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# THE HOUSING SITUATION - 1950

An analysis of preliminary results  
of the 1950 HOUSING CENSUS



HOUSING AND HOME FINANCE AGENCY

Office of the Administrator  
Division of Housing Research  
Washington, D. C.

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SUMMARY: THE HOUSING SITUATION--1950

- Size of the Inventory. There were 45,875,000 dwelling units farm and nonfarm, in the United States in April, 1950. accord-

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ERRATA - THE HOUSING SITUATION - 1950

Page 1, line 12 should read 7.4 instead of 5.7  
Page 1, line 13; should read 8.3 instead of 6.8  
Page 4, line 8; from bottom, should read 7.4 instead of 5.7  
Page 4, line 77; from bottom, should read 8.3 instead of 6.8  
Page 4, line 7, from bottom, should read 8.7 instead of 7.1

Note also: that the chart on page 5 refers to flush toilet and bathing facilities, private or shared. The figures are correct.

percent in 1950. Nearly 2 million occupied units have more than 1.5 persons per room.

- Size of Household. The nonfarm household declined from 3.2 persons in 1940 to 3.0 persons in 1950. The number of one-person and two-person households increased by 55 and 45 percent respectively. The number of households of 5 or more persons declined relatively.
- Home Ownership. The number of nonfarm dwellings owned by their occupants was 19.5 million in 1950, amounting to 53 percent of all occupied units. This is the highest proportion of owner-occupied homes to total dwellings in our history.

### SUMMARY (Continued)

- Rent. The median contract rent for nonfarm dwellings in 1950 was \$35 compared to \$21 in 1940. The median gross rent was \$42 compared to \$27 in 1940.
- Value. The median value of nonfarm one-dwelling unit structures in 1950 was \$7,400. About 30 percent of owners estimated their homes would sell for \$10,000 or more.
- Size of Dwelling Units. Four-room and five-room dwellings accounted for 44 percent of all nonfarm dwellings in 1950. The median size was 4.6 rooms, about the same as in 1940. However, there were relatively fewer small units and relatively fewer large units in 1950 than in 1940.
- Type of Structure. There were 20.5 million one-dwelling unit structures in the nonfarm inventory in 1950, or 56 percent of all nonfarm units, about the same percentage as in 1940.

# THE HOUSING SITUATION - 1950

## THE HOUSING CENSUS OF 1950

The second complete census of housing in the Nation's history was taken in April 1950, as part of the regular decennial census. Since the final summaries will not be available for some time, the Bureau of the Census has tabulated data for a sample of dwelling units, the results of which indicate within calculable limits what the final summaries will show. The present summary and analysis is based on this sample tabulation and is thus subject to sampling error. The variability of the data due to sampling is indicated by the statement that the chances are 19 out of 20 that the final figure for all dwelling units in the United States will not vary by more than 250,000 from the estimated total number of units as given in Table 1. The smaller figures in the tables, and small differences between figures, may not be statistically significant, according to the Bureau of the Census, and should be used with particular care.

Except for Table 1 the data in this analysis pertain only to nonfarm housing, in both urban and rural areas. In making comparisons between 1940 and 1950, it should be borne in mind that the data as of these two dates are not completely comparable. The term "urban" has been broadened by the Bureau of the Census to include some areas that in 1940 were classified either as rural nonfarm or rural farm. Moreover, the term "farm housing" is reported to have a slightly different meaning in 1950 than in 1940. Despite these changes the conclusions drawn in this report from a comparison of the data as of 1950 and 1940 are believed to be generally valid.

## SIZE OF INVENTORY

In April 1950 there were 45,875,000 dwelling units in the United States, a net gain since 1940 of 8,550,000 units, or 23 percent. This is the greatest numerical growth on record, but is not the greatest relative growth between successive censuses.

Of the total number of units, 39,390,000 were classified by the Census as nonfarm units, while 6,485,000 were classified as rural farm dwellings. Nonfarm dwellings increased by 9.7 million units or by more than the total increase in dwelling units; farm units accordingly decreased by 1.2 million

units. This indicates that the increase in nonfarm dwelling units was due partly to a shift during the decade of dwellings from "farm" into the "non-farm" category. Much of this shift represents the actual conversion of farm houses into nonfarm dwellings. Some of it, however, is reported by the Bureau of the Census to be due to a change in the definition of a farm dwelling, with a concurrent broadening of the definition of "urban" to include some dwelling units previously included in the farm inventory.

A large part of the increase in nonfarm housing is to be accounted for by the 5.7 million new units that were constructed between 1940 and 1950, as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and by an undetermined number of new dwellings that were created either by subdividing large existing units into a greater number of smaller ones or by converting nonresidential properties into housing accommodations.

The proportion of nonfarm to all dwellings is now 86 percent, a new high, and a substantial increase over 1940, when it was 80 percent. This represents a continuation of a long-term trend away from the farm, the end of which we have probably not yet seen. In 1890 the proportion of nonfarm units was only 62 percent. (Table 1)

#### CONDITION AND PLUMBING FACILITIES

There are two indices on housing quality that are directly comparable between 1940 and 1950, — availability of a private indoor flush toilet and of private bathing facilities. Percentagewise, the availability of these facilities has increased during the decade but the number of households to which they are not available is virtually unchanged. Thus, the proportion of occupied nonfarm dwelling units with a private indoor flush toilet increased from 73 percent in 1940 to 80 percent in 1950.

The proportion of occupied nonfarm dwelling units with a private bath or shower increased from 68 to 77 percent. This improvement appears, however, to be largely the result of the addition to the inventory of new units with these facilities, rather than the equipping of units previously without them. Thus, the number of nonfarm dwellings without a private flush toilet in 1950 was 5.7 million, the same as in 1940, and the number without private bathing facilities was 6.8 million, compared with 7.1 million in 1940. (Tables 2 and 3)

The remaining data on condition and plumbing facilities are not comparable with data for 1940. They are of interest, however, in providing further indication of the current quality of our housing inventory.

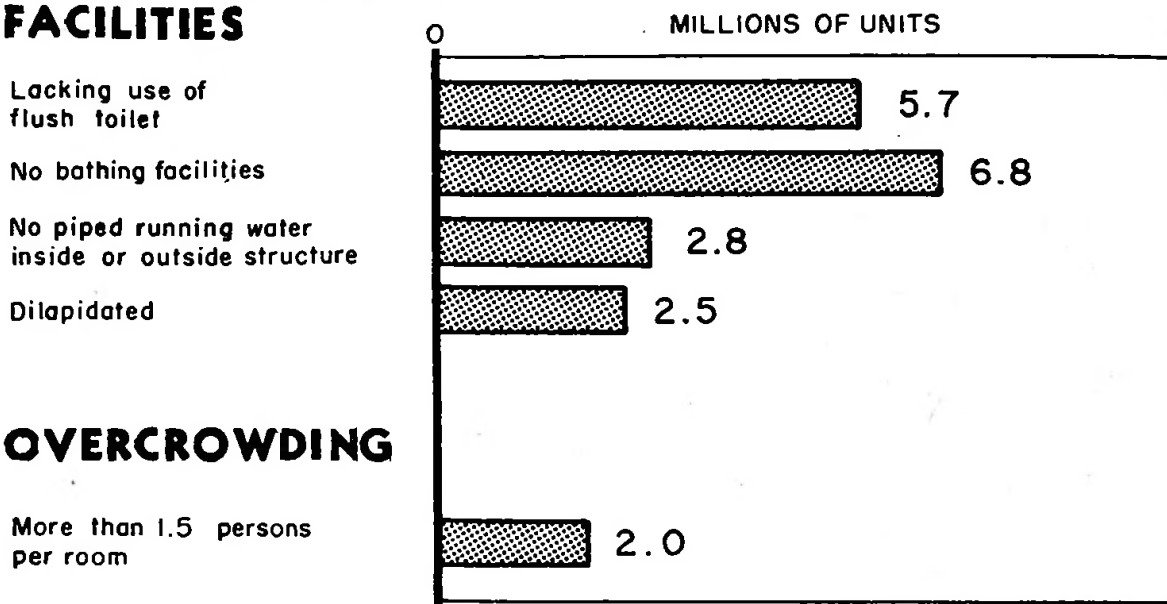
Nearly 2.5 million occupied nonfarm units were reported to be dilapidated\* in 1950, and 3.4 million occupied urban units were reported as not

\*See Definitions, item No. 3, "Condition and Plumbing Facilities, following text and tables.

# NONFARM HOMES

Continental U. S. - 1950 Census

## HOMES LACKING FACILITIES



## OVERCROWDING

More than 1.5 persons per room

2.0

dilapidated but lacking running water, private toilet or bath. Over 4 million occupied urban units did not have hot and cold running water inside the structure. Of the occupied rural nonfarm units over one-fourth were without piped running water either inside or outside the structure. (Tables 4 and 5)

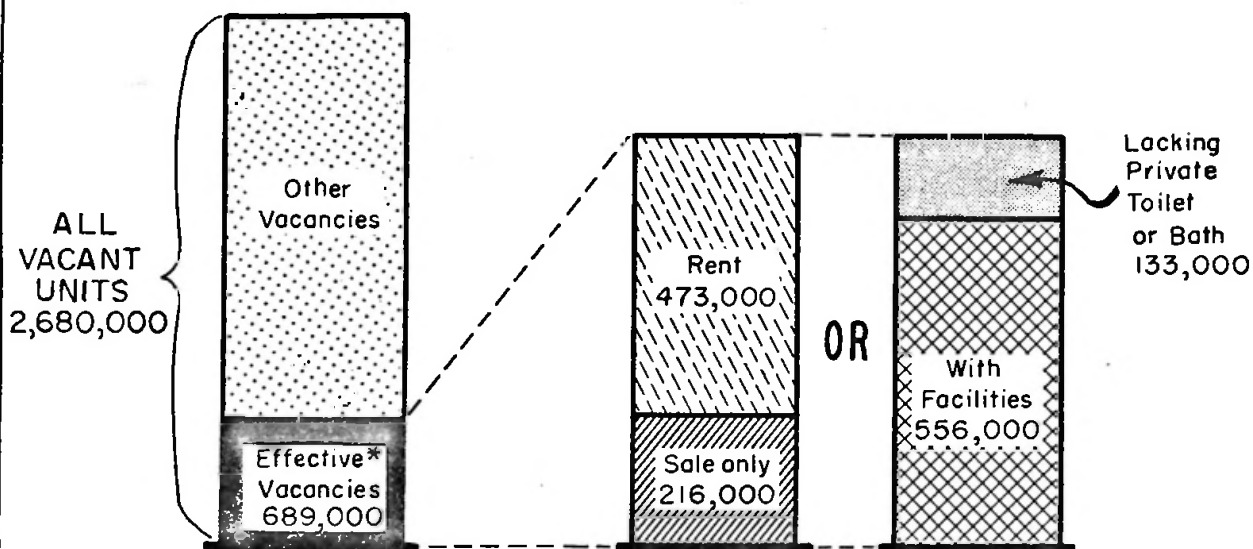
Homes for nonwhite families continued to show a relatively greater need for improvement than did those of whites. Thus, speaking again only of the nonfarm units, 27 percent of the homes of nonwhite families were dilapidated compared to 7 percent for all families, both white and nonwhite, and 24 percent of the homes of nonwhite families were urban units not dilapidated but lacking running water, private toilet or bath, compared to 10 percent for whites and nonwhites combined. An installed bathtub or shower was not available to 40 percent of nonwhite families in urban places and to 94 percent of nonwhite families in rural nonfarm areas, compared respectively to 11 and 44 percent for whites and nonwhites combined. Over 30 percent of the nonwhite urban units lacked the use of a flush toilet compared with 8 percent for all races. Finally, only 50 percent of the nonwhite families in urban places had access to both hot and cold running water inside the structure as compared with 85 percent for both whites and nonwhites, and for rural nonfarm areas nearly three-fourths of the nonwhite families had no piped running water at all, compared to about one-fourth of white and nonwhite families. (Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5)

## VACANCY RATE

In spite of the great increase in the number of nonfarm dwelling units, the effective vacancy rate remains low, perhaps critically so. Although the gross vacancy rate is reported to be 6.8 percent\* of all nonfarm units, the effective vacancy rate is much smaller. Many of the units included in the gross vacancy rate are for seasonal use only, others though vacant are not for rent or sale, and still others are dilapidated. Excluding these seasonal and dilapidated units and those held off the market for one reason or another, the effective vacancy rate is 1.7 percent. Measured in terms of units which have both a private bath and a private flush toilet, however, the effective vacancy rate is even lower than 1.7 percent. Thus, the Census findings show that about one-fifth of these vacant units lack a private inside toilet or bath. As to size, the vacant units tend to be smaller than the occupied units in the nonfarm inventory, the effective vacant units averaging only 3.8 rooms compared with 4.6 rooms per occupied dwelling. (Tables 6 and 14)

# NONFARM VACANT UNITS

Continental U. S. - 1950 Census



\*For rent or sale, year-round use, not dilapidated

\*While not strictly comparable, the gross rate in 1940 as reported by the Bureau of the Census was 6.1 percent.



The high volume of family formations during the decade, and the high level of incomes resulting in the desire and ability of many doubled-up families to seek quarters of their own, kept the supply of new units from catching up with demand. It is true that the situation has been eased to some extent since 1947 when a sample survey conducted by the Bureau of the Census revealed an extremely low effective vacancy rate of only eight-tenths of 1 percent. Despite this improvement, however, the current rate appears to be lower than it is estimated to have been in 1940, and is probably too low for adequate mobility of the population. This low rate, moreover, means that we can count on little or no reserve of available housing in many defense areas for in-migrant defense workers in the critical times ahead.

According to Bureau of the Census data there were a total of 2,680,000 vacant nonfarm dwelling units. However, of these only 689,000 were available for year-round use, were not dilapidated and were being offered for rent or sale. Moreover, 133,000 of these units had no private flush toilet or bathing facilities. (Table 6)

### OVERCROWDING

If the commonly used standard of more than 1.5 persons per room is applied to denote overcrowding, there appears to be less overcrowding than 10 years ago, the proportion of all nonfarm units with more than 1.5 persons per room declining from 7.1 percent in 1940 to 5.5 percent in 1950. On the other hand, there were just as many units, nearly 2 million, in 1950 as in 1940, with more than 1.5 persons per room. Most serious were conditions among the nonwhite portion of the population, especially renters. Not only was the proportion of nonwhite renter-households that were overcrowded about 4 times as high in 1950, as for all white and nonwhite households combined, but it actually increased during the decade from 20 to 23 percent. (Table 7)

### SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD

The size of the average American nonfarm household continued its long-term downward trend. By 1950 the median size household was 3.0 persons as compared to 3.2 in 1940. For nonwhites, the median was 3.1 persons in both 1950 and 1940.

The decrease in size of the median nonfarm household was due chiefly to the large increases in the number of 1-person and 2-person households, increases of 55 and 45 percent respectively. Households of 5 and 6 persons declined relatively and households of 7 or more persons declined numerically. An important factor in these changes is the high marriage rate during the post-war period, which not only resulted in the formation of many new 2-person families, but also contributed to the reduction in size of larger families as previously unwed members married and left to establish their own homes. (Table 8)

The number of nonfarm households increased from 27,748,000 in 1940 to 36,626,000 in 1950 or by 32 percent. The increasing population was "spreading

out" into more and smaller household units, a trend that has been observed to go back at least as far as 1850.

#### HOME OWNERSHIP

One of the most significant changes in the nonfarm housing inventory between 1940 and 1950 was a sharp increase in the percentage of units owned by their occupants. More homes were owned by their occupants in 1950 than ever before in our history, 19.5 million, as against 17.1 million that were occupied by renters. The increase of 71 percent in the number of owner-occupied homes was the largest for any decade on record. Renter-occupied units increased by only 5 percent during the same period. (Table 9)

The shift in tenure may be seen in better perspective against the trend over the past 60 years. Between 1890 and 1930 the trend in the proportion of nonfarm units that were owned by their occupants was upward, advancing from 37 to 46 percent. The depression of the '30's, causing many foreclosures, resulted in a temporary reversal, sending the percentage down to 41 in 1940. During the '40's a number of factors -- including the shortage of available rental units, and an unusual degree of prosperity -- combined to raise the proportion of owner-occupied units to 53 percent in 1950, the highest in our history. For the first time, also, the number of home owners exceeded the number of renters. (Table 9)

By way of contrast it may be noted that the proportion of home owners in the farm population had been continuously declining from 66 percent in 1890 to 53 percent in 1940. During the past decade, however, the factors mentioned above sharply reversed this trend and in 1950 the proportion of home owners was again 65 percent, nearly the same as in 1890.

For nonfarm dwelling units occupied by nonwhites the increase in home ownership was even more marked between 1940 and 1950, the proportion of owner-occupants increasing from 24 to 35 percent. This proportion is still, however, considerably below the 55 percent for white occupants. (Table 9)

If we consider only the traditional American home, a one-dwelling unit detached structure without business, we find that three-fourths of such structures, a far larger proportion than in the case of all nonfarm dwelling units, are owned, and only one-fourth are rented, by their occupants. (Table 15)

This increase in home-ownership has resulted in a substantial increase in the number of mortgaged homes. Considering only nonfarm owner-occupied structures without business and containing 1 to 4 dwelling units, we find that there has been an increase of 2.8 million in the number of such mortgaged homes, bringing the total to 7.7 million. This is 44 percent of all homes of this type, about the same as in 1940. The number of mortgage-free homes in April 1950 was over 9.5 million, or 56 percent of the total, and an increase over 1940 of about 4 million units. (Table 10)

Interestingly enough, the proportion of nonwhite owner-occupied homes (1 to 4 dwelling units without business) that are mortgaged, 38 percent, is

smaller than the proportion for whites and nonwhites combined, for whom it is 44 percent, and the proportion of nonwhite homes in rural areas that are mortgaged is only 15 percent. It is this same group (rural nonwhite) that reports a majority (three-fifths) of owner-occupied homes to be worth less than \$2,000. (Tables 10 and 13)

### RENT

Rents in 1950 for nonfarm dwelling units were considerably higher than in 1940. The median monthly contract rent for nonfarm dwelling units was \$35 compared to \$21 in 1940, an increase of 67 percent. Only 8 percent of rents were under \$15 per month, compared to 31 percent in 1940. At the upper end of the scale, 25 percent of renters in 1950 were paying \$50 or more per month, whereas in 1940 only 7 percent were paying that much.

The median contract rent in 1950 in urban areas was \$37, which is about half again as much as in rural areas.

For nonwhite renters the median in 1950 was \$25, two and one-half times as much as in 1940 when it was \$10. Whereas nearly half (47 percent) of the nonwhite renters in 1940 paid less than \$10 per month, only 16 percent paid that little in 1950. However, nearly 55 percent of nonwhite renters living in rural nonfarm dwellings still paid less than \$10 per month in 1950.

Gross rents <sup>1/</sup> were also higher in 1950. The median gross rent in 1950 was \$42, 55 percent higher than in 1940 when it was \$27. For nonwhite renters it nearly doubled, increasing from \$14 to \$27. (Tables 11 and 12)

### VALUE

Half of the nonfarm owner-occupants of one-dwelling unit structures (without business and with no other dwelling units on property) estimated that the value of their properties was \$7,400 or more, and about 30 percent estimated that it was \$10,000 or more. At the other extreme more than one-fourth of the owner-occupants estimated their properties would sell for less than \$5,000. The median value in urban areas was found to be \$8,400 compared to \$5,000 in rural nonfarm areas.

For nonwhite owner-occupants home values were generally far lower than for whites and nonwhites combined. Thus, one-fourth of nonwhite owners of one-dwelling-unit structures in urban areas and three-fifths of such owners in rural areas estimated their dwellings would sell for less than \$2,000. The median value for nonwhite owners was found to be \$3,700 in urban areas and \$3,100 for urban and rural nonfarm dwellings combined. (Table 13)

<sup>1/</sup> Gross rent includes the cost of water, gas, electricity, and other fuel paid by the renter, but excludes that portion of the rent charged for the use of the furniture. The significance of this concept is that it permits comparison of rental data.

## SIZE OF DWELLING UNITS

In 1950 there were more 4- and 5-room occupied nonfarm dwelling units than any other size. Houses and apartments of this size represented 44 percent of the total, compared to 39 percent in 1940. The median size occupied dwelling unit declined ever so slightly from 4.8 rooms in 1940 to 4.6 in 1950. Despite this stability of the median there was a significant change in the distribution of dwelling units by size. Compared to 1940 there were relatively fewer small units as well as relatively fewer large units. In fact, 1-room dwelling units declined not only relatively, but also numerically, while those of 7 or more rooms increased a mere 6 percent. The number of 4-room units, on the other hand, increased 58 percent and the number of 3-room units 42 percent. Units of 3-5 rooms now comprise nearly 60 percent of all units compared to 54 percent ten years ago.

There is a considerable difference between the average size of homes occupied by owners and those occupied by tenants. The median for the former is a 5.3-room unit compared to a 3.8-room unit for renters. This may point to an impending shortage in the near future of rental units of adequate size for the many families formed during the past 10 years who now have or will have children. (Table 14)

## TYPE OF STRUCTURE

Between 1940 and 1950 about 5.3 million one-dwelling unit detached structures were added to the nonfarm inventory of occupied dwelling units. There were 20.5 million such structures in 1950, comprising 56 percent of all occupied nonfarm units, about the same percentage as in 1940.

The 1950 Census reports trailers as a separate category of dwelling unit. In 1940 they were classified, along with occupied tents, boats, etc., as "other dwelling places." This entire group totaled only 168,000 in 1940, which when compared to the 276,000 trailers reported in 1950, gives a rough indication of the growth in the use of this mobile medium as a dwelling unit. (Table 15)

# Sample Tabulation of the Housing Census, April 1950

The following summary tables have been prepared from data released by the Bureau of the Census. These Census data are estimates based on a sample of units drawn at random from the 1950 Census enumeration. Accordingly it should be borne in mind that they are subject to sampling error. The chances are 19 out of 20 that the final figure for all dwelling units in the United States will not vary by more than 250,000 from the estimated total number of units in Table I. The smaller figures, and smaller differences between figures, may not be statistically significant, according to the Bureau of the Census, and should be used with particular care.

Except for Table 1, the tables present data for nonfarm dwelling units only. Totals may not equal the sum of their components, due to independent rounding.

Table 1. - Dwelling units in the United States, by urban, rural-nonfarm, and farm, number and percent: 1950 and 1940

(Dwelling units in thousands)

Area	1950		1940		Increase	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
United States, total...	45,875	100.0	37,325	100.0	8,550	22.9
Nonfarm.....	39,390	85.9	29,683	79.5	9,707	32.7
Urban.....	29,256	63.8	21,616	57.9	7,640	35.3
Rural nonfarm.....	10,134	22.1	8,067	21.6	2,067	25.6
Farm.....	6,485	14.1	7,642	20.5	-1,157	-15.1

Table 2 - Toilet facilities for occupied nonfarm dwelling units: 1950 and 1940

(Dwelling units in thousands)

Toilet facilities	1950			1940	
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	Total	Percent increase
All units reporting.	36,330	27,882	8,448	27,384	32.7
Flush toilet inside structure					
Exclusive use.....	28,934	24,241	4,693	19,949	45.0
Shared.....	1,663	1,521	142	1,691	-1.7
Other toilet facilities (including privy).....	5,320	1,949	3,370	5,465	-2.6
No toilet.....	414	171	243	279	48.4

Table 2a - Toilet facilities for occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Toilet facilities	1950			1940 total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units reporting.	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Flush toilet inside structure				
Exclusive use.....	79.6	86.9	55.6	72.8
Shared.....	4.6	5.5	1.7	6.2
Other toilet facilities (including privy).....	14.6	7.0	39.9	20.0
No toilet.....	1.1	0.6	2.9	1.0

Table 2b - Toilet facilities for nonwhite occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950

Toilet facilities	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm
All units reporting*	100.0	100.0	100.0
Flush toilet inside structure			
Exclusive use.....	47.9	58.4	7.2
Shared.....	8.9	11.2	
Other toilet facilities (including privy).....	40.0	29.1	82.3
No toilet.....	3.2	1.3	10.5

\* 2,954,000

Table 3 - Bathing equipment for occupied nonfarm dwelling units: 1950 and 1940

Bathing equipment	(Dwelling units in thousands)				
	1950			1940	
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	Total	Percent increase
All units reporting.	36,195	27,793	8,402	27,348	32.3
Installed bathtub or shower					
Exclusive use.....	27,864	23,275	4,590	18,649	49.4
Shared.....	1,538	1,403	135	1,603	-4.0
No bathtub or shower.....	6,793	3,115	3,678	7,095	-4.2

Table 3a - Bathing equipment for occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Bathing equipment	1950			1940 total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units reporting.	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Installed bathtub or shower				
Exclusive use.....	77.0	83.7	54.6	68.2
Shared.....	4.2	5.0	1.6	5.9
No bathtub or shower.....	18.8	11.2	43.8	25.9

Table 3b - Bathing equipment for nonwhite occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950

Bathing equipment	1950		
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm
All units reporting*	100.0	100.0	100.0
Installed bathtub or shower			
Exclusive use.....	41.7	50.8	6.5
Shared.....	7.5	9.5	
No bathtub or shower.....	50.7	39.8	93.5

\* 2,927,000

Table 4 - Condition and plumbing facilities for occupied nonfarm dwelling units:  
1950

(Dwelling units in thousands)

Condition and plumbing facilities	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm
All units reporting both condition and facilities.....	35,297	27,179	8,118
<u>Not dilapidated</u>			
With private toilet, and bath, and hot running water.....	25,309	21,393	3,916
With private toilet and bath, and only cold running water.....	1,174	852	323
With running water, lacking private toilet or bath.....	4,036	2,823	1,213
No running water.....	2,308	571	1,737
<u>Dilapidated</u>			
With private toilet and bath, and hot running water.....	564	485	79
Lacking hot water, private toilet, or bath.....	1,905	1,055	850

Table 4a - Condition and plumbing facilities for occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950

Condition and plumbing facilities	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm
All units reporting both condition and facilities.....	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>Not dilapidated</u>			
With private toilet and bath, and hot running water.....	71.7	78.7	48.2
With private toilet and bath, and only cold running water.....	3.3	3.1	4.0
With running water, lacking private toilet or bath.....	11.4	10.4	14.9
No running water.....	6.6	2.1	21.4
<u>Dilapidated</u>			
With private toilet and bath, and hot running water.....	1.6	1.8	1.0
Lacking hot water, private toilet or bath.....	5.4	3.9	10.5



Table 4b - Condition and plumbing facilities for nonwhite occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950

Condition and plumbing facilities	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm
All units reporting both condition and facilities*.....	100.0	100.0	100.0
<u>Not dilapidated</u>			
With private toilet and bath, and hot running water.....	33.2	40.1	5.8
With private toilet and bath, and only cold running water.....	4.7	5.8	0.2
With running water, lacking private toilet or bath.....	18.1	20.9	7.2
No running water.....	17.3	9.2	49.5
<u>Dilapidated</u>			
With private toilet and bath, and hot running water.....	3.9	4.9	—
Lacking hot water, private toilet or bath.....	22.7	19.0	37.3

\* 2,636,000

Table 5 - Water supply for occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950

Water supply	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm
All units reporting*.....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Hot and cold piped running water inside structure.....	77.8	85.4	52.6
Only cold running water inside structure.....	12.2	10.9	16.6
Piped running water outside structure.....	2.3	1.8	3.7
No piped running water.....	7.8	1.9	27.1

\* 36,357,000

Table 5a - Water supply for nonwhite occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950

Water supply	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm
All units reporting*.....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Hot and cold piped running water inside structure.....	41.1	50.0	6.6
Only cold running water inside structure.....	25.9	30.6	7.7
Piped running water outside structure.....	12.2	11.8	13.5
No piped running water.....	20.8	7.5	72.2

\* 2,958,000

Table 6 - Vacant nonfarm dwelling units; percentage of all units: 1950

	Percent of all units	
Effective vacancies (year-round use, not dilapidated, available for rent or sale).....		1.7
For rent.....	1.2	
For sale only.....	0.5	
Other vacancies.....		5.1
Dilapidated, <u>1</u> /, year-round use.....	0.7	
Off the market, <u>2</u> / not dilapidated, year-round use.....	1.6	
Seasonal.....	2.8	
Gross vacancies.....		6.8

1/ A dwelling unit is dilapidated because of: (a) one or more critical deficiencies; (b) a combination of minor deficiencies; or (c) inadequate original construction.

2/ Rented or sold, not yet occupied; held for settlement of estate for personal reasons of owner, etc.

Table 7. - Persons per room in occupied nonfarm dwelling units, by tenure:  
1950 and 1940

Persons per room	(Dwelling units in thousands)			1940	
	1950			Total	Percent increase
	Total	Owner-occupied	Renter-occupied		
All units reporting	36,104	19,263	16,840	27,430	31.6
1.00 or less.....	30,761	17,334	13,427	22,598	36.1
1.01 to 1.50.....	3,348	1,325	2,023	2,875	16.4
1.51 or more.....	1,995	605	1,390	1,957	1.9

Table 7a. - Persons per room in occupied nonfarm dwelling units, by tenure, percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Persons per room	1950			1940 total
	Total	Owner-occupied	Renter-occupied	
All units reporting	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1.00 or less.....	85.2	90.0	79.7	82.4
1.01 to 1.50.....	9.3	6.9	12.0	10.5
1.51 or more.....	5.5	3.1	8.3	7.1

Table 7b. - Overcrowding in occupied nonfarm dwelling units: Percent of each group with 1.51 or more persons per room: 1950 and 1940

Tenure and color of occupant	1950			1940 total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units reporting...	5.5	4.7	8.2	7.1
All owner occupied....	3.1	2.4	5.2	4.4
All renter occupied...	8.3	7.1	13.2	9.1
Nonwhite occupied.....	18.2	16.7	23.8	18.4
Nonwhite owner occupied.....	9.6	7.9	14.3	12.7
Nonwhite renter occupied.....	22.8	20.9	31.5	20.2

Table 8 - Size of household for nonfarm dwelling units: 1950 and 1940

(Dwelling units in thousands)

Number of persons per unit	1950			1940	
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	Total	Percent increase
All units.....	36,626	28,108	8,518	27,748	32.0
1 person.....	3,580	2,751	829	2,316	54.6
2 persons.....	10,463	8,134	2,328	7,242	44.5
3 persons.....	8,414	6,567	1,847	6,383	31.8
4 persons.....	6,958	5,420	1,538	5,063	37.4
5 persons.....	3,700	2,765	935	3,066	20.7
6 persons.....	1,797	1,285	512	1,704	5.5
7 persons.....	829	577	252	912	-9.1
8 or more persons.....	885	609	276	1,062	-16.7

Table 8a - Size of household for nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Number of persons per unit	1950			1940 total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1 person.....	9.8	9.8	9.7	8.3
2 persons.....	28.6	28.9	27.3	26.1
3 persons.....	23.0	23.4	21.7	23.0
4 persons.....	19.0	19.3	17.9	18.3
5 persons.....	10.1	9.8	11.0	11.1
6 persons.....	4.9	4.6	6.0	6.1
7 persons.....	2.3	2.1	3.0	3.3
8 or more persons.....	2.4	2.2	3.3	3.8

Table 8b - Median number of persons in occupied nonfarm dwelling units; by tenure and race: 1950 and 1940

Tenure and race	1950			1940 total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units.....	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.2
Owner-occupied.....	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.3
Renter-occupied.....	2.8	2.8	3.2	3.1
Nonwhite occupied dwell- ing units.....	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.1
Nonwhite owner-occupied....	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.2
Nonwhite renter-occupied...	3.0	2.9	3.4	3.1

Table 9. - Race of occupants and tenure of occupied nonfarm dwelling units: 1950 and 1940

(Dwelling units in thousands)

Tenure and race	1950			1940	
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	Total number	Percent increase
All units....	36,626	28,108	8,518	27,748	32.0
White.....	33,632	25,730	7,902	25,459	32.1
Nonwhite.....	2,993	2,378	615	2,288	30.8
Owner-occupied.....	19,528	14,195	5,332	11,413	71.1
White.....	18,473	13,420	5,053	10,867	70.0
Nonwhite.....	1,055	776	279	546	93.2
Renter-occupied	17,098	13,913	3,185	16,335	4.7
White.....	15,159	12,310	2,849	14,592	3.9
Nonwhite.....	1,938	1,602	336	1,742	11.3

Table 9a - Race of occupants and tenure of occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Tenure and race	1950			1940 total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White.....	91.8	91.5	92.8	91.8
Nonwhite.....	8.1	8.5	7.2	8.2
Owner-occupied.....	53.3	50.5	62.6	41.1
White.....	50.4	47.7	59.3	39.2
Nonwhite.....	2.9	2.8	3.3	2.0
Renter-occupied.....	46.7	49.5	37.4	58.9
White.....	41.4	43.8	33.4	52.6
Nonwhite.....	5.3	5.7	4.0	6.3

Table 10 - Mortgage status for owner-occupied 1- to 4-dwelling-unit structures without business; total and nonwhite: 1950 and 1940

Mortgage status	(Dwelling units in thousands)				
	1950			1940	
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	Total	Percent increase
All units reporting.	17,531	13,068	4,463	10,611	65.2
With mortgage.....	7,651	6,270	1,381	4,805	59.2
No mortgage.....	9,880	6,798	3,082	5,806	70.2
All nonwhite units reporting.....	948	720	228	487	94.7
With mortgage.....	356	323	33	143	149.0
No mortgage.....	592	397	194	344	72.1

Table 10a - Mortgage status for owner-occupied 1- to 4-dwelling-unit structures without business, total and nonwhite; percentage distribution; 1950 and 1940

Mortgage status	1950			1940 total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units reporting.	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
With mortgage.....	43.6	48.0	30.9	45.3
No mortgage.....	56.4	52.0	69.1	54.7
All nonwhite units reporting.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
With mortgage.....	37.6	44.9	14.5	29.4
No mortgage.....	62.4	55.1	85.1	70.6

Table 11 - Contract monthly rent for renter-occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Contract monthly rent	1950			1940 Total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units reporting* ....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under \$10.....	4.4	2.5	15.2	17.4
\$10 to \$14.....	3.8	2.6	10.3	14.1
\$15 to \$19.....	10.4	8.7	19.7	13.7
\$20 to \$29.....	19.9	19.6	21.8	23.8
\$30 to \$39.....	20.0	21.3	13.1	15.6
\$40 to \$49.....	16.5	17.9	8.5	8.0
\$50 to \$59.....	10.4	11.3	5.6	3.3
\$60 to \$74.....	7.3	7.9	3.6	2.0
\$75 to \$99.....	5.1	5.8	1.2	1.0
\$100 or more.....	2.2	2.5	0.9	0.7
Average rent.....	\$39	\$41	\$28	\$24
Median rent.....	\$35	\$37	\$24	\$21

\* 15,422,000 in 1950; 16,178,000 in 1940: excludes units occupied rent-free.

Table 11a - Contract monthly rent for nonwhite renter-occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Contract monthly rent	1950			1940 Total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units reporting* ....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under \$10.....	16.2	10.9	54.8	47.3
\$10 to \$14.....	9.1	8.5	13.5	18.5
\$15 to \$19.....	18.1	18.5	14.9	11.0
\$20 to \$29.....	20.9	22.3	11.1	13.6
\$30 to \$39.....	16.6	18.5	2.4	5.6
\$40 to \$49.....	8.7	9.8	1.0	2.3
\$50 to \$59.....	5.2	5.9	-	0.9
\$60 to \$74.....	3.0	3.2	1.0	0.5
\$75 or more.....	2.3	2.4	1.4	0.3
Average rent.....	\$27	\$28	\$18	\$18
Median rent.....	\$25	\$26	(1)	\$10

\* 1,722,000 in 1950; 1,725,000 in 1940: excludes units occupied rent-free.  
(1) Less than \$10.



Table 12 - Gross monthly rent for renter-occupied nonfarm dwelling units;  
percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Gross monthly rent	1950			1940 Total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units reporting * .....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under \$10.....	1.6	0.8	6.3	9.3
\$10 to \$19.....	7.5	5.6	18.5	22.1
\$20 to \$29.....	14.8	13.3	23.6	23.8
\$30 to \$39.....	20.4	20.5	19.5	20.0
\$40 to \$49.....	20.3	21.7	12.6	13.0
\$50 to \$59.....	15.5	16.6	8.9	6.1
\$60 to \$74.....	11.9	12.7	7.1	3.4
\$75 to \$99.....	5.3	5.8	2.1	1.5
\$100 or more.....	2.6	2.8	1.3	0.8
Average rent.....	\$46	\$48	\$37	(1)
median rent.....	\$42	\$44	\$30	\$27

\* 14,883,000 in 1950; 15,144,000 in 1940: excludes units occupied rent-free.  
(1) 1940 data not available.

Table 12a - Gross monthly rent for nonwhite renter-occupied nonfarm dwelling  
units; percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Gross monthly rent	1950			1940 Total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units reporting * ....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under \$10.....	5.9	2.6	32.1	29.3
\$10 to \$19.....	21.5	19.5	37.4	36.1
\$20 to \$29.....	25.0	25.6	20.0	18.3
\$30 to \$39.....	17.8	19.3	5.8	9.5
\$40 to \$49.....	15.0	16.6	2.6	4.0
\$50 to \$59.....	7.1	8.0	-	1.6
\$60 to \$74.....	5.6	6.2	1.1	0.8
\$75 or more.....	2.1	2.2	1.6	0.4
Average rent.....	\$33	\$34	\$23	(1)
Median rent.....	\$27	\$31	\$12	\$14

\* 1,656,000 in 1950; 1,599,000 in 1940: excludes units occupied rent-free.  
(1) 1940 data not available.

Table 13 - Value of owner-occupied nonfarm one-dwelling-unit structures;  
percentage distribution: 1950

Value	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm
All units reporting* .....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under \$2,000.....	7.7	4.3	16.6
\$2,000 to \$2,999.....	5.7	3.5	11.6
\$3,000 to \$3,999.....	7.2	5.3	12.4
\$4,000 to \$4,999.....	7.0	6.0	9.6
\$5,000 to \$5,999.....	9.0	8.4	10.4
\$6,000 to \$7,499.....	14.0	14.7	12.2
\$7,500 to \$9,999.....	18.5	21.0	11.9
\$10,000 to \$14,999.....	19.9	23.8	9.5
\$15,000 to \$19,999.....	6.4	7.6	3.2
\$20,000 or more.....	4.6	5.4	2.5
Average value.....	\$10,800	\$12,200	\$7,200
Median value.....	\$ 7,400	\$ 8,400	\$5,000

\* 14,699,000.

Table 13a - Value of nonwhite owner-occupied nonfarm one-dwelling-unit  
structures; percentage distribution: 1950

Value	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm
All units reporting* ....	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under \$2,000.....	33.7	24.6	59.3
\$2,000 to \$2,999.....	15.3	14.6	17.2
\$3,000 to \$3,999.....	12.9	14.6	8.1
\$4,000 to \$4,999.....	9.4	10.8	5.7
\$5,000 to \$5,999.....	7.6	9.7	1.9
\$6,000 to \$7,499.....	8.5	10.7	2.4
\$7,500 to \$9,999.....	5.3	6.4	2.4
\$10,000 to \$14,999.....	6.3	7.5	2.9
\$15,000 or more.....	1.0	1.4	-
Average value.....	\$5,500	\$6,500	\$2,600
Median value.....	\$3,100	\$3,700	(1)

\* 799,000.

(1) Less than \$2,000.

Table 14 - Number of rooms for occupied nonfarm dwelling units: 1950 and 1940

(Dwelling units in thousands)

Number of rooms	1950			1940	
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	Total	Percent increase
All units reporting...	36,104	27,733	8,371	27,430	31.6
1 room.....	950	724	226	982	-3.3
2 rooms.....	2,721	2,081	641	2,262	20.3
3 rooms.....	5,477	4,355	1,122	3,864	41.7
4 rooms.....	7,922	5,806	2,116	4,997	58.5
5 rooms.....	8,035	6,266	1,769	5,841	37.6
6 rooms.....	6,273	4,963	1,311	5,036	24.6
7 or more rooms.....	4,725	3,538	1,187	4,448	6.2

Table 14a - Number of rooms for occupied nonfarm dwelling units; percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Number of rooms	1950			1940 total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units reporting...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1 room.....	2.6	2.6	2.7	3.6
2 rooms.....	7.5	7.5	7.7	8.2
3 rooms.....	15.2	15.7	13.4	14.1
4 rooms.....	21.9	20.9	25.3	18.2
5 rooms.....	22.3	22.6	21.1	21.3
6 rooms.....	17.4	17.9	15.7	18.4
7 or more rooms.....	13.1	12.8	14.2	16.2

Table 14b - Median number of rooms in nonfarm dwelling units, by occupancy and tenure: 1950 and 1940

Occupancy and tenure	1950			1940 total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units reporting..	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.7
Occupied dwelling units.....	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.8
Owner occupied.....	5.3	5.4	5.0	5.6
Renter occupied.....	3.8	3.7	3.9	4.1
Vacant, nonseasonal, not dilapidated, for rent or sale.....	3.8	3.8	4.0	(1)

(1) Data not available.

Table 15 - Type of structure for occupied nonfarm dwelling units:  
1950 and 1940

(Dwelling units in thousands)

Type of structure	1950			1940	
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	Total	Percent increase
All units.....	36,626	28,108	8,518	27,602	32.7
1-dwelling unit, detached, without business.....	20,511	13,536	6,975	15,198	35.0
Owner occupied.....	15,326	10,587	4,739	8,995	70.4
Renter occupied.....	5,186	2,949	2,236	6,203	-16.4
1- to 4-dwelling unit, other	11,059	9,735	1,324	8,843	25.1
Owner-occupied.....	3,799	3,307	492	2,284	66.3
Renter occupied.....	7,260	6,428	831	6,559	10.7
5-dwelling unit or more.....	4,780	4,667	112	3,561	34.2
Owner-occupied.....	179	169	10	75	138.7
Renter occupied.....	4,600	4,498	102	3,486	31.9
Trailers.....	276	169	107	(1)	
Owner-occupied.....	224	133	91		
Renter occupied.....	52	37	16		

(1) Not available.

Table 15a - Type of structure for occupied nonfarm dwelling units;  
percentage distribution: 1950 and 1940

Type of structure	1950			1940 total
	Total	Urban	Rural nonfarm	
All units.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1-dwelling unit, detached without business.....	56.0	48.2	81.9	55.1
Owner occupied.....	41.8	37.7	55.6	32.6
Renter occupied.....	14.2	10.5	26.3	22.5
1- to 4-dwelling unit, other	30.2	34.6	15.5	32.0
Owner occupied.....	10.4	11.8	5.8	8.3
Renter occupied.....	19.8	22.9	9.7	23.8
5-dwelling unit or more.....	13.0	16.6	1.3	12.9
Owner occupied.....	0.5	0.6	0.1	0.3
Renter occupied.....	12.5	16.0	1.2	12.6
Trailer.....	0.7	0.6	1.3	(1)
Owner occupied.....	0.6	0.5	1.1	
Renter occupied.....	0.1	0.1	0.2	

(1) Not available.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

Definitions of a few key terms used in the Census of Housing and the differences between those used in 1950 and in 1940 follow:

1. Dwelling Unit - In general, a dwelling unit is a group of rooms or a single room, occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, by a family or other group of persons living together or by a person living alone.

A group of rooms, occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, is a dwelling unit if it has separate cooking equipment or a separate entrance. A single room, occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, is a dwelling unit if it has separate cooking equipment, or if it constitutes the only living quarters in the structure. Also, each apartment in a regular apartment house is a dwelling unit even though it may not have separate cooking equipment. Excluded from the dwelling unit count are rooming house quarters which do not meet the above qualifications and living quarters in such structures as institutions, dormitories, and transient hotels and tourist courts.

In the 1940 Census, a dwelling unit was defined as the living quarters occupied or intended for occupancy by one household. A household consisted of a family or other group of persons living together with common housekeeping arrangements, or by a person living entirely alone.

The number of dwelling units, as shown in this report, may be regarded as comparable with the number of dwelling units shown in the reports of the 1940 Census. The instructions used for identifying a dwelling unit in the 1950 Census were more explicit than those used in the 1940 Census. As a result, some living quarters may have been classified as separate dwelling units in the one census and not in the other. However, the net effect of the change in the instructions is probably small.

2. Vacant Dwelling Unit - A dwelling unit is considered vacant if no persons are living in it at the time of enumeration. Vacant units are enumerated if they are intended for occupancy as living quarters regardless of their condition. New units not yet occupied are enumerated as vacant dwelling units if construction has proceeded to the extent that all the exterior windows and doors are installed and final usable floors are in place.

The classification "for rent" consists of vacant units offered for rent. The "for sale only" group is limited to those for sale only and not for rent. Vacant units "not for rent or sale" include units already rented or sold but not yet occupied, newly constructed units awaiting final completion and which have already been rented or sold, and units held off the market for other reasons.

The enumeration of vacant units in the 1950 Census of Housing is not entirely comparable with the procedure used in the 1940 Census. Vacant units for sale and vacant units for rent were enumerated as one combined category. In 1940, vacant units were enumerated if they were habitable; vacant units which were uninhabitable and beyond repair were omitted from the enumeration. The "for sale or rent" vacancies included all habitable vacant units which were available for occupancy even though not actually being offered for rent or sale at the time of enumeration, that is, all dwelling units which were vacant except those held for occupancy of an absent household.

Both censuses exclude vacant trailers, tents, houseboats, and railroad cars.

3. Condition and Plumbing Facilities - Data on condition of a dwelling unit are shown in combination with data for selected plumbing facilities and are, therefore, limited to units for which condition and all the plumbing items are reported. Plumbing facilities include water supply, toilet facilities, and bathing facilities.

A dwelling unit is reported with private toilet and bath if it has both a flush toilet and a bathtub or shower inside the structure for the exclusive use of the occupants of the unit. Running water and cold water refer to piped running water inside the structure. The "no running water" category refers to piped running water outside the structure and to other sources, such as a hand pump.

For the item on condition, dwelling units are classified as "not dilapidated" or "dilapidated." A dwelling unit is dilapidated when it has serious deficiencies, is rundown or neglected, or is of inadequate original construction, so that the dwelling unit does not provide adequate shelter or protection against the elements or it endangers the safety of the occupants. Dilapidated dwelling units are so classified either because of deterioration, as evidenced by the presence of one or more critical deficiencies or a combination of minor deficiencies, or because of inadequate original construction, such that they should be torn down, extensively repaired, or rebuilt.

In the 1940 Census, data on condition were collected showing dwelling units "needing major repairs." Dwelling units were classified as needing major repairs when such parts of the structure as floors, roof, plaster, walls, or foundation required repairs or replacements, the continued neglect of which would have seriously impaired the soundness of the structure and created a hazard to its safety as a place of residence.

Because the definitions of the two terms differ significantly, the 1940 count of dwelling units needing major repairs and the 1950 count of dilapidated dwelling units are not comparable.

4. Contract Monthly Rent - Contract monthly rent is the rent contracted for by renters of nonfarm dwelling units at the time of enumeration. The rent is the amount contracted for regardless of whether it includes furniture, heating fuel, electricity, cooking fuel, water, or other services sometimes supplied. Dwelling units which are occupied rent free are not included with the units reporting rent.

A similar definition was used in the 1940 Census except that an estimated monthly rent was reported and tabulated for the non-farm units which were occupied rent free.

Monthly rent for vacant dwelling units is the amount asked for the dwelling unit at the time of enumeration, and is presented in 1950 for the nonseasonal, not dilapidated vacant units for rent. The 1940 rent data for vacant dwelling units, however, applied to all vacant units classified as for sale or rent.

5. Gross Monthly Rent - Gross monthly rent is contract monthly rent plus the reported average monthly cost paid by renters of non-farm dwelling units for water, electricity, gas, and other fuel. If furniture is included in the contract rent, the reported estimated rent of the dwelling unit without furniture is used in the computation instead of the contract rent. The same method of computing was used in the 1940 Census.
6. Urban and Rural Areas - In response to requests from many of the users of census data for a more realistic classification of dwelling units by urban and rural residence, the Census Bureau adopted a new definition for use in the 1950 Census. According to the new definition, urban areas comprise (a) places of 2,500 inhabitants or more incorporated as cities, boroughs, and villages; (b) the densely settled suburban area, or urban fringe, incorporated or unincorporated, around cities of 50,000 or more; (c) unincorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more outside of any urban fringe; and (d) incorporated towns of 2,500 inhabitants or more except in New England, New York, and Wisconsin, where "towns" are simply minor civil divisions of counties. The remaining areas are classified as rural.

According to the old definition, urban areas comprised all places of 2,500 inhabitants or more which are incorporated places and areas (usually minor civil divisions) classified as urban under special rules relating to population size and density.