THE 1970 CENSUS: FINDING THE FACTS

This section summarizes the steps involved in taking the 1970 census from questionnaire design to data production. Users who want to fully understand census data and use them to best advantage will benefit from this background information on collection and processing procedures going into the final product.
Which Facts

The items included in Census questionnaires are selected only after a lengthy process of consultation with census users, discussion with a council of federal agency representatives established by the Bureau of the Budget, review by advisory panels of subject matter experts, and careful deliberation by the Bureau staff.

Neither the Bureau of the Census, nor any other Federal agency, is free to ask any question it chooses. Each question must conform to the guidelines established by Congress in the Federal Reports Act of 1942. Briefly, this act, which is administered by the Bureau of the Budget under its reports control program, has both a positive and negative or preventive side. The preventive side results in the avoidance of duplicate, unnecessary, or burdensome reports.

Equally as important, however, is the act’s positive objective of “insuring that the informational needs of government, and through it, of the public, are adequately met in the most efficient manner.” Accordingly, each potential census question must be submitted to the Bureau of the Budget by the Census Bureau for approval and review to insure that the data obtained are “valid and appropriate to the purpose intended.” Questions are eligible for inclusion on the final census questionnaires only after they have gone through this formal clearance procedure. Final authority for determining which approved questions will be included is lodged with the Secretary of Commerce by Title 13 of the U.S. Code, the basic legislation governing the censuses.

In choosing questions, the Census Bureau decides which ones are most important by consulting people who need the statistics. The needs of government agencies receive top priority, but those of businessmen, labor groups, research workers, and others are also considered—often through the use of advisory committees. These committees, which average about a dozen members each and meet several times a year, are established by professional organizations such as the American Statistical Association, or by the Bureau itself, e.g., a committee of population specialists drawn largely from universities. The advisory committees provide an organized and regular channel of communication between the Bureau staff and professional experts. The committee members receive no salary from the Bureau. Their role is advisory, not decision-making.

In 1966, the Bureau also obtained suggestions and comments through intensive discussion with many individuals, organizations, and Federal agency representatives in a series of locally-sponsored public meetings in 23 cities across the country. The Bureau necessarily relies on this organized and regular flow of information in evaluating users’ needs as a means for guiding future program development. Studies are made in an effort to determine both current uses and likely future needs for census data in existing local, State, and Federal programs.

The questions which were proposed for 1970 are too numerous to present here fully. Many were ruled out as not being in the broad public interest, which is the first criterion for possible inclusion. Others were vetoed as too complex or too personal, or more appropriate for a National sample survey than the census, or for other equally relevant reasons. After the list was initially reduced, further cuts had to be made on a priority basis in order to remain within the limits of the available resources and to avoid imposing an unreasonable burden on the respondent.

Among the proposals rejected for one or more of the above-mentioned reasons were questions on exterior building material, amount of taxes paid, auto accidents, religion, union membership, ownership of musical instruments, smoking, multiple job holding, distance to shopping areas, stock ownership, and expected family size.

The final format of the 1970 census questionnaire represents a balance between meeting the needs of users for data to carry out program and research responsibilities and the cost to the citizen and the government resulting from a too complex and lengthy questionnaire. Figure 1 presents the questions contained in the questionnaire and indicates whether a particular question was asked on a 100-percent, 20-percent, 15-percent, or a 5-percent basis.
### 1970 Census Questionnaire (Sample)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line No.</th>
<th>Last name</th>
<th>First name</th>
<th>Middle init</th>
<th>Head of household</th>
<th>Wife of head</th>
<th>Son or daughter of head</th>
<th>Other relative of head</th>
<th>Present on same household</th>
<th>Date of birth</th>
<th>Date of death</th>
<th>Census status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Figure 1. 1970 Census Questionnaire

- **Line No.** indicates the row number.
- **Last name** is the last name of the person.
- **First name** is the first name of the person.
- **Middle init** is the middle initial of the person.
- **Head of household** indicates if the person is the head of household.
- **Wife of head** indicates if the person is the wife of the head of household.
- **Son or daughter of head** indicates if the person is a son or daughter of the head of household.
- **Other relative of head** indicates if the person is another relative of the head of household.
- **Present on same household** indicates if the person was present on the same household.
- **Date of birth** indicates the month and year of birth.
- **Date of death** indicates the month and year of death.
- **Census status** indicates the census status of the person (Married, Widowed, Divorced, Single).
Figure 1. 1970 Census Questionnaire—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1. How many living quarters, occupied and vacant, are at this address?</td>
<td>(0) One  (1) Two apartments or living quarters  (2) Three apartments or living quarters  (3) Four apartments or living quarters  (4) Five apartments or living quarters  (5) Six apartments or living quarters  (6) Seven apartments or living quarters  (7) Eight apartments or living quarters  (8) Nine apartments or living quarters  (9) Ten or more apartments or living quarters  (10) This is a mobile home or trailer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1a. Is there a telephone on which people in your living quarters can be called?</td>
<td>(1) Yes  (2) No  (3) No, the number?  (4) Phony number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1b. Do you enter your living quarters—</td>
<td>(0) Directly from the outside or through a common or public hall  (1) Through someone else's living quarters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1c. Do you have complete kitchen facilities?</td>
<td>Complete kitchen facilities are a sink with piped water, a range or cook stove, and a refrigerator.  (0) Yes, for this household only  (1) Yes, but also used by another household  (2) No complete kitchen facilities for this household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1d. How many rooms do you have in your living quarters?</td>
<td>(0) 1 room  (1) 2 rooms  (2) 3 rooms  (3) 4 rooms  (4) 5 rooms  (5) 6 rooms  (6) 7 rooms  (7) 8 rooms  (8) 9 rooms or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1e. Is there hot and cold piped water in this building?</td>
<td>(0) Yes, hot and cold piped water in this building  (1) No, only cold piped water in this building  (2) No piped water in this building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1f. Do you have a flush toilet?</td>
<td>(0) Yes, for this household only  (1) Yes, but also used by another household  (2) No flush toilet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1g. Do you have a bathtub or shower?</td>
<td>(0) Yes, for this household only  (1) Yes, but also used by another household  (2) No bathtub or shower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1h. Is there a basement in this building?</td>
<td>(0) Yes  (1) No, built on a concrete slab  (2) No, built in another way (includes mobile homes and trailers)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FOR CENSUS ENUMERATOR'S USE ONLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block number</th>
<th>Serial number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>D 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>D 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>D 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### B. Type of unit or quarters

- **Occupied:**
  - First form
  - Continuation
- **Vacant:**
  - Regular
  - Usual residence elsewhere
  - Group quarters
    - First form
    - Continuation
  
  Elsewhere, fill in C, D, A, H12 to H18, and 1516 to 1518

### C. Vacancy status

- **Year round:**
  - For rent
    - For sale only
    - Rented or sold, not occupied
    - Hold for occasional use
    - Other vacant
  - Seasonal
  - Migrant

### D. Months vacant

- Less than 1 month
- 1 up to 6 months
- 6 up to 12 months
- 1 year up to 2 years
- 2 years or more

### G/Y

- (0)
### 1970 Census Questionnaire—Continued

#### Sample Housing Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H13.</td>
<td>Answer question H13 if you pay rent for your living quarters. In addition to the rent entered in H12, do you also pay for—\n\n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. 1970 Census Questionnaire—Continued
Sample Housing Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many stories (floors) are in this building?</td>
<td>1 to 3 stories, 4 to 6 stories, 7 to 12 stories, 13 stories or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If 4 or more stories—Is there a passenger elevator in this building?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which fuel is used most for cooking?</td>
<td>Coal or coke, Wood, Other fuel, No fuel used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which fuel is used most for house heating?</td>
<td>Coal or coke, Wood, Other fuel, No fuel used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which fuel is used most for water heating?</td>
<td>Coal or coke, Wood, Other fuel, No fuel used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many bedrooms do you have? Count rooms used mainly for sleeping or other purposes.</td>
<td>No bedroom, 1 bedroom, 2 bedrooms, 3 bedrooms, 4 bedrooms, 5 bedrooms or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a clothes washing machine?</td>
<td>Yes, automatic or semi-automatic, Yes, wringer or separate spin dryer, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a clothes dryer?</td>
<td>Yes, electrically heated, Yes, gas heated, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a dishwasher (built-in or portable)?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a home food freezer which is separate from your refrigerator?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a television set? Count only sets in working order.</td>
<td>Yes, one set, Yes, two or more sets, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If “Yes”—Is any set equipped to receive UHF broadcasts, that is, channels 14 to 83?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a battery-operated radio?</td>
<td>Yes, one or more, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you (or any member of your household) own a second home or other living quarters which you occupy sometime during the year?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. 1970 Census Questionnaire—Continued
Sample Population Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of person on (1) of page 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last name</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **12a. Where was this person born?** If born in hospital, give state or country where mother lived. If born outside U.S., see instructions on place of birth; distinguish Northern Ireland from Ireland (Bir).  
  - This State  
  - OR  
  - (Name of state or foreign country; or Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.)

- **15. What country was his father born in?**  
  - United States  
  - OR  
  - (Name of foreign country; or Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.)

- **15. What country was his mother born in?**  
  - United States  
  - OR  
  - (Name of foreign country; or Puerto Rico, Guam, etc.)

- **16. For persons born in a foreign country—**  
  - a. Is this person naturalized?  
    - Yes, naturalized  
    - No, alien  
    - Born abroad of American parents

- **17. What language, other than English, was spoken in this person’s home when he was a child? Fill one circle.**  
  - Spanish  
  - French  
  - German  
  - Other—Specify

- **18. When did this person move into this house (or apartment)?**  
  - Fill circle for date of last move.  
    - 1969 or 70  
    - 1960 or 59  
    - 1959 or 58  
    - 1956 or 57  
    - 1955 or 54  
    - 1954 or 53  
    - 1953 or 52  
    - 1952 or 51  
    - 1951 or 50  
    - 1949 or earlier

- **19a. Did he live in this house on April 1, 1965?** If in college or Armed Forces in April 1965, report place of residence there.  
  - Born April 1965 or later  
  - Age 20 or less  
  - 1957 or earlier  
  - Any other year

- **20. Since February 1, 1970, has this person attended regular school or college at any time? Count nursery school, kindergartens, and schools which lead to an elementary school certificate, high school diploma, or college degree.**  
  - Yes, public  
  - Yes, private  
  - Yes, other private  
  - No

- **21. What is the highest grade (or year) of regular school he has ever attended?** Fill one circle. If you attending, mark grade he is in.  
  - Never attended school—Skip to 29  
  - Kindergarten  
  - 1966 or later  
  - 1965 or earlier

- **22. Did he finish the highest grade (or year) he attended?**  
  - Yes  
  - No

- **23. When was this person born?**  
  - Born before April 1956—Please go on with questions 24 through 41.  
  - Born April 1956 or later—Please omit questions 24 through 41 and go to the next page for the next person.

- **24. If this person has ever been married—**  
  - a. Has this person been married more than once?  
    - Yes  
    - No

- **25. If this is a man—**  
  - a. Has he ever served in the Army, Navy, or other Armed Forces of the United States?  
    - Yes  
    - No

- **26. If this is a man—**  
  - b. Was he drafted—Fill in circle for each period of service.  
    - Vietnam Conflict (June 1964)  
    - Korean War (June 1950 to Jan. 1953)  
    - World War II (Sept. 1940 to May 1945)  
    - World War I (April 1917 to Nov. 1918)  
    - Any other time

**Note:** Question 15 and 16 are marked with 15 and 5 percent, indicating the percentage for which these questions are used in the census.
Figure 1. 1970 Census Questionnaire--Continued

Sample Population Questions

27a. Has this person ever completed a vocational training program?

For example, in high school; as apprentice; in school of business, nursing, or trades; technical institutes; or Armed Forces schools.

(1) Yes
(2) No—Skip to 28

b. What was his main field of vocational training?  Fill in one circle:

(1) Business, office work
(2) Nursing, other health fields
(3) Trades and crafts (except building, construction, etc.)
(4) Engineering or science technician; draftsman
(5) Agriculture or home economics
(6) Other fields—Specify:

28a. Does this person have a health or physical condition which limits the kind or amount of work he can do at a job? If 65 years old or over, skip to question 29.

Yes
No

b. Does his health or physical condition keep him from holding any job at all?

Yes
No

c. If "Yes" in a or b—How long has he been limited in his ability to work?

Less than 6 months
6 to 12 months
1 to 2 years
10 years or more

QUESTIONS 28 THROUGH 41 ARE FOR ALL PERSONS BORN BEFORE APRIL 1960 INCLUDING HOUSEHOLDS, STUDENTS, OR DISABLED PERSONS, AS WELL AS PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME WORKERS

29a. Did this person work at any time last week?

Yes—Fill in circle if this person did full- or part-time work.
No—Fill in circle if the person did not work, or did only odd homework, school work, or volunteer work during the week

b. How many hours did he work last week (at all jobs)?

Submit any time off and odd overtime or extra hours worked.

1 to 14 hours
does not work
15 to 29 hours
to 49 hours
30 to 34 hours
to 59 hours
35 to 49 hours
60 hours or more

--- continued ---

c. Where did he work last week?

If he worked at more than one place, print where he worked most last week.

(1) Address (Number and street name)

(2) Name of city, town, village, etc.

(3) Inside or outside city limits, city, town, village, etc.

(4) Yes

(5) No

(6) County

(7) ZIP

15 percent

28d. How did he get to work last week? Fill in circle for chief means used on the last day he worked at the address given in 20.

Driver, private auto
Taxicab
Passenger, private auto
Walked only
Bus or streetcar
Subway or electric
Railroad
Other means—Specify:

15 and 5 percent

After completing question 28d, skip to question 41.

30. Does this person have a job or business from which he was temporarily absent or on layoff last week?

Yes
No—Skip to 32

31a. Has he been looking for work during the past 4 weeks?

Yes
No—Skip to 32

b. Was there any reason why he could not take a job last week?

Yes, already has a job
No, because of this person's temporary illness
Yes, for other reasons (on school, etc.)
No, could not have taken a job

32. When did he first work at all, even for a few days?

in 1970
1969 to 1967
1959 or earlier

in 1960
1960 to 1963
Never worked

in 1958
--- continued ---
### 1970 Census Questionnaire—Continued

#### Sample Population Questions

**33. Industry**
- a. For whom did he work? If now on active duty in the Armed Forces, print "AF" and skip to question 36.
  - [ ] Manufacturing
  - [ ] Wholesale or retail trade
  - [ ] Transportation, communication, electric, gas, or other utilities
  - [ ] Construction
  - [ ] Other (specify)
- b. What kind of business or industry was this?
- c. Is this main work?
  - [ ] Yes
  - [ ] No

**34. Occupation**
- a. What kind of work was he doing?
  - [ ] Farming
  - [ ] Fishing
  - [ ] Hunting
  - [ ] Hunting
  - [ ] Transportation, communication, electric, gas, or other utilities
- b. What were his most important activities or duties?
- c. What was his job title?

**35. Was this person—**
- [ ] Employed by private company, business, or individual
- [ ] Federal government employee
- [ ] State government employee
- [ ] Local government employee
- [ ] Self-employed in own business, professional practice, or farm
- [ ] Own business not incorporated
- [ ] Own business incorporated
- [ ] Working without pay on family business or farm

**36. In April 1965, what State did this person live in?**
- [ ] This State
- [ ] Other (specify)

**37. In April 1965, was this person—**
- [ ] Working in a job or business (full or part-time)?
  - [ ] Yes
  - [ ] No
- [ ] In the Armed Forces?
  - [ ] Yes
  - [ ] No
- [ ] Attending college?
  - [ ] Yes
  - [ ] No

**38. If "Yes" for "Working in a job or business" in question 37—Describe this person's chief activity or business in April 1965.
- a. What kind of business or industry was this?
- b. What kind of work was he doing (occupation)?
- c. Was he—
  - [ ] An employee of a private company or government agency
  - [ ] Self-employed or an unpaid family worker

**39a. Last year (1969), did this person work at all, even for a few days?
- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

**40. Earnings in 1969—**
- a. How much did this person earn in 1969 in wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, or tips from all jobs?
  - [ ] Less than $100
  - [ ] $100 to $499
  - [ ] $500 to $999
  - [ ] $1,000 or more
- b. How much did he earn in 1969 from his own farm?
  - [ ] Less than $100
  - [ ] $100 to $499
  - [ ] $500 to $999
  - [ ] $1,000 or more
- c. How much did he earn in 1969 as a farmer (not including operating expenses)?
  - [ ] Less than $100
  - [ ] $100 to $499
  - [ ] $500 to $999
  - [ ] $1,000 or more

**41. Income other than earnings in 1969—**
- a. How much did this person receive in 1969 from Social Security or Railroad Retirement?
  - [ ] Less than $100
  - [ ] $100 to $499
  - [ ] $500 to $999
  - [ ] $1,000 or more
- b. How much did he receive in 1969 from public assistance or welfare payments?
  - [ ] Less than $100
  - [ ] $100 to $499
  - [ ] $500 to $999
  - [ ] $1,000 or more
- c. How much did he receive in 1969 from all other sources?
  - [ ] Less than $100
  - [ ] $100 to $499
  - [ ] $500 to $999
  - [ ] $1,000 or more
Table 1 provides a summarized comparison of the 1970 census items with the 1960 content. That the 1970 items do not differ strikingly from 1960 is not surprising. Although many new items were proposed, the dominant tone through most discussions of improvement of the 1970 product by users was for a greater exploitation of the existing (1960) items by more intensive cross-tabulation and by providing additional data for small areas. Thus, while a number of new items have been added to a sample basis (primarily to meet the program needs of Federal agencies), the subject needs which the decennial census serve have not changed greatly during the decade.

The stability of the census items stems from a desire to develop historical continuity in data series. This continuity is sometimes lost, however, and should be examined carefully on a case-by-case basis. A question asked for one census may not be asked for the next because it no longer yields useful data, or it is no longer important in most localities, or it may yield unreliable data. For example, the 1960 item on structural condition was dropped because it was based on a subjective rating made by the enumerators, which post-census evaluation studies found in many cases to be unreliable and inaccurate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population items</th>
<th>Complete-count or sample percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to head of household.</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color or race.</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (month and year of birth).</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex.</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Status.</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State or country of birth.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of school completed.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children ever born.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity 5 years ago.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Status.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours worked last week.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks worked last year.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last year in which worked.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation, industry, and class of worker.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income last year:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage and salary income.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employment income.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country of birth of parents.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother tongue.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year moved into this house.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of residence 5 years ago.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School or college enrollment (public or private).</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran status.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of work.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means of transportation to work.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican or Spanish origin or descent.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of immigration.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital history.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational training completed.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence and duration of disability.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation-industry 5 years ago.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Single item in 1960; two-way separation in 1970 by farm and nonfarm income.
2 Single item in 1960; three-way separation in 1970 by social security, public assistance, and all other receipts.
3 This item is also in the 5-percent sample but limited to State of residence 5 years ago.
4 Street address included for 1970.
5 In 1960, whether married more than once and date of first marriage; in 1970 also includes whether first marriage ended by death of spouse.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing items</th>
<th>Complete-count or sample percentage</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>1970</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of units at this address</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone available</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>7100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to unit</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen or cooking facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete kitchen facilities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition of housing unit</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water supply</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flush toilet</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathtub or shower</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basement</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial establishment on property</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract rent</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy status</td>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Months vacant</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heating equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Components of gross rent</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year structure built</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of units in structure and whether a trailer</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm residence (acreage and sales of farm products)</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land used for farming</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of water</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewage disposal</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathrooms</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air conditioning</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobiles</td>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stories, elevator in structure</td>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel—heating, cooking, water heating</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedrooms</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes washing machine</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothes dryer</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishwasher</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Food Freezer</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second home</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Collected primarily for coverage check purposes.
*Required on 100-percent basis for field follow-up purposes in mail areas.
*100-percent in places of 20,000 or more inhabitants, 25-percent elsewhere.
*Omitted in places of 20,000 or more inhabitants.
*For renter-occupied and vacant-for-rent units outside places of 20,000 or more inhabitants.
*120-percent in places of 20,000 or more inhabitants, 5-percent elsewhere.
*Collected only in places of 20,000 or more inhabitants.
Sampling

People

Only five questions are asked of all individuals. The “complete count” or “100-percent” items on relationship to household head, sex, race, age, and marital status permit an accurate count of persons in each area as required by the Constitution to determine representation in Congress. These facts about a person together with his name and address are used to establish his identity and insure against double counting. However, the basic record tapes and summary tapes do not contain names or addresses, because these items are never used in Census Bureau tabulations. The complete-count tabulations provide only totals and cross-tabulations of the five items listed above.

All other information concerning individuals is obtained from questions asked of only a sample of the population. Sampling permits the collection of data about an area which reflect the characteristics of all persons in the area even though only a small number of individuals were actually questioned. This process allows the data to be obtained at a much lower cost. The sample cases are weighted to reflect the sampling percentages. For example, in a tabulation based on the 20-percent sample, the average case will have a weight of 5, that is, all figures are multiplied by approximately 5 so the final results will provide estimates for all people in an area. Thus, if the sample indicated that 51 families have an income between $5,000 and $6,000, and that 40 families have an income between $7,000 and $8,000, tabulations for that area would show that there are 255 families which have an income between $5,000 and $6,000, and 200 families which have an income between $7,000 and $8,000. This aspect of sample tabulations makes identification of particular individuals impossible. As an additional protection, the sampling procedures used a random start to select those households which were asked to answer the sample questions.

There was a 15-percent and a 5-percent sample in the 1970 census, and certain questions common to both samples resulted in a 20-percent sample (see Table 1). Whether a question was asked of everyone or of a sample of people depends in part on the size of the area for which statistics are to be tabulated and published, information required for apportionment purposes and that which is to be tabulated for city blocks was collected on a 100-percent basis; that which is to be tabulated for larger areas, the smallest being a census tract, was asked on a 15- or 20-percent sample basis. The 5-percent sample will provide reliable data for all large counties and States.

Although the average census tract has a population of about 4000 persons, tracts having a population of as few as 1000 persons are not unusual. A tract with just 1000 inhabitants would be expected to have perhaps 300 households (and household heads). For a 5-percent sample this would mean that 15 households, of which 10 might be owner-occupied and 5 renter-occupied. When combined for larger areas, such as an entire SMSA, 5-percent data could be expected to be fairly reliable. However, it should be noted that 5-percent sample data for census tracts, available on census summary tapes, can be used for statistical analysis only with great caution.

Housing units

The basic unit in census sampling is the housing unit. Therefore, the sample percentages (20, 15, and 5) are the same for housing units as for people. For example, in a household where each person answers 15-percent sample population questions, 15-percent sample housing data is also obtained. There are more complete-count housing unit questions (15) than population questions because of the need for housing data on a city block basis where a sample would not be reliable because of the small number of cases. These block data are essential to public and private housing programs, renewal, city planning, and other work related to the physical characteristics of our environment.

Group quarters

In addition to the private living quarters or “housing units,” there are other living arrangements known as group quarters. Group quarters are institutions such as mental hospitals, homes for the aged, prisons, dormitories, military barracks, or any house or apartment with five or more occupants unrelated to the head of household.

The population questions are asked either on a “complete-count” or a sample basis as explained above; however, no housing information is collected.

Geographic Preparation

Geographic identification is crucial to every stage in the taking and processing the decennial census. Census tabulations are always prepared
in terms of specific geographic areas—whether the entire United States or a city block. Geographic areas also provide the basis of administrative control in taking the census in the field and in processing the returned questionnaires.

The Bureau engages in substantial geographic work preparatory to the census such as determining boundaries, mapping, and geographic coding. These activities result in geographic products—maps, code schemes, etc.—which are of value to users as well as the Bureau. These activities also determine which areas will be recognized in general census tabulations and which areas will require special procedures to produce data summaries. (See section on Data Products and Services, page 33.)

Boundary definitions

The Bureau of the Census is not responsible for establishing the boundaries of most geographic areas for which it generally tabulates data. Political boundaries for States, counties, minor civil divisions, cities, and wards are established by appropriate authorities. In a number of States, however, the minor civil divisions (MCD’s) are not satisfactory units for reporting statistics because they no longer serve any local administrative purpose (e.g., townships in Oklahoma), or are unsuitably small (e.g., some Georgia militia districts), or they have frequently shifting boundaries (e.g., election precincts in Washington and Oregon). To provide divisions with stable and meaningful boundaries in these States, the Bureau established, in cooperation with State and local groups, census county divisions (CCD’s) as permanent statistical areas.

The Bureau also defines and delineates densely populated but unincorporated population centers. Data is tabulated for those unincorporated places with a population of 1000 or more inhabitants. Within urbanized areas, only those unincorporated places with a population of 5,000 or more are identified.

Statistical boundaries are determined by groups with special interests, often with the advice and assistance of the Bureau of the Census. The Bureau of the Budget, with the help of other Federal agencies, is responsible for defining standard metropolitan statistical areas. Local census tract committees determine tract boundaries. Several kinds of economic regions have been set up by specialists in regional economics.

Functional or administrative boundaries are established by the appropriate agencies. The Post Office defines ZIP code coverage, police departments define police precincts, marketing departments and firms draw sales territories, and so on. (With the exception of ZIP codes, census tabulations do not recognize these kinds of areas; however, special tabulations may be feasible on a contract basis.) For purposes of taking the census, the Bureau itself defines an administrative area known as an enumeration district (ED), which represents a work assignment for a single enumerator. An ED may range in size from a city block to several hundred square miles, but usually encompasses from 750 to 1,500 persons.

Boundary changes

A general problem for the Bureau in all its geographic work (and to users interested in historical analysis) is that boundaries change over time. Geographic areas of all sizes are affected.

While State and county boundaries remain relatively unchanged, MCD or CCD boundaries are altered by incorporation of new places or annexations to existing ones and in other ways. Records of such changes are kept by the Bureau and extensive footnotes on the changes that have occurred since the previous census are provided in the first series of population reports (PC(I)-A).

Census tracts are designed to permit comparison from census to census. However, changes in their boundaries do occur. Tracts are often subdivided because of an increase in population, tract boundaries which follow corporate limits may change with shifts in these limits, and boundaries can change with alterations to the street pattern. Comparability tables are prepared to aid users in recognizing changes in these boundaries. The tables are available with each printed tract report.

Because enumeration districts are created for administrative purposes and are based on population size, their boundaries are generally not comparable from census to census. Comparability is usually only possible where block data are available to aggregate to the earlier ED boundaries.

The point to be recognized is that a user wishing to compare areas at two points in time should design a plan permitting adjustments necessary to produce comparability.
Boundary identification and coding

Maps provide a means of showing the location of various types of geographic and political boundaries. The Bureau, working with the best sources available, prepares maps defining the boundaries of the areas recognized in the general tabulations: States, counties, standard metropolitan statistical areas, minor civil divisions, places, tracts, blocks, and other areas, such as wards.

For purposes of identifying the data for each of the geographic areas, the basic data record for each individual housing unit contains a series of codes, one code for each level in the geographic hierarchy down to the enumeration district or block in areas where block data are to be produced. These code numbers are derived from the maps and a geographic coding scheme prepared by the Bureau. The basic record tape (BRT) is put through a tallying program which aggregates each data item into totals for specified geographic areas using the identification codes as "keys" to the desired areas.

The geographic codes and associated place names (where relevant) for each political and statistical subdivision of the United States for which data will be tabulated will be contained in the 1970 Master Enumeration District List (MEDList). The MEDList will be an expanded version of the 1960 Geographic Identification Code Scheme and will be available either on tape or in printed form. A detailed description of the MEDList is found in the section on Data Products and Services.

Sources of geographic error and their correction

None of the mapping can be any better than the geographic material on which it is based. The Bureau obtains the best source maps it can locate in preparing its own maps. Local cooperation is sought to ensure accuracy; nevertheless, errors may be present in the final product.

These maps were one of the sources used in preparing the Address Coding Guide (ACG) for those areas to be covered by a mail-out/mail-back enumeration process (see below). Conflicts between the areal definition of the maps and the residential listings were resolved with local cooperation at this stage also.

At the time the census was taken, errors in the geographic descriptions were exposed. A record of geographic changes is kept to facilitate correction of the maps. Users depending on these maps for determination of user-defined small geographic areas should work with the post-census versions of these maps.

Collecting the Data

In 145 of the larger SMSA's and some rural test counties (altogether including about 60 percent of the total U.S. population), householders were asked to fill in questionnaires and return them by mail to the local census field office (see Figure 2). Enumerators obtained the necessary information from households that either did not respond or returned incomplete questionnaires. For the balance of the country, the traditional house-to-house canvass was used, supplemented (as in 1960) by the distribution to all households shortly before Census Day of a questionnaire containing the 100-percent population and housing questions.

The major steps in the mail-out/mail-back system are as follows: Over a span of approximately 6 months in 1969, about 40 million individual address labels were printed out from a computer tape containing city-type residential addresses—the Address Register. (These addresses were derived from a commercial mailing list.) The labels contained apartment designation (in multiunit structures), house number, street name, city, and ZIP code; however, they did not contain the name of the householder. Each label was affixed to a card, and the cards were turned over to the Post Office Department for transmittal to their respective letter carriers. Each carrier checked his cards for completeness and accuracy, i.e., nonexistent addresses were marked for deletion, incorrect addresses were corrected, and addresses for which the carrier had not been given a card were listed for addition to the Address Register cards. Lists then were returned to the Census Bureau and the necessary revisions were made to the computer tape.

The corrected tape was then processed through an Address Coding Guide so that each address could be assigned the appropriate geographic identification codes, e.g., tract, block, ward, city, county, etc. (See previous section.) Finally, the addresses were identified by the Census field control codes for district office, enumeration district (ED), and serial number within ED; and each address was designated through a random-start serialization technique to receive one of the three types of questionnaires. The three types were (1) the "short form" which contained the 100-percent items and
Figure 2. Mail-Out/Mail-Back Areas in the 1970 Census

The mail-out/mail-back areas (shaded) include approximately 60 percent of the United States population.

August, 1968
went to 80 out of every 100 housing units; (2) the "15-percent long form" which contained the "5-percent long form" which contained the 100, 20, and 5-percent items and went to 5 out of every 100 housing units.

From this corrected, geographically-identified, field-coded, and sample-designated set of addresses, two primary sets of materials were printed. One was the individual address labels, which were affixed to the mailing pieces. Each mailing piece contained the appropriate type of questionnaire, an instruction booklet, and a return envelope. The second was a listing (or Address Register) of all the addresses in a particular ED which was used for control purposes.

Because addresses are, in a sense, individual information, the Address Registers will not be released to the public. The Address Coding Guides (ACG), however, are simply a record of address ranges for each blockface together with codes corresponding to the geographic areas of which a particular blockface is a part; i.e., block, tract, ward, 5-digit ZIP, congressional district, place, MCD or CCD, county or county equivalent, and State. The ACG in no way presents individual information. Therefore, ACG copies are available. (See section on Data Products and Services for further information).

This process did not cover the entire SMSA, but only the portion which received city delivery service from the Post Office Department. For the balance of the SMSA, temporary Census employees performed a special listing operation in late 1969 or early 1970. The listing procedure involved the location of each housing unit within an assigned enumeration district and the determination of its mailing address. The mail address for each housing unit (whether a city delivery type such as 121 Main Street or a rural delivery type such as Box 210, RFD #2) together with the name of the household head were recorded onto an Address Register listing sheet. Block numbers were also recorded if they appeared on the map of the enumeration district.

The Address Registers which were developed in this manner were then used to prepare hand-addressed mailing pieces comparable to the computer generated ones discussed above.

About March 15, 1970, all mailing pieces were transmitted to local post offices. The carriers sorted the mailing pieces to recheck whether any residential address had been omitted. The missing addresses were sent to the appropriate local Census office where they were added to the Address Registers, and mailing pieces were prepared. About four days before Census Day--Wednesday, April 1, 1970—all mailing pieces were delivered. During the delivery process, the carriers made a final check for missing addresses and informed the Census office accordingly.

Householders were requested to fill out and mail back their questionnaires on Census Day. This request was reinforced by a widespread publicity campaign.

Within a few days after Census Day, check-in and review of the mail returns began. Incomplete questionnaires and nonresponse cases were followed up. The goal of the operation was to have a complete questionnaire for each address on the register, or an explanation on the register of why a listed address was not included in the census (e.g., it was really part of another housing unit, or it was not a residential address despite the letter carrier's belief).

The mail-out/mail-back system was developed after many years of study and field testing. The procedures developed for the 1970 census were successfully tested under as near census conditions as possible in 1968 in dress rehearsals in Dane County, Wisconsin and Trenton, New Jersey. The primary purposes of a mail census are to improve coverage, to improve the data from respondents, and to reduce the number of enumerators needed for the census. On the first point, by bringing the letter carrier's knowledge of his delivery area into the census process and by the repeated checks which this system makes feasible, improvement in coverage was evidenced. In the test areas, the postal check virtually eliminated that portion of the underenumeration which results from an enumerator skipping an entire structure and its residents. Mail enumeration gives each respondent a chance to answer questions for himself at his own speed and to check his records if necessary, thus assuring privacy and increasing the likelihood of accuracy. The mail census system also permits the Census Bureau to concentrate effort on hard-to-enumerate areas by reducing demands on employees time in areas where cooperation in mailing back questionnaires is high.

With regard to reducing the total number of enumerators, the mail approach permitted a reduction in the number of field workers who
would have been needed for a house-to-house canvas of the areas where the mail system
was used. The reduction eased to some extent the intense problems of staff recruitment and
retention in the large cities, and sped up the completion of the enumeration process.

Problems in acquiring a mailing list and in locating the addresses on the list for a particular
physical area--Box 283, RFD #1, for example--dictated that the country's more rural areas be
excluded from the mail enumeration system at this time. Certain tests however, were carried
on during the 1970 operation to help determine whether the scope of the mail system could be
extended in future censuses.

In the nonmail areas, a technique much like the 1960 “single stage” approach was used. Several
days before Census Day, letter carriers left at every housing unit an unaddressed short
form questionnaire identical in content with the one used in mail areas. This questionnaire was
similar to the Advance Census Report of 1960, except that the 1970 form was a FOSDIC document
and used for final processing, whereas in 1960 the information was transcribed by the enu-
merator into a FOSDIC book. (FOSDIC stands for Film Optical Sensing Device for Input to
Computers, an optical scanning device which is capable of “reading” information from a micro-
film copy of an appropriately designed and marked questionnaire and “transferring” the
data to magnetic tape for processing on electronic computers.) The purpose of this advance
distribution was to obtain the advantages of self-enu-
meration for the 100-percent items. At every
fifth unit, the 1970 enumerator completed the
same long-form (15- or 5-percent) question-
aire as was used in mail areas.

Processing the Data

Figure 3 provides a greatly simplified diagram of the 1970 census data processing steps. The
complete-count data handled separately from the sample data in the processing operations.
Although both types of data undergo similar steps, the complete-count data are prepared on a
priority time schedule while the sample data require a time-consuming hand-coding opera-
tion.

The questionnaires were specially designed
for optical scanning by FOSDIC. Questions were
answered by blackening in a limited number of
circles. In preparation for processing, a
“breaker sheet,” a geographic identification
page in FOSDIC readable form, is prepared and
placed at the beginning of each enumeration
district grouping of questionnaires. Because the
complete-count items do not require hand-
coding, the short form together with the 100-
percent portion of the sample questionnaires can be
microfilmed for FOSDIC processing with a
minimum of handling.

Several of the sample questions, such as those
on income, occupation, and place-of-work have
many possible answers, so the answers were
hand-written. Because FOSDIC can read only
darkened circles, a Bureau coder determines
data for each hand-written entry and then
fills the appropriate circles. Therefore, after
the 100-percent entries are accepted, the sample
questionnaires are separated from the 100-
percent forms and sent to the coding sections.
After coding, the sample forms are microfilmed
in their entirety for FOSDIC. When the micro-
filming is completed, the original questionnaires
are destroyed, and the microfilm will ultimately
be stored under security conditions in Pitts-
burg, Kansas.

The new FOSDIC machine (called FOSDIC-70
for the 1970 census) scans the microfilm, notes
in each section the position of the darkened
circles (light spots on the film negative), and
converts these marks to bit patterns on magnetic
tape. FOSDIC is also equipped with internal
memory and programming capacity and performs
some preliminary consistency checks and edits
on the tape. The tape then will carry the
information in a form that can be read and
manipulated by electronic computers.

Instructions for the operations carried out
by the computer are given in programs prepared
for each major operation which are fed into
the computer with the data from the census.
Controlled by the stored program, the computer
processes the data for each person (as coded
by FOSDIC) through the editing, tallying, and
cross-tabulating. An edit program checks the
information on each record to determine whether
any items are inconsistent or missing. For
example, a record for a person identified as
the wife of a household head but with a marital
status of “single” is automatically changed to a
marital status of “now married.”

Some missing information will be supplied
by allocation. The allocation procedure begins
with a set of items stored in the computer.
Substitutions are then made for missing items
using the most recent record containing the item. The stored information is then
used to make allocations for missing data items.
Figure 3. The Processing of the 1970 Census Data Products

This is necessarily a simplified presentation. Dashed lines indicate separate processing operations.
For example, in processing the 100-percent data, the stored information has an entry of age 25 for a male, white, head of household, with wife present. As another record with this set of characteristics comes through the computer with age reported as 26, the new age is substituted in the stored information for the original entry of 25. Now, if another record comes through for a person with the same characteristics but with age missing, the age of 26 is allocated to this individual. This procedure insures that the distribution of ages assigned by the computer for persons of a given set of characteristics will correspond closely to the reported age distribution of such persons in the current census.

The sample data are then processed through a sample weighting procedure in addition to the above processing. The goal of this procedure is to arrive at weights (multipliers) which, when applied to the sample respondents in a given small area, would match certain complete-count characteristics of that small area. In the 20-percent sample, for instance, a number close to 5 is found, which would produce an inflated population from the sample items that would be the same as the observed population in total and with respect to race, sex, age, family size, and housing characteristics. (See section on Sampling, page 21.)

Edited data about individuals, together with associated geographic information, are contained on computer tapes known as the basic record tapes (BRT's). All complete-count and sample tabulations are made from these tapes. Because the BRT's contain information about individuals, they are confidential and may be tabulated for statistical purposes only by Census Bureau employees. Names and addresses of persons do not appear on the BRT's because there is no need for this information in statistical data summaries.

Data summaries are prepared on computer tapes from the BRT's for each of the geographic areas--blocks, tracts, places, counties, etc. The tapes containing these area tabulations are called census summary tapes. Summary tapes in turn are used to prepare more limited sets of tabulations which appear in the printed reports, complete with table headings, footnotes, etc. Some tabulations contained on the summary tapes and in the printed reports will also be released on microfilm. Other special tabulations of the basic record tapes may be prepared at user request and expense. (See section on Data Products and Services.)

All tabulations--general and special--pass through a variety of releasability analyses as they are prepared for delivery to the user. These analyses take many forms but their basic objective is to insure that no confidential data are released and that all data delivered are properly tabulated.
References


