About Census Geocoder

The Census Geocoder is an address look-up tool that will find both locations and geographies. Enter either an address or a latitude and longitude, and it will return a list of geographies that the address is within or enter an address and the geocoder will return an approximate latitude/longitude coordinate.

Where to Begin

For general information, go to:
http://www.census.gov/geo/maps-data/data/geocoder.html

To launch the geocoder, go to:
http://geocoding.geo.census.gov/geocoder/

Use Find Locations Using… to get the latitude and longitude for an address. Use Find Geographies Using… to get census geography (county, tract, and block) for an address or geographic coordinates.

Single Address Look-up Instructions

Click on Address to enter the address on separate lines.

For example, use the Find Locations Using… and enter in the street address: 4600 Silver Hill Rd, Washington, DC 20233. The Census Geocoder will return the following:
Matched Address: 4600 Silver Hill Rd, WASHINGTON, DC 20233
Coordinates: X: -76.9275  Y: 38.84598

For another example, use the Find Geographies Using… and enter in the geographic coordinates: X: -76.9275 Y: 38.84598. The Census Geocoder will show that the address is in Prince George's County, Maryland, census tract 8024.05, and census block 1083.

For more information and directions for returning different geographies, visit the general information page.

Address Batch Instructions

The batch geocoder allows you to geocode up to 1,000 addresses at one time.

To find the latitude and longitude for each address, use Find Locations Using… and click Address Batch.

For more information, including details about the results and record layouts for the output, visit the general information page.
Vintage Information

When geocoding your address to census geography, you need to select a benchmark and a vintage of geography.

The benchmark is the time period when we created the snapshot of the data (usually done twice yearly). For example, Public_AR_Current is the most recent snapshot of our dataset.

The vintage refers to the census or survey the data is linked to. For instance, Census 2010_Current are the address ranges from the 2010 Census at the time of the Current benchmark. The available vintages are dependent upon the benchmark you select.

Additional Information

The data in the geocoder is from the MAF/TIGER database. The address ranges used in the geocoder are the same address ranges found in the TIGER/Line Shapefiles. The address ranges are potential address ranges, not actual address ranges. Potential ranges include the full range of possible structure numbers even though the actual structures might not exist. Please note: this tool does not return individual addresses.

Additional Information, cont.

The latitude/longitude coordinates are the approximate location on the road feature, slightly offset from the road. The coordinates are calculated along the address ranges in the MAF/TIGER database.

The majority of the address ranges are for residential areas. Limited address ranges exist for commercial areas. If an address is not located or is not in the correct approximate location, it does not mean that the address was excluded or misallocated in our censuses and surveys. We use additional sources of information to ensure that people are counted in the correct location.

The geocoder is also available as an API and is available in the TIGERweb applications found here:

http://tigerweb.geo.census.gov.

Contact Information:
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Other Census Geography Questions
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