

# 5 facts on love and marriage in America

By [Gretchen Livingston](#) and [Andrea Caumont](#)

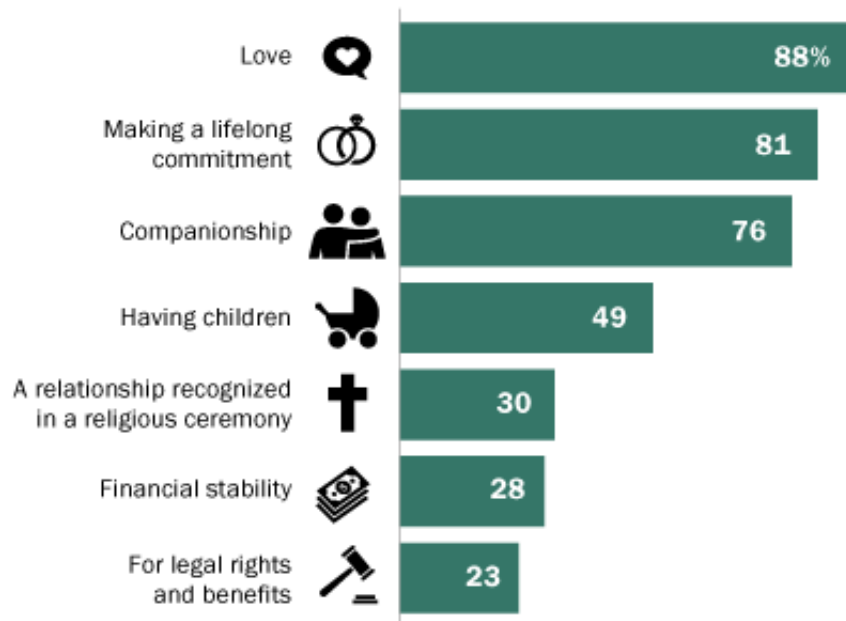
Americans may not be embracing the institution of marriage as they used to, but that doesn't mean they are giving up on relationships. From online dating, to remarriage, to cohabitation, here are five facts about the state of love and marriage in the U.S.

## 1

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### Why get married?

*% of the general public saying \_\_\_ is a very important reason to get married*



Source: Survey conducted May 10-13, 2013 (online poll).

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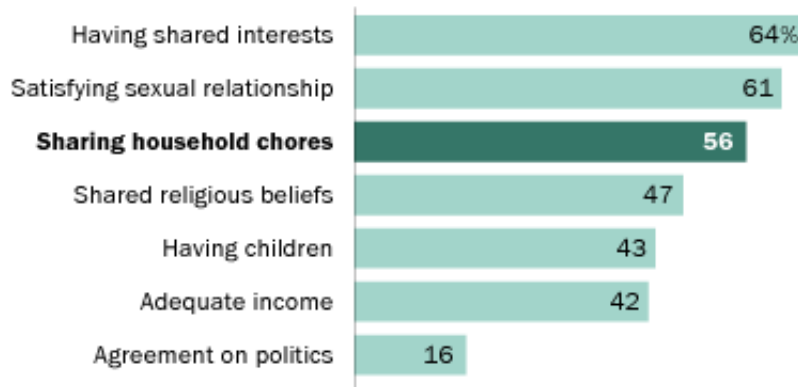
**Love remains Americans' top reason to marry.** In a 2013 [Pew Research Center survey](#), 88% of Americans cited love as a very important reason to get married, ahead of making a lifelong commitment (81%) and companionship (76%). Fewer (28%) said financial stability was a very important reason to marry.

But while financial stability may not be an important *reason* to marry, it is an important factor in what people are *looking for* in a spouse – especially women who have never married but say they want to or are not sure if they want to: 78% say finding a spouse or partner with a steady job [would be very important to them](#).

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### More than half of married people say shared housework is key to a successful marriage

*% of married adults who say \_\_\_ is 'very important' to a successful marriage*



Source: 2014 Religious Landscape Study recontact survey conducted March 17-May 6, 2015.

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Never-married men, however, have different priorities. While 46% say finding a spouse or partner with a steady job is very important, a larger share (62%) says that finding someone who shares their ideas about raising children is. (Seven-in-ten of their female counterparts say the same.)

And as far as what helps people *stay* married, married adults say having shared interests (64%) and a satisfying sexual relationship (61%) are very important to a successful marriage. More than half (56%) also name [sharing household chores](#).

**2**  
**The share of Americans who are married is at its lowest point since at least 1920.** Half of Americans ages 18 and over were married in 2015, [compared with 72% in 1960](#). One factor driving this change is that Americans – particularly men – are staying single longer. In 2012, 78% of

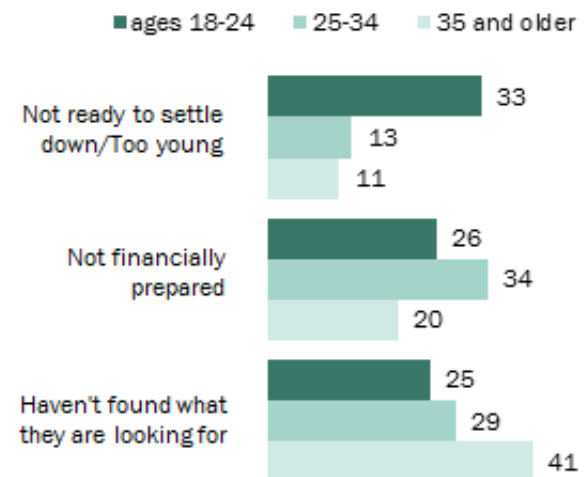
25-year-old men had [never married](#) compared with 67% of their female counterparts, and by 2016, the median age at first marriage had [reached its highest point](#) on record: 29.5 years for men and 27.4 years for women.

A number of factors may be driving marriage delays, including increases in the [share of young adults going to college](#) and [cohabitation](#). Another likely factor? Not feeling financially prepared for the commitment: 34% of never-married people ages 25 to 34 say this is the primary reason they are not yet married.

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## Reasons that people are not married vary by age

*% of never-married adults who say the main reason they are not currently married is ...*



Note: Based on those who have never been married and want to get married or are not sure (n=369). Volunteered responses of "Other" and "Don't know/Refused" not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted May 22-25 and May 29-June 1, 2014.

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**3 Americans are still embracing relationships.** In addition to the half of U.S. adults who are married, an analysis of 2015 Census Bureau data shows that about 8% of adults are cohabiting (among those who are householders or partners of householders), and a 2013 [Pew Research Center survey](#) found that 11% of the public described themselves as in a committed relationship, even though they were not married or living with a partner.

**4 Marriage may be on the decline, but remarriage is rising.** In 2013, 23% of all married people [had been married before](#), compared with just 13% in 1960. In that same year, 40% of new marriages included a spouse who had said "I do" (at least) once before, and in 20% of new marriages *both* spouses had been married at least once before.

Remarriage is more common among men than women. Some 64% of previously married men – those who were ever divorced or widowed – took

a second walk down the aisle, compared with 52% of previously married women, according to our analysis of 2013 Census Bureau data. One possible reason for this disparity is that women are less interested than men in remarriage. About half (54%) of previously married women said in our 2014 survey that they did *not* want to marry again, compared with 30% of men.

**5 Americans today are increasingly looking for love online.** A total of 15% of American adults have used online dating sites and/or mobile dating apps,

[according to our 2015 survey](#), up from 11% who [reported doing so](#) in 2013. Roughly four-in-ten Americans (41%) know someone who uses online dating, and 29% know someone who has entered a long-term relationship via online dating.

Growth in online dating has jumped the most for the youngest Americans. The share of 18- to 24-year-olds who use online dating has almost tripled in recent years, from 10% in 2013 to 27% in 2015. Mobile dating apps are driving much of this increase: 22% of 18- to 24-year-olds now report using mobile dating apps, up from just 5% in 2013.

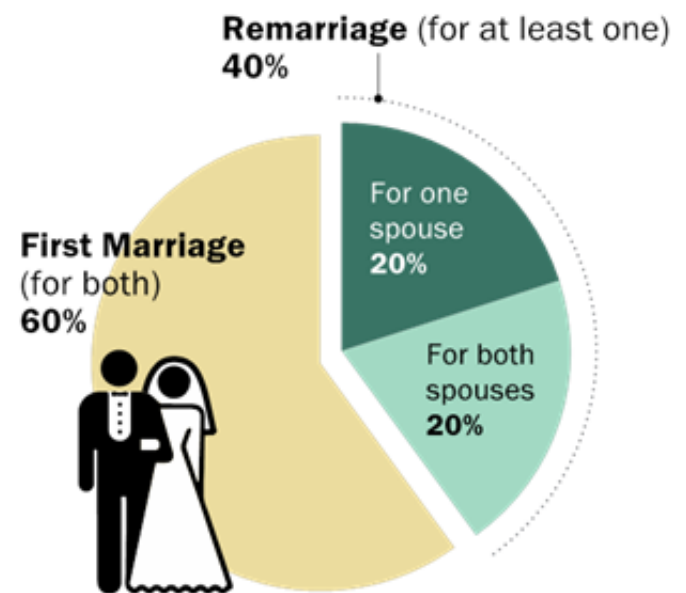
For the most part, people today view online dating positively. About six-in-ten (59%) say that it is a good way to meet people, and 47% agree that it is easier and more efficient than other ways of meeting people. Detractors remain, however – 23% say that people who use online dating sites are desperate.

*Note: This is an update of a post originally published Feb 14, 2014.*

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## Four-in-Ten New Marriages Involve Remarriage

*% of new marriages in 2013*



Note: "New marriages" are marriages that began in the past 12 months. A first marriage is one in which neither spouse has been previously married. A remarriage includes at least one spouse who has been married before. Based on couples, not individuals, where at least one spouse is age 18 or older.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2013 American Community Survey (1% IPUMS)

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## Category: 5 Facts

Topics: Economics and Personal Finances, Family and Relationships, Gender, Household and Family Structure, Marriage and Divorce