

# Monthly VITAL STATISTICS REPORT



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## Summary Report Final Marriage Statistics, 1972

FROM THE  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS

In 1972 there were 2,282,154 marriages in the United States, 91,673, or 4.2 percent, more than in 1971. This continued the increase in marriages that had occurred annually since 1958 when the number stood at 1.45 million. The marriage rate, after remaining at a level of 10.6 for 3 years, 1969-71, increased to 11.0 marriages per 1,000 population in 1972. Provisional data indicate little change in the marriage rate for 1973 and a slight decline for 1974.

In 1972 the marriage rate per 1,000 unmarried women aged 15-44 years and the rate for unmarried women 15 years and older both increased for the first time since 1969, by 1.7 percent and 2.2 percent, respectively.

Marriage rates varied by State of occurrence; most fell in the range from 7.6 per 1,000 total population in Delaware to 15.5 in Oklahoma and Wyoming. South Dakota had a rate of 17.9 and South Carolina, a rate of 22.3. The rate for Nevada, 19.5, as usual, far exceeded that for any other State and was at nearly the same level as in 1970.

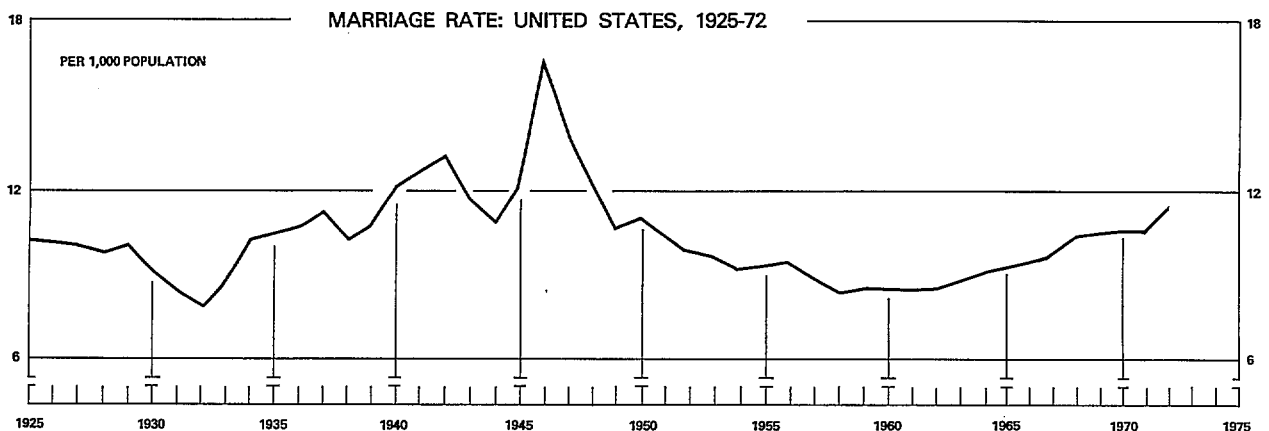
Data on characteristics of marriage, such as age at marriage, are available for the marriage-registration area (MRA). The number of States included in the MRA increased from 35 in 1963 to 41 in

1971-72. The District of Columbia is included for all years.

In 1972, 1,848,928 marriages were performed in the MRA, comprising 81 percent of all marriages occurring in the United States during the year. These data indicate that 25 percent of the brides and 26 percent of the grooms were marrying for the second time or more. This proportion has increased in recent years. In 1969 and prior years of the decade it was around 23 percent for both brides and grooms. Also, in 1972 remarriage rates—39.3 per 1,000 previously married women and 133.9 per 1,000 previously mar-

Table 1. MEDIAN AGES OF BRIDE AND GROOM BY PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS, 1963-72

Year	Median age of bride			Median age of groom		
	Total	First marriage	Remarriage	Total	First marriage	Remarriage
1972-----	21.7	20.5	32.8	23.8	22.4	36.5
1971-----	21.7	20.5	32.9	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	39.3
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



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ried men—were higher than in 1969 (36.7 for women and 117.9 for men).

The median age at marriage moved up gradually during the decade, from 21.3 to 21.7 for brides but fluctuated between 23.5 and 23.8 for grooms. The median age at first marriage for brides was a little higher in the late sixties and early seventies than during the earlier years, 1963-66, while for grooms there was no clear trend. Remarriages are occurring at younger ages than formerly; during the decade 1963-72 the median age at remarriage has declined uninterruptedly by 7.9 percent for women and 8.3 percent for men.

This report presents summary tabulations from the final marriage statistics for 1972. More detailed tabulations for 1972 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.

## SYMBOLS

Data not available-----	---
Category not applicable-----	...
Quantity zero-----	-
Quantity more than 0 but less than 0.05-----	0.0
Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision-----	*

Table 2. MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGE RATES: UNITED STATES, 1958-72

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

Year	Marriages	Rate per 1,000 <sup>1</sup> —		
		Total population	Unmarried women 15 years and over	Unmarried women 15-44 years
1972-----	2,282,154	11.0	77.9	141.3
1971-----	2,190,461	10.6	76.2	139.9
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	78.4	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	8.9	73.4	143.3
1962-----	1,577,000	8.5	71.2	138.4
1961-----	1,543,000	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

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

Table 3. MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGE RATES: UNITED STATES, EACH REGION, DIVISION, AND STATE, 1970-72

[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 1971 and 1972 and enumerated as of April 1 for 1970]

Region, division, and State	Number			Rate		
	1972	1971	1970	1972	1971	1970
United States-----	2,282,154	2,190,461	2,158,802	11.0	10.6	10.6
Northeast-----	425,955	417,971	417,755	8.6	8.4	8.5
North Central-----	577,429	559,217	545,383	10.1	9.8	9.6
South-----	818,405	779,553	763,128	12.6	12.2	12.2
West-----	460,365	433,740	432,536	12.8	12.2	12.4
Northeast:						
New England-----	107,111	104,913	105,368	8.8	8.7	8.9
Middle Atlantic-----	318,844	313,058	312,387	8.5	8.3	8.4
North Central:						
East North Central-----	409,206	396,535	384,845	10.0	9.7	9.6
West North Central-----	168,223	162,682	160,538	10.1	9.8	9.8
South:						
South Atlantic-----	394,392	377,111	370,993	12.4	12.1	12.1
East South Central-----	170,054	162,164	154,917	12.9	12.5	12.1
West South Central-----	253,959	240,278	237,218	12.7	12.2	12.3
West:						
Mountain-----	209,980	193,416	187,544	23.6	22.6	22.6
Pacific-----	250,385	240,324	244,992	9.2	8.9	9.2
New England:						
Maine-----	11,739	11,193	10,975	11.4	11.2	11.0
New Hampshire-----	9,752	9,771	10,006	12.6	12.8	13.6
Vermont-----	5,088	5,000	4,524	11.1	10.9	10.2
Massachusetts-----	48,189	47,535	47,403	8.3	8.3	8.3
Rhode Island-----	7,853	7,589	7,531	8.1	7.9	7.9
Connecticut-----	24,485	23,825	24,929	7.9	7.7	8.2
Middle Atlantic:						
New York-----	161,872	161,864	161,246	8.8	8.8	8.9
New Jersey-----	58,476	56,531	56,625	8.0	7.7	7.9
Pennsylvania-----	98,496	94,663	94,516	8.3	8.0	8.0
East North Central:						
Ohio-----	86,297	85,641	80,056	9.0	8.9	8.5
Indiana-----	61,262	58,076	55,202	11.6	11.0	10.6
Illinois-----	118,592	115,826	115,478	10.5	10.3	10.4
Michigan-----	94,447	92,134	89,694	10.5	10.2	10.1
Wisconsin-----	38,608	34,858	34,415	8.5	7.8	7.8
West North Central:						
Minnesota-----	32,227	31,196	31,280	8.3	8.0	8.2
Iowa-----	26,603	25,819	24,848	9.2	9.1	8.7
Missouri-----	53,372	51,048	50,149	11.2	10.7	10.7
North Dakota-----	5,886	5,648	5,340	9.3	9.0	8.6
South Dakota-----	12,151	11,363	11,054	17.9	17.0	16.6
Nebraska-----	14,105	15,080	15,868	9.2	10.0	10.6
Kansas-----	23,678	22,526	22,421	10.5	10.0	10.0
South Atlantic:						
Delaware-----	4,362	4,481	4,254	7.6	8.0	7.8
Maryland-----	49,924	50,824	52,237	12.3	12.7	13.3
District of Columbia-----	6,292	6,898	7,267	8.4	9.0	9.6
Virginia-----	55,863	52,158	51,964	11.7	11.1	11.2
West Virginia-----	18,270	16,987	15,949	10.2	9.7	9.1
North Carolina-----	48,786	46,871	46,281	9.3	9.5	9.5
South Carolina-----	59,983	56,034	57,887	22.3	22.1	22.3
Georgia-----	69,756	63,860	63,886	14.5	13.7	13.9
Florida-----	82,176	75,108	69,249	11.2	10.7	10.2
East South Central:						
Kentucky-----	35,423	35,994	36,269	10.7	11.0	11.3
Tennessee-----	56,164	50,307	45,381	13.8	12.6	11.6
Alabama-----	49,764	48,276	46,959	14.1	13.9	13.6
Mississippi-----	28,703	27,597	26,326	12.7	12.4	11.9
West South Central:						
Arkansas-----	25,202	24,065	23,307	12.6	12.4	12.1
Louisiana-----	39,981	38,849	35,416	10.4	10.0	9.7
Oklahoma-----	40,787	39,333	39,004	15.5	15.1	15.2
Texas-----	149,009	140,232	138,491	12.8	12.2	12.5
Mountain:						
Montana-----	7,674	7,128	6,919	10.7	10.1	10.0
Idaho-----	12,066	11,356	10,915	16.0	15.5	15.3
Wyoming-----	5,357	4,772	4,495	15.5	14.0	13.5
Colorado-----	27,095	25,839	24,988	11.5	11.3	11.3
New Mexico-----	14,167	14,008	12,422	13.2	13.6	12.2
Arizona-----	123,318	120,865	118,509	11.9	11.3	10.4
Utah-----	13,935	12,037	11,692	12.4	11.0	11.0
Nevada-----	108,348	97,411	97,605	199.5	182.1	199.7
Pacific:						
Washington-----	41,618	40,988	41,313	12.2	11.9	12.1
Oregon-----	15,265	18,100	17,302	8.8	8.4	8.3
California-----	175,924	168,049	172,388	8.6	8.3	8.6
Alaska-----	3,829	3,453	3,390	11.8	11.0	11.2
Hawaii-----	9,750	9,734	10,599	11.9	12.3	13.8

<sup>1</sup>Includes marriage licenses issued for some counties.

<sup>2</sup>Marriage licenses issued.

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**Table 4. MARRIAGES AND MARRIAGE RATES BY AGE, PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS, AND COLOR OF BRIDE AND OF GROOM: MARRIAGE-REGISTRATION AREA,<sup>1</sup> 1972**

[By place of occurrence. Based on sample data. Rates per 1,000 population in specified group, estimated as of July 1, 1972. Figures for age not stated are distributed]

Age and previous marital status	Bride					Groom					
	Total		White	All other	Color not stated <sup>3</sup>	Total		White	All other	Color not stated <sup>3</sup>	
	Number	Rate <sup>2</sup>				Number	Rate <sup>2</sup>				
<b>ALL MARRIAGES</b>											
Total-----	1,848,928	66.6	1,052,626	157,371	639,001	1,849,623	80.7	1,051,874	158,053	639,001	
14-17 years-----	198,873	29.0	131,043	19,092	49,748	32,587	4.5	22,777	2,226	7,584	
18-19 years-----	415,503	157.1	247,102	34,393	134,079	240,246	77.1	151,140	20,625	69,491	
20-24 years-----	699,379	209.4	390,277	52,932	255,670	801,446	176.1	457,447	66,389	277,110	
25-44 years-----	421,965	124.6	222,514	40,817	159,664	604,903	160.5	324,947	51,954	229,797	
25-29 years-----	213,031	175.5	111,242	19,555	82,234	323,737	206.2	177,011	26,493	125,243	
30-34 years-----	96,864	130.2	50,539	9,541	35,785	133,034	153.2	69,963	11,776	51,320	
35-44 years-----	112,107	78.4	60,734	11,721	39,645	143,037	107.4	77,942	13,695	51,444	
45-64 years-----	107,326	22.4	61,714	9,922	35,683	136,943	22.3	75,840	13,349	46,759	
65 years and over-----	16,352	2.4	9,976	1,125	5,251	32,793	16.4	18,723	3,010	11,060	
Median age-----	21.7	...	21.4	21.9	22.1	23.3	...	23.5	23.9	24.3	
<b>FIRST MARRIAGES</b>											
Total-----	1,363,929	84.5	750,519	124,424	493,996	1,351,500	69.7	747,034	121,663	492,753	
14-17 years-----	193,943	29.3	127,059	18,691	49,204	32,141	4.4	22,439	2,191	7,511	
18-19 years-----	399,320	151.9	233,730	33,391	131,199	235,243	75.6	147,259	20,116	87,873	
20-24 years-----	592,697	182.9	313,426	49,417	230,854	739,212	155.2	432,892	63,259	263,091	
25-44 years-----	167,049	84.2	71,342	12,940	73,787	324,839	111.6	155,976	32,992	136,010	
25-29 years-----	115,978	134.8	52,097	13,461	50,412	230,394	167.1	115,717	20,509	94,768	
30-34 years-----	37,510	76.5	11,864	4,849	13,787	57,445	87.3	25,240	6,892	25,403	
35-44 years-----	20,569	39.9	7,391	3,630	9,553	36,449	41.9	15,019	5,591	15,839	
45-64 years-----	11,017	17.9	4,549	1,960	4,822	18,132	16.5	7,765	2,891	7,476	
65 years and over-----	910	1.1	415	135	360	1,879	3.7	783	324	792	
Median age-----	20.5	...	20.2	20.7	21.0	22.4	...	22.1	22.6	22.9	
<b>RE-MARRIAGES</b>											
Total-----	457,078	39.3	292,724	29,662	146,662	472,112	133.9	225,440	33,429	153,243	
14-19 years-----	12,618	*	10,117	331	2,171	1,916	*	1,525	86	205	
20-24 years-----	82,893	499.0	55,997	3,222	23,244	49,183	4467.1	33,171	2,318	12,699	
25-44 years-----	267,649	155.3	149,343	19,133	84,193	275,270	313.5	164,118	18,099	91,063	
25-29 years-----	94,256	265.5	57,622	5,643	31,591	93,103	439.2	57,765	5,302	30,042	
30-34 years-----	63,607	190.7	39,300	4,546	22,761	74,490	477.0	43,974	4,797	25,709	
35-44 years-----	90,799	93.2	52,991	7,949	23,845	103,931	227.3	62,379	7,990	35,312	
45-64 years-----	95,595	25.4	56,741	6,991	31,653	118,141	109.7	69,781	10,270	39,090	
65 years and over-----	15,332	2.6	9,526	950	4,656	30,697	20.7	17,945	2,666	10,186	
Median age-----	32.8	...	32.0	36.3	33.3	36.5	...	35.9	39.3	36.9	
Previously widowed <sup>5</sup> -----	73,594	9.4	50,593	6,932	16,909	64,499	40.6	42,427	6,235	15,826	
14-24 years-----	2,877	*	2,333	224	450	711	*	503	67	141	
25-44 years-----	20,323	665.1	13,570	2,290	4,473	9,893	6175.3	6,443	1,313	2,227	
45-64 years-----	39,893	16.3	26,823	2,829	9,341	32,646	96.8	21,403	3,121	8,117	
65 years and over-----	11,291	2.2	7,697	749	2,645	21,149	18.4	14,073	1,734	5,341	
Median age-----	51.4	...	51.6	47.8	51.8	59.1	...	59.4	57.1	58.9	
Previously divorced <sup>6</sup> -----	314,730	130.6	212,752	21,115	80,263	339,535	229.0	226,959	24,511	87,066	
14-19 years-----	10,235	*	8,822	262	1,151	1,414	*	1,303	66	45	
20-24 years-----	66,965	406.3	50,296	2,775	13,694	32,466	4465.7	30,459	2,109	6,898	
25-44 years-----	192,837	177.1	125,839	14,343	52,655	223,302	324.6	149,473	15,364	59,465	
45-64 years-----	42,459	47.2	29,563	3,594	12,342	63,761	123.2	43,715	6,203	18,843	
65 years and over-----	2,204	9.5	1,232	151	821	5,592	39.3	3,009	769	1,815	
Median age-----	30.3	...	29.6	33.5	31.5	34.0	...	33.3	36.6	35.0	
Not stated if widowed or divorced <sup>7</sup> -----	69,764	...	17,379	2,465	49,920	69,059	...	16,655	2,633	50,351	
NOT STATED IF PREVIOUSLY MARRIED <sup>8</sup> -----	27,921	...	21,383	3,215	3,323	25,316	...	19,350	2,961	3,005	

<sup>1</sup>In 1972 the MRA consisted of the District of Columbia and all the States in the Union except 9; Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, and Washington. It covered 80 percent of the marriages registered in the United States. Sampling errors of estimates for the MRA appear in table 5.

<sup>2</sup>Base 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.

<sup>3</sup>Figures include data for California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio, and parts of Illinois; these areas did not require reporting of race or color.

<sup>4</sup>Rates are shown for ages 14-24 years.

<sup>5</sup>Data exclude remarriages in Michigan, Ohio, and South Carolina.

<sup>6</sup>Rates are shown for ages 14-44 years.

<sup>7</sup>Data include all remarriages in Michigan, Ohio, and South Carolina.

<sup>8</sup>Figures are included in all marriages.

## TECHNICAL NOTES

## 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 3, however, figures for marriages shown for some States are by place and date the marriage license was issued.

## Sources of Data

Figures in tables 2 and 3 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 1970, 39 States and the District of Columbia participated and for 1971 and 1972, 41 States and the District of Columbia participated.

## 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. Florida supplied a State-coded tape of its marriage records and 100 percent were used by NCHS. One-half of all records were included from seven States and the District of Columbia, one-fifth from nine States, one-tenth from 13 States, and one-twentieth from seven States. The total sample size was 287,241 marriages. Sampling errors shown in table 5 are for frequencies which equal a specified percent of the MRA in 1972.

## Sampling Errors

All statistics for the MRA are estimates based on the systematic sample of marriages described above; therefore,

Table 5. APPROXIMATE SAMPLING ERRORS OF ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF MARRIAGES SHOWN IN TABLE 4.

Total MRA marriages in 1972	Percent of total MRA marriages in subclass	Sampling error
1,848,900	1 or 99	320
	2 or 98	440
	3 or 97	540
	4 or 96	620
	5 or 95	690
	7 or 93	810
	10 or 90	950
	15 or 85	1,130
	20 or 80	1,270
	25 or 75	1,370
	50	1,590

## How to use the Sampling Error Table

For any estimate of marriage shown in table 4, determine its ratio to total MRA marriages. Then look in the appropriate row on table 5 for the percentage figures closest to the estimate to determine the sampling error. For example, there were 314,730 marriages to women who had been previously divorced, or 17 percent of all MRA marriages. Since 17 percent is between 15 and 20 percent, the sampling error is between 1,130 and 1,270, or by interpolation, about 1,190 marriages. Chances are about 68 out of 100 that the actual number of marriages to divorcees is between 313,540 and 315,920 (314,730  $\pm$  1,190).

these statistics are subject to sampling errors. A sampling error is a measure of variations that occur by chance between sample estimates and the actual quantity being estimated. Chances are about 68 out of 100 that an estimate would differ from the true value by less than the sampling error, and about 95 out of 100 that the difference would be less than twice the sampling error.

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