

2020

FP-20-16 Median Duration of Marriages in the U.S., 2018

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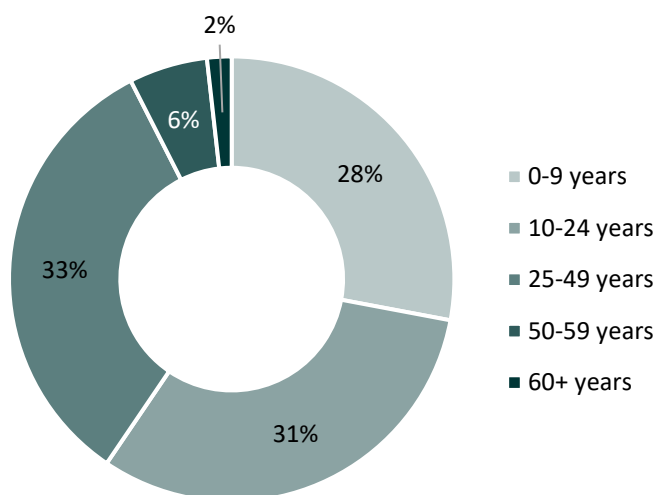
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Delays in marriage and decreases in divorce rates could impact how long currently married individuals have been married. Using data from the American Community Survey to compare median marital duration of current marriages since 2008, we observe little change over the last nine years. Duration increased by one year—from 18 to 19—between 2009 and 2010 and has remained at 19 years since. Using 2018 data from the American Community Survey, we provide an overview of duration among currently married individuals and then examine median duration by number of times married, race/ethnicity, and educational attainment.

Marital Duration

- In 2018, nearly one-third (28%) of currently married individuals wed in the past ten years.
- Forty-one percent have made it to their silver (25 years) wedding anniversary, and only 8% have made it to their golden (50 years) anniversary.
- Celebrating 60 plus years of marriage is rare (termed the diamond anniversary)—only 2% of currently married individuals can claim this milestone.

Figure 1. Marital Duration in the U.S., 2018



Source: NCFMR analyses of ACS 2018 1-year estimates

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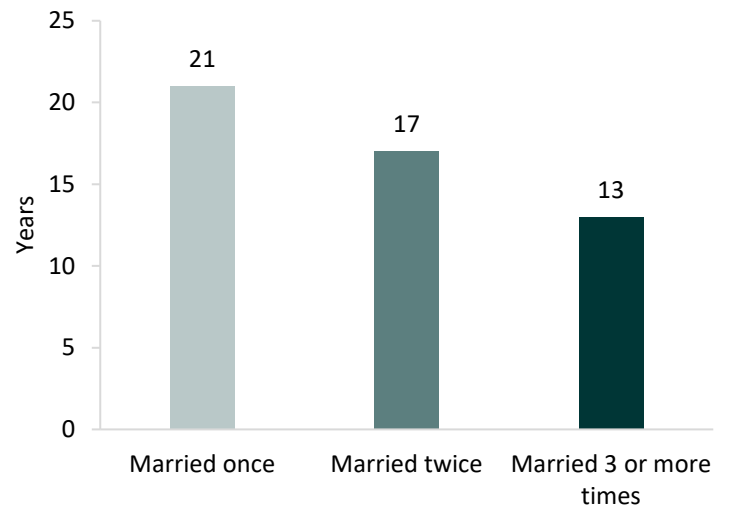
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Marital Duration by Number of Times Married

- In 2018, the median duration of marriage for individuals in a first marriage was 21 years. In other words, half of Americans in a first marriage in 2018 were married for at least 21 years.
- The median duration of marriage for those in a second marriage was 17 years.
- Among those married three or more times, the median duration was only 13 years.

Figure 2. Median Duration of Marriage by Number of Times Married, 2018



Source: NCFMR analyses of ACS 2018 1-year estimates

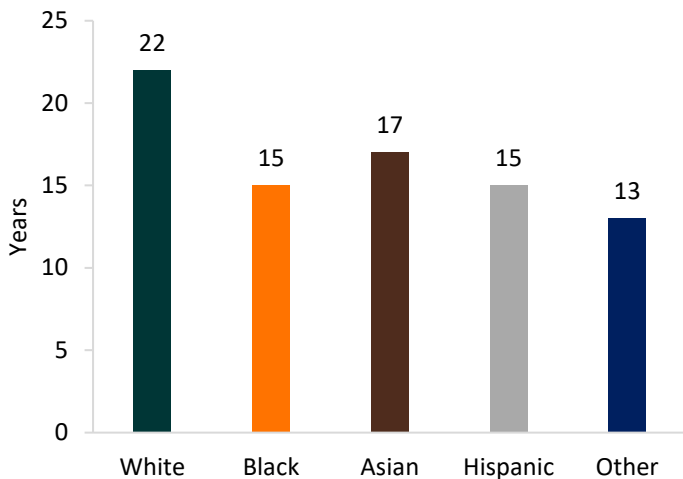
Marital Duration by Race/Ethnicity

- Currently married Whites had the highest median duration of marriage at 22 years.
- The pattern of duration among the other racial/ethnic groups examined are distinct from Whites. The median duration among Asians was 17 years and even lower among Blacks, Hispanics, and Others.

Marital Duration by Educational Attainment

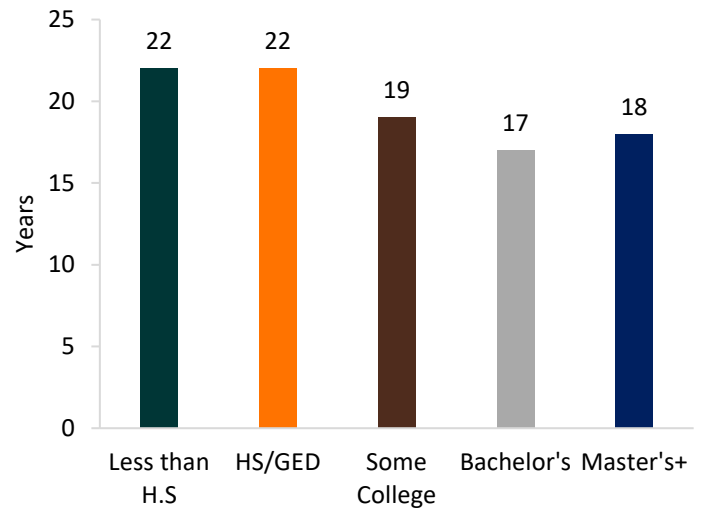
- Duration of marriage varies by an individual's educational attainment—those without any college experience have the highest durations at 22 years.
- Those with a bachelor's degree have the shortest duration at 17 years.

Figure 3. Median Duration of Marriage by Race/Ethnicity, 2018



Source: NCFMR analyses of ACS 2018 1-year estimates

Figure 4. Median Duration of Marriage by Educational Attainment, 2018



Source: NCFMR analyses of ACS 2018 1-year estimates

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