

Table 34. Persons 65 Years Old and Over—Characteristics by Sex: 1990 to 2008

[As of March, except as noted (29.6 represents 29,600,000). Covers civilian noninstitutional population. Excludes members of Armed Forces except those living off post or with their families on post. Data for 1990 are based on 1980 census population controls; 2000 data based on 1990 census population controls; beginning 2005, data based on 2000 census population controls and an expanded sample of households. Based on Current Population Survey; see text, this section and Appendix III]

Characteristic	Total				Male				Female			
	1990	2000	2005	2008	1990	2000	2005	2008	1990	2000	2005	2008
Total (million)	29.6	32.6	35.2	36.8	12.3	13.9	15.1	15.8	17.2	18.7	20.0	21.0
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION												
Marital status:												
Never married	4.6	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.9	3.6	3.9	4.0
Married	56.1	57.2	57.7	57.0	76.5	75.2	74.9	74.5	41.4	43.8	44.7	43.9
Spouse present	54.1	54.6	54.8	54.6	74.2	72.6	71.7	71.9	39.7	41.3	42.0	41.7
Spouse absent	2.0	2.6	2.9	2.4	2.3	2.6	3.2	2.6	1.7	2.5	2.7	2.3
Widowed	34.2	32.1	30.3	29.8	14.2	14.4	13.7	13.8	48.6	45.3	42.9	41.9
Divorced	5.0	6.7	7.9	9.1	5.0	6.1	7.0	7.5	5.1	7.2	8.5	10.2
Educational attainment:												
Less than ninth grade	28.5	16.7	13.4	11.2	30.0	17.8	13.2	11.3	27.5	15.9	13.5	11.1
Completed 9th to 12th grade, but no high school diploma	¹ 16.1	13.8	12.7	11.4	¹ 15.7	12.7	11.9	10.8	¹ 16.4	14.7	13.3	11.8
High school graduate	² 32.9	35.9	36.3	36.9	² 29.0	30.4	31.6	32.0	² 35.6	39.9	39.9	40.5
Some college or associate's degree	³ 10.9	18.0	18.7	20.1	³ 10.8	17.8	18.4	19.2	³ 11.0	18.2	19.0	20.8
Bachelor's or advanced degree	⁴ 11.6	15.6	18.9	20.5	⁴ 14.5	21.4	24.9	26.7	⁴ 9.5	11.4	14.3	15.8
Labor force participation: ⁵												
Employed	11.5	12.4	14.5	16.1	15.9	16.9	19.1	20.5	8.4	9.1	11.1	12.7
Unemployed	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.7	1.0	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5
Not in labor force	88.1	87.2	84.9	83.2	83.6	82.5	80.2	78.5	91.3	90.6	88.5	86.7
Percent below poverty level ⁶	11.4	9.7	9.8	9.7	7.8	6.9	7.0	6.6	13.9	11.8	11.9	12.0

¹ Represents those who completed 1 to 3 years of high school. ² Represents those who completed 4 years of high school.

³ Represents those who completed 1 to 3 years of college. ⁴ Represents those who completed 4 years of college or more.

⁵ Annual averages of monthly figures. Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Employment and Earnings*, January issues. See footnote 2, Table 574. ⁶ Poverty status based on income in preceding year.

Source: Except as noted, U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Reports*, P20-546, and earlier reports; "Educational Attainment"; <<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/educ-attn.html>>; "Families and Living Arrangements"; <<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam.html>>; and "Detailed Poverty Tabulations from the CPS"; <<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/detailedpovtabs.html>>.