

How Many Men and Women Get Married at Some Point in Their Lives?

What's the main conclusion?

The percent of men and women who have ever married in the United States increases steadily with age. In other words, a smaller number of 20- to 24-year-olds than 40- to 49-year-olds have ever been married. By the time they reach their 70s, nearly 100% of Americans today have been married at some point in their lives.

What else do the data tell us?

- Men tend to marry at older ages compared with women.
- Only a minority of Americans now marry in their teens or early twenties.

Why is this an important issue?

- People who marry young run a higher risk that their marriage will break up, compared with people who wait until they are older to marry.
- People who have never married report lower overall levels of well-being compared with those who are married. We don't know exactly why this is true.

Do population groups differ on this issue?

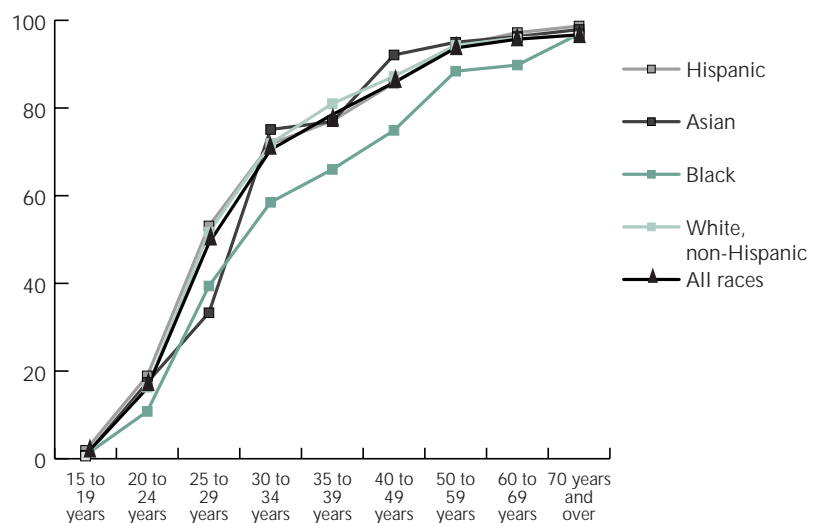
- The percentage of black men and women who have ever married is lower for most age brackets than it is for their counterparts of other races/ethnicities.
- The percent of young Hispanic females under the age of 30 who have ever married is higher than other females and males of the same age.

Defining the terms

Ever married = Those who reported being married at least once. This includes those who are currently married as well as those who are widowed, divorced, or separated.

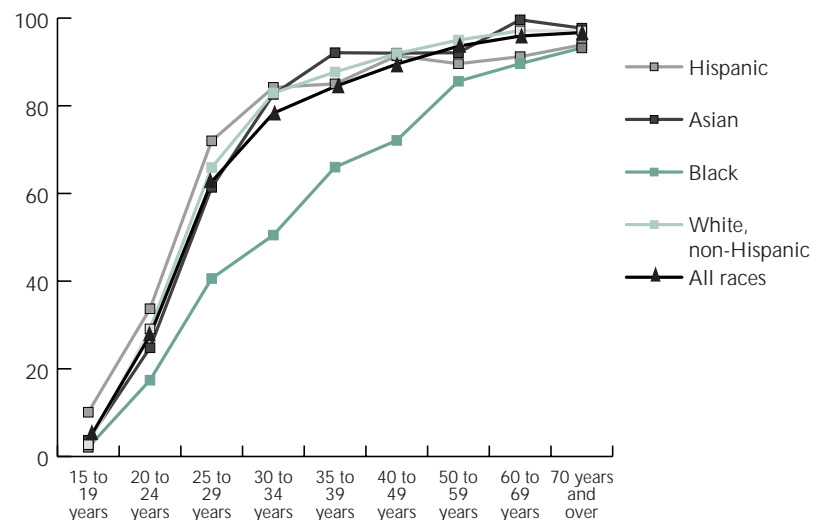
For more detailed information on this topic, visit www.healthymarriageinfo.org

Percentage of Men Ever Married, by Age: 2001



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Percentage of Women Ever Married, by Age: 2001



Source: U.S. Census Bureau