

Use a complete title. List major variables, unit of analysis (often a geographic unit such as a city or MSA), year(s), and cases (and selection criterion for cases if relevant)

Use complete source citation (and don't just list the url)

Right-justify column labels so that they align with the data below

**Data tables:  
Common mistakes  
and fixes**  
Prof. S Campbell  
(2015) Version 2

Avoid awkward abbreviations, such as "LA" or "Philly"

No need for digits to the right of the decimal place for discrete variables

Excel displays ##### if the number is too wide for the column -- expand column width

Use 1000 comma separators (e.g., 9,710,156)

Be more precise: "Per capita income in 1989, in \$000s". And "average" can be ambiguous: use "mean" or "median"

Right justify all digits

Be consistent with the degree of accuracy used: In general, no need for digits beyond 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a percent (e.g., 12.6%)

**1990 US Census Data**  
source: Census online

	New York City LA	Chicago	Philly	UNITED STATES
Population	7,322,564.0	3,485,398.0	2,783,726.0	1,585,577.0
<b>RACE</b>				
White	3831907	1845133	1265953	848894
Black	2107137	485949	1086389	632430
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	21543	14526	6508	3185
Asian or Pacific Islander	510549	341986	104141	43174
Other race	850253	797411	320482	57754
Hispanic	1737927	1370476	535315	84186
Average Income	16.3	16.2	12.9	12
<b>AGE</b>				
18 and under	1,683,621	861,436	723,482	379,287
18 to 65 years	4,686,212	2,277,999	1,730,572	965,084
65 and over	952,731	345,963	329,672	241,206
%	13.01%	9.92%	11.843%	15%

"Hispanic origin," for US Census purposes, can be of any race. Therefore, one cannot combine these categories without risking double-counting.

Spell out "%" as "percent" in titles. Also explain "percent of ..."

Make sure categories are mutually exclusive (no overlap) and exhaustive (all possibilities covered)

At the bottom of the table you can include: (1) Source(s); (2) Notes, including (a) if there is missing data; (b) explanation of any unusual terms (c) full name of any abbreviated terms or acronyms included in the table. (3) an optional brief caption (to help guide the reader through the table and/or highlight the main points).