

# **THE U. S. CENSUS: WHAT IT CAN TELL YOU ABOUT YOUR FAMILY**

**BYU Family History Library  
19 May 2022  
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## **I) Historical Background**

- A) Why do we take a census every ten years?**
- B) What did the census tabulate?**
- C) (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/technical-documentation/questionnaires.html>)**
- D) Non-Population and Special Schedules**

## **II) Locating the census**

- A) Why we can't find "our" names**
- B) Recorder writes what he hears**
- C) Using "shorthand"**
- D) "Lazy" recorder**
- E) Spelling wasn't import**
- F) Indexer interpretation**
- G) Personal name changes and nicknames**
- H) Outright mistakes**
- I) FamilySearch Records Search ([familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org))**
- J) Ancestry Census Search ([ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com))**
- K) Stephen Morse One Step searches ([stevemorse.org](http://stevemorse.org))**

## **III) Tips for successful searches**

- A) Use age ranges**
- B) Develop a name variants list**
- C) Use wild cards**
- D) Be creative – Think outside the box**
- E) Say the name out loud and then spell "what you hear"**
- F) Add a silent "H" to names beginning with a vowel**
- G) Vowels can be interchangeable**
- H) Double (or single) "L", "M", "N", "R" and "T", especially if in the middle of the name**
- I) Add or remove prefixes and suffixes**

## **IV) The 1950 Census**

## **V) "Reading" a census return – fill in the family story**





