

1950 Census: How Do I Search for My Family?

12 April 2022

Questions & Forms

- An article that reviews all the questions asked on the standard Census Form P1.
Wright, Jason. "What Questions Appeared on the 1950 U.S. Census?" *FamilySearch*
<https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/1950-census-questions>, 12 Dec 2021.
- Census forms used in the 1950 Census
<https://www.archives.gov/research/census/1950/blank-forms>.

Indexing

- National Archives
 - Amazon Web Services' Artificial Intelligence / Optical Character Recognition tool.
 - Corrections can be submitted.
- Ancestry and FamilySearch
 - Artificial Intelligence Handwriting Recognition Technology.
 - Volunteers evaluating the index.
 - Sign-up to edit the index <https://www.familysearch.org/1950census/>.
 - Article about the 1950 Census Indexing.
Wright, Jason. "How Indexing the 1950 Census Will Be Different" *FamilySearch*
<https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/indexing-1950-census>, 27 Jan 2022.

Notification of indexing progress

- Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com/c/1950-census>.
- FamilySearch <https://www.familysearch.org/1950census/>. Scroll Down to "Project Progress Map" for updates on indexing

In the interim, discover the 1950 address for the person

- 1940 Census
- World War II Draft Cards
- City Directories
- Birth, marriage, death related records

Finding an Enumeration District

- For a larger city:
 - Recommend using SteveMorse.org <https://stevemorse.org/census/unified.html>.
 - You can search by state, county, town, address, and cross streets to narrow down your enumeration districts.
 - Map the street to determine cross streets.
- For more rural communities:
 - Use Enumeration District Maps to determine the correct District.

- Ancestry Enumeration District Maps <https://www.ancestry.com/c/1950-census>.
- FamilySearch Enumeration District Maps <https://www.familysearch.org/1950census/>. Scroll down to the “Who can I find in the 1950 Census?” and click on “Explore Images” button.
- SteveMorse.org 1940-1950 ED Maps <https://stevemorse.org/census/arc1940-1950edmaps.html>.

View 1950 Census images

- National Archives <https://1950census.archives.gov/> currently has their index available to search by state, county, enumeration district, and first and/or last name.
- Ancestry <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/62308/> can be browsed by state, county, populated place, and enumeration district.
- FamilySearch <https://www.familysearch.org/1950census/>. Scroll down to the “Who can I find in the 1950 Census?” and click on “Explore Images” button to browse the images.
- Try all potential possibilities to determine the Enumeration District, search, or browse through images.

Not at home

- For those who were not at home on a Census Form P1, a note is made on the census record that no one was at home.
- If the enumerator was able to speak to the family later, the new sheet number and line number was noted.
- All those not at home are found starting on sheet 71 at the end of the enumeration district, so check the end of the district for the stated sheet and line number.
- Amy Johnson Crow Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4p_afzX34Uk

Pages missing

- Reverse sides or back pages of the census forms were questions about the structure of the housing.
- Infant Cards documented children born in January, February, and March 1950.
- Agriculture, Irrigation, and Draining Schedules.
- These were all used for statistical purposes and were destroyed.
- The statistical analysis can be found at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/decade/decennial-publications.1950.html>.

Experimental Forms in Michigan and Ohio

- A test of self-enumeration was done in Ingham and Livingston Counties, MI, and Franklin County, OH.
 - Self-enumeration was done using what was called “household” forms, Form P12C or P13C.
 - The form was received by people in these counties prior to April 1st along with detailed instructions and to mail it back to the District Office.

- Another set of tests of self-enumeration was done in selected (not all) Enumeration Districts, in Genesee County, MI, and in Coshocton, Defiance, Delaware, Fulton, Henry, Knox, Licking, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Richland, Van Wert, and Williams Counties, OH.
 - Census Form P12A or Form P13A, “household” forms were left at the house or dwelling unit for the enumerator to pick up at a later date. Form P12A stated the census taker would return within 3 days.
 - Census Form P12B or Form P13B, “household” forms were left at the house to be completed by the head of household and mailed to the District Office if no one was at home.
 - Census Form P10 was used by the enumerator when asking questions if the person was at home. If the person was not at home, they would still appear on the P10 form at their address but with a note that the person appeared on a P11 form. The P11 forms follow the P10 forms for the enumeration district and are typically numerical by the house or unit serial # from the P10 form. If not able to meet with the person, the census taker would leave the P11 form with a detailed explanation and would pick it up later.

Other resources to learn more about the 1950 Census

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the 1950 Census
<https://www.archives.gov/research/census/1950/faqs>
- To learn more or see more videos about the 1950 Census ...
https://www.archives.gov/calendar/genealogy-series/2022?utm_source=presskit&utm_medium=presskit&utm_campaign=1950Census
- Deciphering Codes Appended to 1910 to 1950 Census in One Step
<https://stevemorse.org/census/codes.html>

Tips for searching the Census:

- Spelling Does Not Count! Dates Can Be Off!
- Look at neighbors (on the page before and after too!) and their information compared to your family (birth place, occupation, owned or rented, etc.)
- Search for other members of the household if your ancestor is not coming up
- Make a list of surname variations on other records to find patterns of misspellings
- Do specific searches for just the first or last names (remember to limit results to a location)
- Search without a name but with all the other information filled in (limit results)
- When in doubt, check the instructions:
<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/programs-surveys/decennial/technical-documentation/questionnaires/1950instructions.pdf>

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