



## A Decade of Change in the Median Age at First Marriage, 2012 & 2022

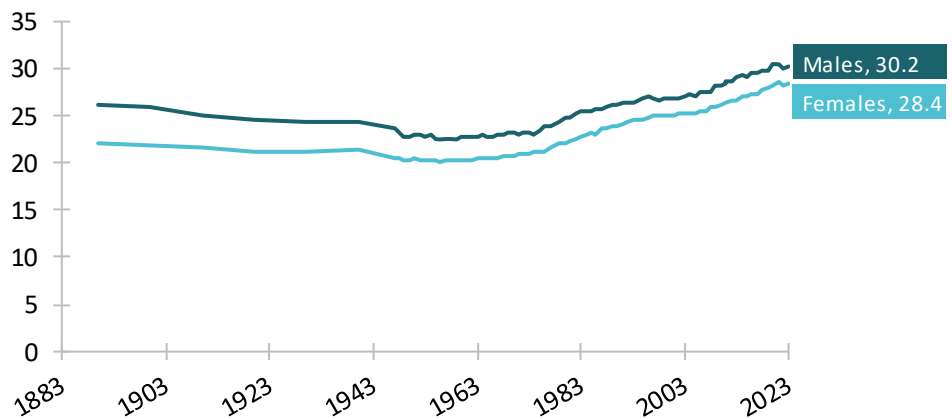
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The median age at first marriage in the United States has increased steadily since the mid-20th century. In this profile, we use the 2023 Current Population Survey to document overall trends through 2023 and the 2012 and 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-Year PUMS data to examine differences by race/ethnicity and educational attainment. The CPS and ACS tend to yield similar estimates for the median age at first marriage but vary slightly due to differences in how age at marriage is measured. <sup>1</sup> For instance, in 2022, the CPS median age at first marriage for men was 30.4, and for women it was 28.2; the comparable figures for the 2022 ACS were 30.1 and 28.7, respectively. This is an update to our previous profiles on the topic for the years 2020 ([FP-22-15](#)), 2019 ([FP-21-12](#)), 2017 ([FP-19-06](#)), 2014 ([FP-16-07](#)), 2013 ([FP-15-05](#)), 2010 ([FP-12-07](#)), and 2008 ([FP-09-03](#)).

### Long-term Trends in the Median Age at First Marriage by Sex, 1890-2023

- In 1890, the median age at first marriage for males was 26.1 and 22.0 for females; by 2023, it reached 30.2 and 28.4, respectively (see Figure 1).
- The median age at first marriage for males reached 30.5 in 2020 – a historic high – and has hovered at a similar level since. Similarly, the median age at first marriage for females reached 28.0 in 2019 hitting a historic high of 28.6 in 2021.

Figure 1. Median Age at First Marriage in the U.S., 1890-2023



<sup>1</sup> The ACS provides annual data to directly estimate the median age at first marriage whereas using the CPS requires the use of an indirect method.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Censuses, 1890 to 1940, and Current Population Survey, March and Annual Social and Economic Supplements, 1947 to 2023. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/families/marital.html>

#### Data Source:

U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey, 1-year Public Use Microdata, 2012 & 2022. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/microdata/access.html>

#### References:

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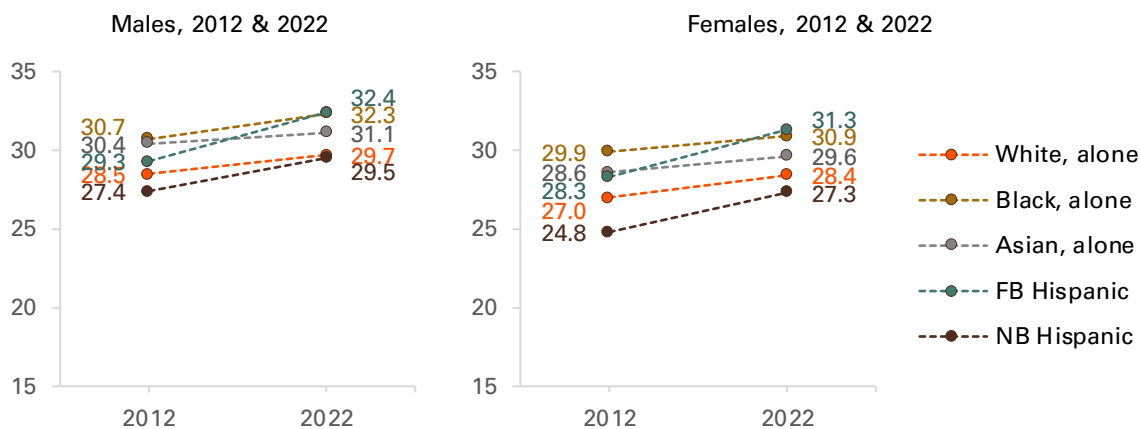
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## Median Age at First Marriage by Race and Ethnicity

Figure 2. Median Age at First Marriage by Race/Ethnicity for Males and Females, 2012 & 2022



Source: NCFMR analyses of American Community Survey, 1-year PUMS files, 2012 & 2022

- Regardless of race, ethnicity, or sex, the median age of first marriage is higher in 2022 than it was in 2012. The largest change was among foreign-born Hispanic males (3.1 years) and females (2.5 years) and the smallest was among Asian males (0.7 years).
- Among males in 2022 foreign-born Hispanics had the highest age at first marriage at 32.4 followed closely by Blacks at 32.3. Native-born Hispanics had the lowest age at 29.5.
- Consistent with males, among females in 2022 foreign-born Hispanics also had the highest age at first marriage at 31.3 and native-born Hispanics had the lowest age at 27.3

## Median Age at First Marriage by Educational Attainment

Figure 3. Median Age at First Marriage by Educational Attainment for Males and Females, 2012 & 2022



Source: NCFMR analyses of American Community Survey, 1-year PUMS files, 2012 & 2022

- The median age at first marriage increased from 2012 through 2022 across all educational levels. The largest increase was among those who had achieved some college education, but did not complete a bachelor's degree. Among males age increased by 1.7 years (27.8 to 29.5) and among females by 1.6 years (26.0 to 29.1). Across sex, the smallest increase was among those who had achieved at least a master's degree at 0.5 years among males and 0.6 years among females.
- Among males, those with at least a master's degree had the highest median age at first marriage (32.1). Males with a high school diploma or GED had the lowest median age at first marriage (28.8) and those without a high school diploma or GED had a similarly low age at first marriage (29.0).
- Among females who married in the year preceding the 2022 ACS, those with at least a master's degree had the highest median age at first marriage (30.8). Females with less than a high school diploma had the lowest median age (25.5).