

Reference Training Module – Introduction to Basic Government Information Sources



A complicated task...

If you ask 10 people, you will likely hear 10 different ideas of the most important Government information reference sources

Our goals:

- Get you thinking
- Get you interested
- Counteract fear of Government information
- Give you an initial path to follow
 - Detailed information available elsewhere
 - You can also create your own path as you learn!



What this webcast will cover

Broad Topics

- Links to useful resources
- Sample reference questions

Other places to look when you want to delve deeper

Topics Covered Include

Presidential Papers

Members of Congress

Laws and Regulations

Government Budget and Spending

Tax Information

Safety and Oversight

Census Data

Career Information



The foundational documents of our democracy

Two very useful lists:

- Cornerstone Documents of our Democracy
 - <https://www.govinfo.gov/help/other-resources>
- FDLP Basic Collection
 - <https://libguides.fdlp.gov/fdlp-basic-collection>



What agency does what

United States Government Manual

USA.gov

- [A-Z Index of U.S. Government Departments and Agencies](#)

Q: What department is the Census Bureau in?

A: The Department of Commerce

- *It's in the Economics and Statistics Administration along with the Bureau of Economic Analysis and the Office of the Chief Economist*

(Source: U.S. Government Manual)



What has the President said and done?

Compilation of Presidential Documents

Public Papers of the President of the United States

- 1929-1932, 1945-2016

Presidential Libraries

Q: Where can I find Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech?

A: In the *Public Papers of the Presidents and at the Eisenhower Presidential Library site*

256 ¶ Address Before the General Assembly of the United Nations on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, New York City. December 8, 1953

Madame President, Members of the General Assembly:

When Secretary General Hammarskjöld's invitation to address this General Assembly reached me in Bermuda, I was just beginning a series of conferences with the Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers of Great Britain and of France. Our subject was some of the problems that beset our world.

During the remainder of the Bermuda Conference, I had con-

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Who is my Member of Congress? How did they vote?

Congressional Record

- [Bound Edition](#)
- [Daily Edition](#)

[House.gov](#)

[Senate.gov](#)

[Congress.gov](#)

Q: *What was the vote tally in the House on the California Desert Protection Act in 1991?*

A:

- *Aye: 297*
- *No: 136*
- *Present: 0*
- *Not voting: 1*

Source: Congress.gov



Where are the laws or regulations about X?

uscourts.gov

[United States Code](#)

[United States Statutes at Large](#)

[Federal Register](#)

[Code of Federal Regulations](#)

[eCFR](#)

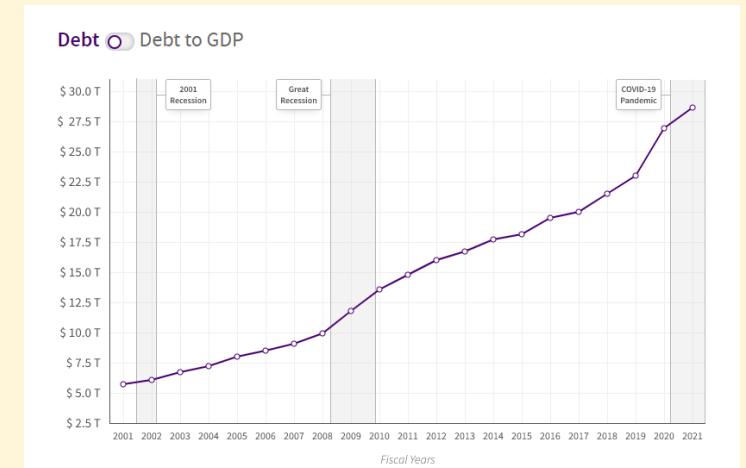
- Continuously updated online version of the CFR. It is not an official legal edition of the CFR.



Government budget and spending

Some resources:

- [USAspending.gov](https://www.usaspending.gov)
- [Your Guide to America's Finances](#)
- [Budget of the United States Government](#)
- [Appropriations, Budget Estimates, Etc.](#)
- [Combined Statement of Receipts, Outlays, and Balances of the United States Government](#)



Q: How much is the federal debt?

A: At the end of 2021, \$28.43 trillion, which equates to a little less than \$86,000 per individual in the U.S.

Source: Your Guide to America's Finances



Tax information

[IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov)

- [Tax Statistics](#) page

[Taxpayer Assistance Centers](#)

[Tax forms and instructions](#)

Q: *How many people did the IRS employ in 2000?*

A:

- *96,092 total*
- *81,428 permanent*
- *14,664 temporary*

Source: *Statistics of Income*



Safety and oversight

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Consumer Product Safety Commission

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Federal Trade Commission

Environmental Protection Agency

Food and Drug Administration

Q: What food products were recalled week of May 16-21, 2022?

A: 90 items

- 23 in Biologics
- 41 in Devices
- 13 in Drugs
- **13 in Food: curry vinaigrette, jerk dressing, popcorn, ramen, 6 flavors of a beverage, roasted peanuts snack, 2 types of Valencia almonds snack**

Source: FDA Weekly Enforcement Report



Census data

[Decennial Census](#) (10 years)

[American Community Survey](#) (annual)

[Economic Census](#) (5 years)

[Census of Governments](#) (5 years)

- State and local government sector

[Census of Agriculture](#) (5 years)

[Statistics of U.S. Businesses](#) (annual)

data.census.gov

[Census State Data Centers](#)

Q: How much was spent per student in Texas public schools in fiscal year 2020?

A: \$10,342

Source: Public Elementary-Secondary Education Finance Data



Where are the statistics on...?

Statistical Abstract of the United States

- 1878 to 2012

Historical Statistics of the United States

- Colonial times to 1970

U.S. Census Bureau

Agency statistics portals and sites

- For example, National Institutes of Health, National Center for Education Statistics

Q: How much did a bushel of soybeans cost in 1930? In 2020?

A:

- 1930: \$1.37
- 2020: \$8.98

Source: *Historical Statistics of the U.S. and the National Agricultural Statistics Service*



Image: [USDA](#)

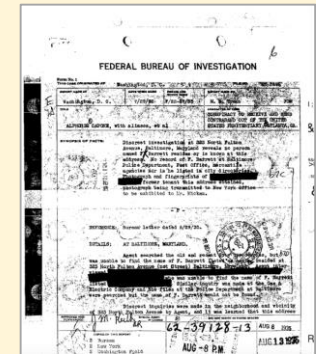
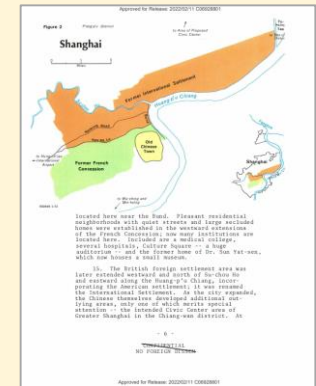
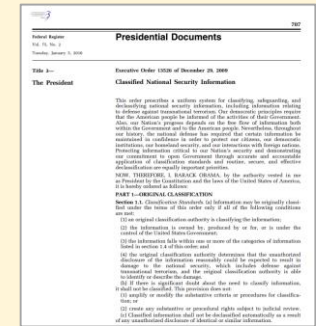


Where's the secret stuff?

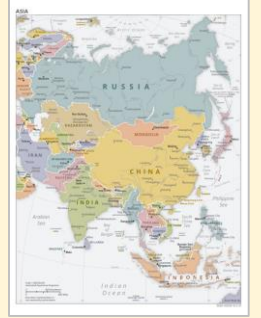
[Library of Congress guide](#) to declassified documents

[National Archives Declassification](#) website

[FOIA.gov](#)



Geography



U.S. Geological Survey

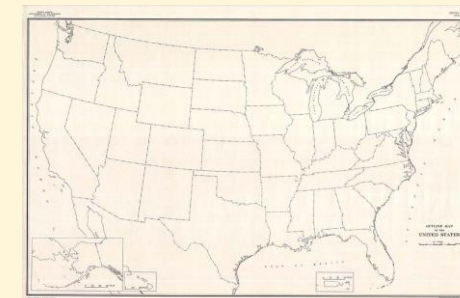
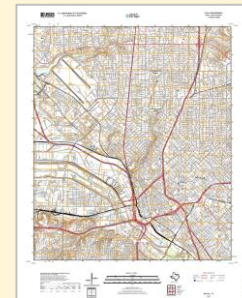
- [The National Map](#)
- [USGS Map Store](#)
 - Many free downloads available
- [USGS TopoView](#)

Public Lands

- [Bureau of Land Management](#)
- [National Park Service](#)
- [U.S. Forest Service](#)
- [U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service](#)

[CIA World Factbook](#)

[data.gov](#)



Career information

Occupational Outlook Handbook

CareerOneStop.org

USAJobs.gov

OOH HOME | OCCUPATION FINDER | OOH FAQ | OOH GLOSSARY | A-Z INDEX | OOH SITE MAP Search Handbook

OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK

Athletes and Sports Competitors PRINTER-FRIENDLY

Summary | What They Do | Work Environment | How to Become One | Pay | Job Outlook | State & Area Data | Similar Occupations | More Info

Summary

Quick Facts: Athletes and Sports Competitors	
2021 Median Pay	\$77,300 per year
Typical Entry-Level Education	No formal educational credential
Work Experience in a Related Occupation	None
On-the-job Training	Long term on-the-job training
Number of Jobs, 2020	16,700
Job Outlook, 2020-30	38% (Much faster than average)
Employment Change, 2020-30	6,300



What Athletes and Sports Competitors Do
Athletes and sports competitors participate in organized, officiated sporting events to entertain spectators.

Work Environment
Athletes and sports competitors may work irregular schedules, including evenings, weekends, and holidays. They typically work more than 40 hours per week for several months during their particular sports season. They frequently work outside, so they may be exposed to all weather conditions.

How to Become an Athlete or Sports Competitor
No formal educational credential is typically required to become an athlete or sports competitor. Athletes must have athletic talent and an extensive knowledge of their sport. They typically get such knowledge through years of practice and experience at lower levels of competition.

Pay
The median annual wage for athletes and sports competitors was \$77,300 in May 2021.

Q: *What's the median pay for X job?*

A: *For 2021*

- *Athletes and Sports Competitors: \$77,300*
- *Dentist: \$163,220*
- *Paralegal: \$56,230*
- *Heavy truck driver: \$48,310*

Source: *Occupational Outlook Handbook*



Government grants, benefits, loans, and financial aid

USA.gov's page

- [Government Benefits, Grants, and Loans](#)

- Links to resources for topics like housing, financial aid for students, Social Security, military benefits, unemployment, Medicaid, etc.

[Grants.gov](#)

[Benefits.gov](#)



Government Benefits, Grants, and Loans

Learn about government programs that provide financial help for individuals and organizations.

How do I...

- Learn what benefits I qualify for
- Get help with bills
- Apply for Social Security benefits

Affordable Rental Housing
Get help finding rental assistance or public housing.

Benefits
Learn about federal government programs, including unemployment benefits, and how to find which ones are available to you.

Financial Aid for Students
Learn about getting help paying for school.

Food Assistance
Find food programs including SNAP (food stamps), WIC, school meals, and more. Get emergency food assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

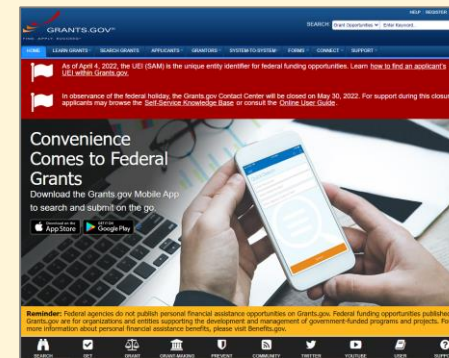
Grants and Loans
Learn about government grants and loans for states and organizations.

Help with Bills
Find government programs to help with phone bills, medical bills, and other expenses. Get COVID relief assistance. And see if you qualify for welfare.

Military Programs and Benefits
Learn about benefits and assistance available to military members, veterans, and their families.

Retirement
Learn some of the basics about retirement and pension benefits.

Social Security Questions
Find the answers to common questions about receiving Social Security.



GRANTS.GOV

SEARCH: Best Opportunity • One Grant

Learn about government programs that provide financial help for individuals and organizations.

As of April 9, 2022, the USF (USAF) is the unique entity identifier for federal funding opportunities. Learn how to find an opportunity on Grants.gov.

In observance of the federal holiday, the Grants.gov Contact Center will be closed on May 30, 2022. For support during this closure, applicants may browse the Self-Serve Knowledge Base or consult the Online User Guide.

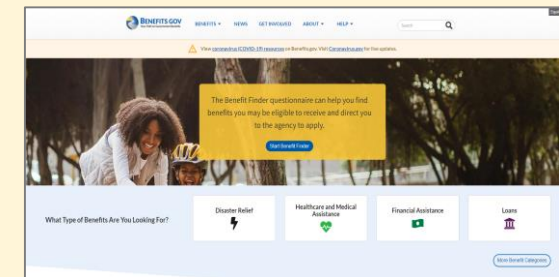
Convenience Comes to Federal Grants

Download the Grants.gov Mobile App to search and submit on the go.

Available on the App Store and Google Play.

Reminder: Federal agencies do not publish personal financial assistance opportunities on Grants.gov. Federal funding opportunities published on Grants.gov are for organizations and entities supporting the development and management of government-funded programs and projects. For more information about personal financial assistance benefits, please visit Benefits.gov.

SEARCH GET GRANTS GRANTS WANTED FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS CONTACT US



BENEFITS.GOV

SEARCH: Best Opportunity • One Grant

Learn about government programs that provide financial help for individuals and organizations.

The Benefits Finder questionnaire can help you find benefits you may be eligible to receive and direct you to the agency to apply.

What Type of Benefits Are You Looking For?

- Disaster Relief
- Healthcare and Medical Assistance
- Financial Assistance
- Loans

View Benefit Categories



Recreation

[National Park Service](#)

[Recreation.gov](#)

[National Forests](#)

[Recreational Areas and Activities \(usa.gov\)](#)

RECREATION.gov #RecreateResponsibly
BRING HOME A STORY

TEN TIPS

FOR FIRST-TIME TENT CAMPERS

- STICK CLOSE TO HOME**
Make your trip a memorable one by planning an easy outing close to home. A weekend escape for one or two nights within an hour of where you live is the best choice for a first camping trip.
- PLAN FOR THE UNEXPECTED**
Plan ahead and have back-up options in mind for your trip. Learn about conditions or guidance that may impact your travel plans. You might find new routes, crowded trails, or new rules. Make sure to spend a little more time researching your trip.
- MAKE A RESERVATION**
Planning ahead is more important than ever. In fact, reservations through Recreation.gov are at an all-time high. Start planning your camping trip by searching Recreation.gov for locations and making a reservation in advance.
- CHECK YOUR GEAR**
Whether you choose to rent or purchase, test all your gear before your trip. Avoid spending hours figuring out how to set up your tent for the first time when you arrive with a few trail-runs at home.
- PACK LIGHT, BUT SMART**
Make a checklist so you don't forget any gear, and pack items that serve more than one purpose. Check the location's facility page for important Need to Know information prior to your trip.
PRO TIP: Bring earplugs, nature can be louder than you'd think.
- DON'T FORGET THE FURNITURE**
Review the campsite amenities on Recreation.gov to see if picnic tables are available. As a good rule of thumb, pack a chair for each member of your group as well as a table for food prep, eating, and games.
- PLAN YOUR MEALS**
Plan a full menu for each day of your trip. Measure your ingredients and prep meals before you arrive to save time as well. It's common for new campers to need a store run for something they forgot.
- ARRIVE AT CHECK-IN**
Check your reservation for the check-in time and plan to arrive at your campsite by then. Arriving right at check-in ensures you have plenty of time to unpack and set up, and helps you avoid pitching your tent with a headlamp in the dark.
- LEAVE NO TRACE**
Pack out what you pack in. These principles apply in your neighborhood, local park, and all public lands. Clean up after yourself. Don't leave trash on the trails or at your campsite, and respect our outdoor spaces and fellow campers.
- BE A COURTEOUS CAMPER**
Be a respectful camper by following all rules and guidelines. Honor quiet hours, fully extinguish your fire, keep your campsite tidy, and remove all trash and belongings when it is time to leave.



Image: Great Smoky Mountain National Park by Traci Thornton via Dept of Interior Twitter



Image: Yellowstone National Park by Jacob W. Frank via Dept of Interior Twitter



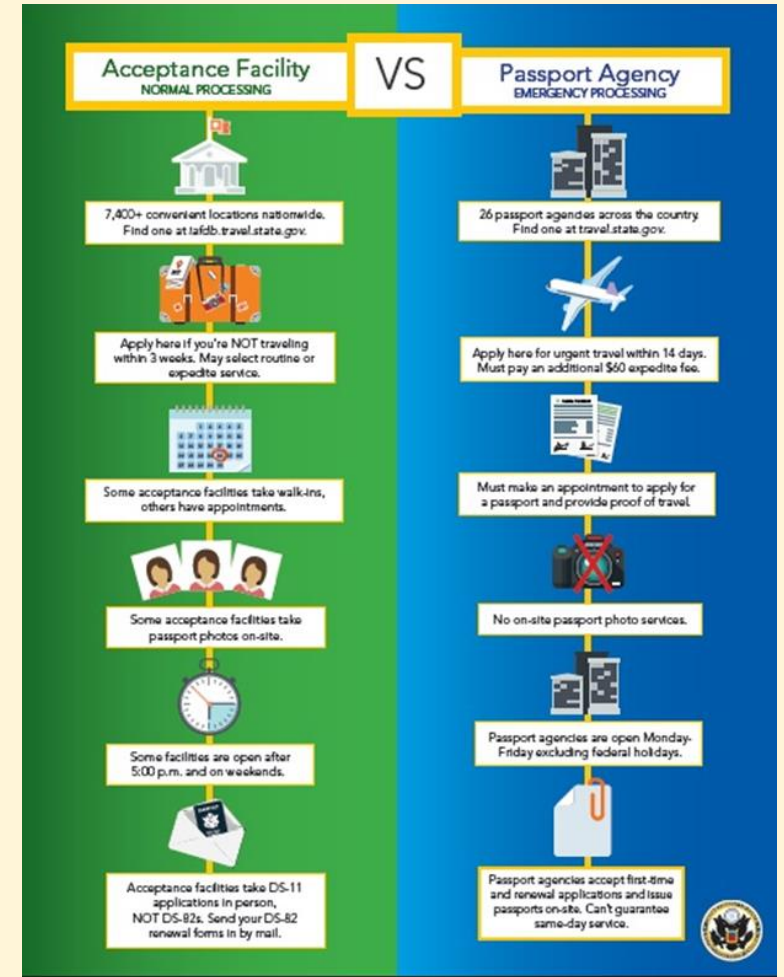
Passports and travel

U.S. Department of State

- travel.state.gov
- [Passports](#)



[Passport Acceptance Facility Search Page](#)



Where do I go from here?

Some options:

- Check out some Government information reference books or online guides
- Attend conferences, join professional associations, or monitor the govdoc-I listserv
- View GPO resources:
 - [FDLP Academy Training Repository](#)
 - [FDLP LibGuides](#) (and other online guides)



FDLP Information

FDLP Academy for live webinars and recorded webcasts

- <https://www.fdlp.gov/about/fdlp-academy>

Online guides about Federal Government resources

- <https://libguides.fdlp.gov/>

Questions for GPO staff?

- Contact us using [askGPO](#)



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 - Image 1: [USDA](#)
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 - Image 3: [Recreation.gov](#)
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 - Image 1: [Travel.State.Gov](#)

