



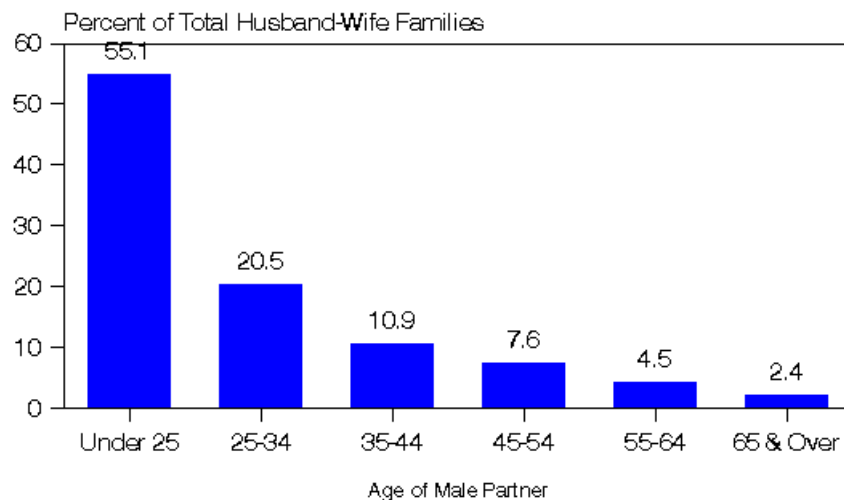
Census 91 Fast Facts

Issue 4: Common Law Unions

Produced by: Labour and Social Statistics Section

- Common-law unions are becoming increasingly popular. In 1991, one in ten couples in British Columbia was living common-law.

Most Young Couples Live Common-law



Source: 1991 Census of Canada

- Most young couples are opting to live together without being formally married. More than half of husband-wife families under 24 years of age¹ were living common-law in 1991.
- The majority of couples aged 25 and over are legally married. A possible explanation may be that many common-law couples choose to marry as their relationship becomes established.
- The rising popularity of common-law unions is also a reflection of changing social mores. It is likely that the trend toward more common-law relationships will continue to spill over into older age groups as couples currently under the age of 25 grow older.

Husband-Wife Families Living Common-Law, British Columbia, 1991

Age of Male Partner	Husband-Wife Families			Percent
	Total	Now Married	Common-Law	Common-Law
24 Years and under	20,985	9,425	11,560	55.1%
25-34 Years	157,455	125,120	32,335	20.5%
35-44 Years	203,925	181,735	22,190	10.9%
45-54 Years	145,995	134,915	11,080	7.6%
55-64 Years	118,930	113,600	5,330	4.5%
65 Years and over	132,985	129,850	3,135	2.4%
Total	780,275	694,645	85,630	11.0%

Source: 1991 Census of Canada