

# LANGUAGE IN AMERICA

## Notes

- There are 322 languages spoken in the United States, ranging alphabetically from Abnaki to Zuni, and in number of speakers from English (215,423,555) to Kalispel (4).
- The top 10 most common languages spoken in the United States are, in order: English, Spanish, French, Chinese, German, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Korean, Italian and Russian.
- Eight languages have more than 1,000,000 speakers, 13 languages have more than 500,000 speakers, and 38 languages have more than 100,000 speakers. However, only two languages are spoken by one percent or more of the population.
- Nationwide, 24 languages were recorded in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. 69 languages were recorded in at least 40 states (including the District of Columbia), and 105 languages were recorded in at least 20 states (including the District of Columbia).
- 207 languages were recorded in California, the most of any state. California's total was followed by New York (169), Washington (163), Texas (145), Oregon (138), Pennsylvania (135), Florida (134), Illinois (132), New Jersey (130) and Arizona (129). Wyoming had the fewest languages recorded (56), trailing South Dakota (62), Vermont (64) and North Dakota (66).
- 26 states recorded more than 100 languages spoken within their borders, including 22 that exceeded 110 languages and 15 that exceeded 120 languages. 16 states recorded 90 or fewer languages, including 11 that recorded fewer than 80 languages.
- Los Angeles County, Calif. is home to the most languages spoken at home (135). The nation's most populous county is one of nine counties home to 100 or more languages. The others are: King County, Wash. (118), Maricopa County, Ariz. (110), San Diego County, Calif. (110), Cook County, Ill. (109), Queens County, N.Y. (105), Santa Clara County, Calif. (104), Alameda County, Calif. (101), and Orange County, Calif. (100).
- Of the nation's 3,141 counties, 161 (5.1 percent) have 50 or more languages spoken, 529 (16.8 percent) have 20 or more languages spoken, and 1,076 (34.3 percent) have 10 or more languages spoken.

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How linguistically diverse is the population of the United States? Consider that if Michigan Stadium (capacity 107,501) was to be filled to capacity with people representative of the nation's population, there would be:

88,264	English speakers	30	Turkish speakers	3	Ojibwa speakers
11,513	Spanish speakers	28	Czech speakers	3	Sindhi speakers
658	French speakers	27	Swedish speakers	3	Pashto speakers
614	Chinese speakers	25	Syriac speakers	3	Mayan language speakers
566	German speakers	23	Croatian speakers	3	Estonian speakers
501	Tagalog speakers	23	Samoan speakers	2	Sebuano speakers
413	Vietnamese speakers	22	Norwegian speakers	2	Muskogee speakers
413	Italian speakers	19	Indonesian speakers	2	Zuni speakers
366	Korean speakers	18	Serbian speakers	2	American Indian speakers
289	Russian speakers	17	Cushite speakers	2	Inupik speakers
273	Polish speakers	16	Slovak speakers	2	Oto-Manguen speakers
251	Arabic speakers	16	Finnish speakers	2	Icelandic speakers
231	Portuguese speakers	15	Lithuanian speakers	2	Marshallese speakers
195	Japanese speakers	15	Swahili speakers	2	Aztec speakers
185	French Creole speakers	14	Marathi speakers	2	Pampang speakers
149	Greek speakers	13	Danish speakers	2	Efik speakers
129	Hindi speakers	11	Bulgarian speakers	2	Hopi speakers
127	Persian speakers	11	Hawaiian speakers	2	Tibetan speakers
107	Urdu speakers	10	Irish Gaelic speakers	1	Krio speaker
106	Cantonese speakers	10	Bantu speakers	1	Caucasian speaker
96	Gujarathi speakers	9	Kannada speakers	1	Crow speaker
83	Armenian speakers	9	Tongan speakers	1	Tewa speaker
80	Hebrew speakers	8	Dakota speakers	1	Arawakian speaker
74	Mon-Khmer/Cambodian speakers	8	Lettish speakers	1	Fijian speaker
73	Kru/Ibo/Yoruba speakers	8	Patois speakers	1	Chadic speaker
73	Yiddish speakers	8	Burmese speakers	1	Nilotic speaker
72	Navaho speakers	7	Macedonian speakers	1	Shoshoni speaker
71	Mandarin speakers	7	Jamaican Creole speakers	1	Basque speaker
68	Miao/Hmong speakers	7	Cajun speakers	1	Welsh speaker
61	Dutch speakers	6	Yupik speakers	1	Micronesian speaker
61	Laotian speakers	6	Miao-Yao/Mien speakers	1	Mongolian speaker; and
58	Panjabi speakers	6	Cherokee speakers	1	Romany speaker
53	Serbocroatian speakers	6	Afrikaans speakers		
52	Ukrainian speakers	6	Chamorro speakers		
52	Bengali speakers	6	Bisayan speakers		
49	Thai speakers	5	Pakistan (n.e.c.) speakers		
48	Hungarian speakers	5	Sinhalese speakers		
47	Romanian speakers	5	Apache speakers		
35	Telugu speakers	5	African speakers		
34	Formosan speakers	5	Fulani speakers		
34	Tamil speakers	5	Mande speakers		
34	Pennsylvania Dutch speakers	4	Choctaw speakers		
33	Amharic speakers	4	Keres speakers		
32	India (n.e.c.) speakers	4	Nepali speakers		
32	Malayalam speakers	4	Malay speakers		
32	Albanian speakers	4	Kurdish speakers		
30	Ilocano speakers	3	Slovene speakers		
		3	Pima speakers		

The 103 remaining seats would be occupied by a mixture of all 322 languages spoken in the United States, including 40 by mixed speakers of the 195 languages not mentioned above.

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- English is the most common language spoken at home in 3,103 of the 3,141 counties (98.8 percent) in the United States. Of the remaining 38 counties, Spanish is the most common language in 35 counties, with two counties having a plurality of Navaho speakers and one county home to a plurality of speakers of Yupik.
- Texas is the home of 26 counties where English is not the most common language spoken at home. Other states with such counties are: New Mexico (6), Arizona (2), Alaska, California, Colorado and Florida. The exceptions are as follows, with the percentage of that county's population speaking each language:

County, State	Most Common	Pct.	Second	Pct.
Bethel Census Area, Alaska	Yupik	63%	English	35%
Apache County, Ariz.	Navaho	58%	English	38%
Santa Cruz County, Ariz.	Spanish	80%	English	20%
Imperial County, Calif.	Spanish	65%	English	32%
Costilla County, Colo.	Spanish	58%	English	41%
Miami-Dade County, Fla.	Spanish	59%	English	32%
Dona Ana County, N.M.	Spanish	53%	English	36%
Guadalupe County, N.M.	Spanish	66%	English	34%
McKinley County, N.M.	Navaho	46%	English	39%
Mora County, N.M.	Spanish	68%	English	31%
Rio Arriba County, N.M.	Spanish	60%	English	34%
San Miguel County, N.M.	Spanish	59%	English	39%
Brooks County, Texas	Spanish	78%	English	22%
Cameron County, Texas	Spanish	78%	English	21%
Culberson County, Texas	Spanish	73%	English	27%
Dimmit County, Texas	Spanish	76%	English	24%
Duval County, Texas	Spanish	78%	English	22%
El Paso County, Texas	Spanish	71%	English	27%
Frio County, Texas	Spanish	61%	English	39%
Hidalgo County, Texas	Spanish	82%	English	17%
Hudspeth County, Texas	Spanish	74%	English	26%
Jim Hogg County, Texas	Spanish	82%	English	18%
Jim Wells County, Texas	Spanish	62%	English	38%
Kenedy County, Texas	Spanish	86%	English	14%
Kleberg County, Texas	Spanish	54%	English	45%
LaSalle County, Texas	Spanish	69%	English	30%
Maverick County, Texas	Spanish	91%	English	8%
Pecos County, Texas	Spanish	55%	English	44%
Presidio County, Texas	Spanish	84%	English	16%
Reeves County, Texas	Spanish	67%	English	33%
Starr County, Texas	Spanish	90%	English	9%
Terrell County, Texas	Spanish	52%	English	48%
Uvalde County, Texas	Spanish	59%	English	40%
Val Verde County, Texas	Spanish	69%	English	30%
Webb County, Texas	Spanish	91%	English	8%
Willacy County, Texas	Spanish	78%	English	22%
Zapata County, Texas	Spanish	79%	English	21%
Zavala County, Texas	Spanish	85%	English	15%

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- In all, 2,725 of the 3,141 counties (86.8 percent) in the United States had English and Spanish as their first and second most common languages – 2,690 with English first and Spanish second and 35 with Spanish first and English second. However, 41 other languages ranked as or tied for the second most widely spoken at home in America's counties. These common languages included:
  - German was the second most common language in 195 counties across 19 states. South Dakota (31 counties) and North Dakota (30) had the highest share, followed by Montana (20), Missouri (15) and Kansas (15). Only five of these counties were in Atlantic or Pacific coast states – two each in Virginia and Pennsylvania and one in Maryland.
  - French was the second most common language in 76 counties across 11 states. Louisiana had the highest total (28), followed by the New England states of Maine (15), Vermont (13) and New Hampshire (10). In New Hampshire, French was the second most common language spoken at home in all the state's counties, while it placed second in 15 of Maine's 16 counties and 13 of Vermont's 14. Outside of Louisiana, only four counties where French was the second most common language spoken at home were located in states that did not border Canada – one each in Iowa, Kentucky, Virginia and West Virginia.
  - Dakota was the second most common language in 19 counties across four states. South Dakota (15 counties) had the majority of these, the remainder were scattered between Montana, North Dakota and Nebraska.
  - Norwegian was the second most common language in 14 counties across four states. North Dakota had the most with eight, with four in Minnesota, and one each in Montana and Wisconsin
  - Pennsylvania Dutch was the second most common language in 10 counties across six states. Three were located in Pennsylvania, two each in Kentucky and Missouri and one apiece in New York, Ohio and West Virginia
  - Other languages that placed second or tied for second were: Finnish (nine counties), Tagalog (eight), Cherokee (six), Czech, Ojibwa (five), Choctaw, Italian, Miao/Hmong, Muskogee, Navaho, Portuguese (four), Inupik, Tlingit, Yupik (three), Athapascan, Cree, Hidatsa (two), Blackfoot, Cheyenne, Chinese, Crow, Danish, Ilocano, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Menomoni, Omaha, Passamaquoddy, Russian, Salish, Swedish, Tsimishian, Ukrainian and Ute (one).

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- While the five most common languages in the United States are, in order, English, Spanish, French, Chinese and German, no state follows with that exact sequence. In fact, only five states have those languages in their top five in any order (Ala., Del., Ind., Ky. and S.C.), while 30 states have four of the top five national languages within the top five languages in the state.
- Alaska and New Jersey have only two of the top five national languages in the within the top five state languages (English and Spanish), while Hawaii's only match within the top five is English.
- Maryland comes closest to the national model, as the top four most common languages in the state match the national list: English, Spanish, French, Chinese. However, German, the U.S.A.'s fifth most common language, ranks sixth in Maryland, behind Korean.
- Only seven of the nation's 3,141 counties (0.2 percent) exactly match the nationwide order. These counties are Franklin County, Ohio; Forsyth County, N.C.; McLean County, Ill.; Pickens County, S.C.; Troup County, Ga.; Adams County, Miss.; and Coahoma County, Miss.
- Los Angeles County, Calif. led all 3,141 counties in the number of speakers of 39 different languages. Cook, County, Ill., Honolulu County, Hawaii and Queens County, N.Y. each led the nation in speakers of 14 different languages. Other counties to lead the United States in the number of speakers of at least four different languages were: Kings County, N.Y. (eight languages), Bronx County, N.Y. (seven), King County, Wash. (seven), San Diego County, Calif. (five), Santa Clara County, Calif. (five), and Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area, Alaska (four).
- Only seven languages other than English and Spanish were spoken by more than 100,000 people in any county: Chinese in Los Angeles County, Calif. and Queens County, N.Y.; Armenian in Los Angeles County, Calif.; Tagalog in Los Angeles County, Calif.; Korean in Los Angeles County, Calif.; Polish in Cook County, Ill.; Russian in Kings County, N.Y.; and Vietnamese in Orange County, Calif..