

Geography – Scotland’s Census 2022 Spatial Datasets File Specification

National Records of Scotland (NRS) have created the following spatial datasets for use with 2022 Census statistics.

[Census 2022 Output Areas](#)

There are 46,363 2022 Output Areas. The boundaries are available at Extent of the Realm and clipped to the Mean High Water (MHW) Mark with inland water removed.

[Census 2022 Output Areas Part Removed](#)

There are 531 2022 Output Areas Part Removed. The boundaries are available at Extent of the Realm and clipped to the Mean High Water (MHW) Mark with inland water removed.

[Census 2022 Output Areas Population Weighted Centroids](#)

There are 46,363 2022 Output Areas Population Weighted Centroids. The master postcode was selected using an algorithm which calculates the postcode centroid within an OA which has grid references closest to the population-weighted centre of the OA. In some instances, it was necessary to assign master postcodes manually.

[Census 2022 Frozen Postcode](#)

There are 153,192, 2022 frozen postcodes. The postcode dataset used for 2022 Census outputs is based on the April Postcode Address File (PAF®) received from Royal Mail®. The boundaries are available at Extent of the Realm and clipped to the Mean High Water (MHW) Mark with inland water removed.

[Census 2022 Frozen Postcode Grid References](#)

There are 153,192, 2022 frozen postcode grid references. Each individual postcode polygon holds a grid reference. Grid references have been assigned by NRS, choosing the building nearest to the centre of the most populous part of the postcode, or the grid reference is from Gridlink®.

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[Census 2022 Settlements](#)

There are 503 2022 Census Settlements. Settlements of Scotland are built-up areas which round to 500 people or more.

[Census 2022 Settlement Centroids](#)

There are 503 2022 Census Settlements Centroids. Grid references are calculated based on the population of the postcodes within the settlement, while ensuring that the centroid is located inside the boundary.

[Census 2022 Localities](#)

There are 656 2022 Census Localities. Larger Settlements are divided into Localities to reflect areas which are more easily identifiable as the towns and cities of Scotland.

[Census 2022 Locality Centroids](#)

There are 656 2022 Census Localities Centroids. Grid references are calculated based on the population of the postcodes within the Locality, while ensuring that the centroid is located inside the boundary.

[Census 2022 Island Groups](#)

As statistics for individual islands could reveal details about individual people, the individual islands have been grouped into 53 ‘Island Groups’ (including mainland Scotland) for 2022 Census output.

Geography – Scotland’s Census 2022 Spatial Datasets File Specification

Product Name: Census 2022 Output Areas

File Name(s): OutputArea2022_EoR or OutputArea2022_MHW

Description: Output Areas created by aggregating frozen postcodes.

Field Name	Type/Size	Comments
code	Char(9)	A code that identifies a Census 2022 Output Area (OA).
HHcount	Int	2022 Census occupied household count at OA level. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland's Census website .
Popcount	Int	2022 Census household population count at OA level. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland's Census website .
council	Char(9)	A code that identifies a 2019 Council Area.
sqkm	Double	Area of Output Area in square kilometres.
hect	Double	Area of Output Area in hectares.
masterpc	Char(9)	Postcode assigned as the Master Postcode for Output Area.
easting	Char(6)	Easting of Master Postcode grid reference measured to 1 meter on the British National Grid.
northing	Char(7)	Northing of Master Postcode grid reference measured to 1 meter on the British National Grid.

Note:

The area held in ‘sqkm’ and ‘hect’ will not always agree with the area which users will be able to calculate from the shapefile. This is because the area recorded in these fields is based on the Output Area (OA) and all of its constituent parts, whereas some constituent parts have been removed from the shapefile (see OutputArea2022_PartRemoved_EoR or OutputArea2022_PartRemoved_MHW for parts that have changed).

Geography – Scotland’s Census 2022 Spatial Datasets File Specification

Geography Name: Census 2022 Output Areas Part Removed

File Name: OutputArea2022_PartRemoved_EoR or OutputArea2022_PartRemoved_MHW

Description: The parts of multipart Postcodes removed from an Output Area.

Field Name	Type/Size	Comments
code	Char(9)	A code that identifies a Census 2022 Output Area (OA).
HHcount	Int	2022 Census occupied household count at OA level. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .
Popcount	Int	2022 Census household population count at OA level. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .
council	Char(9)	A Code that identifies a 2019 Council Area.
sqkm	Double	Area of Output Area in square kilometres.
hect	Double	Area of Output Area in hectares.
masterpc	Char(9)	Postcode assigned as the Master Postcode for Output Area.
easting	Char(6)	Easting of Master Postcode grid reference measured to 1 meter on the British National Grid.
northing	Char(7)	Northing of Master Postcode grid reference measured to 1 meter on the British National Grid.

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Geography Name: Census 2022 Output Areas Population Weighted Centroids

File Name: OutputArea2022_PWC

Description: the populated weighted centroid assigned to each Output Area.

Field Name	Type/Size	Comments
code	Char(9)	A code that identifies a Census 2022 Output Area (OA).
HHcount	Int	2022 Census occupied household count at OA level. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .
Popcount	Int	2022 Census household population count at OA level. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .
council	Char(9)	A Code that identifies a 2019 Council Area.
masterpc	Char(9)	Postcode assigned as the Master Postcode for Output Area.
easting	Char(6)	Easting of Master Postcode grid reference measured to 1 meter on the British National Grid.
northing	Char(7)	Northing of Master Postcode grid reference measured to 1 meter on the British National Grid.

Geography – Scotland’s Census 2022 Spatial Datasets File Specification

Geography Name: Census 2022 Frozen Postcode

File Name(s): Postcode2022_EoR or Postcode2022_MHW

Description: The postcode boundaries used for Census 2022.

Field Name	Type/Size	Comments
postcode	Char(9)	The full Royal Mail Postcode, for example EH10 4SU. Along with any split indicator (A, B, C) added by National Records of Scotland (NRS). For example, EH10 4SUA.
HHcount	Int	2022 Census occupied household count at postcode level. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .
Popcount	Int	2022 Census household population count at postcode level. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .
council	Char(9)	A Code that identifies a 2019 Council Crea.

Geography – Scotland’s Census 2022 Spatial Datasets File Specification

Geography Name: Census 2022 Frozen Postcode Grid References

File Name: PostcodeGridRef2022

Description: The grid reference point assigned to each postcode.

Field Name	Type/Size	Comments
postcode	Char(9)	The full Royal Mail Postcode, for example EH10 4SU. Along with any split indicator (A, B, C) added by National Records of Scotland (NRS). For example, EH10 4SUA.
HHcount	Int	2022 Census occupied household count at postcode level. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .
Popcount	Int	2022 Census household population count at postcode level. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .
council	Char(9)	A Code that identifies a 2019 Council Area.
easting	Char(6)	Easting of Postcode grid reference measured to 1 meter on the British National Grid.
northing	Char(7)	Northing of Postcode grid reference measured to 1 meter on the British National Grid.

Geography – Scotland’s Census 2022 Spatial Datasets File Specification

Geography Name: Census 2022 Settlements

File Name: CensusSettlement2022_MHW

Description: Boundaries of the Settlements created for Census 2022.

Field Name	Type/Size	Comments
code	Char(9)	A code that identifies a 2022 Census Settlement.
name	Char(250)	A name for the Census 2022 Settlement.
Popcount	Int	2022 Census total population count for the Settlement. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .

Geography Name: Census 2022 Settlement Centroids

File Name: CensusSettlementCentroids2022

Description: The populated weighted centroids assigned to each Settlement.

Field Name	Type/Size	Comments
code	Char(9)	A code that identifies a 2022 Census Settlement.
name	Char(250)	A name for the Census 2022 Settlement.
Popcount	Int	2022 Census total population count for the Settlement. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology, you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .

Geography – Scotland’s Census 2022 Spatial Datasets File Specification

Geography Name: Census 2022 Locality

File Name: CensusLocality2022_MHW

Description: Boundaries of the Localities created for Census 2022.

Field Name	Type/Size	Comments
code	Char(9)	A code that identifies a 2022 Census Locality.
name	Char(250)	A name for the Census 2022 Locality.
Popcount	Int	2022 Census total population count for the Locality. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology; you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .

Geography Name: Census 2022 Locality Centroids

FileName: CensusLocalityCentroids2022

Description: The populated weighted centroids assigned to each Locality.

Field Name	Type/Size	Comments
code	Char(9)	A code that identifies a 2022 Census Locality.
name	Char(250)	A name for the Census 2022 Locality.
Popcount	Int	2022 Census total population count for the Locality. Cell Key Perturbation has been applied to Scotland’s Census 2022 outputs. This means that small adjustments are made automatically to cells in tables, including the Postcode to Output Area lookup. This is part of our Statistical Disclosure Control methodology; you can read more on the Scotland’s Census website .

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Geography Name: Census 2022 Island Groups

File Name: IslandGroups2022_MHW

Description: Groupings of Islands designed to allow the release of statistics without disclosure for islands with low population counts.

Field Name	Type/Size	Comments
code	Char(9)	A code that identifies a 2022 Census Island Group.
name	Char (250)	A name for the 2022 Census Island Group.