

Monthly

VITAL STATISTICS REPORT

Summary Report

Final Marriage Statistics, 1971



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FROM THE

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS

In 1971 there were 2,190,481 marriages performed, an increase of 31,679, or 1.5 percent, over 1970. The annual number of marriages has been increasing steadily since 1958 when it was 1.45 million.

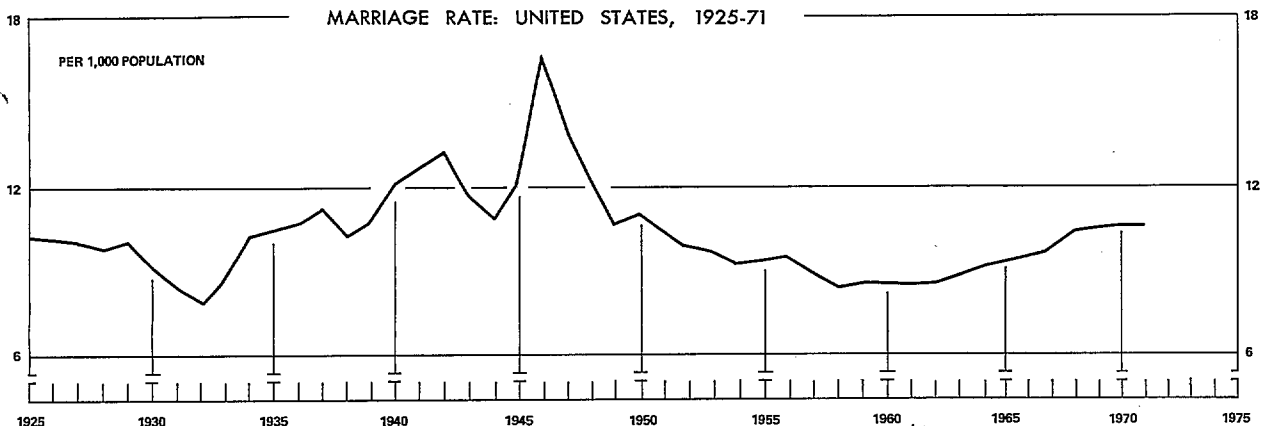
As the graph shows, the marriage rate hit a historic peak in 1946 at 16.4 per 1,000 population. It declined to 8.4 in 1958, held steady at 8.5 from 1959 to 1962, then rose gradually until 1969 when it reached 10.6 where it remained through 1971. Provisional data indicate an increase in the marriage rate to 10.9 for 1972 and 1973.

Stabilization of the marriage rate per 1,000 population occurred during 1969-71 in spite of an increase in the proportion of the population at marriageable ages. For example, from 1970 to 1971 the number of persons 20-24 years old increased 7.7 percent, while the total resident population of the country grew by a comparatively small 1.5 percent.

The rate of marriages per 1,000 unmarried women 15 years old and over and the rate for unmarried women 15-44 years old both declined less than 1.0 percent in 1971 following drops of 4.4 percent and 6.0 percent, respectively, in 1970.

The marriage rates vary from State to State; most fall between 7.7 (for Connecticut and New Jersey) and 15.5 (for Idaho). The rate for South Dakota was 17.0 and for South Carolina, 22.1. Nevada has a uniquely high rate, 192.1 per 1,000 resident population, but this rate is down 4 percent from 1970. The rate for Hawaii also dropped considerably in 1971, 11 percent. In two States, Tennessee and New Mexico, the marriage rate rose 1.0 and 1.4 per 1,000 population, respectively. These two States were among several that lowered the age at which people may marry without parental consent.

Year	Median age of bride			Median age of groom		
	Total	First marriage	Remarriage	Total	First marriage	Remarriage
1971	21.7	20.5	32.3	23.7	22.5	36.9
1970	21.7	20.6	33.3	23.6	22.5	37.5
1969	21.6	20.6	33.8	23.5	22.4	38.2
1968	21.5	20.6	33.8	23.6	22.4	38.3
1967	21.4	20.5	35.0	23.8	22.6	39.1
1966	21.5	20.3	35.2	23.8	22.6	39.2
1965	21.4	20.4	35.5	23.6	22.5	39.6
1964	21.4	20.4	35.6	23.6	22.4	39.7
1963	21.3	20.3	35.6	23.7	22.5	39.8



Data on characteristics of marriages are available for the marriage-registration area (MRA) and are believed to closely approximate national data. Since two States, Minnesota and South Carolina, were added to the MRA in 1971, comparison of the totals for the 2 years might be misleading, but the rates can be considered. Rates for the MRA show that first marriages decreased slightly and remarriages increased.

Age at marriage has many implications for social and economic institutions of the Nation. It is closely related to fertility, duration of married life, and to marital stability. In 1971 the median age of bride at first marriage was 20.5, slightly lower than in 1970. Median age of groom at first marriage was 22.5 for the second year. In contrast to the relatively steady age at first marriage, the median age at remarriage has been declining. In 1971 the median age for brides at remarriage was 32.9, and for grooms 36.9, both almost 3 years lower than the same figures in 1963.

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Table 1. MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGE RATES: UNITED STATES, 1958-71

[Data refer only to events occurring within the United States. Alaska included beginning 1959 and Hawaii beginning 1960]

Year	Marriages	Rate per 1,000 ¹ —		
		Total population	Unmarried women 15 years and over	Unmarried women 15-44 years
1971-----	2,190,481	10.6	76.2	138.9
1970-----	2,158,802	10.6	76.5	140.2
1969-----	2,145,000	10.6	80.0	149.1
1968-----	2,069,000	10.4	79.1	147.2
1967-----	1,927,000	9.7	76.4	145.2
1966-----	1,857,000	9.5	75.6	145.1
1965-----	1,800,000	9.3	75.0	144.3
1964-----	1,725,000	9.0	74.6	146.2
1963-----	1,654,000	8.8	73.4	143.3
1962-----	1,577,000	8.5	71.2	138.4
1961-----	1,548,000	8.5	72.2	145.4
1960-----	1,523,000	8.5	73.5	148.0
1959-----	1,494,000	8.5	73.6	149.8
1958-----	1,451,000	8.4	72.0	146.3

¹Data are based on population enumerated as of April 1 for 1960 and 1970 and estimated as of July 1 for all other years.

Table 2. MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGE RATES: UNITED STATES, EACH REGION, DIVISION, AND STATE, 1969-71

[By place of occurrence. Data are counts of marriages performed except as noted. Rates per 1,000 population in each area, estimated as of July 1 for 1969 and 1971 and enumerated as of April 1 for 1970]

Region, division, and State	Number			Rate		
	1971	1970	1969	1971	1970	1969
United States-----	2,190,481	2,158,802	2,145,438	10.6	10.6	10.6
Northeast-----	417,971	417,755	417,512	8.4	8.5	8.6
North Central-----	559,217	545,383	550,235	9.6	9.6	9.6
South-----	779,553	763,128	758,094	12.2	12.2	12.0
West-----	453,740	432,536	419,737	12.2	12.4	12.4
Northeast:						
New England-----	104,913	105,369	105,020	8.7	8.9	9.1
Middle Atlantic-----	313,058	312,387	312,292	8.3	8.4	8.4
North Central:						
East North Central-----	386,535	394,845	389,470	9.7	9.6	9.8
West North Central-----	162,682	160,539	160,225	9.6	9.8	9.9
South:						
South Atlantic-----	377,111	370,393	368,137	12.1	12.1	12.1
East South Central-----	162,164	154,917	154,101	12.5	12.1	11.8
West South Central-----	240,278	237,218	235,856	12.2	12.3	12.1
West:						
Mountain-----	193,416	187,544	181,261	22.6	22.6	22.6
Pacific-----	240,324	244,992	238,476	8.9	9.2	9.2
New England:						
Maine-----	11,193	10,975	10,428	11.2	11.0	10.7
New Hampshire-----	9,771	10,009	10,358	12.3	13.3	14.4
Vermont-----	5,000	4,524	4,477	10.9	10.2	10.2
Massachusetts-----	47,535	47,403	47,326	8.3	8.3	8.7
Rhode Island-----	7,589	7,531	7,548	7.9	7.9	8.3
Connecticut-----	23,825	24,929	24,893	7.7	8.2	8.5
Middle Atlantic:						
New York-----	161,664	161,246	161,759	8.8	8.9	8.8
New Jersey-----	56,531	56,825	55,632	7.7	7.9	7.8
Pennsylvania-----	94,663	94,516	94,961	8.0	8.0	8.0
East North Central:						
Ohio-----	95,641	90,058	89,577	8.9	8.5	8.3
Indiana-----	58,076	55,202	57,960	11.0	10.6	11.3
Illinois-----	115,826	115,478	115,532	10.3	10.4	10.5
Michigan-----	92,154	89,694	90,999	10.2	10.1	10.4
Wisconsin-----	34,688	34,415	34,402	7.8	7.8	8.1
West North Central:						
Minnesota-----	21,196	31,280	31,971	8.0	8.2	8.6
Iowa-----	25,819	24,648	24,686	9.1	8.7	8.9
Missouri-----	51,048	50,149	50,411	10.7	10.7	10.8
North Dakota-----	5,648	5,340	5,589	9.0	8.6	8.8
South Dakota-----	11,563	11,024	10,908	17.0	15.8	16.6
Nebraska-----	15,080	15,686	15,143	10.0	10.6	10.5
Kansas-----	22,528	22,421	22,504	10.0	10.0	9.6
South Atlantic:						
Delaware-----	4,481	4,254	3,992	8.0	7.8	7.4
Maryland-----	50,824	52,237	52,681	12.7	13.3	14.0
District of Columbia-----	6,688	7,267	7,639	9.0	9.6	9.8
Virginia-----	52,153	51,964	52,575	11.1	11.2	11.3
West Virginia-----	16,927	15,948	15,299	9.7	9.1	8.8
North Carolina-----	48,971	48,291	48,177	9.5	9.5	9.4
South Carolina-----	58,034	57,887	56,225	22.1	22.3	20.9
Georgia-----	63,660	65,896	64,003	13.7	13.9	13.8
Florida-----	75,108	69,249	65,836	10.7	10.2	10.4
East South Central:						
Kentucky-----	35,984	36,269	37,416	11.0	11.3	11.6
Tennessee-----	50,307	45,361	44,507	12.6	11.6	11.1
Alabama-----	48,276	46,959	46,422	13.9	13.6	13.1
Mississippi-----	27,597	26,328	26,956	12.4	11.9	11.0
West South Central:						
Arkansas-----	24,085	23,307	22,618	12.4	12.1	11.4
Louisiana-----	36,648	35,416	34,540	10.0	9.7	9.2
Oklahoma-----	39,333	39,004	36,107	15.1	15.2	14.1
Texas-----	140,232	139,491	142,331	12.2	12.5	12.7
Mountain:						
Montana-----	7,128	6,919	6,444	10.1	10.0	9.3
Idaho-----	11,356	10,915	10,936	15.5	15.3	15.3
Wyoming-----	4,772	4,495	4,269	14.0	13.5	13.3
Colorado-----	25,659	24,988	24,159	11.3	11.5	11.5
New Mexico-----	14,008	12,422	11,199	13.6	12.2	11.2
Arizona-----	20,865	18,508	19,012	11.3	10.4	10.6
Utah-----	12,037	11,692	11,633	11.0	11.0	11.1
Nevada-----	197,411	97,605	94,642	192.1	199.7	207.1
Pacific:						
Washington-----	40,988	41,313	41,711	11.9	12.1	12.3
Oregon-----	18,100	17,302	16,574	8.4	8.3	8.5
California-----	168,049	172,388	166,832	8.3	8.3	8.6
Alaska-----	3,453	3,430	3,168	11.0	11.2	11.2
Hawaii-----	9,734	10,599	9,891	12.3	13.8	12.5

²Marriage licenses issued.

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Table 3. MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGE RATES BY AGE, PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS, AND COLOR OF BRIDE AND OF GROOM: MARRIAGE-REGISTRATION AREA, 1971

[By place of occurrence. Based on sample data. Rates per 1,000 population in specified group, estimated as of July 1, 1971. Figures for age not stated are distributed]

Age and previous marital status	Bride					Groom				
	Total		White	All other	Color not stated ²	Total		White	All other	Color not stated ²
	Number	Rate ¹				Number	Rate ¹			
ALL MARRIAGES										
Total-----	1,770,654	65.2	986,226	134,611	649,757	1,770,654	78.8	986,044	134,853	649,757
14-17 years-----	182,979	27.0	119,755	16,450	46,774	29,795	4.2	21,429	1,985	6,494
18-19 years-----	401,341	156.6	234,415	29,422	137,504	225,413	73.0	138,232	17,712	67,469
20-24 years-----	689,719	216.6	374,654	47,010	268,055	806,187	177.5	454,305	58,077	293,805
25-44 years-----	379,015	120.6	192,136	32,684	154,195	549,329	156.4	294,319	45,195	221,815
25-29 years-----	186,880	172.4	94,249	15,133	77,498	295,741	201.2	154,107	22,514	119,520
30-34 years-----	87,440	126.2	43,788	7,816	35,836	121,316	143.9	51,409	9,537	50,370
35-44 years-----	104,695	78.5	54,099	9,735	40,881	132,272	110.0	68,803	11,344	52,125
45-64 years-----	101,190	21.4	55,972	7,836	37,382	128,873	58.4	69,274	11,122	48,477
65 years and over-----	16,410	2.4	9,354	1,209	5,847	35,056	16.7	18,485	2,864	11,707
Median age-----	21.7	...	21.4	21.8	22.1	23.7	...	23.4	23.8	24.2
FIRST MARRIAGES										
Total-----	1,308,536	82.8	712,620	107,190	488,726	1,299,337	67.9	715,583	104,479	481,275
14-17 years-----	177,435	26.2	116,089	15,958	45,388	29,169	4.1	21,037	1,828	6,304
18-19 years-----	382,691	150.3	221,797	28,403	132,486	217,736	71.2	134,747	17,285	65,704
20-24 years-----	587,882	197.7	310,049	42,816	234,997	737,921	165.6	411,492	54,795	271,634
25-44 years-----	149,301	89.2	60,106	18,265	70,930	295,856	106.9	138,756	27,859	129,241
25-29 years-----	101,140	151.2	43,642	10,704	46,794	207,205	158.5	102,140	17,556	87,509
30-34 years-----	28,403	75.0	10,192	4,135	14,081	53,756	80.6	22,851	5,568	25,337
35-44 years-----	19,753	37.6	6,272	3,426	10,055	34,895	43.8	15,765	4,735	16,395
45-64 years-----	10,116	9.5	4,093	1,578	4,445	16,941	14.6	6,846	2,498	7,597
65 years and over-----	1,131	1.4	486	165	480	1,714	3.2	705	214	795
Median age-----	20.5	...	20.2	20.8	21.0	22.5	...	22.2	22.6	22.9
REMARRIAGES										
Total-----	422,729	37.3	251,197	23,825	147,707	434,295	130.6	251,715	27,051	155,529
14-19 years-----	10,911	*	8,490	277	2,144	1,145	*	812	63	270
20-24 years-----	82,041	³ 405.9	55,138	2,889	26,014	47,172	³ 536.3	30,804	1,819	14,549
25-44 years-----	224,267	152.6	129,294	13,563	81,410	243,959	327.5	140,505	14,190	89,264
25-29 years-----	82,172	261.7	48,793	3,939	29,440	82,152	507.1	48,487	4,053	29,612
30-34 years-----	58,058	185.5	33,170	3,540	21,348	65,710	373.4	37,636	3,793	24,281
35-44 years-----	84,037	99.8	47,331	6,084	30,622	93,097	236.7	54,382	6,344	35,371
45-64 years-----	90,348	24.6	51,477	6,077	32,794	110,860	105.8	61,899	8,374	40,587
65 years and over-----	15,162	2.5	8,798	1,019	5,345	31,159	21.6	17,695	2,605	10,859
Median age-----	32.9	...	32.1	36.9	33.7	36.9	...	36.2	40.8	37.3
Previously widowed ⁴ -----	76,232	9.6	50,472	5,882	19,878	67,345	42.5	42,196	6,030	19,119
14-24 years-----	3,507	*	2,609	184	714	1,148	*	690	168	290
25-44 years-----	20,504	⁵ 70.4	13,342	2,109	5,053	10,526	⁵ 201.3	6,146	1,183	3,197
45-64 years-----	40,723	16.5	26,837	2,850	10,936	33,365	85.8	21,203	2,879	9,303
65 years and over-----	11,498	2.2	7,584	739	3,175	22,285	19.6	14,157	1,800	6,329
Median age-----	51.8	...	51.9	50.0	52.1	59.1	...	59.5	58.2	58.4
Previously divorced ⁴ -----	292,659	132.8	196,454	17,240	78,965	310,759	230.7	205,815	20,214	84,730
14-19 years-----	9,282	*	7,948	225	1,109	878	*	770	48	60
20-24 years-----	67,956	³ 443.9	49,973	2,630	15,353	39,235	³ 527.3	23,718	1,578	7,939
25-44 years-----	175,247	176.1	113,949	11,033	50,235	201,334	358.4	132,521	12,546	56,267
45-64 years-----	38,201	46.5	23,491	3,082	11,648	63,826	119.3	39,585	5,297	18,944
65 years and over-----	1,973	9.3	1,093	260	620	5,468	38.3	3,221	745	1,520
Median age-----	30.2	...	29.3	33.8	31.4	34.1	...	35.4	36.8	35.0
Not stated if widowed or divorced ⁶ -----	53,838	...	4,271	703	48,864	56,191	...	3,704	807	51,680
NOT STATED IF PREVIOUSLY MARRIED ⁷ -----	39,369	...	22,469	3,596	13,324	37,022	...	20,746	3,323	12,933

¹Base populations exclude persons under 14 years of age. Rates for all marriages are based on the unmarried population; for first marriages on the never-married population; and for remarriages on the widowed and divorced populations.

²Figures include data for California, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Ohio, parts of Illinois; these areas did not require reporting of race or color.

³Rates are shown for ages 14-24 years.

⁴Data exclude remarriages in Michigan and Ohio.

⁵Rates are shown for ages 14-44 years.

⁶Data include all remarriages in Michigan and Ohio.

⁷Figures are included in all marriages.

This report presents summary tabulations from the final marriage statistics for 1971. More detailed tabulations for 1971 will be published in *Vital Statistics of the United States, Volume III-Marriage and Divorce*. Prior to the publication of that volume, the National Center for Health Statistics will respond to requests for unpublished data whenever possible.

TECHNICAL NOTES

SAMPLING ERROR OF ESTIMATED FREQUENCY EXPRESSED AS PERCENTAGE OF AREA TOTAL: MARRIAGE-REGISTRATION AREA AND EACH REGISTRATION STATE, 1971

[Figures for Alaska, Delaware, Vermont, and Wyoming have no sampling errors because all records were tabulated]

Area	Sampling error of estimated frequency expressed as percentage of area total				Area	Sampling error of estimated frequency expressed as percentage of area total			
	1 or 99	10 or 90	25 or 75	50		1 or 99	10 or 90	25 or 75	50
Marriage-registration area----	471	1,420	2,049	2,366	Registration States--Con.				
Registration States:					Michigan-----	132	397	573	662
Alabama-----	66	198	285	330	Minnesota-----	53	159	229	265
Alaska-----	...	...	...	...	Mississippi-----	33	100	144	168
California-----	178	536	774	893	Missouri-----	67	203	294	339
Connecticut-----	31	93	134	154	Montana-----	8	25	37	42
Delaware-----	...	...	...	...	Nebraska-----	24	74	106	123
District of Columbia-----	8	25	35	41	New Hampshire-----	10	30	43	50
Florida-----	82	247	356	411	New Jersey-----	71	214	309	357
Georgia-----	110	330	477	551	New York-----	175	526	760	877
Hawaii-----	10	30	43	49	North Carolina-----	66	199	288	332
Idaho-----	21	64	92	107	Ohio-----	138	415	599	691
Illinois-----	147	445	642	741	Oregon-----	27	81	117	135
Indiana-----	72	217	313	361	Pennsylvania-----	137	413	596	688
Iowa-----	32	96	139	161	Rhode Island-----	9	27	38	44
Kansas-----	30	90	130	150	South Carolina-----	72	217	313	362
Kentucky-----	57	171	246	284	South Dakota-----	11	32	46	53
Louisiana-----	38	115	166	191	Tennessee-----	67	202	291	336
Maine-----	11	33	47	55	Utah-----	11	32	47	54
Maryland-----	67	203	293	336	Vermont-----	...	...	...	...
Massachusetts-----	65	196	283	327	Virginia-----	66	206	297	343
					West Virginia-----	26	78	113	130
					Wisconsin-----	56	168	243	280
					Wyoming-----	...	...	...	...

Place and Time of Occurrence

Marriages are those performed during the year. Marriages and marriage rates for States and other areas are by place of occurrence. In table 2, however, figures for marriages shown for some States are by place and date the marriage license was issued.

Sources of Data

Figures in tables 1 and 2 are based on totals reported by States and counties. All other figures in the tables are based on data tabulated from probability samples of records selected in the National Center for Health Statistics from copies of the records sent in by States participating in the marriage-registration area. For the 2 years 1969-70, 39 States and the District of Columbia participated; for 1971, 41 States and the District of Columbia.

Marriage Sample

Records were sampled at different rates designed to give a sample of at least 2,500 records for each State except four, where less than 5,000 marriages were performed. For these States all records were included in the sample. One-half of all records were included from seven States and the District of Columbia, one-fifth from nine States, one-tenth from 14 States, and one-twentieth from seven States. Sampling errors shown in the table above are for frequencies which equal a specified percent of 1971 totals for each State and the MRA.

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