

5 key steps to counting every person in the nation

How will the 2010 Census actually happen? Many operations, people and activities must come together to produce a successful census. Here are five key steps every U.S. resident should know:

Step 1: Census is underway. Census workers canvassed the country between April and July 2009 to update addresses and maps from the previous census. This process is important because buildings that existed in the last census may no longer be standing, or a community may have new construction that needs to be recorded.

Step 2: The form arrives. More than 130 million addresses throughout the nation will receive a census form in March 2010, either by mail or in person from a census worker. Households should complete and return their forms upon receipt.

Step 3: Census Day is April 1, 2010. Responses to the census form should include everyone living at your address. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share an individual's personal information with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement entities.

Step 4: Follow-up because every person matters. Addresses that still have not responded are visited in person by a census worker beginning in late April through July. (Census workers can be identified by a census badge and bag.)

Step 5: The results are in! The Census Bureau will provide the 2010 apportionment counts to the President by Dec. 31, 2010, which include the total population counts and the number of representatives for each state.

Where should you be counted?

Most people should be counted in the residence in which they live or sleep most of the time. However, some individuals or groups have unique living situations. The Census Bureau residence rule helps make it clear where people should be counted. Common situations include:

Typical living situations

Living situation	Where they are counted
Live at their home and nowhere else	Their home
On vacation or a business trip	Their home where they live and sleep most of the time
Live in no one place regularly OR Experiencing homelessness	The residence in which they are staying on Census Day

College students

Living situation	Where they are counted
Live with their parents while attending college in the United States	Parental home
Live away from the parental home while attending college in the United States	On-campus or off-campus housing
Attend college outside the United States	Not counted in the census

People in places where groups of people live

Living situation	Where they are counted
Places where groups of people live such as jails or prisons, group homes, domestic violence shelters, and emergency or transitional shelters for people experiencing homelessness	Group location

Foreign citizens in the United States

Living situation	Where they are counted
Citizens of foreign countries living in the United States	The residence where they live and sleep most of the time
Foreign citizens visiting the United States on a vacation or business trip	Not counted in the census

U.S. military personnel

Living situation	Where they are counted
In barracks in the United States	The barracks
On base or off base in the United States, but not in the barracks	The residence where they live and sleep most of the time
In the military and living overseas	Counted using the military's records for home address

People on the move

Living situation	Where they are counted
Staying at more than one place (like a vacation home) or at a transitory location, such as recreational vehicle (RV) parks, campgrounds, marinas, racetracks, circuses or carnivals	In the residence in which they live and sleep most of the time
In the residence in which they are staying on Census Day, if time is divided equally	In the residence in which they live and sleep most of the time