Did you know that every ten years, the United States Census Bureau makes an effort to count every person living in the United States? This is called a census, and the very first U.S. Census was conducted in 1790–229 years ago! Earn this patch to discover why we count everyone, what happens afterward, and how you can become involved.

Steps

1. Learn more about the U.S. Census.
2. Explore older U.S. Census results.
3. Take your own census in your community.
4. Take the lead in your household.
5. Spread the word!

Purpose

When I’ve completed this patch program I’ll:

- Understand what the United States Census is and how the information that is collected is used.
- Collaborate with my household to complete the 2020 Census correctly.
- Share what I’ve learned with other girls, family members, and my community.
**Step One**

Learn more about why we have a national census. Use the internet or your local library to answer these questions:

- Who can access data from the U.S. Census, and how is it used?
- What happens when we don’t count people correctly?
- What questions are included on the 2020 Census?
- Why might people not complete the 2020 Census?

**Step Two**

Take a step into the past and explore older census results. Did you know that U.S. Census records remain confidential for 72 years? That means that the earliest census data open to the public is the 1940 Census (which you can view here: [https://1940census.archives.gov/getting-started/](https://1940census.archives.gov/getting-started/)).

Use the internet, your local library, or local historical society to research older U.S. Census results. What do you notice?
Step Three

You’ve learned that a census is an official count of a population, and you’ve learned how the United States government uses the information (also known as data) that has been collected. How is a census different from a poll or survey? Why might you take a census in your community, and how would you use the data you collect?

Create a census to complete in your community – a class at school, a club, a youth group, a Girl Scout troop, etc.

How will you use your census data to make a decision?

Remember, a census isn’t the same as a poll or survey; you use those results in different ways.

Step Four

Take the lead in your household! Discuss with your family members what you’ve learned about the U. S. Census and how important it is to complete it correctly.

Sign a family pledge (you’ll find one on the next page!) to complete the 2020 Census accurately, and then work with your family to complete it together.
**Family Pledge**

We pledge to complete the 2020 Census fairly and accurately. We know that a good census is the first step in making sure our community has good jobs, roads, and schools now and in the future. We pledge to work together to do our part!

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**Girl Name**

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**Adult Name**

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**Date**

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**Step Five**

Spread the word about the 2020 Census! Outside of your household, who else can you talk to about the U.S. Census? Use your newfound knowledge to help educate your community!

Thank you to Girl Scouts Heart of New Jersey and to the Advocates for the Children of New Jersey for their help in creating this patch program.
Resource Guide

Need to brush up your own knowledge about the U.S. National Census to help your girl navigate this patch? Here are some resources to get you started!

FOR ADULTS

United States Census 2020 Educator Info.


For use in school classrooms or learning at home, the Statistics in Schools program offers free and engaging resources for students of all ages.

Be Prepared: Census 2020

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/897979248208900099

This is a recording of GSHNJ’s informational webinar with guest presenter Daynne Glover from Advocates for the Children of New Jersey.

Census Counts

https://censuscounts.org/

Visit this page, a collaboration of dozens of national organizations and local partners, to learn about the census. Start at the “About” tab and click on “Impact” in that menu.
**United States Census 2020**
*https://2020census.gov/en.html*

Here at the homepage for this year’s census, check out a fun PSA and don’t miss the “Get the Facts” and “Why Your Answers Matter” tabs.

**United States Census Bureau**
*https://www.census.gov/*

Start at the “About Us” tab to find out more about the Bureau and what they do with the data they collect.

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**FOR GIRLS**

**1940 Census**
*https://1940census.archives.gov/*

This is the digital home of the latest census data available to the public (which you learned about reading Step Two). Click on “Get Started” to search by person or location.

**United States Census Bureau: Census 101**
*https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/factsheets/20191dee/census101.pdf*

Check out this two-page resource, good for both learning census basics and for spreading the word; perfect for sharing on social media or handing out as a flyer.
Check out the lesson plans for grades K-12 at this site!

**United States Census Bureau: Statistics in Schools**

[https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources.html](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis/2020census/2020-resources.html)

Start by clicking on K-12 Activities and selecting the grade level appropriate for your troop. Each curriculum includes step-by-step instructions and supply lists. The activity *Let’s Get the Count Right*, is a good place to start for girls of all ages!