

# U.S. Census Bureau News

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## Valentine's Day: February 14

One legend has it that Valentine's Day originated to commemorate the anniversary of the death of St. Valentine, a Roman clergyman who was executed on Feb. 14, about 270 A.D., for secretly marrying couples in defiance of the emperor. According to another, the holiday began as a Roman fertility festival. Americans probably began exchanging handmade valentines in the early 1700s. In the 1840s, Esther Howland, a native of Massachusetts, began to sell the nation's first mass-produced valentine cards.



### Top Ways to Celebrate Valentine's Day

Household participation rates

Greeting Cards	65%	Plush	21%
Date Night	44%	Other Gifts	17%
Candy	38%	Perfume/Cologne	12%
Flowers	32%	Jewelry	11%
Gift Cards	29%		

Sources: Hallmark/Retail Industry Leaders Association/NRF



### Valentine's Cards

#### **180 million**

Number of Valentine's Day cards exchanged annually, making Valentine's Day the second-most popular greeting-card-giving occasion. (This total excludes packaged kids valentines for classroom exchanges.) (Source: Hallmark research)

## Nearly 50 percent

Typically, the proportion of all Valentine's Day cards purchased in the six days prior to the observance, making Valentine's Day a procrastinator's delight. (Source: Hallmark research)

## About 40%

Proportion of all Valentine card purchases which parents account for. (Source: Hallmark research.)

## Young and Looking for Love

### 120

Number of single men (i.e., never married, widowed or divorced) who are in their 20s for every 100 single women of the same ages. Corresponding numbers for the following race and ethnic groups are:

Hispanics: 153 men per 100 women

Asians (single race): 132 men per 100 women (This ratio is not significantly different from that for Hispanics or non-Hispanic whites.)

Non-Hispanic whites (single race): 120 men per 100 women

Blacks (single race): 92 men per 100 women (The numbers of black men and women in this age group are not significantly different from one another.)

<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2004.html>>

## Young at Heart and Looking for Love

### 33

Number of single men (i.e., never married, widowed or divorced) age 65 or older for every 100 single women of the same ages. Corresponding numbers for the following race and ethnic groups are:

Hispanics: 38 men per 100 women

Non-Hispanic whites (single race): 33 men per 100 women

Blacks (single race): 33 men per 100 women

Asians (single race): 28 men per 100 women

(Note: None of the ratios for the individual groups differ significantly from one another nor from the ratio for all people age 65 or older.)

<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2004.html>>

## Try Looking Here . . .

Below are names of some romantic-sounding places:

Valentine, Neb.

Valentine, Texas

Loveland, Colo.

Lovejoy, Ga.

Lovelady, Texas

Loving County, Texas

Lovington, N.M.

Loving, N.M.

Loves Park, Ill.	Love County, Okla.
Lovelock, Nev.	Lovington, Ill.
Love Valley, N.C.	Romeo, Colo.
Loveland, Ohio	Romeo, Mich.
Loveland Park, Ohio	Romeoville, Ill.
Loveland, Okla.	

(Source: American FactFinder)

## **Be Mine**

### **2.2 million**

The number of marriages that take place in the United States annually. That breaks down to more than 6,000 a day. <<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>>

### **145,800**

The number of marriages performed in Nevada during 2004. So many couples “tie the knot” in the Silver State that it ranked fourth nationally in marriages, even though its total population that year among states was 35th. <[http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr53/nvsr53\\_21.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr53/nvsr53_21.pdf)>  
<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/003153.html>>

### **25.8 and 27.4**

The estimated U.S. median ages at first marriage for women and men, respectively, in 2004. The age for women rose 4.7 years in the last three decades. The age for men at first marriage is up 4.3 years. <<http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/hh-fam/ms2.pdf>>

Men and women in northeastern states generally have a higher median age at first marriage than the national average. In Massachusetts, for example, women were a median of 27.4 years old and men 29.1 years of age at first marriage. States where people typically marry young include Utah, where women were a median of 21.9 years and men, 23.9 years.

<<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/fertility/005807.html>>

### **54% and 57%**

The percentages of American women and men, respectively, who are 15 or older and currently married (includes those who are separated).

<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2004.html>>

### **4.7 million**

Number of opposite-sex cohabitating couples who maintained households in 2004. These couples comprised 4.2 percent of all households.

<<http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2004.html>>

## **Candy is Dandy**

## **1,271**

Number of locations producing chocolate and cocoa products in 2003. These establishments employed 43,379 people. California led the nation in the number of such establishments (with 146) followed by Pennsylvania (with 120).

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/cbptotal.html>>

## **519**

Number of locations that produced nonchocolate confectionary products in 2003. These establishments employed 23,343 people. <<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/cbptotal.html>>

## **\$13.5 billion**

Total value of shipments in 2003 for firms producing chocolate and cocoa products.

Nonchocolate confectionery product manufacturing, meanwhile, was a \$5.5 billion industry.

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/am0331gs1.pdf>>

## **3,523**

Number of confectionery and nut stores in the United States in 2003. Often referred to as candy stores, they are among the best sources of sweets for Valentine's Day.

<<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/cbptotal.html>>

## **24.7 pounds**

Per capita consumption of candy by Americans in 2004. Candy consumption has actually declined over the last few years; in 1997, each American gobbled or savored more than 27 pounds of candy a year. <<http://www.census.gov/industry/1/ma311d04.pdf>>

## **Flowers**

### **\$422 million**

The combined wholesale value of domestically produced cut flowers in 2004 for all flower-producing businesses in 36 states with \$100,000 or more in sales. Among states, California was the leading producer, alone accounting for nearly three-quarters of this amount (\$304 million). <<http://www.nass.usda.gov>>

### **\$43 million**

The combined wholesale value of domestically produced cut roses in 2004 for all businesses in 36 states with \$100,000 or more in sales. Among all types of cut flowers, roses were second in receipts to lilies (\$78 million). <<http://www.nass.usda.gov>>

## **22,022**

The number of florists nationwide in 2003. These businesses employed 113,270 people.  
<<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/cbptotal.html>>

## **Jewelry**

# **28,527**

Number of jewelry stores in the United States in 2003. Jewelry stores offer engagement, wedding and other rings to lovers of all ages. In February 2005, these stores sold \$2.4 billion worth of merchandise. (This figure has not been adjusted for seasonal variation, holiday or trading day differences or price changes.) <<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/cbptotal.html>>  
<<http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>>

The merchandise at these locations could well have been produced at one of the nation's 1,892 jewelry manufacturing establishments. The manufacture of jewelry was an \$8.6 billion industry in 2003. <<http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/cbptotal.html>>  
<<http://www.census.gov/prod/ec02/am0331gs1.pdf>>

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)	Labor Day (Sept. 4)
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)	Grandparents Day (Sept. 10)
Women's History Month (March)	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/ St. Patrick's Day (March 17)	Halloween (Oct. 31)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)	American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Older Americans Month (May)	Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Mother's Day (May 14)	Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 23)
Father's Day (June 18)	The Holiday Season (December)
The Fourth of July (July 4)	
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)	
Back to School (August)	

**Editor's note:** The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: (301) 763-3030; fax: (301) 457-3670; or e-mail: <[pio@census.gov](mailto:pio@census.gov)>.