



Family Profile No. 22, 2025

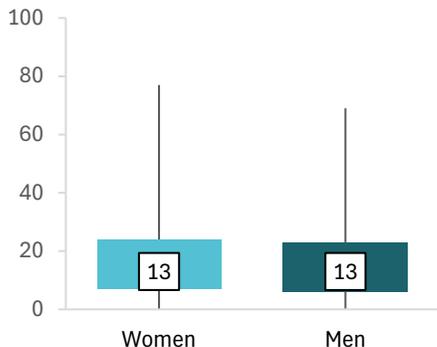
Duration of Marriage at First Divorce, 2023

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In 2023, the first marriage rate in the U.S. was highest among those aged 30-44 ([Bankey, 2025](#)), echoing the ongoing rises in both the median ages at first marriage ([Payne, 2021](#)) and first divorce ([Julian, 2022a](#)). These trends suggest that marriages are not necessarily lasting longer but are being delayed into middle adulthood. Between 2010 and 2020, the median age at first marriage rose by 2.3 years for men and 2 years for women while the median age at first divorce increased by 2.9 years for men and 2 years for women. During the same period, the median duration of marriage at first divorce rose by 2 years (from 11 years to 13 years) ([Julian, 2022b](#)) and based on our latest analysis, has remained steady at 13 years (not shown). Notably, the increase in the median age at first divorce outpaced the rise in the median duration of marriage at first divorce among men but not women. This family profile uses data from the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) to examine differences in how long first marriages last before ending in divorce. We present this information using box and whisker plots, which show the typical range and spread of marriage durations for different groups. We compare these patterns across gender, race/ethnicity, and educational attainment to highlight how marriage duration before first divorce varies among different populations in the U.S. This is an update of previous profiles ([FP-11-13](#), [FP-14-11](#), and [FP-22-31](#)).

Duration of Marriage at First Divorce by Gender

Figure 1. Duration of Marriage at First Divorce by Gender, 2023



- The median duration of marriage at first divorce in 2023 was the same for both men and women (13 years). That is, among men and women experiencing a first divorce, half had been married for 13 years.
- The spread in the distribution (the IQR) of marital duration at first divorce was the same for both men and women (17 years) with women ranging from 7 to 24 years and men ranging from 6 to 23 years.
- The durations of marriage at first divorce were clustered at shorter durations for both men and women, suggesting those with longer durations of marriage prior to divorce were uncommon.

Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates 2023 from IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org

How to read a box and whisker plot:

1. The box represents the middle 50% of marriage durations, also known as the interquartile range (IQR).
2. The value inside the box is the median (middle) duration.
3. The whiskers extend to show the shortest and longest marriages, excluding extreme outliers.
4. Longer boxes indicate a wider range of typical marriage durations within a group.

Suggested Citation

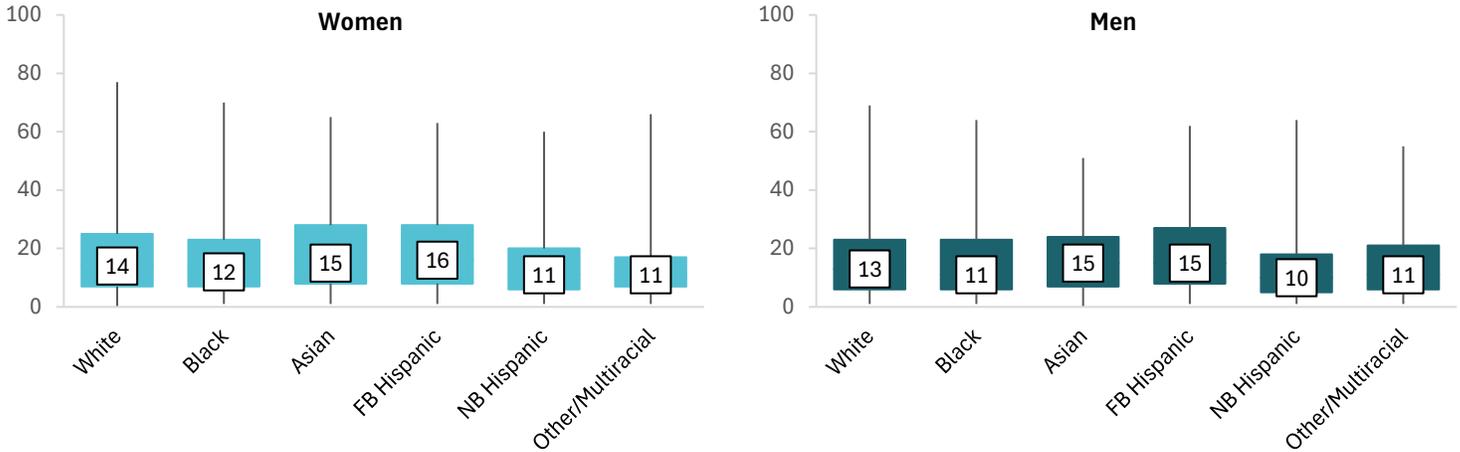
Bankey, N. (2025). Duration of marriage at first divorce, 2023. *Family Profiles*, FP-25-22. Bowling Green, OH: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. <https://doi.org/10.25035/ncfmr/fp-25-22>

This project is supported with assistance from Bowling Green State University. From 2007 to 2013, support was also provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the author(s) and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the state or federal government.

Duration of Marriage at First Divorce by Race/Ethnicity

- Among women, foreign-born Hispanics had the longest median duration of marriage at first divorce (16 years). The shortest duration was among native-born Hispanics and those who identified as Other/Multiracial (11 years).
- For women, both Asians and foreign-born Hispanics had the greatest variability in duration of marriage with an IQR of 20 years. Those who identified as Other/Multiracial had the least variability with an IQR of 10 years.
- Among men, both Asians and foreign-born Hispanics had the highest median duration of marriage at first divorce (15 years). The shortest duration was among those who identified as native-born Hispanic (10 years).
- Similar to women, men who identified as foreign-born Hispanic had the greatest variability with an IQR of 19 years. The least variability was among native-born Hispanics with an IQR of 13 years.
- Both men’s and women’s durations of marriage at first divorce were skewed across all racial/ethnic groups, suggesting that long durations prior to divorce were relatively uncommon.

Figure 2. Duration of Marriage at First Divorce by Race and Ethnicity, 2023



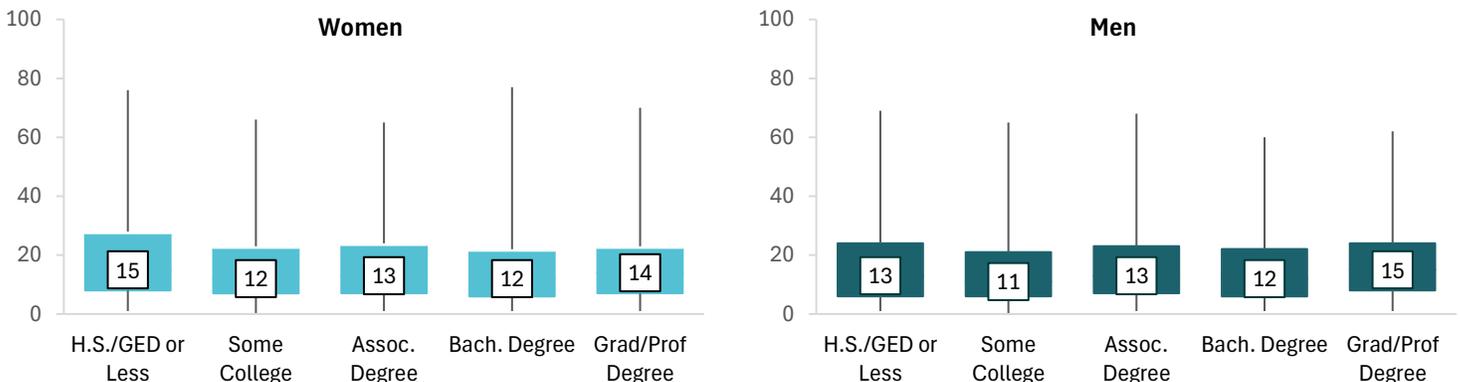
Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates 2023 from IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org

Note: FB = foreign-born, NB = native-born

Duration of Marriage at First Divorce by Educational Attainment

- Among women, those with a H.S. diploma/GED or less had the longest median duration of marriage at first divorce (15 years), and those who either attended some college or those with a bachelor’s degree had the shortest duration (12 years).
- For women, those with a H.S. diploma/GED or less also had the greatest variability in duration with an IQR of 20 whereas those with some college, a bachelor’s degree, or a graduate/professional degree had the least with an IQR of 16 years (ranging from 7 to 23 or 24 years).
- Unlike women, men with the highest level of educational attainment (graduate/professional degree) experienced the longest median duration of marriage at first divorce (15 years). Men with the shortest durations were among those who attended some college (11 years).
- For men, the greatest variability in duration was among those with a H.S. diploma/GED or less with an IQR of 18 years. The least variability was experienced by those who had some college education, with an IQR of 15.
- Both men and women’s durations of marriage at first divorce were skewed across all educational groups, suggesting that long durations prior to divorce were relatively uncommon.

Figure 3. Duration of Marriage at First Divorce by Educational Attainment, 2023



Source: NCFMR analyses of U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates 2023 from IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota, www.ipums.org

Data Sources

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