This is a tutorial from the librarians at Lone Star College—North Harris. The purpose of this tutorial is to teach library users how to use the database Statistical Abstract of the United States.

The Statistical Abstract of the United States is a collection of statistical information about the United States.

You can browse the table of contents for information about major topics. As an example, let’s look at section 6—Geography and Environment.

Here is a list of tables of information on this topic. Using the tools in the sidebar on the left, you can limit the information by the year of publication, the geographic area or the major subject.

Let’s look at the list of the largest lakes in the United States.

Here’s a list of the largest lakes in the United States. It was updated in December, 2012. You can import this table as an Excel file by clicking on XLS. Doing so will open up a vast amount of statistical data on the topic far beyond what is visible on the table.

You can also import it as a PDF file by clicking on Source document PDF or you can print it by clicking on the printer icon. Once you’re done, close out of the table by clicking on the X.

You can use the search field to search for information about a particular topic. For example, let’s look for statistics about hospitals in Texas. Type Texas hospital into the search bar. Now click on Go.

Here are the search results. The first search result is entitled “Community Hospitals—States: 2000-2009.” That may be relevant. Let’s click on it to find out.

This table appears to provide information about the number of hospitals, hospital beds, patients admitted, daily patient count, outpatient visits and average cost per day for all of the hospitals in each of the 50 states.

The source for this information is listed at the top. It says that this information was provided by the American Hospital Association. You may wish to research that organization further in order to determine whether it is a credible source of information.

If you want to export this data as an Excel file, a PDF file or print it, click on the appropriate buttons at the top.