

# Tips for Using American FactFinder Advanced Search

Start at <https://factfinder.census.gov>

Go to Advanced Search (top bar)

Click **Geographies**

The screenshot shows the American FactFinder Advanced Search page. The 'ADVANCED SEARCH' tab is selected in the top navigation bar. On the left side, under 'Search using the options below:', the 'Geographies' option is circled in purple. The main content area contains a search form with the following elements:

- Field 1: topic or table name
- Field 2: state, county or place (optional)
- GO button
- Radio buttons:  topics,  race/ancestry,  industries,  occupations

Below the form, there are numbered instructions:

- 1 Enter search terms and an optional geography and click GO
- 2 Next, select **Geographies** (states, counties, cities, towns, etc.)
- 3 Select one or more Search Results and click **View**

If you want to look at cities or towns in Maine, select:

- County Subdivision
- Maine
- Select the county you want to look at
- Select town or city
- Click Add to your selections (you will see your selection pop up in the Your Selections box in the top left)

**Note:** If you want to confirm what the area you are looking at encompasses, click on About This Geography once you've highlighted a town/city – then click on Map View.

If you want to compare cities or towns side by side, you can do this process again and add it to your selections

**Note:** the level of geography will determine the breadth of topics available

Once you have your geography selected you can go into **Topics**

**Note:** it is best to use ACS 5-year estimates (largest sample size, most reliable; best when analyzing very small populations)

**Want to learn more about using the census for your research?**  
Check out the U.S. Census Bureau's Educational Resources page at  
[www.census.gov/mso/www/training](http://www.census.gov/mso/www/training)

