

United States® Census 2020



What Does the Census Ask?



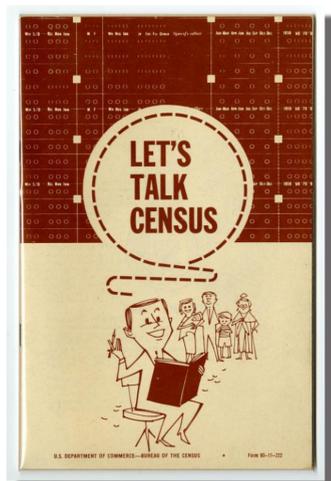
The Census Form Over the Years

From the earliest years of the census, the number and types of questions began to grow. Only questions pertaining to head of household and numbers of free white persons and slaves were asked through the first thirty years. Here are some questions asked over the years on the census:

- 1820—Numbers of “foreigners not naturalized” or the first non-U.S. citizen question was added
- 1840—Name and age of pensioners for Revolutionary or military service
- 1850—Two different questionnaires—one for free inhabitants and one for slaves
- 1870— Added classification “Chinese” and “American Indian” to the column “Color” question
- 1890—“Color” was changed to “Race”
- 1930—Included 32 questions
- 1940—5% statistical sample asked additional questions to gauge effects of Great Depression
- 1960— Individuals could select their own race
- 2000—Individuals could select more than one race
- 2010—Introduction of the American Community Survey that takes place every year to replace long form



Census badge, 1900.
Courtesy of the Smithsonian National
Museum of American History,
https://www.si.edu/object/nmah_514198



This booklet was part of the kit given to
census enumerators in 1960.
Courtesy, Smithsonian National Museum
of American History,
https://www.si.edu/object/nmah_1671502

SCHEDULE I.—Free Inhabitants in <i>Hattickville</i> in the County of <i>White</i> State of <i>Virginia</i> enumerated by me, on the <i>29</i> day of <i>August</i> 1850. <i>W. B. Ballou</i> Ass't Marshal									
Name	Sex	Color	Age	Profession, Occupation, or Trade	Place or Birth	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.	Married		Total
							Male	Female	
<i>Thomas Jackson</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>Labourer</i>	<i>Pa</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>John Jackson</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Pa</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>John Jackson</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Pa</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>John Jackson</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Pa</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Thomas</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Pa</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Mary Ann Jackson</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Pa</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Mary Jackson</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Pa</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Carroll H. Boyd</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>Do</i>	<i>Pa</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>

1850 Census Schedule for “free” black inhabitants in Hudson Valley,
Courtesy, Historic Huguenot Street Society through the Southeastern
Library Resources Council in New York Heritage,
<https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/hhs/id/599/rec/37>

The 2020 Census

The 2020 Census asks 10 questions and offers multiple opportunities to complete it. For the first time, residents can complete the census online. Nearly all households receive an invitation letter and instructions for responding to the census. The online 2020 Census is available in 13 different languages and the paper questionnaires are available in English and bilingual English-Spanish. Additional means for completing the census are through telephone services or through an in-person interview.

The form will:

- Allow individuals to self-identify their race and ethnicity
- Enable head of household report a same-sex relationship with another household member
- Encourage respondents to include all children in their household on the form

Census challenge:

The Hollerith tabulating machine, introduced for the 1890 Census, took only 6 weeks to process the results. How long did it take to compute results by hand for the 1880 U.S. Census?

Find out more about the history of the U.S. Census by visiting our online exhibit at:
<https://bit.ly/2nVeTK7>

www.census.gov

