

VBGS How-To Group - Jan 2021

U. S. Federal Census Records

by Heather Wright

U. S. Federal Censuses

The US government began collecting information on inhabitants in 1790 and have repeated the process every ten years. Initially it was only to count people but has expanded to capture other information including education, immigration, and relationships within a household. A few different censuses come and go but the population schedule is consistently taken over the years.

This [Census Bureau page](#) has some good general information and final reports for each census. See [enumerator instructions](#) for what was to be included.

Types of Federal censuses:

The FamilySearch [wiki](#) is a good jumping point for the types of census available. They include:

Population Schedules

- First taken in 1790, every 10 years after
- 1790-1840 – only head of household named, others are tallied in age brackets
- 1850 – Everyone in household is listed by name
- 1880 – Relationship to head of household begins
- 1890 – most destroyed in a fire, [a few survive](#) from a number of states
- released to the public after 72 years, latest is 1940
- 1950 will be released in Apr 2022
- can [order a transcript](#) of a single person for 1950-2010 – must meet criteria and pay \$65 search fee

Slave Schedules

- 1850 & 1860
- slaves not named, only owners

Indian Schedules

- 1900 and 1910 have “Special Inquiries Related to Indians” with additional questions to general census (different than the Indian Census Rolls)
- Indian Census Rolls
 - began in 1885
 - supposed to be taken annually on reservations, some exempt, annually not enforced

Mortality Schedules

- 1850 – 1880
- lists those that died within the year

Veteran Schedules

- 1841 - Revolutionary War Pensioner census
- 1890 - Revolutionary War Veteran/Widow census
 - name of veteran or widow
 - rank
 - company
 - regiment/vessel
 - enlistment
 - discharge
 - length of service
 - mailing address
 - disability

Locate the Census

Many sites have at least some of the population schedules available, we will look at these below:

- FamilySearch (free with account)
- Ancestry (with subscription)
- HeritageQuest (through library, part of Ancestry)

Blank Forms

You can fill them in or simply use for the header information.

- [National Archives](#) – all schedules
- [FamilySearch](#) – population schedules
- [Ancestry](#)
- [HeritageQuest](#) 1790-1930, forms and information
- 1790-1860 headers only – [pdf from Familysearch](#)
- 1870-1930 headers only – [pdf from Familysearch](#)

Notes

- information, esp. ages, can be inconsistent between census years
- misspellings or incorrect info (age, parent birthplace, etc.) are not the rule but quite common
- person may show up in more than one household, or not at all
- 1820 Census has overlap category: males 16-18 and males 16-26

Tips

- start searching with a small net (more information) and then go bigger as needed (less information)
- given names may be initials, nicknames, or middle names
- surname spelling variations
- search for other family members you expect to be in the household
- search for a relative or neighbor if you can't find your person/family
- your person may be the boarder
- households may be split over multiple pages, check the prior or next image as needed
- 1830 & 1840 census is two pages wide, don't forget page 2!
- browse images for a place if searching the index doesn't work
- "missing" family members may be deceased or just in another house (moving out is expected for adults but children may be in other households as well)
- there are often close and extended family nearby
- don't rely solely on the indexed record, look at the image, there will be more information than indexed and indexed information may be incorrect if the handwriting was hard to read

Finding the Census Records - FamilySearch

free (with free account)

search index

- enter at least a surname and hit Search
- narrow by collection type – *Census and Lists*

Or, on the search page ---
If you know the location, you can use the map to narrow your search by place first.

Search Results from Historical Records [Filter by collections](#)

1-20 of 1,502,651 Results for Name: **crow**

Number of results to show: 20 50 100 Export Results 1-20

Name	Events	Relationships	View
Lester Crow Son United States Census, 1940	birth: 1922 Georgia residence: 1940 Militia District 1599, Forsyth, Georgia, United States; Same House	father: Cephus Crow mother: Dellar Crow other: Rose Crow, Ethel Crow, Melvin Crow, Peggy Crow	
Lorraine Crow Wife United States Census, 1940	birth: 1907 Texas residence: 1940 Tract 30, Houston, Justice Precinct 1, Harris, Texas, United States; Dallas, Dallas, Texas	spouse: Frank V Crow children: Peggy Crow, Patsy Crow	
Thomas B Crow Head United States Census, 1940	birth: 1878 Colorado residence: 1940 Tract 37, Denver, Election District L, Denver, Colorado, United States; Same House	spouse: Janet Crow other: Sadie E Stutzman	

- narrow by other criteria on the left (residence place, birthplace, age range, census year)
- look for names of others in household that you recognize
- click anywhere on the desired line to open preview (a pedigree icon means it's attached to someone, this doesn't matter now)
- click on image to open the original document

FamilySearch Lorraine Crow United States Census, 1940

Tools Attached to: Lorraine Crow

Name: Lorraine Crow [Edit](#)
 Event Type: Census
 Event Date: 1940 [Edit](#)
 Place: Tract 30, Houston, Justice Precinct 1, Harris, Texas, United States [Edit](#)
 Date of Residence: Dallas, Dallas, Texas
 Age: 33
 Marital Status: Married
 Race: White
 Race (Original): White
 Birth Year (Estimated): 1907
 Birthplace: Texas
 Relationship to Head of Household: Wife
 Relationship to Head of Household (Original): Wife

Household

Role	Sex	Age	Birthplace
Frank V Crow	Male	44	Mississippi

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[Print](#) [Download](#) [Tools](#)

Record Collection: United States Census, 1940
 Document Information:
 Indexed Record
 A volunteer indexed this record for you.
 Thank the volunteer.

Similar Historical Records

- Lorraine Home Texas Birth Certificates, 1903-1935
- Lorraine Home Texas Birth Index, 1903-1997

citation info

print, download, image tools

FamilySearch Records Images Family Tree Search Memories Indexing Activities

United States Census, 1940 Texas Harris Justice Precinct 1, Houston, Tract 30 258-178 Justice Precinct ... on City (Tract 30 - part)

Image 6 of 38

flip through pages to see those who lived in the area (may or may not be close by)
zoom in and out (or scroll on mouse)

FamilySearch United States Census, 1940

Information

Name	Title and Gender	Exact Place of Res...	Gender	Age	Marital Status	Race	Birth Year (Estim...
Lorraine Crow		Dallas, Dallas, Texas	Female	33	Married	White	1907
Peggy Crow		Dallas, Dallas, Texas	Female	9	Single	White	1931
Patsy Crow		Dallas, Dallas, Texas	Female	6	Single	White	1934

indexed list of page

citation info

indexed list of page

Finding the Census Records - Ancestry

with subscription or through a library or Family History Center

[VB Public Library](#) – access to ancestry is available at home while social distancing restrictions are in place, username (library card number) and password required.

- [search](#) Census and Voter Lists
- enter at least a surname and hit **Search**
- Narrow search by spelling match or decade
- Hover mouse over link to see preview with others in household
- Click to open, citation located on this page
- Click on image or **View** button to open image
- household will be highlighted

All Census & Voter Lists results for Crow

Search Filters: Search Filters, Broad (selected), Exact

crow

Filter by: All Categories, Census & Voter Lists

1700s	1800s	1900s
1700s	1800s	1900s
1710s	1810s	1910s
1720s	1820s	1920s
1730s	1830s	1930s
1740s	1840s	1940s
1750s	1850s	1950s
1760s	1860s	1960s
1770s	1870s	1970s
1780s	1880s	1980s

Results 1-20 of 739,140

To get better results, add more information such as **First Name, Birth Info, Death Info and Location**—even a guess will help. [Edit your search](#) or [Learn more](#)

1940 United States Federal Census: Name V Odell Crowe, Birth Mississippi, Residence 1940 Reed's E Precinct 6, Reids, Marion, Alabama, USA

1940 United States Federal Census: Name Ica Crowe, Birth Pennsylvania, Residence 1940 Springhill, Point Marion, Fayette, Pennsylvania, USA

NOTE: these images are through the library edition, there may be slight differences if you are signed in with a subscription

1940 United States Federal Census for Ica Crowe

Save

1940 United States Federal Census

Detail Related Source

Name [Ica Crow] Ica Crowe

Respondent Yes

Age 43

Estimated Birth Year 1897

Gender Female

Race White

Birthplace Pennsylvania

Marital Status Married

Relation to Head of House Wife

Home in 1940 Point Marion, Fayette, Pennsylvania

Map of Home in 1940 Point Marion, Fayette, Pennsylvania

Street Jane Street

House Number 28

Inferred Residence in 1935 Point Marion, Fayette, Pennsylvania

Residence in 1935 Same House

flip through pages to see those who lived in the area (may or may not be)

zoom in and out (or scroll on mouse)

Save to computer or send by email

Index of selected household

Finding the Census Records – HeritageQuest

- HeritageQuest is part of Ancestry
- available through institutions, not personal account
- Norfolk library's page says access ended July 24, 2020
- It is accessible through the VB Library page

[Login page](#) – enter library card number

- under US Census Records, click *View All*
- enter at least a surname and hit *Search*
- follow instructions for Ancestry

HeritageQuest Online
Discover your family history today
[Search](#) [Research Aids](#) [Maps](#)

Welcome to HeritageQuest Online at Home

City Directories
Census Map Guide
U.S. Indian Census Rolls

Mortality Schedules
Agricultural and Industrial Schedules
U.S. Freedman's Bank Record, 1861-1875

US Census Records

1940	1930	1920	1910	1900
1890	1880	1870	1860	1850
1840	1830	1820	1810	1800
1790				

[View All](#)

Searching for that right moment