

Utah's Changing Households

In 2020, Utah had nearly **twice** the share of **5-or-more person households** as the nation, **20.4%** compared to **10.9%** nationally.

Nearly **1 in 5** Utahns (19.6%) **lived alone**, the lowest share of one-person households in the nation.

Between 2010 and 2020, **married couples without children** became the **most common household type in Utah** (30.2%), overtaking married couples with children (28.1%).

More than **6 in 10** (63.5%) of Utah households were **coupled households** in 2020, a higher percentage than any other state in the nation.

69.0% of Utah households are **owner-occupied**. Shares range from **88.9%** in Morgan County to **63.4%** in Cache County.

Utah was the fastest-growing state in the country between 2010 and 2020, not only in total population but also in housing units and households. With this rapid growth came shifts in the state's household dynamics. The 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics file provides insights into these changes.

Between 2010 and 2020, Utah added 179,560 new households. These new households represent a 20.5% increase over the decade, the largest in the nation. Salt Lake and Utah counties drove the state household growth, together accounting for 59.3%, while Wasatch County grew the fastest, with an increase in households of 51.5%.

Over the same period, married couples without children became the largest share of households (30.2%), overtaking married couples with children, the most common household type in 2010 (31.7%). In 2020, married couple households without children were the largest share of households in 21 out of 29 counties in Utah. In 2010, these households were most common in 16 Utah counties. The percentage of nonfamily households increased, representing over 1 in 4 households in 2020 compared to just below 25% in 2010.

Tenure

Owner-Occupied

Utah householders overwhelmingly own their homes. In 2020, Utah ranked 12th in the nation for the highest homeownership rate, with 69.0% of households owning and 31.0% renting. The state's homeownership rate decreased slightly from 2010, when it was 70.4%. Nationally, the homeownership rate fell from 65.1% in 2010 to 63.1% in 2020.

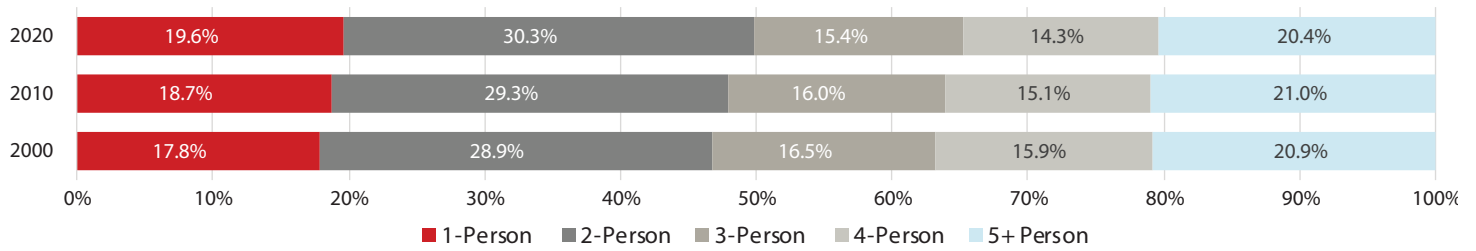
What is a household?

The Census Bureau uses a variety of terms to define people, their residences, and their relationships to one another.

- **Housing unit** – A physical structure like a house, apartment, condo, or mobile home.
- **Household** – Refers to the people living within a housing unit.
- **Householder** – The individual in whose name the housing unit is owned or rented. If multiple people own or rent the housing unit (ex. a husband and wife or two unrelated roommates), either can be the householder. The householder is the "reference person" to whom the relationship of all other household members is recorded.
- **Family household** – A household with two or more people in which the householder is related to at least one household member by birth, marriage, or adoption.
- **Nonfamily household** – Includes one-person households and those with two or more members in which the householder is not related to any of the other household members.
- **Other family household** – A household in which members are related, but not by marriage or partnership. Examples include siblings living together or single parents with children 18 or older.
- **Coupled household** – When a householder lives with a spouse or partner. Coupled households can be classified as either family or nonfamily households based on whether a couple is legally married.

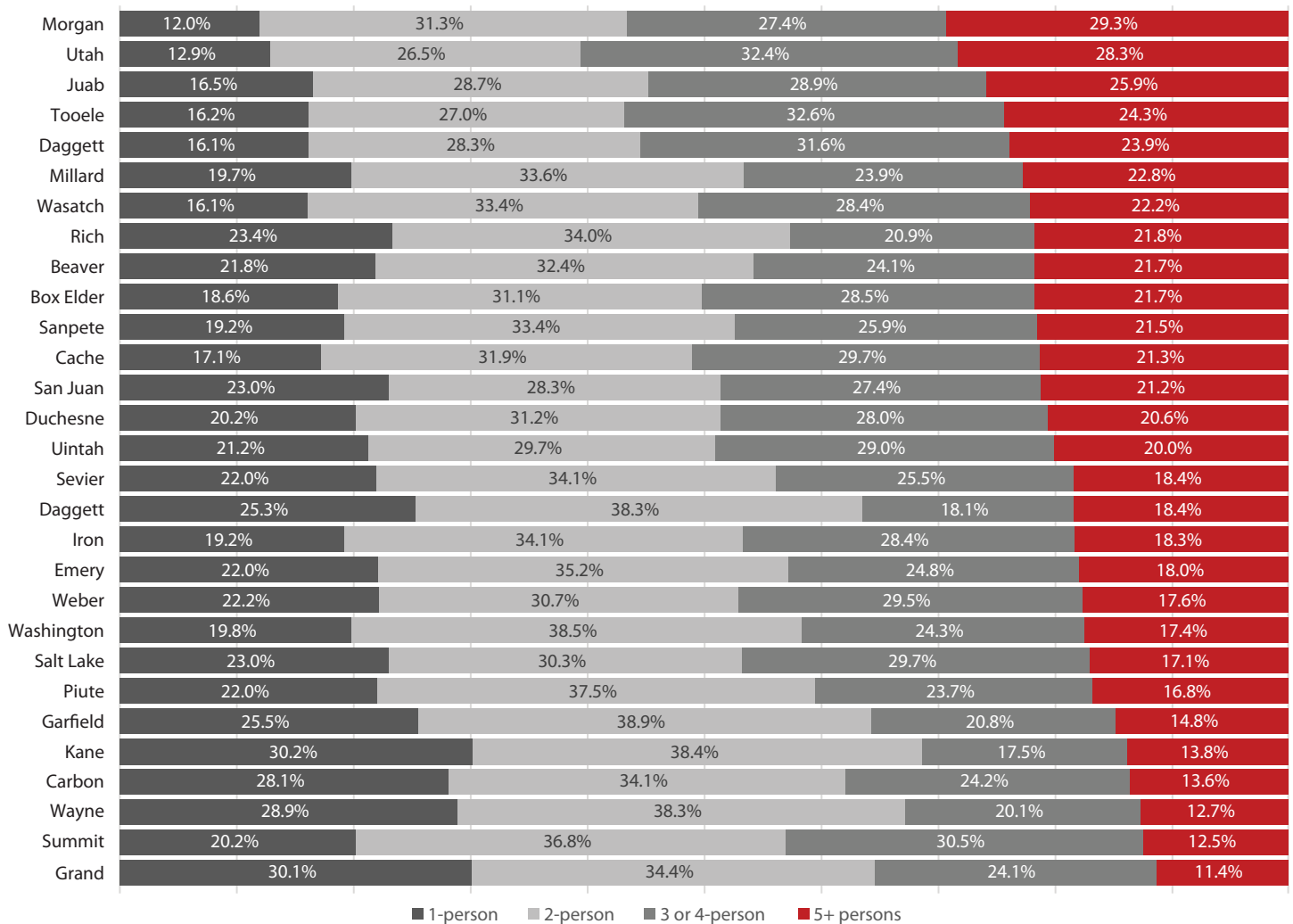
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Subject Definitions. Retrieved from: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/subject-definitions.html>

Figure 4: Utah Households by Size, 2000 – 2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)

Figure 5: Utah Counties Ranked by Share of Largest Household Size, 2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)

represented less than half of the households in eight Utah counties (Utah, Tooele, Morgan, Daggett, Juab, Cache, Wasatch, and Box Elder).

More than a quarter of households in Morgan, Utah, and Juab counties included five-or-more people. Morgan County had the highest share of large households, 29.3%. In contrast, households of five-or-more people made up only 11.4% of Grand County households and 12.5% of Summit County households.

Nonfamily Households

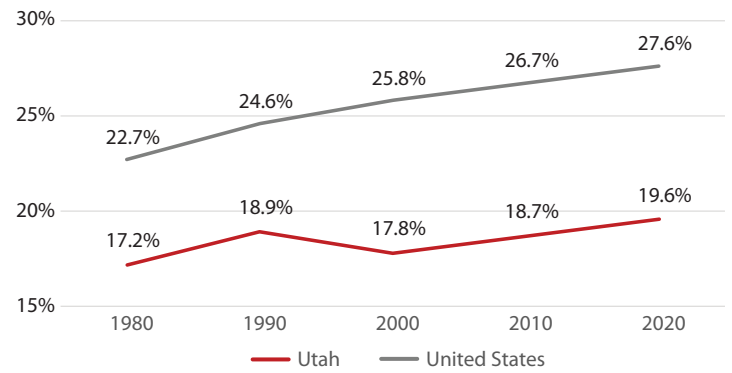
Just over one-quarter (26.4%) of Utah households were nonfamily households, where a householder lives alone or with unrelated individuals. Nationally, more than one-third (34.7%) of households were nonfamily.

Living Alone

In 2020, 27.6% of Americans lived alone, a share that has increased since 1980.¹ In Utah, the percentage of residents living alone fluctuated over the past five decades but increased overall, rising from 17.2% in 1980 to 19.6% in 2020 - the lowest share of one-person households of any state. Utah counties with rates exceeding the national percentage of one-person households included Kane (30.2%), Grand (30.1%), Wayne (28.9%), and Carbon (28.1%) counties.

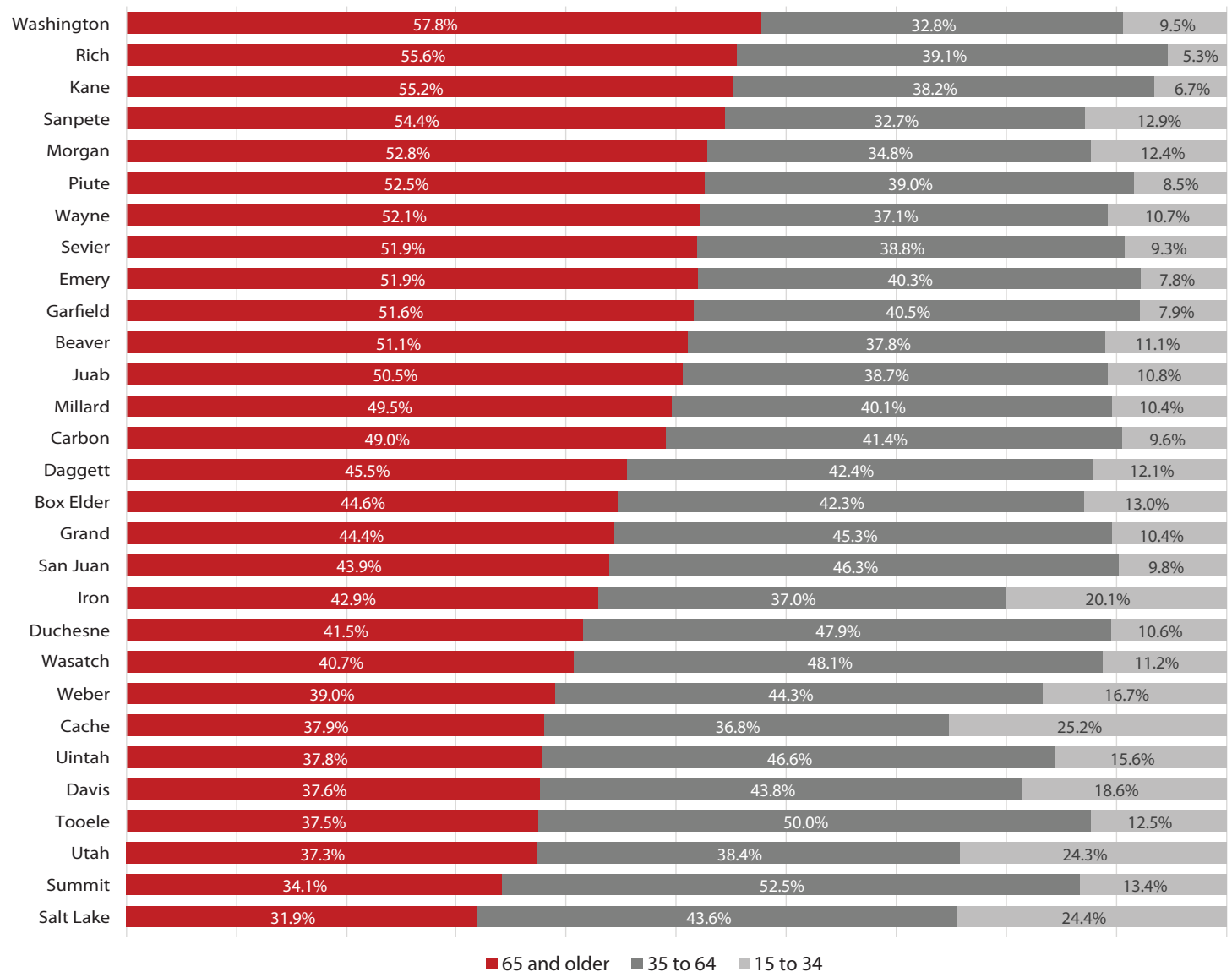
Over one-third (37.4%) of Utahns living alone in 2020 were 65 and older. However, in 12 counties, over half of one-person households were older residents: Beaver, Emery, Garfield, Juab, Kane, Morgan, Piute, Rich, Sanpete, Sevier, Washington, and Wayne counties.

Figure 6: Share of One-Person Households in the United States and Utah, 1980-2020



Source: IPUMS NHGIS, University of Minnesota, www.nhgis.org, U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)

Figure 7: Utah's One-Person Households by County and Age of Householder, 2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)

Improved Measures of Coupled Households

The U.S. Census Bureau revised the relationship to householder question in the 2020 Census to improve the quality of coupled-household data after discovering issues with the measurement of coupled households in the 2010 Census.

After more than a decade of research and an Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-led interagency working group, the Census Bureau implemented improvements in three areas to address data quality:

- Added specific answer categories for opposite-sex spouse, opposite-sex unmarried partner, same-sex spouse, same-sex unmarried partner.
- Created an automated check for consistency between the reports of sex and relationship in electronic questionnaires.
- Updated how the data were processed when reported sex values for the couple did not align with their reported relationship category. For example, a respondent might report John as male and Mary as his opposite-sex spouse, but mistakenly report Mary as male.”

Source: Kreider, R.M., Anderson, L., Gryn, T. & Washington, C. (2023, May 25) Same-Sex Couples Made Up 1.7% of All Coupled Households. U.S. Census Bureau. /www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/05/coupled-households-declined-in-2020.html.

Coupled Households

In 2020, more than 6 in 10 (63.5%) Utah households were coupled households, a higher percentage than any other state in the nation. A majority (53.2%) of households in the United States are coupled households, though the shares of coupled households ranged from 63.5% in Utah to 32.3% in Washington D.C.

The share of coupled households declined between 2010 and 2020 for Utah and the nation. In 2010, 65.6% of Utah households and 55.1% of households nationally included couples. By 2020, the shares in Utah and the U.S. had each decreased by about two percentage points.

In 2020, 611,433, or 91.8%, of Utah’s coupled households were opposite-sex married couple households. Another 51,661 (7.7%) coupled households were opposite-sex unmarried partner households. The final 1.3% of coupled households in Utah were same-sex coupled households, 5,271 of which were married couples (0.8%), and 3,402 of which were unmarried (0.5%).

Opposite-Sex Couple Households

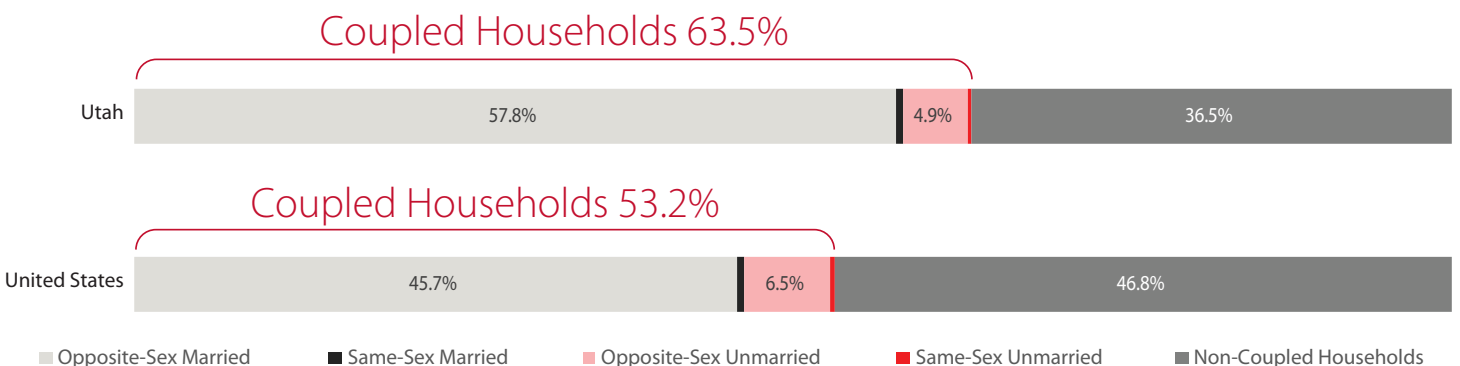
Utah had the highest percentage of opposite-sex married couple households (57.8%) and the second-lowest percentage of opposite-sex unmarried partner households (4.9%) in the nation.

Within Utah, Morgan County had the highest percentage of opposite-sex married couple households (77.7%), followed by Juab County (67.4%) and Utah County (67.1%). Grand County had the highest percentage of opposite-sex unmarried couple households (8.6%), followed by Salt Lake County (6.4%) and Weber County (6.1%).

Same-Sex Couple Households

Same-sex couples made up fewer than 1 in 100 Utah households in 2020. Same-sex married couples accounted for 0.5% of households, matching the national share, while same-sex unmarried couples represented only 0.3%, slightly below the national share of 0.4%. In 2020, the highest percentages of same-sex married couple households in the nation lived in Washington D.C. (1.41%), Delaware (0.83%), and Vermont (0.78%), while the highest shares of same-sex unmarried couples lived in Washington D.C. (1.2%), Oregon (0.5%), and New Mexico (0.5%).

Figure 8: Utah and U.S. Coupled Households by Type, 2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)

Table 1. Share of Opposite-Sex and Same-Sex Couple Households by Marital Status and County, 2020

County	Opposite-Sex Couples		Same-Sex Couples	
	Married	Unmarried	Married	Unmarried
Beaver	60.0%	3.5%	0.1%	0.0%
Box Elder	64.0%	3.8%	0.2%	0.1%
Cache	62.0%	3.5%	0.2%	0.2%
Carbon	50.0%	5.7%	0.2%	0.2%
Daggett	57.7%	3.6%	0.3%	0.0%
Davis	65.0%	3.9%	0.4%	0.2%
Duchesne	61.0%	4.7%	0.3%	0.2%
Emery	61.2%	3.9%	0.2%	0.1%
Garfield	58.1%	3.7%	0.4%	0.2%
Grand	41.3%	8.6%	0.5%	0.4%
Iron	57.3%	5.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Juab	67.4%	2.7%	0.3%	0.1%
Kane	53.2%	4.6%	0.7%	0.2%
Millard	65.1%	3.3%	0.1%	0.2%
Morgan	77.7%	2.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Piute	61.4%	2.4%	0.4%	0.0%
Rich	64.9%	1.0%	0.2%	0.1%
Salt Lake	50.5%	6.4%	0.8%	0.5%
San Juan	50.4%	5.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Sanpete	64.0%	2.8%	0.2%	0.2%
Sevier	60.0%	3.5%	0.1%	0.1%
Summit	60.4%	5.4%	0.5%	0.2%
Tooele	63.0%	5.7%	0.3%	0.2%
Uintah	57.1%	5.4%	0.3%	0.3%
Utah	67.1%	2.5%	0.3%	0.2%
Wasatch	66.0%	4.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Washington	61.3%	4.0%	0.3%	0.2%
Wayne	56.4%	2.9%	0.1%	0.0%
Weber	53.8%	6.1%	0.5%	0.3%
Utah State	57.8%	4.9%	0.5%	0.3%

Note: All data presented as a share of total households. Green arrows mark values above the 90th percentile and red arrows mark values below the 10th percentile.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)

In 2020, 59.6% of Utah's same-sex married couples lived in Salt Lake County, making up 0.8% of households countywide. This was the highest concentration of any county, followed by Kane County, where same-sex married couples composed 0.7% of households. In Utah, the counties with the highest rates of opposite-sex unmarried couple households also had higher percentages of same-sex unmarried households. Salt Lake County featured the highest share in the state (0.5%), followed by Grand County (0.4%).

Family Households

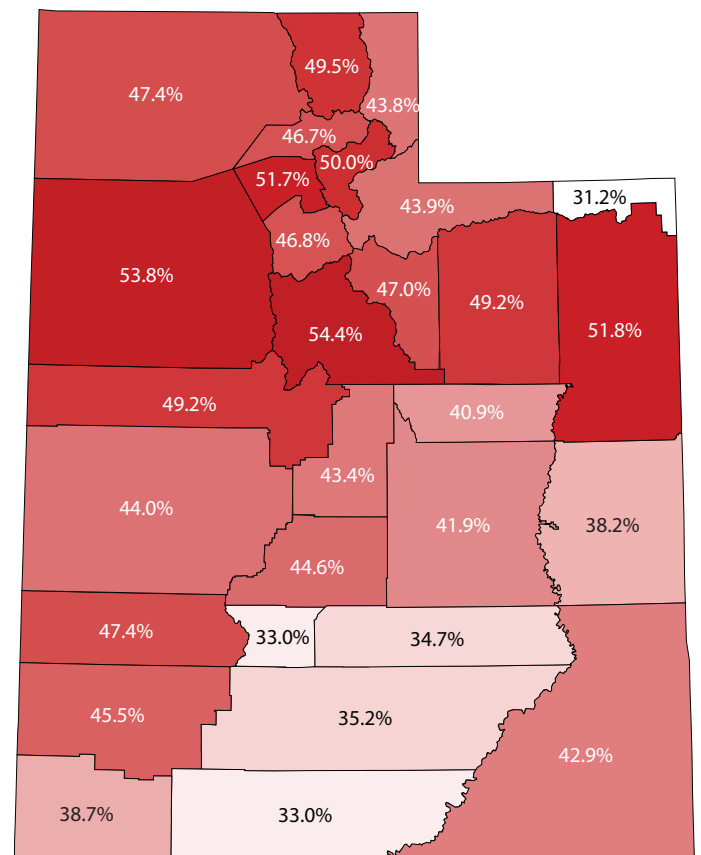
In 2020, Utah ranked first in the nation for its share of family households, or households in which the householder resides with at least one individual to whom they are related by birth, marriage, or adoption.² In 2020, nearly three-quarters (73.6%) of Utah households were family households, down from 75.2% in 2010. The percentage of family households in Utah ranged from 86.3% in Morgan County to 60.3% in Grand County.

Families with Children

Out of the 778,166 family households in Utah in 2020, 48.4% included one or more of the householder's own children under 18, compared to 40.8% nationally. This share declined between 2010 and 2020 from 52.5% to 48.4%.

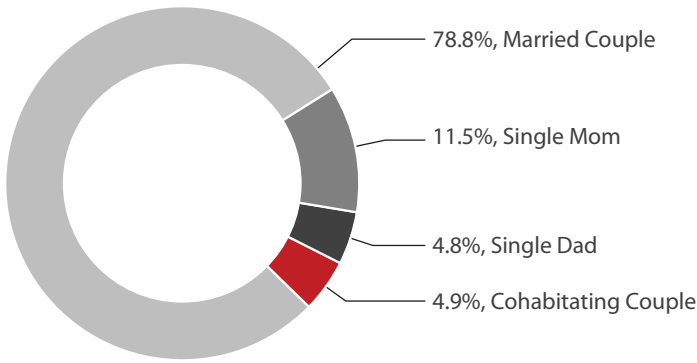
In 2020, family households in Utah and Tooele counties were most likely to include children, where 54.4% and 53.8% of families had at least one child under 18, respectively. Families in Piute and Daggett counties were the least likely to include children, with one-third of families or less (33.0% and 31.2%, respectively) including a child under 18.

Figure 9. County Share of Family Households with Children Under 18, 2020



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)

Figure 10. Utah Family Households with Children Under 18 by Type, 2020



Note: Single Dad includes male householders with no spouse or partner present. Single Mom includes female householders with no spouse or partner present. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)

In 2020, over three-quarters (78.8%) of the families in Utah that included children under 18 were married couple families. An additional 4.9% of Utah families with children were cohabitating couple families. Householders without a partner or spouse led 16.3% of Utah’s family households with children. Women led 7 in 10 of these households.

Between 2010 and 2020, the share of family households with children led by married couples decreased from 80.3% to 78.8%. During the same period, the share led by single parents, especially single fathers, increased.

In 2020, more than 9 out of 10 households (91.3%) with children in Morgan County were married couple families, the highest share in the state. Rich and Utah counties had the next highest percentage of households with children led by married couples, both at 85.5%. Alternatively, children in Grand, San Juan, and Carbon counties were the least likely to live in married couple families, with 59.5%, 67.7%, and 70.1% of households with children led by married couples, respectively.

Endnotes

- Anderson, L., Washington, C., Kreider, R.M., and Gryn, T. (2023, June 8). Home Alone: More Than A Quarter of All Households Have One Person. U.S. Census Bureau. [www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/06/more-than-a-quarter-all-households-have-one-person.html#:~:text=Over%20a%20quarter%20\(27.6%25\),to%202020%20\(Figure%201\).](https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/06/more-than-a-quarter-all-households-have-one-person.html#:~:text=Over%20a%20quarter%20(27.6%25),to%202020%20(Figure%201).)
- U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). Subject Definitions. Census.gov. <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/subject-definitions.html#familyhousehold>
- Washington, C., Gryn, T., Anderson, L., and Kreider, R.M., (2023, June 13). Several Generations Under One Roof. U.S. Census Bureau. www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/06/several-generations-under-one-roof.html
- Washington, C., Gryn, T., Anderson, L., and Kreider, R.M., (2023, June 13). Several Generations Under One Roof. U.S. Census Bureau. www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/06/several-generations-under-one-roof.html

Authored by: Eric Albers, Public Policy Analyst; Heidi Prior, Public Policy Analyst; and Mallory Bateman, Director of Demographic Research

Multigenerational Households

Between 2010 and 2020, Utah added more than 10,000 multigenerational households, those in which three or more generations live together under one roof.³ Multigenerational households represented 4.9% of all family households in Utah in 2020, an increase from 4.6% in 2010. Nationally, multigenerational households were a much larger share of family households (7.2%), with the highest rates occurring in the South, Puerto Rico, and some Western states.⁴

San Juan and Tooele counties in Utah had the highest shares of multigenerational households, at 7.7% and 6.4% of family households, respectively. Juab County, Box Elder County, and the Wasatch Front counties (Utah, Salt Lake, Davis, and Weber) also had higher shares of multigenerational households than the state overall. Multigenerational households were least common in Morgan (0.8%) and Wayne (1.5%) counties.

Table 2. Utah Counties with Highest and Lowest Shares of Multigenerational Households as a Percentage of Family Households, 2020

Rank	County	Share of Multigenerational Households
1	San Juan County	7.7%
2	Tooele County	6.4%
3	Juab County	5.4%
4	Salt Lake County	5.2%
5	Utah County	5.1%
25	Grand County	2.6%
26	Summit County	2.3%
27	Daggett County	2.3%
28	Wayne County	1.5%
29	Morgan County	0.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)