

Bar Graphs and Histograms

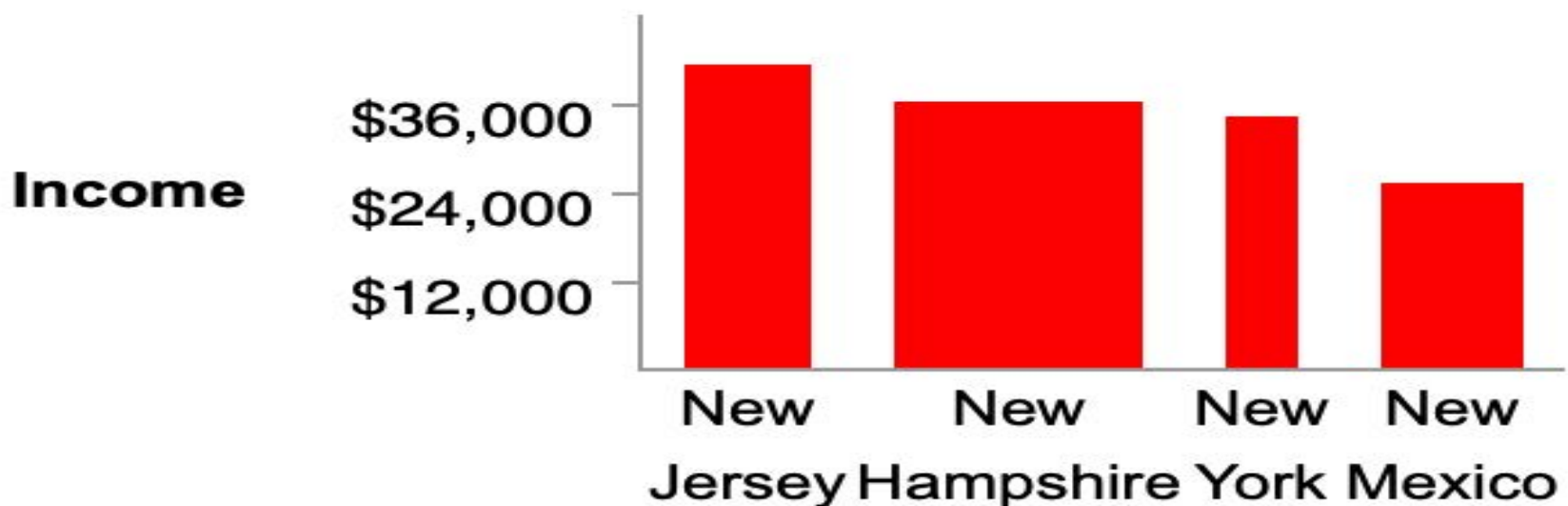
Bar graphs and histograms are used to compare the sizes of different groups.

Bar Graphs

A bar graph is made up of bars - columns - plotted on a chart. Here is how to read a bar graph.

- The bars represent discrete data.
- The height of each bar indicates the value as defined by the y-axis Axis Label.

The bar chart below shows average household income for the four "New" states: New Jersey, New York, New Hampshire, and New Mexico.



The bar graph shows that average household income is highest in New Jersey; lowest, in New Mexico.

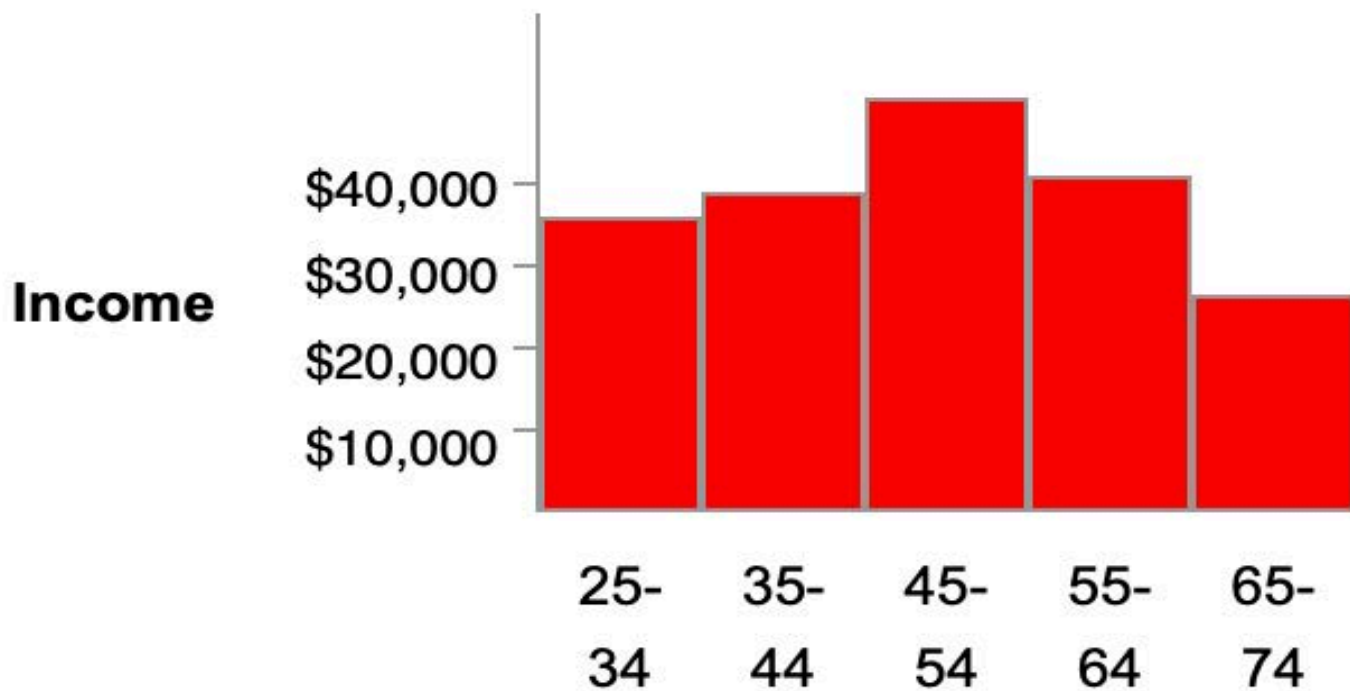
Histograms

Like a bar graph, a histogram is made up of columns plotted on a graph. Unlike a bar graph, in a histogram there is usually no space between adjacent columns.

Here is how to read a histogram.

- The columns are positioned over a label that represents continuous data.
- The column label can be a single value or a range of values (with a minimum and a maximum).
- The height of the column indicates the value of the group as defined by the y-axis Axis Label.

The histogram below shows average household income for five age groups.



You can see from the histogram that average household income is greatest for people the 45 to 54 age group.

The Difference Between Bar Graphs and Histograms

Here is the main difference between bar graphs and histograms. With bar graphs, each column represents a group defined by a discrete measurement; with histograms, each column represents a group defined by a continuous measurement.