Traffic Safety Facts

2003 Data

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DOT HS 809 771

Speeding

NHTSA considers a crash to be speeding-related if the driver was charged with a speeding-related offense or if an officer indicated that racing, driving too fast for conditions, or exceeding the posted speed limit was a contributing factor in the crash.

Speeding is one of the most prevalent factors contributing to traffic crashes. The economic cost to society of speeding-related crashes is estimated by NHTSA to be $40.4 billion per year. In 2003, speeding was a contributing factor in 31 percent of all fatal crashes, and 13,380 lives were lost in speeding-related crashes.

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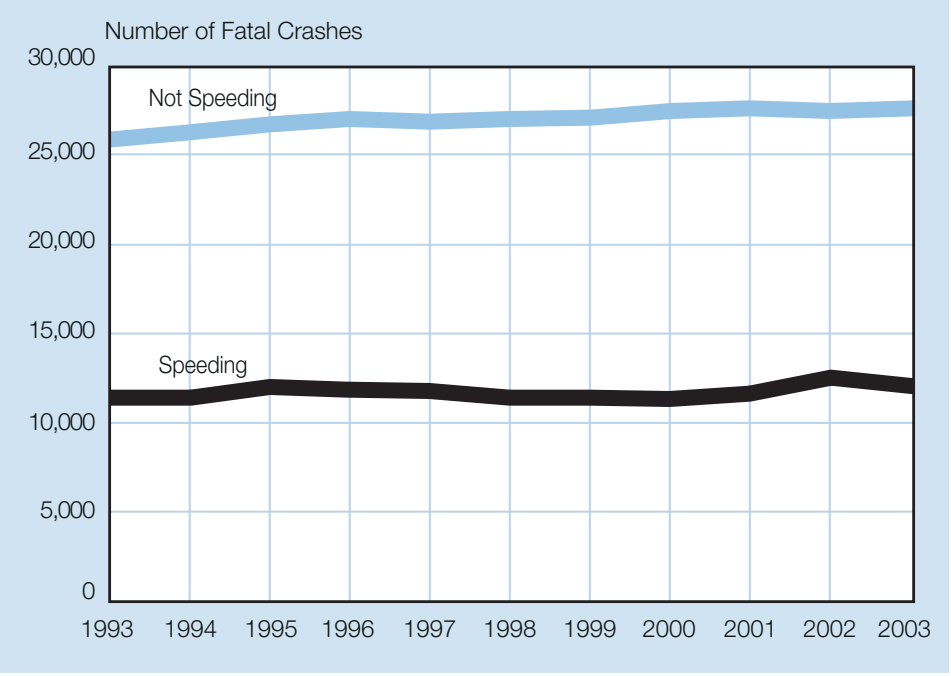
Motor vehicle crashes cost society an estimated $7,300 per second. The total economic cost of crashes was estimated at $230.6 billion in 2000. The 2000 costs of speeding-related crashes were estimated to be $40.4 billion — $76,865 per minute or $1,281 per second.

Speeding reduces a driver's ability to steer safely around curves or objects in the roadway, extends the distance necessary to stop a vehicle, and increases the distance a vehicle travels while the driver reacts to a dangerous situation.

Figure 1

Fatal Crashes by Speeding Status, 1993-2003



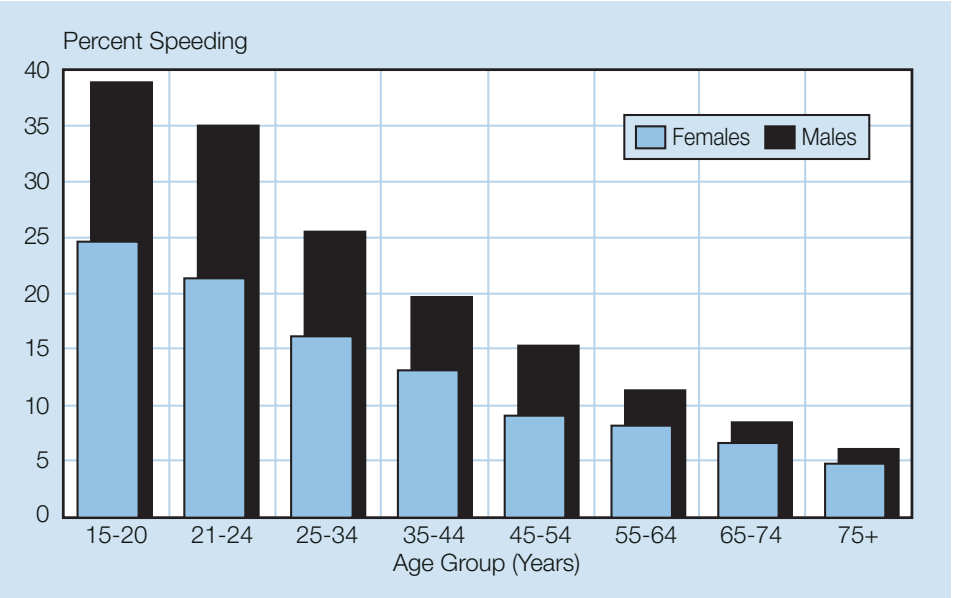
NCSA
National Center for Statistics & Analysis

"In 2003, 39 percent of male drivers 15 to 20 years old involved in fatal crashes were speeding."

For drivers involved in fatal crashes, young males are the most likely to be speeding. The relative proportion of speeding-related crashes to all crashes decreases with increasing driver age. In 2003, 39 percent of the male drivers 15 to 20 years old who were involved in fatal crashes were speeding at the time of the crash.

Figure 2

Speeding Drivers in Fatal Crashes by Age and Sex, 2003



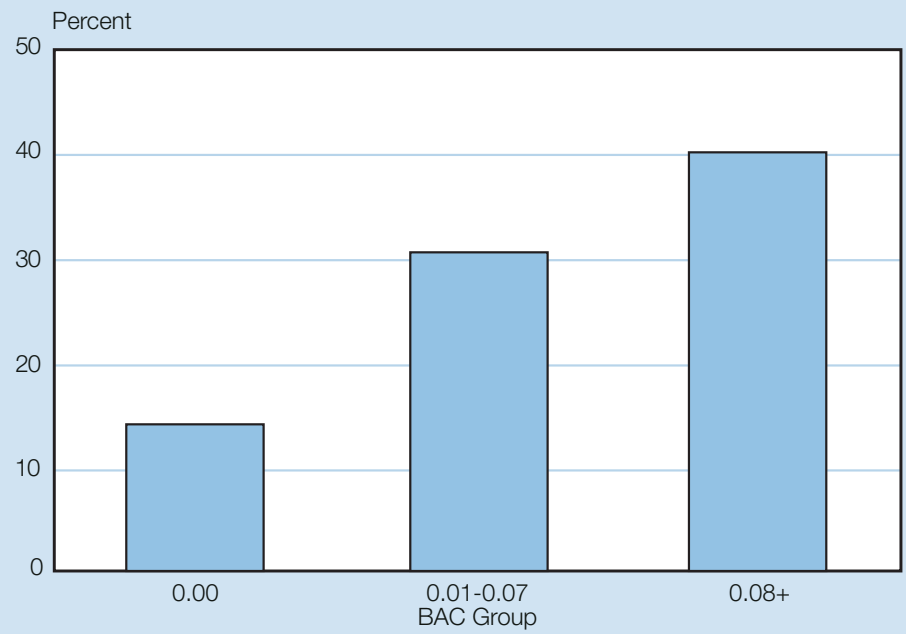
Alcohol and speeding are clearly a deadly combination. Alcohol involvement is prevalent for drivers involved in speeding-related crashes. In 2003, 41 percent of the drivers with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 grams per deciliter (g/dl) or higher involved in fatal crashes were speeding, compared with only 14 percent of the drivers with BAC 0.00 involved in fatal crashes.

Alcohol and speeding seem to go hand in hand. In 2003, 28 percent of the speeding drivers under 21 years old who were involved in fatal crashes also had a BAC of 0.08 g/dl or higher. In contrast, only 13 percent of the nonspeeding drivers under age 21 involved in fatal crashes in 2003 had a BAC of 0.08 g/dl or higher.

For drivers between 21 and 24 years of age who were involved in fatal crashes in 2003, 50 percent of speeding drivers had a BAC of 0.08 g/dl or higher, compared with only 24 percent of nonspeeding drivers.

"In 2003, 41 percent of the drivers with BAC 0.08 g/dl or higher involved in fatal crashes were speeding, compared with only 14 percent of drivers with BAC 0.00 involved in fatal crashes."

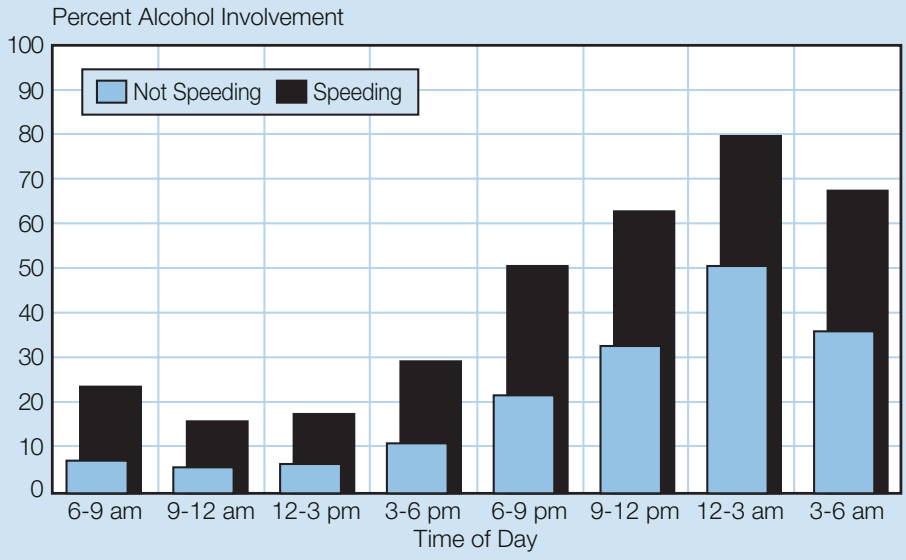
Figure 3
Percentage of All Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes That Were Speeding, by BAC Level, 2003



For both speeding and nonspeeding drivers involved in fatal crashes, the percentage of those who had been drinking, with BAC 0.01 or greater, at the time the crash occurred was higher at night than during the day. Between midnight and 3 am, 78 percent of speeding drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking.

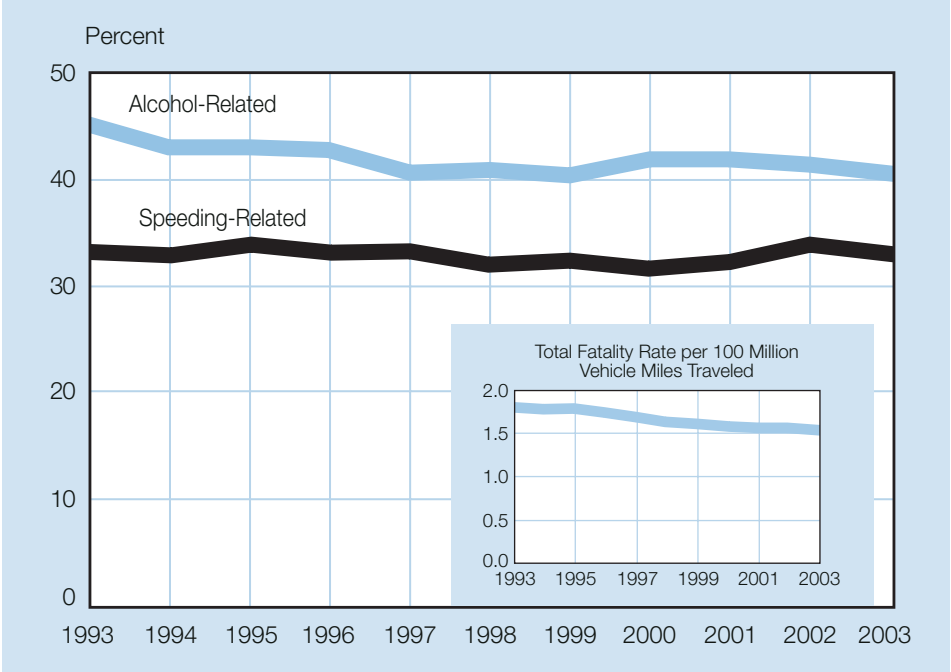
"Between midnight and 3 am, 78 percent of speeding drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking."

Figure 4
Drivers in Fatal Crashes by Alcohol Involvement, Speeding Status, and Time of Day, 2003



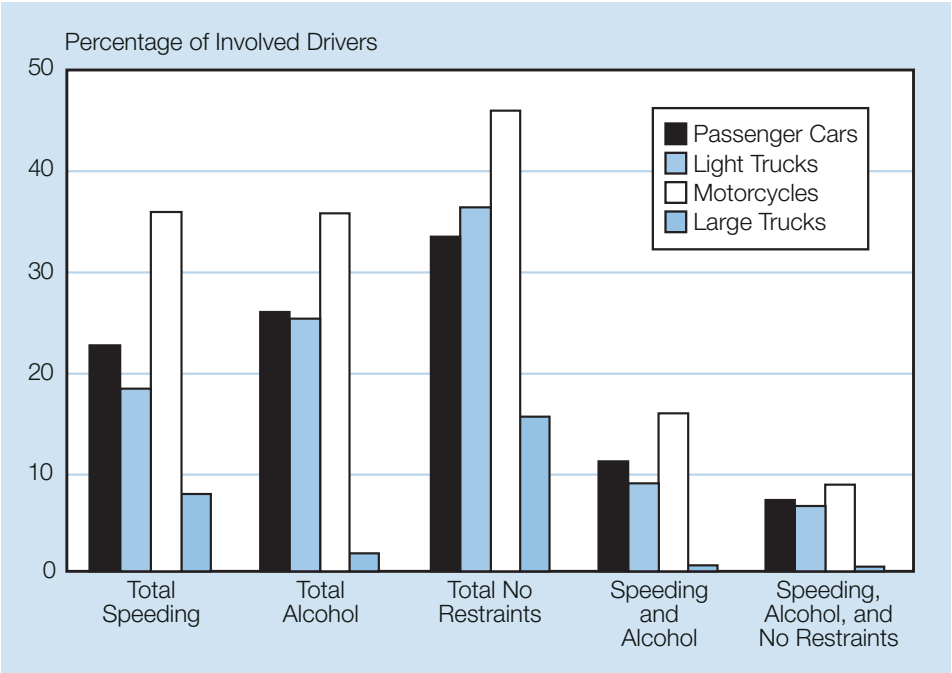
"Speeding involvement for motorcyclists in fatal crashes was about twice the rate for drivers of passenger cars or light trucks."

Figure 5
Percentages of Fatalities Related to Speeding and to Alcohol, 1993-2003



In 2003, 36 percent of all motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were speeding, approximately twice the rate for drivers of passenger cars or light trucks. The percentage of alcohol involvement was 40 percent higher for motorcyclists than for drivers of passenger vehicles.

Figure 6
Speeding, Alcohol Involvement, and Failure To Use Restraints Among Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes by Vehicle Type, 2003



In 2003, only 46 percent of **speeding** passenger vehicle drivers under 21 years old who were involved in fatal crashes were wearing safety belts at the time of the crash. In contrast, 67 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers in the same age group were restrained. For drivers 21 years and older, the percentage of **speeding** drivers involved in fatal crashes who were using restraints at the time of the crash was 43 percent, but 71 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers in fatal crashes were restrained.

"Among drivers in fatal crashes in 2003, those who were not speeding were about 65 percent more likely to be wearing safety belts than those who were speeding at the time of the crash."

In 2003, 22 percent of **speeding** drivers involved in fatal crashes had an invalid license at the time of the crash, compared with 10 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers.

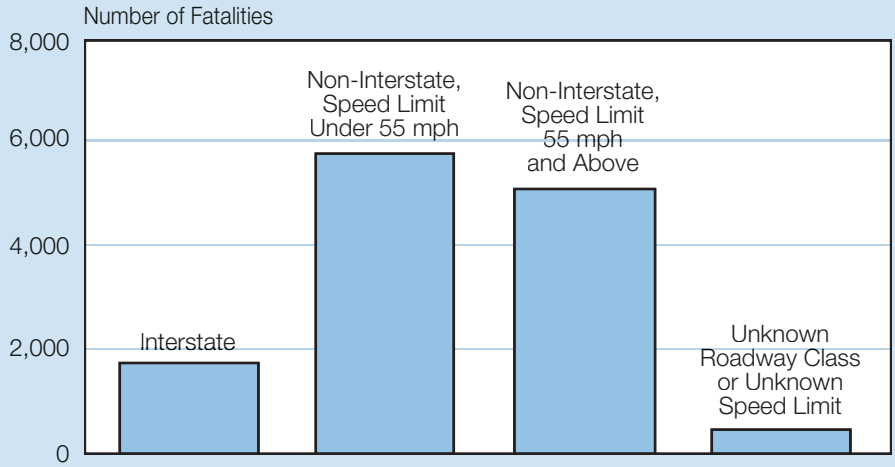
Speeding was a factor in 29 percent of the fatal crashes that occurred on dry roads in 2003 and in 34 percent of those that occurred on wet roads. Speeding was a factor in 52 percent of the fatal crashes that occurred when there was snow or slush on the road and in 58 percent of those that occurred on icy roads.

Speeding was involved in more than one-third (36 percent) of the fatal crashes that occurred in construction/maintenance zones in 2003.

In 2003, 86 percent of speeding-related fatalities occurred on roads that were not Interstate highways.

"Only 14 percent of speeding-related fatalities occur on Interstate highways."

Figure 7
Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Type, 2003



For more information:

Information on speeding involvement in traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NPO-121, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590. NCSA information can also be obtained by telephone or by fax-on-demand at 1-800-934-8517. FAX messages should be sent to (202) 366-7078. General information on highway traffic safety can be accessed by Internet users at **http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/ncsa**. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the DOT Vehicle Safety Hotline at 1-888-327-4236.

Other fact sheets available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis are *Overview, Alcohol, Occupant Protection, Older Population, Young Drivers, Children, Pedestrians, Pedalcyclists, Large Trucks, Motorcycles, School Transportation-Related Crashes, State Traffic Data,* and *State Alcohol Estimates*. Detailed data on motor vehicle traffic crashes are published annually in *Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System and the General Estimates System.*

Table 1
Speeding-Related Traffic Fatalities by Road Type and Speed Limit, 2003

State	Total Traffic Fatalities	Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Type and Speed Limit								
			Interstate		Non-Interstate					
		Total	>55 mph	#55 mph	55 mph	50 mph	45 mph	40 mph	35 mph	<35 mph
AL	1,001	469	46	6	124	16	148	31	45	24
AK	95	39	9	3	6	0	6	5	0	4
AZ	1,120	432	76	16	52	18	71	38	39	31
AR	627	118	7	0	69	0	10	3	14	11
CA	4,215	1,507	242	26	397	58	142	107	173	156
CO	632	239	23	17	38	5	29	22	23	37
CT	294	111	9	15	6	1	16	8	8	43
DE	142	37	0	4	4	13	2	5	4	4
DC	67	22	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	16
FL	3,169	539	35	11	80	13	150	49	80	75
GA	1,603	328	25	14	101	8	61	11	68	20
HI	135	66	0	7	6	1	11	0	22	10
ID	293	82	17	0	8	13	4	0	11	5
IL	1,453	566	46	50	226	3	22	47	69	88
IN	834	217	16	14	68	12	20	19	22	34
IA	441	68	3	2	24	4	6	1	8	14
KS	471	144	17	0	51	2	6	8	7	25
KY	928	122	11	2	75	0	11	0	19	1
LA	894	223	16	3	103	8	26	9	24	20
ME	207	79	3	2	12	16	18	2	14	10
MD	649	198	11	6	24	40	10	35	28	43
MA	462	156	17	5	3	5	14	13	26	52
MI	1,283	293	27	7	132	6	19	5	26	47
MN	657	194	13	7	94	10	9	4	3	28
MS	871	170	18	0	59	15	35	12	12	11
MO	1,232	519	66	12	187	4	32	24	49	58
MT	262	113	18	0	3	2	6	1	14	7
NE	293	38	2	0	3	13	5	1	0	2
NV	368	125	14	1	5	3	28	1	26	11
NH	127	31	2	0	1	2	3	8	5	6
NJ	747	48	4	0	6	6	4	6	4	11
NM	439	172	29	2	28	4	6	13	19	16
NY	1,491	481	9	24	177	10	23	30	23	80
NC	1,531	566	31	10	298	8	119	2	71	9
ND	105	32	0	0	13	0	0	2	1	3
OH	1,277	264	25	6	123	2	23	7	38	25
OK	668	273	43	1	34	14	55	15	15	13
OR	512	167	9	11	82	1	13	12	14	9
PA	1,577	652	42	30	177	12	124	66	115	47
RI	104	54	1	5	1	1	7	7	7	25
SC	968	410	35	1	146	11	91	13	28	28
SD	203	87	18	1	31	1	1	2	3	6
TN	1,193	272	16	13	72	14	42	26	16	45
TX	3,675	1,509	207	43	225	43	113	94	119	143
UT	309	93	34	1	10	3	1	9	7	5
VT	69	33	4	0	1	13	3	5	3	3
VA	943	286	25	11	127	6	43	7	38	23
WA	600	234	20	2	16	38	15	18	53	43
WV	394	112	14	1	50	2	12	14	5	9
WI	848	306	22	3	161	0	29	0	25	48
WY	165	84	26	1	4	2	8	2	0	4
USA*	**42,643**	**13,380**	**1,403**	**396**	**3,743**	**482**	**1,652**	**821**	**1,447**	**1,488**
PR	493	233	48	0	2	7	22	22	105	25

*Of the total number of speeding-related fatalities in 2003, 6,015 occurred on roads with posted speed limits between 55 and 65 mph, and 898 occurred on roads with speed limits above 65 mph.
Note: The total column for speeding-related fatalities includes fatalities that occurred on roads for which the speed limit was unknown.