

HISTORICAL CENSUS RESEARCH



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A web version of this guide is available at: <http://www.library.ucsb.edu/subjects/gov/censushist.pdf>

Census statistics have been collected in the United States every ten years since 1790. The Davidson Library has the major publications from each census; they are listed in our Pegasus catalog, and housed in the Government Information Center (GIC). Statistics are available for population, housing, and social and economic characteristics.

Statistics are collected separately for businesses, agriculture, and governmental bodies. There is a separate research guide available for the Economic Census, Census of Governments and Census of Agriculture.

Census Timetable

- 1790 – first census
- 1810 – first Census of Manufactures (now Census of Manufacturing)
- 1820 – Foreign Trade statistics first compiled
- 1840 – first Census of Mineral Industries and Census of Agriculture
- 1850 – first Census of Governments
- 1905 – Census of Manufactures taken separately from decennial census
- 1920 – Data first collected at tract level for eight cities (not published, but available for purchase)
- 1925 – Census of Agriculture taken separately from decennial census
- 1929 – first Census of Business (later called Economic Census)
- 1930 – first Census of Construction Industries, Retail Trade, and Wholesale Trade
- 1933 – Census of Business taken separately from decennial census; Services Trade first taken
- 1940 – Use of sampling began
- 1940 – Census tracts and blocks first adopted as official geographic entity (data first published)
- 1950 – Census of Population expanded into Census of Population and Housing
- 1963 – first Census of Transportation
- 1972 – Census of Business divided into Census of Retail Trade, Census of Service Industries, Census of Wholesale Trade
- 1985 – TIGER digital geographic database developed; first used with the 1990 census
- 1992 – Census of Finance, Insurance and Real Estate Industries separated from Census of Construction

Census Questions

- 2000: <http://www.census.gov/dmd/www/2000quest.html>
- 1850 – 2000: <http://www.ipums.umn.edu/usa/voliii/tEnumForm.html>

United States. Bureau of the Census.
*Reproduction of questions for each census:
includes chart comparing questions across censuses*

Measuring America: The Decennial Censuses From 1790 to 2000
Govt. Information Center Desk: C3.2: M46/2

Major Publications and Sites

Decennial Census Volumes
1790 – 1970
1970 - 2000
1990 & 2000

Government Information Center:
HA 201 [year]
C 3.223/ [Note: 1970 is split into two call number areas]
<http://factfinder.census.gov>

Selected Historical Census Data <http://www.census.gov/population/www/censusdata/hiscendata.html>
Basic population/housing data 1790+; detailed housing 1940+, income/poverty data 1970+

United States Historical Census Data Browser <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/census/>

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IPUMS: Integrated Public Use Microdata Samples
University of Minnesota: sample data from 1850-2000

<http://www.ipums.org/usa/index.html>

Indexes and Guides

GIC= Government Information Center

Ref = main Reference area

- U.S. Bureau of the Census...Catalog of publications, 1790-1972
Census Catalog and Guide. Annual, 1973+
Complete guide to Census publications **GIC** Z7554 U5 U58 1974
Z7554 U6 U61
- _____ Topical index of population census reports, 1900-1930 **GIC** HA 201 1930 .Z2 & C3.2: P 81/3
- Anderson, Margo. Encyclopedia of the U.S. Census
Good basic overview; includes differences between censuses **Ref** HA37 U55 C66 2000
- Schulze, Suzanne. Population Information in Nineteenth Century Census Volumes
_____ Population Information in Twentieth Century Census Volumes,
1900-1940 **Ref** Z7164. D3 S44 1983
Ref Z7164. D3 S45 1985
- _____ Population Information in Twentieth Century Census Volumes,
1950-1980 **Ref** Z7164. D3 S46 1988
- Consult tables in book cover to find available information for each census. Good introduction at beginning of each census section, including differences from previous censuses.*

Statistical Sources

- Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1878+
Latest at GIC and main reference desks **GIC** C 3.134:
- Historical Statistics of the United States, 1790 – 1970
Compilation of national historical data **Ref Desk** HA 202. B57
GIC Desk: C3.134/2:H62
- Dodd, Don. Historical statistics of the states of the United States:
two centuries of the census, 1790-1990 **Ref Desk** HA 214.D63
Designed to fill gaps between the Historical Statistics of the U.S. and county-level data compiled by ICPSR
- County and City Data Book, 1949+ **GIC** HA 202.U64; latest at **Ref Desk**
Statistics for all U.S. counties, cities with 25,000 or more inhabitants, and places of 2,500 or more inhabitants
- LexisNexis Statistical <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/statuniv>
Statistical sources from 1970+, with some historical statistics
- Vital Statistics of the United States, 1920-36 (variant title), 1937-93 **GIC** HA203 .U62
Natality and mortality data. Series discontinued in print in 1993: continued at:
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/pubd/vsus/vsus.htm>

Census Monographs/Special Reports

Included in the censuses 1880+, these were designed to include more indepth coverage of certain subjects. Topics changed with each census. Titles may be identified through the Bureau of the Census catalogs: GIC Z7554.U5. They can be located by searching Pegasus. For 2000, they are at:
<http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/briefs.html#sr>

Individual Records

Population schedules, the census records for individuals, are released 70 years after each census. The Library has the schedules for California from 1850 – 1930.

We also own schedules for Georgia, 1850 - 1870, Kentucky, 1870 - 1880; New York, 1810 - 1830; Ohio, 1820 - 1830; Pennsylvania, 1810 - 1830; and Virginia, 1810 – 1830.

The schedules are on microfilm in the Government Information Center. To access the appropriate reel, find the county in the following finding aids:

Federal population censuses, 1790-1890

GS 4.2: P 81/2/ 790-890

1900 federal population census...

GS 4.2: P 81/2/900

1910 federal population census...

GS 4.2: P 81/2/910

1920 federal population census...

AE 1.102:P 81/2X/998

1930 federal population census

<http://1930census.archives.gov/beginSearch.asp>

(do a geographic search to find the reel number)

Current Population Survey

The Current Population Survey (CPS) originated as the Work Projects Administration's (WPA) Sample Survey of Unemployment in 1940 and was the first attempt to measure unemployment in the United States on a continuing basis. The Census Bureau took over the 20,000-household survey in 1942 (when the WPA was abolished) and retitled it the Monthly Report on the Labor Force. Refined and enlarged several times, in 1947 the Census Bureau gave the CPS its current name and began collecting a variety of other social and demographic statistics to supplement the survey. In 1959, the Bureau of Labor Statistics became a co-sponsor of the CPS.

Background Information:

Measuring 50 Years of Economic Change: Using the March Current Population Survey. GIC C3.186:P60/203

Recent Surveys: <http://www.bls.census.gov/cps/pubsmain.htm>

Current Population Reports

The Census Bureau produces three reports derived from the Current Population Survey:
(Reports are in the Government Information Center: C3.186:)

P20, Population Characteristics

Information on geographic residence and mobility; school enrollment; marital status and living arrangements; households and families; and the Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, and Hispanic populations. These reports, many of which were issued every year, are now issued every other year. The Library has publications from 1946+.

P23, Special Studies

Information pertaining to methods, concepts, or specialized data: in addition, series includes occasional reports on family life, women, voter turnout, computer use, and other topics. The Library has publications from 1957+.

P60, Consumer Income and Poverty

Information concerning families, individuals, and households at various income levels. Data are also presented on noncash benefits and the relationship of income to age, sex, race, family size, education, occupation, work experience, and other characteristics. The Library has publications from 1946+.

Subject Index to the Current Population Reports:

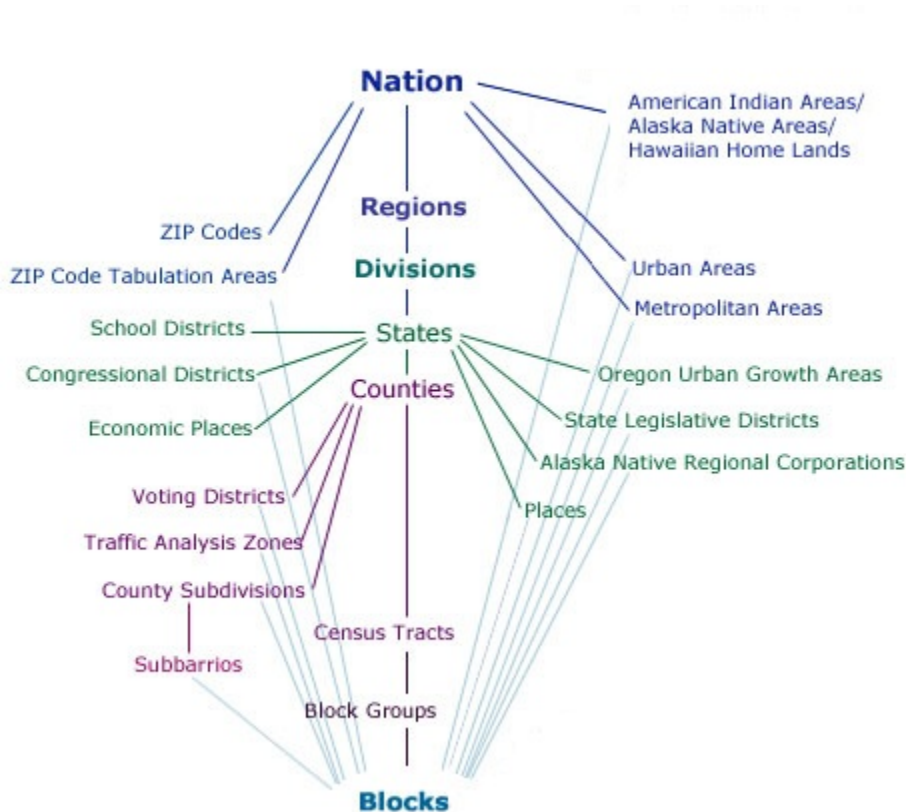
<http://library.osu.edu/sites/reference/govdocs/CPR/CPRindex.htm>

Maps and Geography

Census geographic levels have changed over time: a good source for historical background is the Geographic Areas Reference Manual: GIC C.6/2: G29/4 or <http://www.census.gov/geo/www/garm.html>.

The diagram below illustrates the legal and statistical entities for which the Census Bureau currently tabulates data during the decennial census. Definitions of these areas can be found at:

<http://www.census.gov/geo/www/tiger/glossry2.html>



Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Geography Division

The Davidson Library has tract and block maps from their first printing in 1940.

Pre-1990 census maps, and 1990 tract maps, frequently were bound in, or shelved with Census volumes.

1990 block maps:

Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Ventura counties:

GIC C3.224/5:90-1-6-79X/PT.1-2

Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura counties:

Map & Imagery Lab

2000 block maps:

Santa Barbara County only

GIC: C3.224/5:PHC 2000-1-6-75/MAPS

Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura counties:

Map & Imagery Lab

2000 tract maps:

American FactFinder: <http://factfinder.census.gov>

California only:

GIC: C3.223/11:2000/06/COUNTYNOX/MAPS

Map & Imagery Lab

The UCSB Libraries comply with ADA legislation. If you require this information in an alternate format, contact a Library staff member or the Information Desk (893-2478).

Updated March 2006. Sherry DeDecker

l://researchguides/US Government docs/censushist.doc