


# An introduction to the UK Data Service: How to find and access data

## Finding datasets

The UK Data Service is designed to help you find data easily; however, as with all information search tools, knowing a bit about the system helps you get the most from it.

You can search by entering a term on our home page ([ukdataservice.ac.uk](https://ukdataservice.ac.uk)). You can also reach it via <https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue>.

The screenshot shows the UK Data Service homepage. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'Site search', 'FAQ', 'Help', 'Contact', and 'New users'. Below this is a secondary menu with 'About us', 'Get data', 'Use data', 'Manage data', 'Deposit data', and 'News and events'. The main header features the UK Data Service logo, social media icons for LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter, and a 'Register / Login' button. A large dark banner contains the text 'Explore the UK's largest collection of social, economic and population data resources.' Below this banner is a search bar with the word 'housing' entered and a purple search button with a magnifying glass icon, which is circled in red. At the bottom of the banner, there are links for 'About the UK Data Service' and 'Guides and resources'.

To search, type in a search term and hit the search button .

## Search results

By default, search results include individual studies. Note that there is another tab for Series.

The screenshot shows the search results page for the term 'housing'. At the top, there is a search bar with 'housing' entered and a purple search button with a magnifying glass icon, which is circled in red. To the right of the search bar is a 'Page guide' button with a question mark icon, also circled in red. Below the search bar, there are two tabs: 'STUDIES (3168)' and 'SERIES (61)'. The 'STUDIES' tab is selected. On the left side, there is a filter panel with fields for 'Date from:' (1753), 'Date to:' (2019), 'Topic:', 'Data Type:', 'Access:', and 'Country:'. A 'Refine date' button and a 'Reset filters' button are also present. The main content area shows 'Displaying 1 - 10 of 3168 results for 'housing'' and 'Page 1 of 317'. Below this, there are search options: 'Results per page:' (10) and 'Sort by:' (Relevance), both circled in red. The search results list includes entries for 'English Housing Survey, 2016: Housing Stock Data', 'English Housing Survey, 2015: Housing Stock Data', 'English Housing Survey, 2014: Housing Stock Data', and 'English Housing Survey, 2013: Housing Stock Data', each with a link to the study and the name of the responsible department.

To change the scope of the search, click and select from the options in the filters on the left of the page.

The "Page guide" top right of the page, gives further details regarding boolean searches. Take a look at to see the functionality that is available.

By default, your search will be sorted by Relevance. You can also sort by Title, and most recently released.

The search above returned 3164 results.

## Narrowing the search

The left hand panel in Discover allows you to narrow your search. Search results include different types of items.

By default the results will show "Studies", but there is another tab for "Series". Series describe a series of datasets; these are often surveys which are regularly repeated.

### Facets

You can use the facets to narrow your search.

**Date** allows you to limit your search to a particular period

**Topic** allows you to select from a predefined list of topics

**Data type** allows you to choose between UK survey data, cohort and longitudinal studies, census data and much more.

You may know that you only want easy to access data, or that you are looking for a file which is in a secure setting. If so you can limit your search by access route with the **Access** facet.

**Country** allows you to pick the geographical location to which the data relate. If you are interested in lots of countries, choose Multi-nation

## Searching by variable or question

If you are looking for a particular survey question or variable, a good place to start is in the variable and question bank.

To use this separate part of the search facility, go to <https://beta.ukdataservice.ac.uk/datacatalogue> and click on "Variable and question bank".

The screenshot shows the UK Data Service search interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Login / Register, Help, Accessibility, and Data catalogue. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for About us, Get data, Use data, Manage data, Deposit data, and News and events. A search bar at the top contains the text "coffee" and a search icon. Below the search bar, there are two tabs: "STUDIES (26)" and "SERIES (2)". The search results are displayed in a list format, showing the following entries:

- SN 7947 | [Household Survey for Evaluation of Livelihoods and Sustainable Markets Project in Ethiopia, 2014](#)  
Anguko, Andrew
- SN 3447 | [Integrated Rural Survey of Kenya, 1982](#)  
Collier, Paul
- SN 3448 | [Household Budget Survey of Rural Tanzania, 1983](#)  
Collier, Paul
- SN 5581 | [Futures Commodity Prices and Electricity and Utility Stock Prices, 2005](#)  
Sancetta, Alessio | Satchell, Steve

The search results are displayed on page 1 of 3. The interface also includes a filter section on the left with fields for Date from (1753), Date to (2019), Topic, Data Type, Access, and Country. There are buttons for "Refine date" and "Reset filters".

The search results returns individual questions and variables so that you can

- View question wording
- View the responses to the variable
- View all instances of a particular variable
- Add variables to "my variables" to compare them

The screenshot displays the UK Data Service Discover website interface. At the top right, there are links for 'Site Search', 'FAQ', 'Help', and 'Contact'. Below this is a navigation menu with 'About us', 'Get data', 'Use data', 'Manage data', 'Deposit data', and 'News and events'. The main header area includes 'Discover > Variables' and a 'My Variables' shopping cart icon.

The central section is titled 'Variable and question bank' and features a search bar with the query 'coffee'. Below the search bar are options for 'Reset filters', 'Clear search', and a checkbox for 'Search only question text/responses'. There are also checkboxes for 'Auto-complete' and a 'Help' link. The search results are displayed in a list format, showing the first two results for 'coffee : Do you drink coffee?' from the 'National Diet and Nutrition Survey : Adults Aged 19 to 64 Years, 2000-2001'. Each result includes a '+ View responses...' link and an 'Add to My Variables' button. The interface also shows 'Results per page: 10' and 'Sorted by: Relevance'.

On the left side, there is a 'Data Catalogue' sidebar with a 'Variable and question bank' section. Below this, there is a 'QualiBank' section and a list of filters with expandable options (+): Series, Survey, Country, Date, Data collector, Question: Harmonised set, and Question: Intent.

The variable and question bank covers a wide range of major data collections but it is not comprehensive and will not include variables from one-off studies. It also will not cover data from UK censuses or international aggregate data

## Get Data

The Get Data link is visible at the top of all pages. Under Get Data, you can find a link to Discover. You will also find other ways of exploring data, including topic guides and key data.

**Key data** identifies the major data collections by type;

<b>UK surveys</b>	Cross-national surveys	Longitudinal studies	Census data	International macrodata
Business microdata	Qualitative / mixed methods			

**Data by topic** opens up a number of topic guides to data, which includes key data by topic, video guides to using analysis tools, research ideas and links to relevant resources.

The screenshot shows the UK Data Service website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: About us, Get data, Use data, Manage data, Deposit data, and News and Events. Below this is a breadcrumb trail: Home > Discover data > Data by theme > Health > Discover. The main heading is 'Health and health behaviour'. A large purple banner features the text: "A wealth of data on health and health-related behaviour" next to a heart icon with a plus sign. Below the banner is a sub-navigation bar with tabs: Key data, Discover (selected), Analysing, Research, and Resources. On the left side, there is a sidebar menu with 'Key data' and 'Data by theme' (including Labour, Housing, Crime, and Health). On the right side, there is a search bar with the text 'DISCOVER UK DATA SERVICE' and a 'GO' button, along with a 'QUICK ACCESS TO' section listing: Labour market, Housing and local environment, Crime and social control, and Health and health behaviour. A 'SHARE' button is located at the bottom right of the main content area.

**Explore online** links you to a number of data exploration and analysis tools. For example Nesstar allows you to explore surveys online.

## The catalogue record

The catalogue provides information, regarding the study such as a description, documentation, and citation.

[Home](#) / [Data catalogue](#) / [Studies](#) / Study

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### British Household Panel Survey: Waves 1-18, 1991-2009

[Details](#) [Documentation](#) [Resources](#) [Access](#)

**Details** ▼

<b>Title:</b>	British Household Panel Survey: Waves 1-18, 1991-2009
<b>Alternative title:</b>	BHPS
<b>Study number (SN):</b>	5151
<b>Persistent identifier (DOI):</b>	<a href="#">10.5255/UKDA-SN-5151-2</a>
<b>Series:</b>	<a href="#">British Household Panel Survey</a>
<b>Principal investigator(s):</b>	University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research

**Sponsors and contributors** ▼

**Citation and copyright** ▼

The citation for this study is:

University of Essex, Institute for Social and Economic Research. (2018). *British Household Panel Survey: Waves 1-18, 1991-2009*. [Data file]. UK Data Archive. DOI: 10.5255/UKDA-SN-5151-2

Click the "Access" tab to access the data. Different datasets have different access requirements.

### British Household Panel Survey: Waves 1-18, 1991-2009

[Details](#) [Documentation](#) [Resources](#) [Access](#)

#### Access

The Data Collection is to be made available to Registered or Authorised Users.

Requests for Commercial Use of data are to be subject to the permission of the data owner or his/her nominee.

You must be a [registered user](#) and [logged in to](#) access this study.