

## Searching for Real data sets.

Monday 10 July Workshop A 15.30-16.45

**If you are reading this as a Word file you can access the links by holding down Ctrl as you click on the link.**

'They' say there is lots of data out there on the web, for teaching. That it exists may be true, but I have trouble finding it from time to time. I have taken some of the pain out of this by maintaining a website at [www.mis.coventry.ac.uk/~styrrell/data.php](http://www.mis.coventry.ac.uk/~styrrell/data.php) where you will find links to a variety of real datasets from around the world, and often the stories behind them. These include our own UK [Neighbourhood Statistics](#), [CensusAtSchool](#), food consumption since 1942, hurricanes, Olympic records, and the activity of dolphin groups.

Of course not everything you will want is listed there, but when Google fails you, a visit to some of these sites may well start you hunting in the right direction. There are two approaches: topic and subject. If you have a topic which you want data to illustrate look under the list of topics.

Alternatively try the CensusAt School data (<http://censusatschool.ntu.ac.uk/default.asp>) which has been collected so that it contains useful and real data which can be used to illustrate practically any statistical method. If, on the other hand, you have a subject for which you require data, read through the whole page to find the most appropriate link to follow. You may still find what you want under the Data Collections, which also list sets by subject, but the data is not likely to be up to date, which may not matter. Do not underestimate the power of [Google](#) ([www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk)) either.

### UK Government data

If what you want is collected by some arm of the government there are 3 places worth trying:

1. The [National Statistics data page](#) (<http://www.bized.ac.uk/dataserv/ons/data/data.htm>) of the [Biz/ed](#) (<http://www.bized.ac.uk/>) site, where you will find available data neatly listed;
2. The [Latest Releases](#) ([http://www.statistics.gov.uk/press\\_release/currentreleases.asp](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/press_release/currentreleases.asp)) list, which can also be accessed via the [National Statistics](#) home page (<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/default.asp>). This is good for finding data which is released on a regular basis, e.g. the RPI.
3. The [Guide to Government Key Facts](#) page of Directgov ([http://www.direct.gov.uk/Gtq11/GuideToGovernment/AboutBritain/AboutBritainArticle/s/fs/en?CONTENT\\_ID=10012517&chk=loPvDs](http://www.direct.gov.uk/Gtq11/GuideToGovernment/AboutBritain/AboutBritainArticle/s/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=10012517&chk=loPvDs)). The most interesting links here are to the UK's Overseas territories.

The other National Statistics goldmine for data is [Neighbourhood Statistics](#) (<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/home.asp>) where you can view or download local area statistics for your ward or local authority on a wide range of subjects including population (the latest Census data), crime, health and housing. Try entering your postcode, and you will be surprised at the information available about your ward.

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I lecture at Coventry University, am a National Teaching Fellow, and am associated with [Sigma](#), Coventry and Loughborough's joint Centre of Excellence in Mathematics and Statistics Support. My other interest, as a Trustee of the [ExtraCare](#) Charitable Trust, is revolutionising the care of the elderly, promoting better lives for older people.