, Cambodian	31	0.0
Miao, Hmong	0	0.0
Thai	233	0.0
Laotian	65	0.0

- This is one of the many tables available from the Decennial Census. Tables are available for other geographies including county, census tract, and census block groups.

- You can produce a table of census tracts in the District of Columbia by returning to the geography page and adding all of the census tracts in DC and clicking “Show Result.” From here, you will once again choose a table.

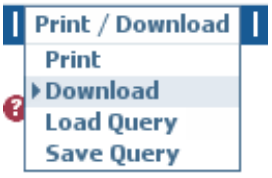


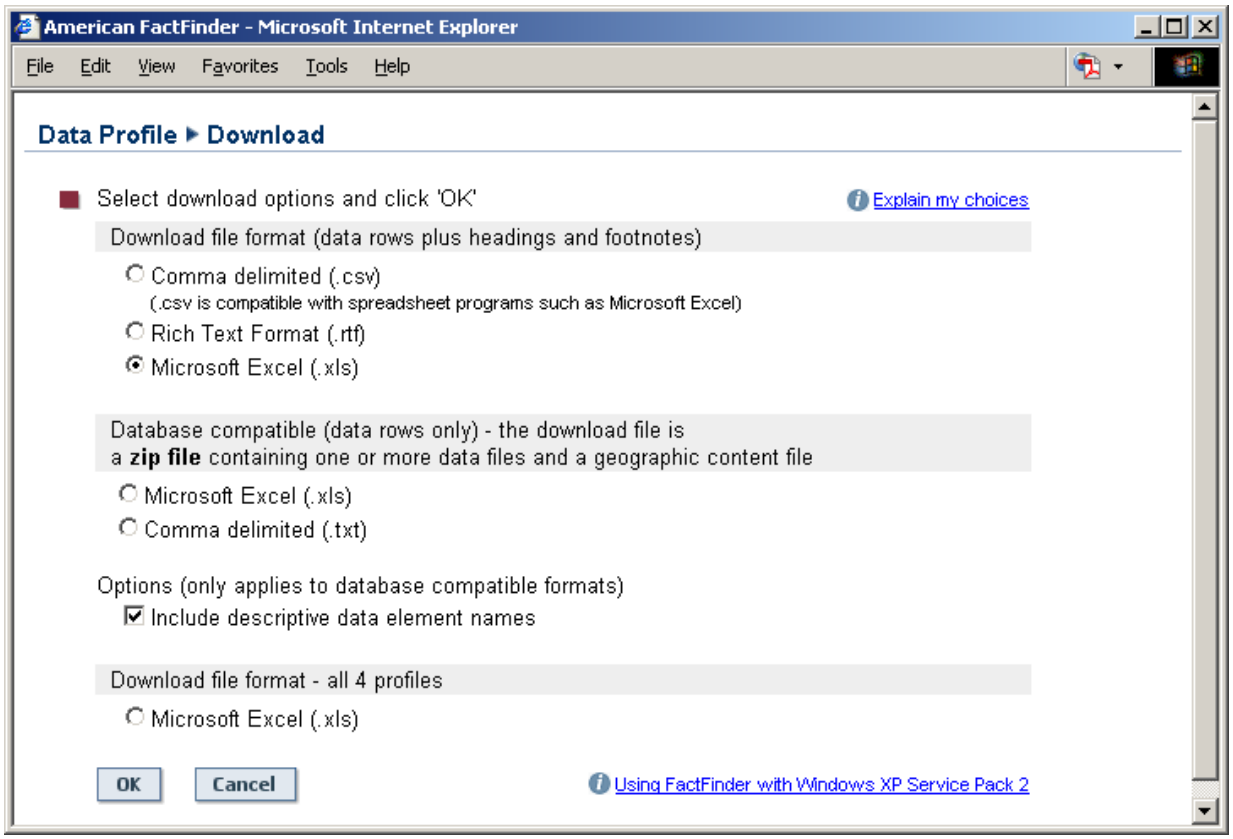
- You have the option of selecting multiple tables at once. You can also search for a table by subject or a keyword by clicking the tabs to the left of the "show all tables" tab.



- The "Quick Tables" option used here is the fastest and easiest way of getting data from the 2000 census. However, it is helpful to explore throughout the Decennial Census page. Many options exist through different files, geographies, and types of tables that you can use.

- You can either print the table or save it to your desktop from the “Print/Download” box above the table. When downloading the data, you are given options of saving your file in different file formats. Choosing Microsoft Excel (.xls) downloads a file to your computer that you can open with Excel.

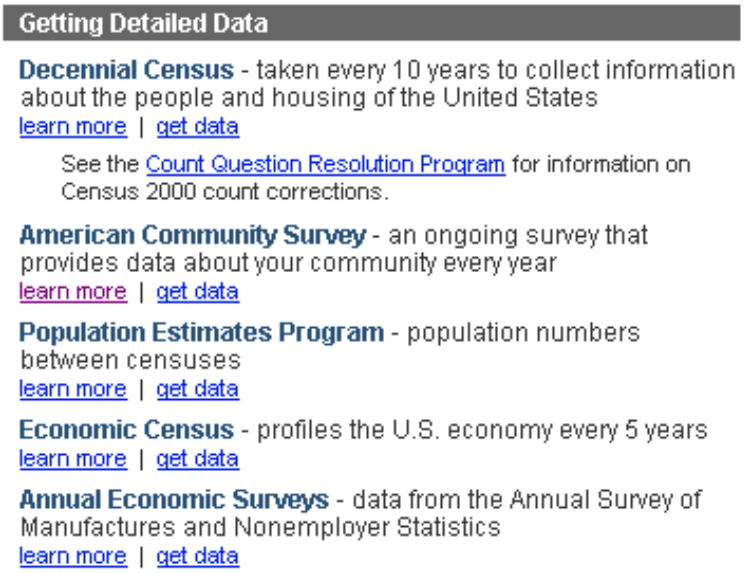




Guide for using the Census Bureau's American Community Survey

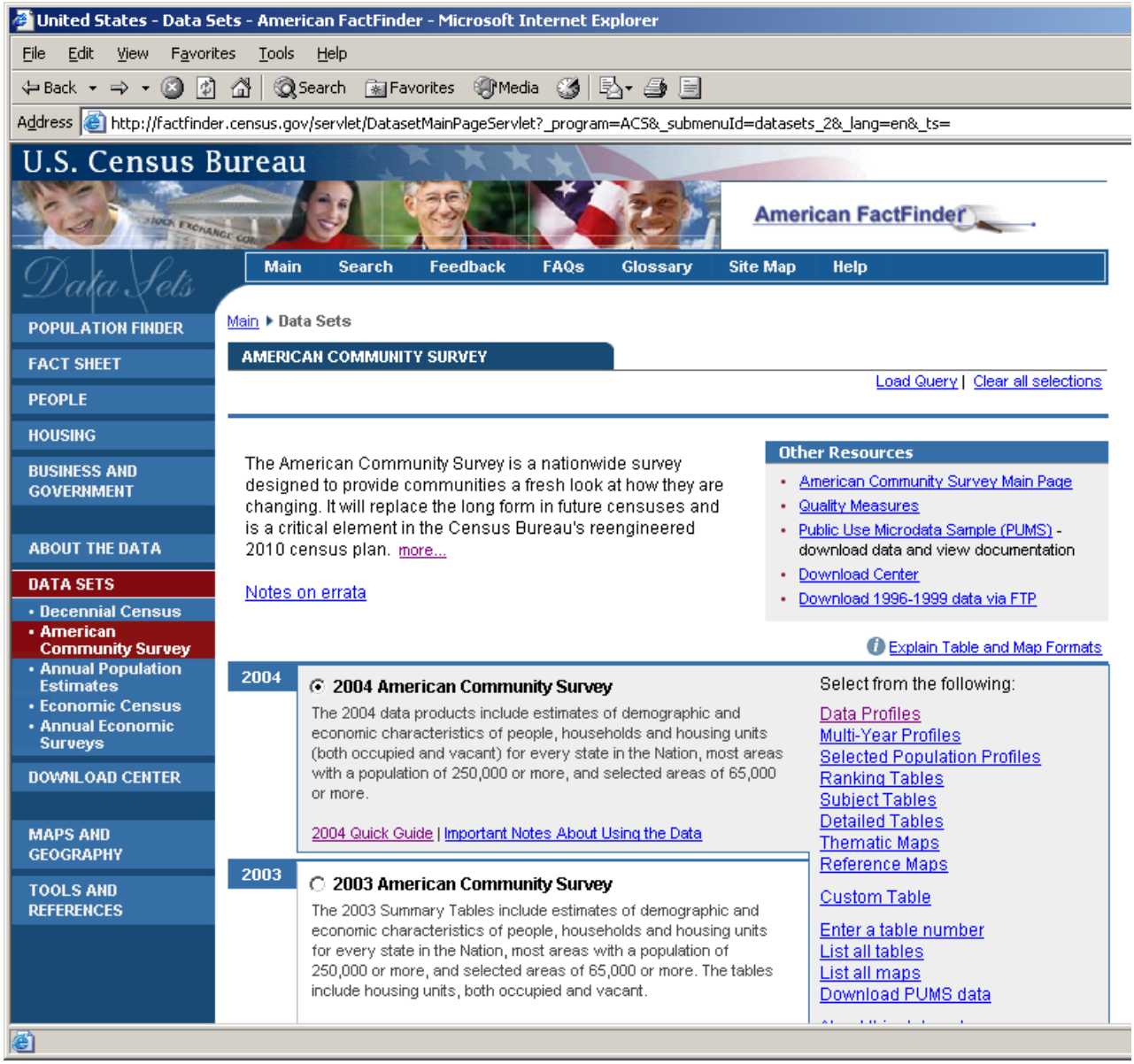
- Get on the internet and go to www.census.gov.
- In the left column of your screen, click on **American FactFinder**:

.
- To learn more about the American Community Survey such as its purpose and coverage, click the "learn more" link under American Community Survey in the "Getting Detailed Data" box.

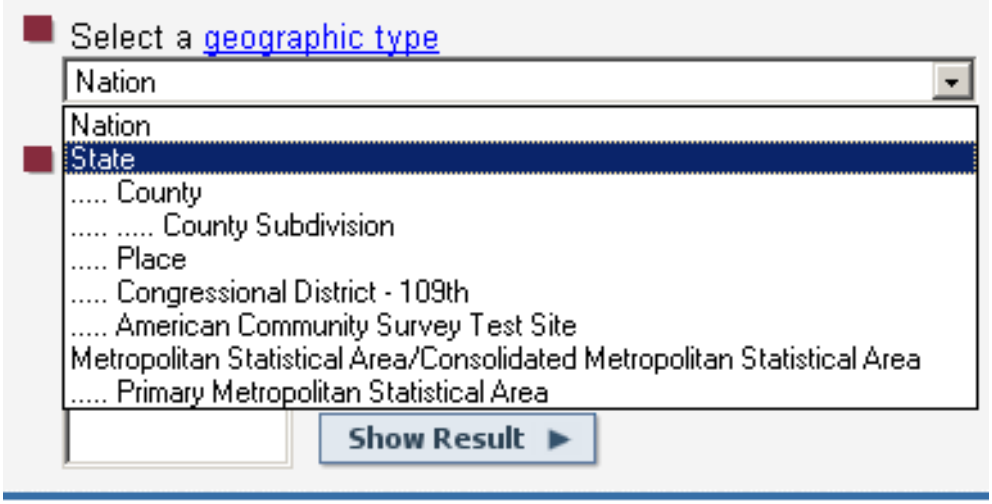


- Click on the "get data". You will see the options to select different years of the American Community Survey from 2000 to 2004. Select the 2004 ACS.

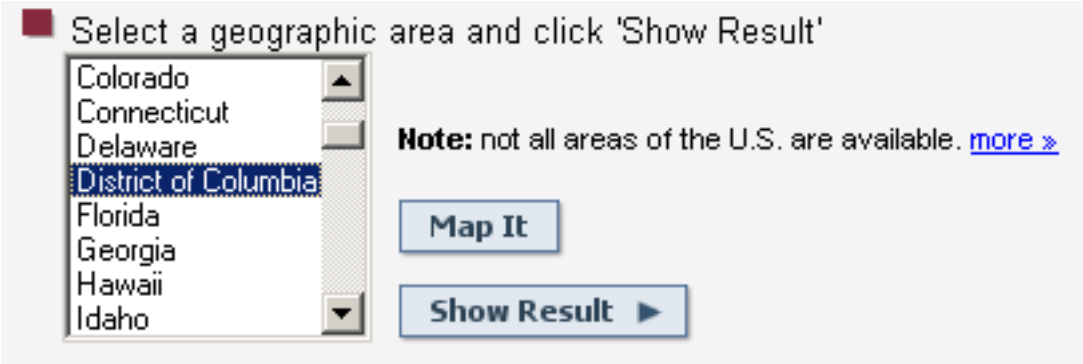
- Click the “Data Profiles” link on the right side of the screen.



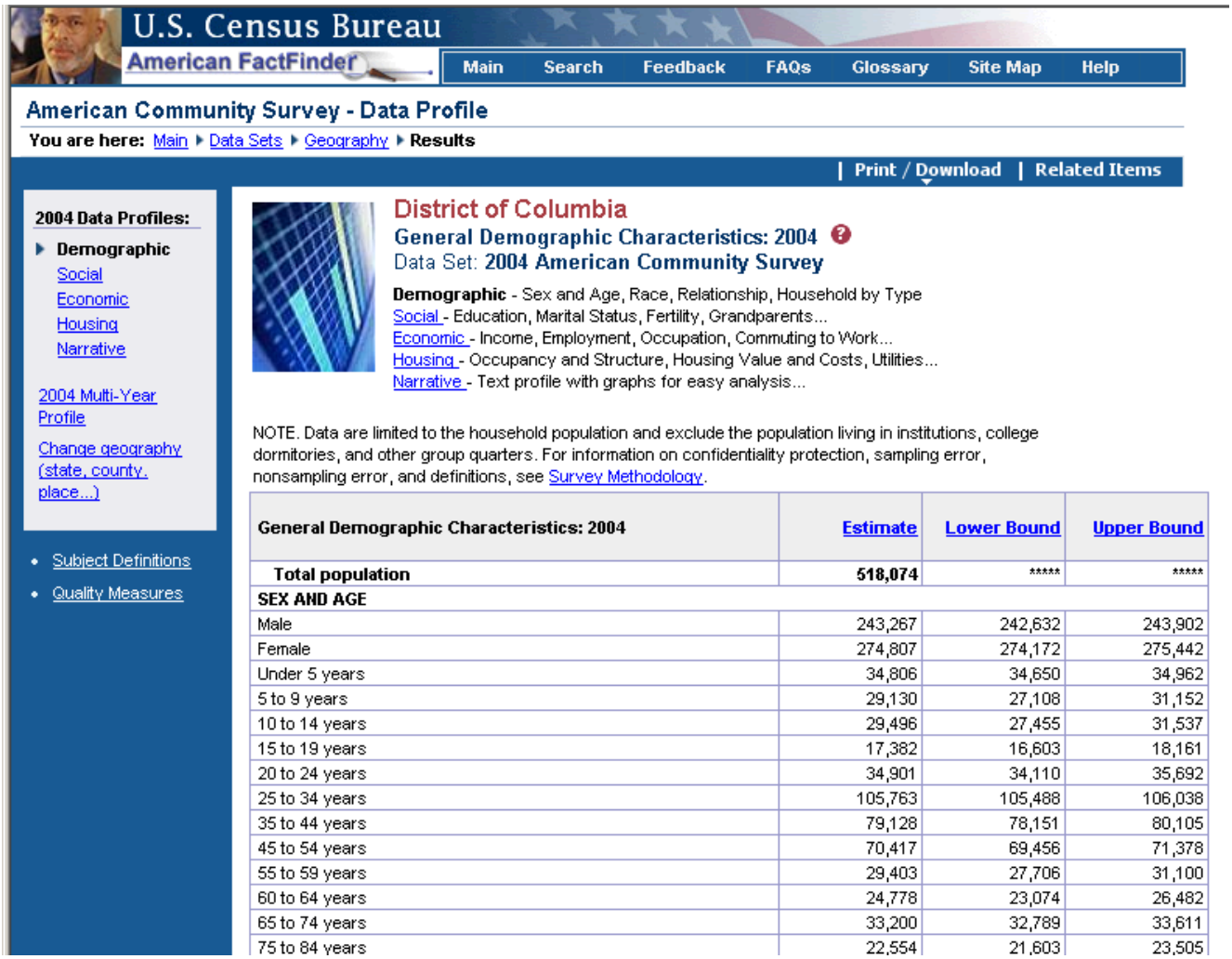
- Click on the drop-down arrow under “Select a geographic type” and choose the state level. (The District of Columbia is included as a state.)



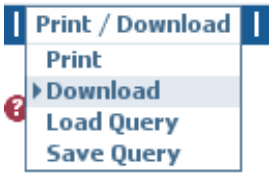
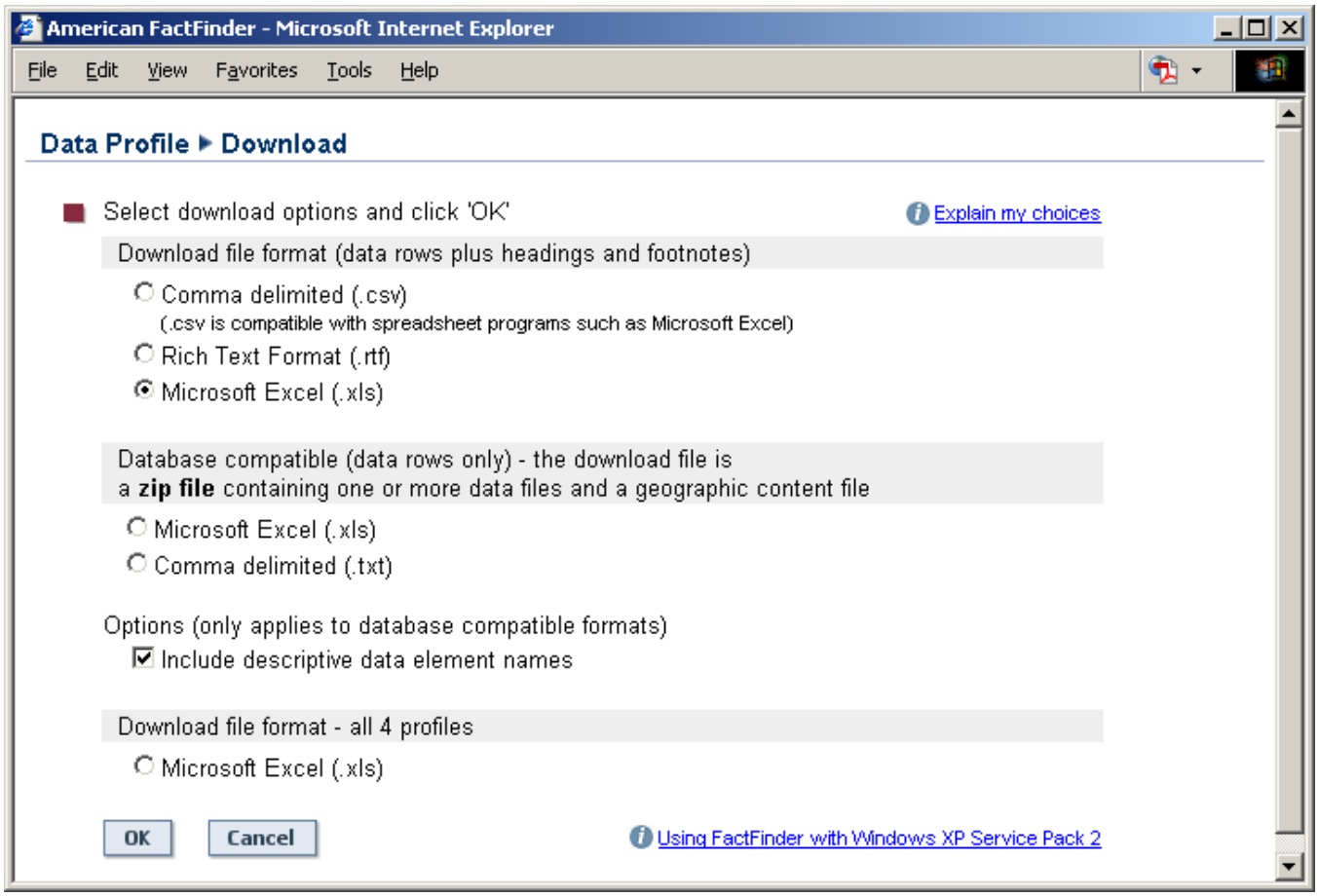
- The 50 states and DC will appear as options in the box below. Scroll down and select District of Columbia, then click the box labeled “Show Result.”



- This will take you to a table of the 2004 ACS General Demographic Characteristics for the District of Columbia.



General Demographic Characteristics: 2004	Estimate	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Total population	**518,074**	*****	*****
SEX AND AGE			
Male	243,267	242,632	243,902
Female	274,807	274,172	275,442
Under 5 years	34,806	34,650	34,962
5 to 9 years	29,130	27,108	31,152
10 to 14 years	29,496	27,455	31,537
15 to 19 years	17,382	16,603	18,161
20 to 24 years	34,901	34,110	35,692
25 to 34 years	105,763	105,488	106,038
35 to 44 years	79,128	78,151	80,105
45 to 54 years	70,417	69,456	71,378
55 to 59 years	29,403	27,706	31,100
60 to 64 years	24,778	23,074	26,482
65 to 74 years	33,200	32,789	33,611
75 to 84 years	22,554	21,603	23,505

- You can select from the links above the table to access data types other than demographic.
- Click the 2004 Multi-Year Profile link on the left of the screen to see combined data from the previous American Community Surveys.
- The Change geography (state, county. place...) link on the left takes you back to the geography menu where you can select a different state or a different level such as a county or a metropolitan area to view. For example, if you want to view Fairfax County, VA, select “county” as your geographic type and Virginia as the state.

- You can either print the table or save it to your desktop from the “Print/Download” box above the table. When downloading the data, you are given options of saving your file in different file formats. Choosing Microsoft Excel (.xls) downloads a file to your computer that you can open with Excel.