

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

On behalf of the Standard Occupational Classification Policy Committee (SOCPC)

February 2010

Questions should be emailed to soc@bls.gov

Standard Occupational Classification and Coding Structure

The occupations in the SOC are classified at four levels of aggregation to suit the needs of various data users: major group, minor group, broad occupation, and detailed occupation. Each lower level of detail identifies a more specific group of occupations. The 23 major groups, listed below, are divided into 97 minor groups, 461 broad occupations, and 840 detailed occupations.

2010 SOC Major Groups

<i>Code</i>	<i>Title</i>
11-0000	Management Occupations
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations
19-0000	Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations
21-0000	Community and Social Service Occupations
23-0000	Legal Occupations
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations
33-0000	Protective Service Occupations
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations
43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations
45-0000	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations
51-0000	Production Occupations
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations
55-0000	Military Specific Occupations

Some users may require aggregations other than the SOC system built on these major groups. Further details on alternate occupational aggregations and approved modifications to the SOC structure are provided at www.bls.gov/soc.

Major groups are broken into minor groups, which, in turn, are divided into broad occupations. Broad occupations are then divided into one or more detailed occupations.

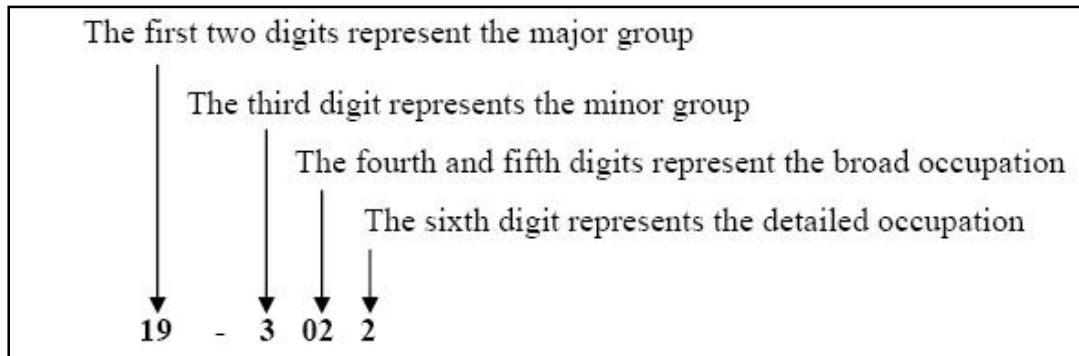
29-0000 Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations
 29-1000 Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners
 29-1060 Physicians and Surgeons
 29-1062 Family and General Practitioners

- Major group codes end with 0000 (e.g., 29-0000 Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations).
- Minor groups generally end with 000 (e.g., 29-1000 Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners)—the exceptions are minor groups 15-1100 Computer Occupations and 51-5100 Printing Workers, which end with 00.

- Broad occupations end with 0 (e.g., 29-1060 Physicians and Surgeons).
- Detailed occupations end with a number other than 0 (e.g., 29-1062 Family and General Practitioners).

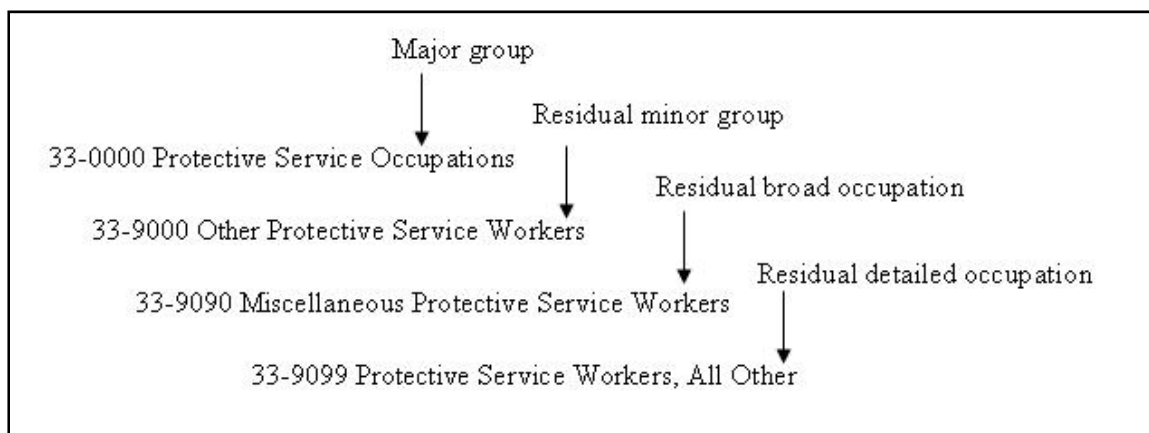
Each item in the SOC is designated by a six-digit code. The hyphen between the second and third digit is used only for clarity (see figure 1).

Figure 1.



As shown in figure 2, all residuals ("Other," "Miscellaneous," or "All Other" occupations), whether at the detailed or broad occupation or minor group level, contain a "9" at the level of the residual. Minor groups that are major group residuals end in 9000 (e.g., 33-9000, Other Protective Service Workers). Broad occupations that are minor group residuals end in 90 (e.g., 33-9090, Miscellaneous Protective Service Workers). Detailed residual occupations end in 9 (e.g., 33-9099, Protective Service Workers, All Other).

Figure 2.



If there are more than nine broad occupations in a minor group (e.g., 51-9000 Other Production Occupations); or more than eight, if there is no residual (e.g., 47-2000 Construction Trades Workers), then the code xx-x090 is skipped (reserved for residuals), the code xx-x000 is skipped (reserved for minor groups), and the numbering system will continue with code xx-x110. The

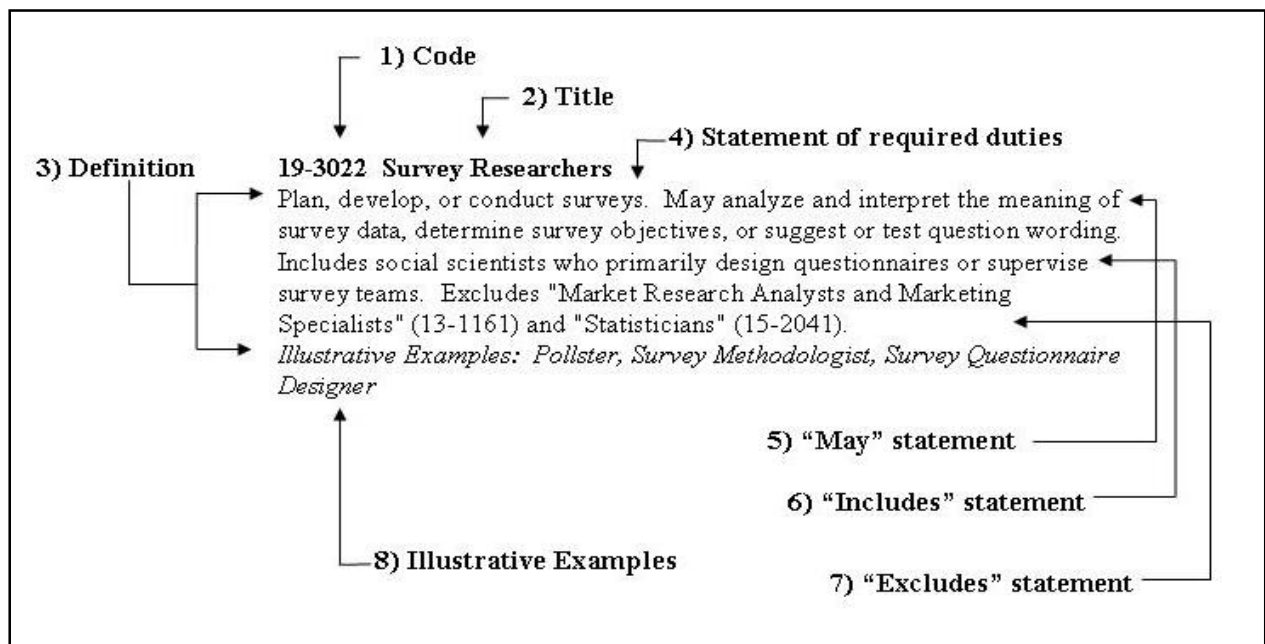
residual broad occupation is then code xx-x190 or xx-x290 (e.g., 51-9190, Miscellaneous Production Workers).

The structure is comprehensive, and encompasses all occupations in the U.S. economy. If a specific occupation is not listed, it is included in a residual category with similar occupations.

Detailed occupations are identified and defined so that each occupation includes workers who perform similar job tasks as described in Classification Principle 2. Definitions begin with the duties all workers in the occupation perform. Some definitions include a sentence at the end describing tasks workers in an occupation *may*, but do not necessarily *have to* perform, in order to be included in the occupation. Where the definitions include tasks also performed by workers in another occupation, cross-references to that occupation are provided in the definition.

Figure 3 identifies the eight elements that appear in detailed SOC occupations. All six-digit, detailed occupations have a SOC code (1), a title (2), and a definition (3). All workers classified in an occupation are required to perform the duties described in the first sentence of each definition (4). Some definitions also have a “may” statement (5), an “includes” statement (6), and/or an “excludes” statement (7). Many occupations have one or more “illustrative examples” (8), presented in alphabetical order. Illustrative examples are job titles classified in only that occupation, and were selected from the Direct Match Title File.

Figure 3.



The “may” statement describes tasks that workers in that occupation may – but are not required to – perform in order to be classified with Survey Researchers. The “includes” statement identifies particular workers who should be classified with Survey Researchers. The “excludes” statement indicates other detailed occupations that may be similar to Survey Researchers and

clarifies that workers who fall into those occupations should be excluded from Survey Researchers.

Approved Modifications to the Structure

Agencies may use the SOC or parts of the SOC at varying levels of the system. For example, data may be collected at the broad occupation level in some areas and at the detailed level in others.

Occupations below the detailed level

The coding system is designed to allow SOC users desiring a delineation of occupations below the detailed occupation level to use a decimal point and additional digit(s) after the sixth digit. For example, Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education (25-2031) is a detailed occupation. Agencies wishing to collect more particular information on teachers by subject matter might use 25-2031.1 for secondary school science teachers or 25-2031.12 for secondary school biology teachers. Additional levels of detail also may be used to distinguish workers who have different training or years of experience.

OMB recommends that those needing extra detail use the structure of the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration's Occupational Information Network (O*NET). For more information, see <http://online.onetcenter.org>.

Higher levels of aggregation

Some users may wish to present occupational data at higher levels of aggregation than the SOC major groups. To meet this need and to maintain consistency and comparability across data sets, either the intermediate or the high-level aggregations presented in tables 3 and 4 should be used for data tabulation purposes.

Table 3. Intermediate aggregation to 13 groups, 2010 SOC

Intermediate aggregation	Major groups included	Intermediate aggregation title
1	11-13	Management, Business, and Financial Occupations
2	15-19	Computer, Engineering, and Science Occupations
3	21-27	Education, Legal, Community Service, Arts, and Media Occupations
4	29	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations
5	31-39	Service Occupations
6	41	Sales and Related Occupations
7	43	Office and Administrative Support Occupations
8	45	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations
9	47	Construction and Extraction Occupations
10	49	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations
11	51	Production Occupations
12	53	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations
13	55	Military Specific Occupations

Table 4. High-level aggregation to 6 groups, 2010 SOC

High-level aggregation	Major groups included	High-level aggregation title
1	11-29	Management, Business, Science, and Arts Occupations
2	31-39	Service Occupations
3	41-43	Sales and Office Occupations
4	45-49	Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations
5	51-53	Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations
6	55	Military Specific Occupations

Alternate aggregations

Data collection issues or confidentiality concerns may prevent agencies from reporting all the detail indicated in the SOC. For example, an agency might report the detail of at least one occupational category at a particular level of the SOC structure but must aggregate the other occupations at that level. In such cases, the agency may adjust the occupational categories so long as these adjustments permit aggregation to the next higher SOC level. In such a situation, agencies must distinguish such groups from the official SOC aggregation. If agencies choose this option they must obtain approval from the Standard Occupational Classification Policy Committee for their proposed aggregation scheme.