American Community Survey Key Facts

- What it is: nationwide survey to gather information on socio economic and housing characteristics
- What it is not: it is not the official source of population counts

The decennial census shows the number of people; the ACS show how people live.
When to use what

- **Decennial Census- every 10 years**
  - Count of persons and households
    - Race/Hispanic Origin
    - Sex
    - Age
    - Housing Unit- Rented or Owned (with or without mortgage)

- **ACS**
  - Replacing the long form census received by 1/6 households
  - 1/40 households receive ACS every year (one in 55 returns it)
  - Results
    - 1 year survey for population > 65,000
    - 3 year survey for population > 20,000
    - 5 year survey for all other areas

**Advantages**
- Timely- Don’t have to wait 10 years
- Focused- Can gather information on a new topic more quickly
- Know error rate

**Disadvantages**
- Different survey may cause different results- for example:
  - Income and poverty
  - Residency
  - Know error rate
- Website
American FactFinder is the place to find decennial census data and American Community Survey data.

We will be covering the NEW American FactFinder. The Census is moving data from the legacy FactFinder and will discontinue the Legacy American FactFinder this fall.
Quick Start Search Box
(only available from Main tab)
For best results enter a topic/table name and geography for narrowed list. Suggested values will appear as you type. All words must be spelled correctly. To search census tracts and blocks you must put the tract or block number, the county, and the state.

Primary Data Selection Tools
Use these tool bars to focus your search.
Your Selections
Shows what topic/table, geography, and dataset you’re searching for.

Search within Results
Refine your search results by entering keywords.

Search by Topic
Expand any of the topics and make a selection.

Search by Geography
Filter your search results by geographic area.

Advanced Search Options- not covered in this handout
• Population Groups currently only data from 2000 Census and 2010 ACS
• Industry Codes Economic Census data

Very Important...
The selections you choose must appear in the ‘Your Selections’ box in order to search for the correct information.

Use the red ‘x’ to remove a single selection or ‘clear all selections’ link to remove all selections.
Search Using Geography: Name Tab

**Geographic selections added to 'Your Selections' box.**

**Close overlay after verifying your selections.**

**Geography Search**

Enter a geography in the text box to quickly get a narrowed results list. Suggested values will appear as you type. All words must be spelled correctly. To search for census tracts and blocks you must put 'census tract' or 'census block', the county, and the state. Or, use the geography filter options to find your geography.

**Geographic filters appear here- does not mean they are selections for search**

When you click on 'Geographies' an overlay box will open.

**NOTHING is actually selected until you click on a 'Geography Name' or check the box next to the geography and click 'Add'.**

**Working the 'Filter Options'**

1. Start by selecting the geography level you want to end up with.
2. Drill down using the ‘within’ selections to narrow the results list.
3. You MUST watch the ‘Your Selections’ box to make sure your final geographic selection(s) show up.
After you have selected your geography and closed the geography overlay box you will be given a list of tables that you’ll want to narrow down. The number of tables available is determined by the geography level you’ve selected.

You can search within Results by typing a keyword(s) or filter the results using the expandable lists in the ‘Topics’ box. Multiple filters are allowed.

Data is classified under two broad categories, People and Housing. Here are the expanded lists under each.

If you searched using a keyword(s) it is placed in ‘Your Selections’.

If you used the expandable lists, your selection(s) is placed in ‘Your Selections’.
Finding the Data: Year

Even after filtering your topics you can still have several tables to choose from.

It may be helpful to filter what year of data you want. The years displayed are determined by the geography level. As the Census moves data from the Legacy FactFinder to this FactFinder more years will be available.

Finding the Data: Selecting the Table

Table Title- click to view table
Table Selector- check one or more tables and then click 'View'.
Not sure if a table has the information you're looking for? Click the 'i' and see a blank version of the table. You may have to scroll thru the tables listed to find the right table even after filtering it by topic and year.
Viewing and Saving the Data

- Modify certain types of tables (transpose rows, hide rows, etc.). If you modify a table, you must download it as an Excel or PDF file to keep your modifications.
- Bookmark tables for quick access in the future.
- Print the table for your records.
- Download the data as a CSV, Excel, or PDF file.

Margin of error data is only given for data from the American Community Survey.

Viewing the Data: Different Types of Tables

- Quick Table or Profile - one geography shown at a time, use the dropdown to select another geography if you have multiple
- Detailed Table - multiple geographies shown

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey
Need More Help?

- Video Tutorials are available on the main page of the New American FactFinder
- Help Button - top right hand corner
- Ask the Census - check out the FAQ section (top right hand corner) to see if the Census has already addressed the issue you are having or if they haven’t, send them an e-mail thru ‘Ask a Question’.
- Contact the Paul Clarke Nonprofit Resource Center at (260) 421-1238 or by e-mail at nrc@acpl.info.

Other Useful Resources

- Allen County Quick Facts and Census Tract Map are available at www.ipfw.edu/cri