"Average," when you stop to think of it, is a funny concept. Although it describes all of us, it describes none of us.

No one considers himself ordinary or run-of-the-mill. But while none of us wants to be the average American, we all want to know about him, or her. Averages define the national character, etch the routines of everyday life. They give us a benchmark to measure ourselves against. Do we earn, owe or work more than the average? Do we jog, eat, loaf or sweat less?

The average American man is 5 feet, 9 inches tall; the average woman, 5 feet 3.6 inches.
The average person’s toes curl when he or she is sexually aroused.
The average American is sick in bed seven days a year, missing 5 days of work.
The average woman is more inclined to be knock-kneed than the average man.
The average American high-school graduate recognizes about 15,000 words when reading or listening; the college graduate recognizes about 30,000.
The average body has over two million sweat glands and two square yards of skin.
On the average, the nonsmoking wives of smokers die four years younger than the nonsmoking wives of nonsmokers.
The average American female is 28% fat. The average American male is 15% fat.
The average Southerner has higher blood pressure than the average Yankee or Westerner.
Every generation of Americans has been taller than its parents by about an inch - except for the present one, which shows no change.
The average American man washes his hair more often than the average woman does.
In 1977, the average working woman spent $960 on clothes.
The average American nudist is 35 years old and married.
For every white-collar worker on payroll, the typical business has 18,000 pieces of paper on file.
By the time he or she graduates from high school, the average American has watched 350,000 commercials and 18,000 murders on television.
In 1979, the average American made 1097 telephone calls.
Thirty-two million Americans - nearly 15% - believe in astrology.
The average American worker gets about $4000 worth of fringe benefits a year. And of every 100 families, 47 get some form of monthly payment from Uncle Sam.
Nine of every ten shoppers enter a supermarket in a good mood, but only three or four are in a good mood when they leave.
On an average day, 24 mailmen receive animal bites.
Given a choice, four men in five take showers rather than baths. Among women, half would rather bathe, half shower.
The average husband in America is just a shade over 45 years old, and the average wife is just shy of 42.
In 1978, the average American worker had been in the same job for 3.6 years, down from 4.6 years in 1963.
Three of every four working Americans gets to work in less than half an hour, and only one in 20 commutes longer than an hour.
None of every three American workers feels overeducated for his or her job.
By his or her 70th birthday, the average American will have eaten 14 steers, 1050 chickens, 3.5 lambs, and 25.2 hogs.
And finally, did you know that about half the people in America are below average?
The Average American
By Charles Osgood from "POSSLQ"

The average American is an amazing fellow. The Bureau of the Census, which keeps tables on the
average American, now tells us that the average American is, at the present time, two years older than
he was ten years ago. Think of that! Are you only two years older than you were ten years ago? Neither
am I. But the average American is. In 1970, he was 27.9 years old, and in the statistics put our by the
Bureau, the average American is now 30.0 years old. How he does it I would sure like to know. I, for
one, am ten years older than I was ten years ago.

The Census Bureau says what happened in the last ten years is that the population under fourteen
years of age decreased by 14% while those between twenty-five and thirty-four increased bye 39%.
Fewer babies, more old folks, and a lot more middle-aged, and you wind up with the average age of the
population: a nice, round, 30.0.

I think the way you arrive at this is to total up all the ages of everybody in the country and divide
that by the size of the population. Or maybe what you do is find the age at which half the population is
older than you and the other half is younger than you. I'm not sure which, but in either case you can be
sure of one thing. The average American (the one who has ages two years in the last ten years)
achieved this remarkable record by the simple expedient of not existing. He is a figment of some
statistician's imagination. The average human being in the work is, according to the official figures, a
lot younger than he was ten years ago. Being younger than you were ten years ago is even more
impressive than being only two years older than you were ten years ago. But the average human being
doesn't exist either.

I think I would rather exist and be ten years older than I was in 1980, than not exist and be only
two years older or a whole lot younger. Wouldn't you?