

The Census

The United States government conducts a *census* every ten years, as required by the Constitution. A *census* is a count of all the people in an area. The U.S. Census is supposed to count all people living in the United States. Collecting information from every person in a country is a massive amount of work. The 2010 Census cost about \$12 billion (12,000,000,000 dollars)! More than 600,000 people worked for U.S. Census Bureau when it collected population data in 2010.



- 1) Have you ever participated in the U.S. Census or another census? Do you know other people who have?

The History of the Census

The first nationwide census in the United States was in 1790, three years after the U.S. Constitution was completed. This was about a year after George Washington became president. The first census identified people who were considered white and counted them separately from people who were considered non-white.

- 2) Do you think the first U.S. Census counted all people? Which groups of people do you think were counted? Put checkmarks next to these groups.

Black women

Native American men

Black men

White women

Native American women

White men

- 3) Some people were counted in the first census, but were not allowed to vote. Put checkmarks next to groups who you think were allowed to vote in 1790.

Black women

Native American men

Black men

White women

Native American women

White men

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Look at the count from the 1790 census below.

DISTRICTS	Free white Males of 16 years and up- wards, including heads of families.	Free white Males under sixteen years.	Free white Fe- males, including heads of families.	All other free per- sons.	Slaves.	Total.
Vermont	22435	22328	40505	255	16	85539
N. Hampshire	36086	34851	70160	630	158	141885
Maine	24384	24748	46870	534	NONE	96540
Massachusetts	95453	87289	190582	5463	NONE	378787
Rhode Island	16019	15799	32652	3407	948	68825
Connecticut	60523	54403	117448	2808	2764	237946
New York	83700	78122	152320	4654	21324	340120
New Jersey	45251	41416	83287	2762	11423	184139
Pennsylvania	110788	106948	206363	6537	3737	434373
Delaware	11783	12143	22384	3899	8887	59094
Maryland	55915	51339	101395	8043	103036	319728
Virginia	110936	116135	215046	12866	292627	747610
Kentucky	15154	17057	28922	114	12430	73677
N. Carolina	69988	77566	140710	4975	100572	393751
S. Carolina	35576	37722	66880	1801	107094	249073
Georgia	13103	14044	25739	398	29264	82548
	807094	791850	1541263	59150	694280	3893635

Image courtesy of U.S. Census Bureau

Categories:

Free white Males of 16 years and upwards,
including heads of families.

All other free persons.

Slaves.

Free white Males under sixteen years.

Total.

Free white Females, including heads of families.

4) What do you notice?

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State	Free white males of 16 years and upward	Free white males under 16 years	Free white females, including heads of families	All other free persons	Slaves	Total
Delaware	11,783	12,143	22,384	3,899	8,887	

- 7) Which three states had the highest total population?
 - 8) Why do you think there are only 16 states listed in the table instead of 50?
 - 9) “All other free persons” referred to free African-Americans and Native Americans not living on a reservation. Which state had the lowest number of “other free persons”? Why do you think this number was so low?
 - 10) Which states had the lowest number of enslaved people?
 - 11) Which states had the highest number of enslaved people?