# Using the Census for Family History

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The U.S. government's recording of families each decade has long been the foundation of genealogy projects. Often the first documents retrieved by family historians, census records offer an opportunity to glean data collected since 1790.

## **U.S.** Census Highlights

Current census records available for family historian research: 1 April 1950

First census: 2 August 1790 Most recent: 1 April 2020 Upcoming: 1 April 2030

## Types of schedules available

- Agricultural & Industry and Manufacturing
- Defective, Dependent, Delinquent
- Population\*

- Mortality & Social Statistics
- Veterans
- Slave (1850 & 1860)

\*The 1890 population schedule was damaged by fire on 10 January 1921. The following states have select schedules that survived: AL, DC, GA, IL, MN, NC, NJ, NY, OH, SD, and TX.

## Common information that may be on a census schedule (population):

- Residence
- Name
- Relationship to the Head of Household
- Age
- Race

- Date of Birth
- Place of Birth
- Marriage
- Place of Births for Parents'
- Citizenship

- Occupation
- Disability
- Military Service
- Education
- Land Ownership

Example, top section, of a population schedule sheet for the Kane household:

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#### Be sure to remember to note the citations!

1920 U.S. census, Greene County, Iowa, population schedule, Scranton, sh. 5B - 6A, Hugh Kane household, digital image, *Ancestry.com* (htpp://www.ancestry.com: accessed 26 October 2017); citing NARA microfilm publication T625, roll 491.

## **Accessing Census Schedules**

Regional collections of census records may be accessed at home by subscription or through your local public library, genealogical, or historical society.

The schedules from the National Archives census collection may be on microfilm or digitized through databases on the National Archives, Ancestry, FamilySearch, and various online subscriptions.

#### **Reference Guides & Record Collections**

Ancestry.com \$, United States Census, https://www.ancestry.com/search/categories/usfedcen

- U.S., Special Census on Deaf Family Marriages and Hearing Relatives, 1888-1895, https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1582
- Slave Schedules, 1850, <a href="https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8055">https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8055</a> and 1860
   https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/7668
- 1890 Veterans Schedules, https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8667
- U.S., 1880 Federal Census Schedules of Defective, Dependent, and Delinquent Classes, https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1634
- U.S., Selected Federal Census Non-Population Schedules, 1850-1880, <a href="https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1276">https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1276</a>

## FamilySearch.org

- United States Census,
   <a href="https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United\_States\_State\_Census\_Records">https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/United\_States\_State\_Census\_Records</a>
- Missouri, <a href="https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Missouri">https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Missouri</a>, <a href="United\_States\_Genealogy">United\_States\_Genealogy</a>
- Franklin County, Missouri, https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Franklin County, Missouri Genealogy
- Missouri, State and Territorial Census Records, 1732-1933, https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/collection/2075262
- Missouri Census, https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Missouri Census,

Findmypast.com \$, Census, https://www.findmypast.com/discover/census-land-and-surveys/census

MyHeritage.com \$, Census Records, https://myheritage.com/census

National Archives.gov, https://www.archives.gov/research/census

- Genealogy: About Census Records, https://www.archives.gov/research/census/about
- 1950 Census Records, <a href="https://www.archives.gov/research/census/1950">https://www.archives.gov/research/census/1950</a>
   1790-1950 Censuses (Search Links), <a href="https://www.archives.gov/research/census/online-resources">https://www.archives.gov/research/census/online-resources</a>
- U.S. Census Bureau, https://www.census.gov
  - "Census Records and Family History," <a href="https://www.census.gov/about/history/census-records-family-history.html">https://www.census.gov/about/history/census-records-family-history.html</a>
  - "2030 Census," <a href="https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2030/2030-census-main.html">https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/2030/2030-census-main.html</a>

Hinckley, Kathleen W. Your Guide to the Federal Census for genealogists, researchers, and family historian. Cincinnati, Ohio: Better Way Books, 2002.

Sperry, Kip. *Reading Early American Handwriting*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Baltimore, Maryland: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2001.