



Traffic Safety Facts 2002

Speeding



A Public Information Fact Sheet on Motor Vehicle and Traffic Safety Published by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's National Center for Statistics and Analysis

*NHTSA has revised the definition of a **speeding-related crash**. A crash is considered 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.*

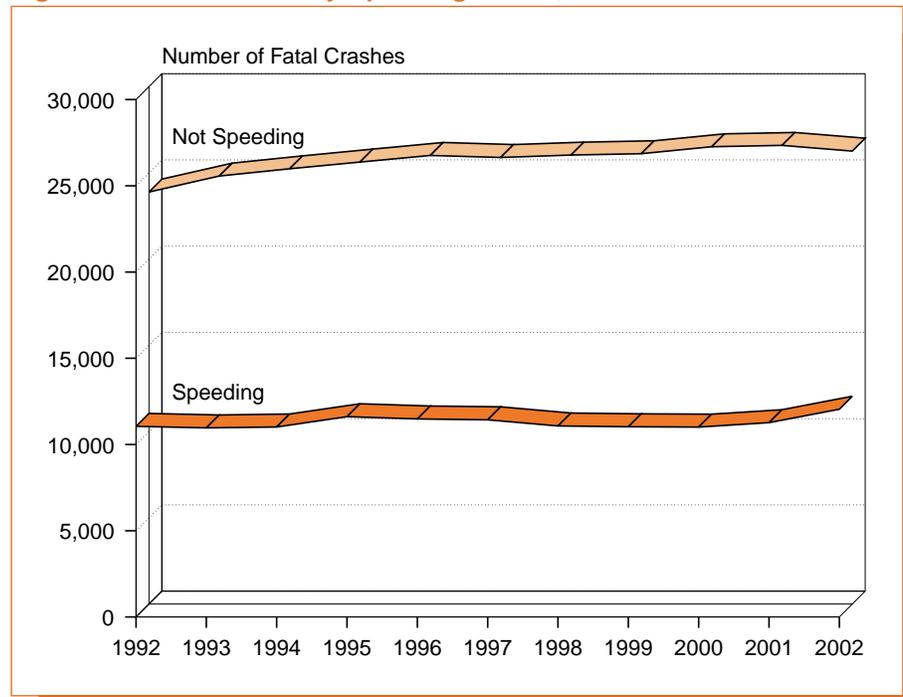
Speeding is one of the most prevalent factors contributing to traffic crashes. The economic cost to society of speeding-related crashes is estimated by NHTSA to be \$40.4 billion per year. In 2002, speeding was a contributing factor in 31 percent of all fatal crashes, and 13,713 lives were lost in speeding-related crashes.

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.

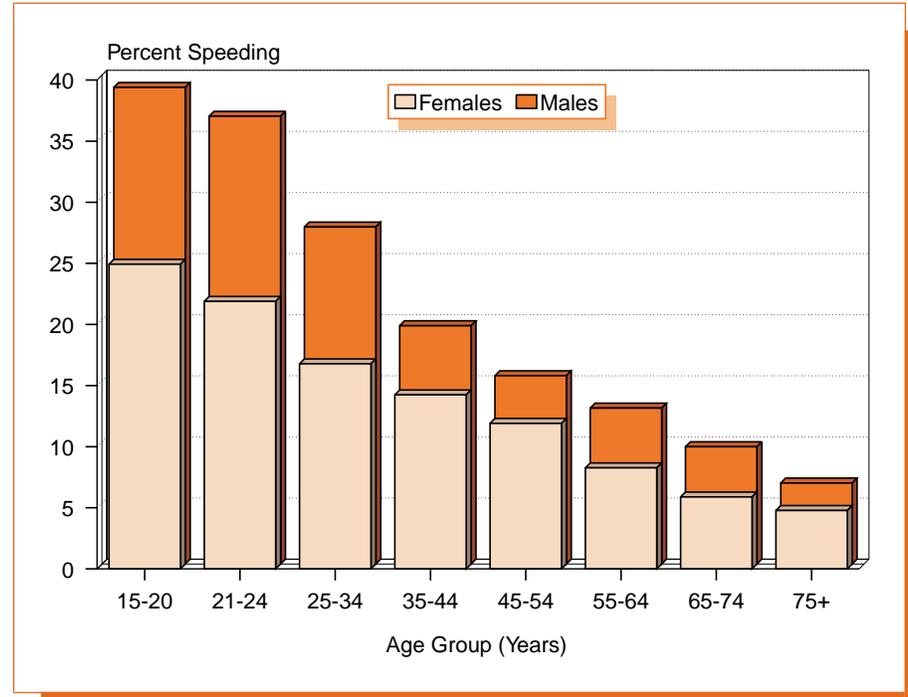
“The economic cost of speeding-related crashes is estimated to be \$40.4 billion each year.”

Figure 1. Fatal Crashes by Speeding Status, 1992-2002



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 2002, 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, 2002



“In 2002, 39 percent of male drivers 15 to 20 years old involved in fatal crashes were speeding.”

In 2001, NHTSA began using a revised method — **multiple imputation** — to estimate missing information about blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels for persons involved in fatal crashes. The alcohol estimates in this fact sheet are based on the new imputation method. More information on the new multiple imputation method, including detailed tabulations of alcohol involvement in various categories (age, sex, time of day, etc.), is available in NHTSA Technical Report DOT HS 809 403, Transitioning to Multiple Imputation: A New Method to Estimate Missing Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Values in FARS.

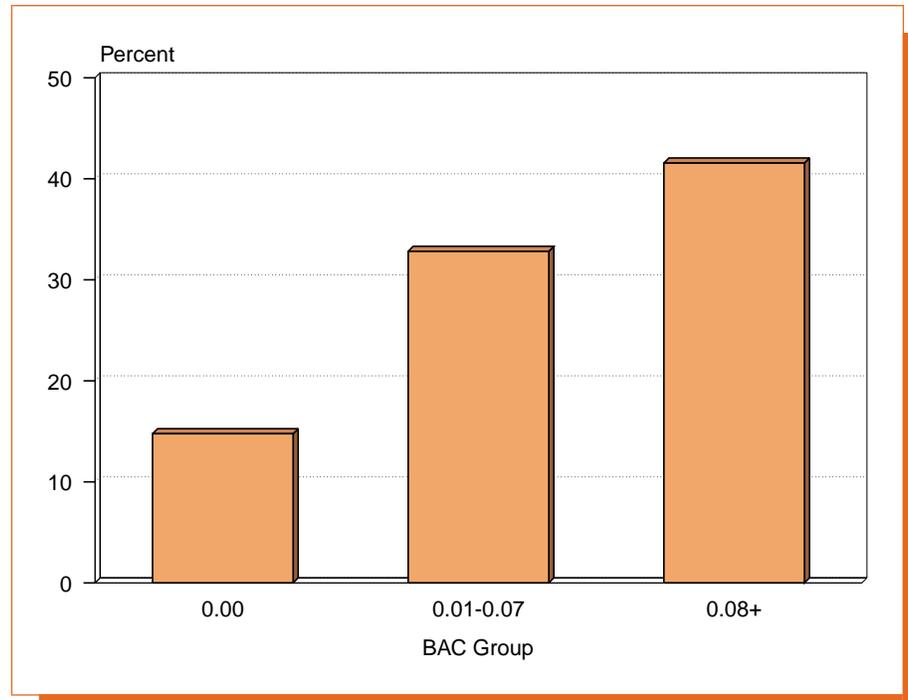
Alcohol and speeding are clearly a deadly combination. Alcohol involvement is prevalent for drivers involved in speeding-related crashes. In 2002, 42 percent of the **intoxicated** drivers (BAC = 0.08 or higher) involved in fatal crashes were speeding, compared with only 15 percent of the **sober** drivers (BAC = 0.00) involved in fatal crashes.

Alcohol and speeding seem to go hand in hand. In 2002, 27 percent of the **speeding** drivers under 21 years old who were involved in fatal crashes were also intoxicated, with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 (grams per deciliter [g/dl]) or greater. In contrast, only 12 percent of the **nonspeeding** drivers under age 21 involved in fatal crashes in 2002 were intoxicated.

For drivers between 21 and 24 years of age who were involved in fatal crashes in 2002, 51 percent of **speeding** drivers were intoxicated, compared with only 24 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers.

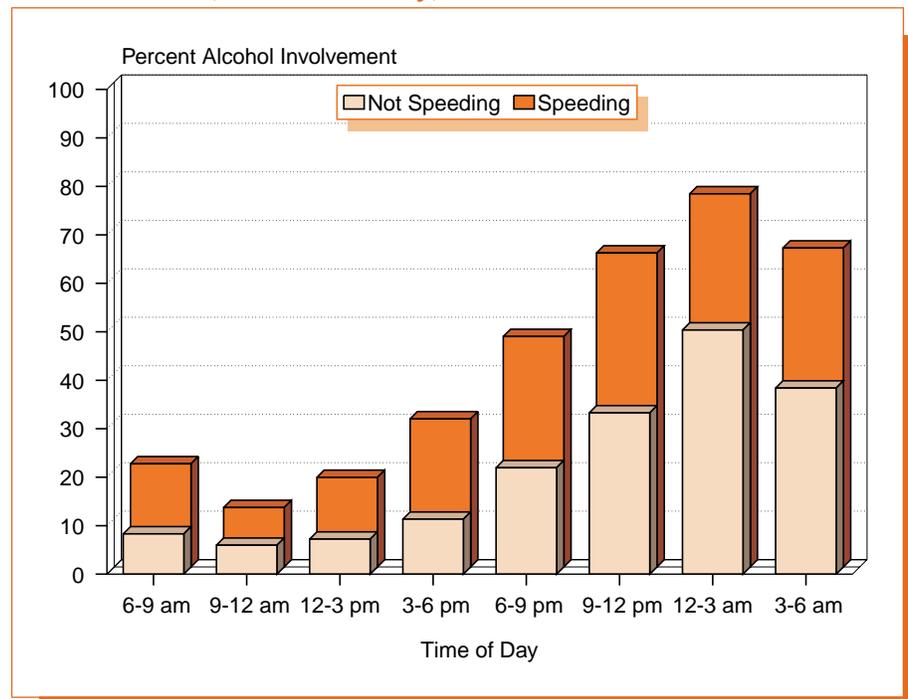
In 2002, 42 percent of the intoxicated drivers involved in fatal crashes were speeding, compared with only 15 percent of sober drivers involved in fatal crashes.

Figure 3. Percentage of All Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes That Were Speeding, by BAC Level, 2002



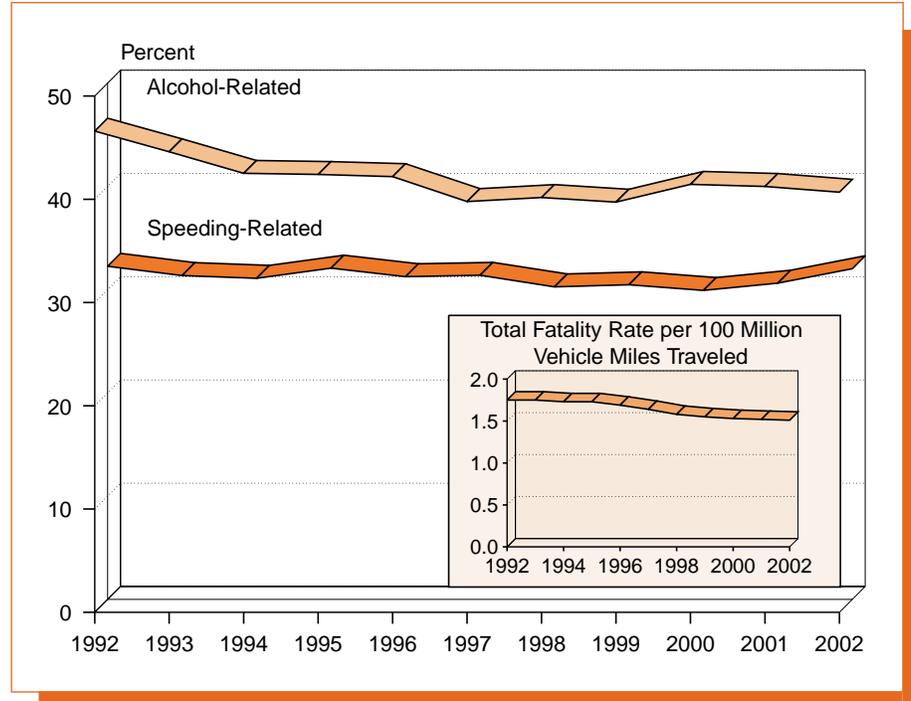
For both speeding and nonspeeding drivers involved in fatal crashes, the percentage of those who had been drinking, with BAC 0.01 or greater, at the time the crash occurred was higher at night than during the day. Between midnight and 3 am, 77 percent of **speeding** drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking.

Figure 4. Drivers in Fatal Crashes by Alcohol Involvement, Speeding Status, and Time of Day, 2002



“Between midnight and 3 am, 77 percent of speeding drivers involved in fatal crashes had been drinking.”

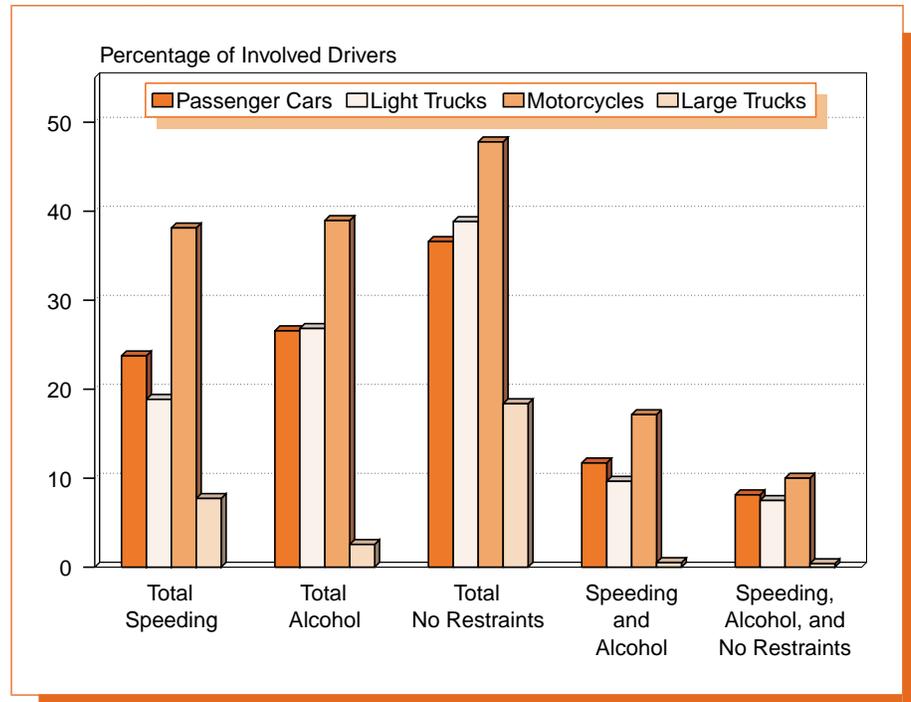
Figure 5. Percentages of Fatalities Related to Speeding and to Alcohol, 1992-2002



“Speeding involvement for motorcyclists in fatal crashes was about twice as high as for car and light truck drivers.”

In 2002, 38 percent of all motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes were speeding. The percentage of speeding involvement in fatal crashes was approximately twice as high for motorcyclists as for drivers of passenger cars or light trucks, and the percentage of alcohol involvement was about 45 percent higher for motorcyclists.

Figure 6. Speeding, Alcohol Involvement, and Failure To Use Restraints Among Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes by Vehicle Type, 2002



“Among drivers in fatal crashes in 2002, those who were not speeding were about 50 percent more likely to be wearing safety belts than those who were speeding at the time of the crash.”

In 2002, only 45 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, 64 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 40 percent, but 69 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers in fatal crashes were restrained.

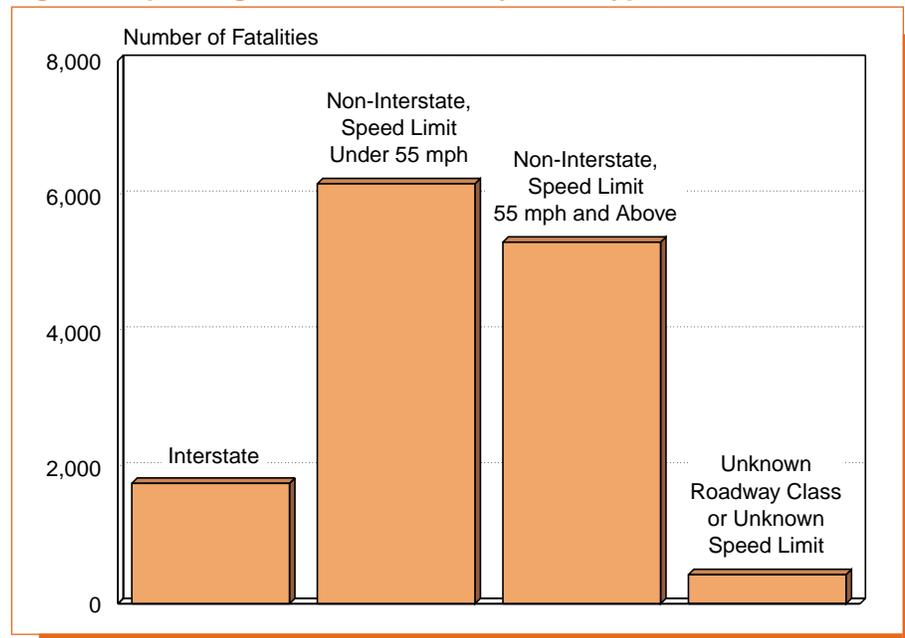
In 2002, 22 percent of **speeding** drivers involved in fatal crashes had an invalid license at the time of the crash, compared with 10 percent of **nonspeeding** drivers.

Speeding was a factor in 31 percent of the fatal crashes that occurred on dry roads in 2002 and in 33 percent of those that occurred on wet roads. Speeding was a factor in 53 percent of the fatal crashes that occurred when there was snow or slush on the road and in 60 percent of those that occurred on icy roads.

Speeding was involved in one-third (33 percent) of the fatal crashes that occurred in construction/maintenance zones in 2002.

In 2002, 87 percent of speeding-related fatalities occurred on roads that were not Interstate highways.

Figure 7. Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Type, 2002



“Only 13 percent of speeding-related fatalities occur on Interstate highways.”

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-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/nrsa>. To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Auto Safety Hotline at 1-800-424-9393.

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, 2002

State	Total Traffic Fatalities	Speeding-Related Fatalities by Road Type and Speed Limit								
		Total	Interstate		Non-Interstate					
			>55 mph	≤55 mph	55 mph	50 mph	45 mph	40 mph	35 mph	<35 mph
AL	1,033	411	40	2	104	8	138	24	51	27
AK	87	33	10	4	4	0	9	1	2	2
AZ	1,117	436	55	7	71	19	74	44	44	40
AR	640	125	9	1	64	1	16	12	11	9
CA	4,078	1,468	228	15	389	46	123	113	168	155
CO	742	319	30	24	43	17	39	31	40	46
CT	322	154	9	19	5	6	7	16	21	68
DE	124	40	1	0	4	17	2	1	0	8
DC	47	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	14
FL	3,132	558	55	20	92	16	137	26	69	81
GA	1,523	313	13	5	96	5	58	16	78	20
HI	119	41	1	5	2	0	6	2	10	13
ID	264	88	10	0	17	9	8	0	14	3
IL	1,411	530	29	58	205	6	42	47	82	61
IN	792	185	12	8	69	5	21	21	22	24
IA	404	49	2	2	27	2	2	1	4	8
KS	512	300	24	0	93	8	10	13	9	36
KY	915	179	26	3	98	3	16	1	19	8
LA	875	107	5	2	47	3	13	6	16	4
ME	216	83	4	3	1	7	23	4	16	6
MD	659	213	11	17	19	30	12	30	35	52
MA	459	176	16	2	4	10	11	21	32	71
MI	1,277	287	27	3	161	7	20	9	20	18
MN	657	179	18	13	92	7	3	10	2	21
MS	885	232	31	1	82	8	40	15	20	13
MO	1,208	509	57	8	171	5	49	17	66	31
MT	270	102	16	1	2	2	4	1	8	5
NE	307	44	10	4	7	14	0	0	4	3
NV	381	148	26	4	29	3	25	2	18	19
NH	127	38	1	2	3	6	1	5	11	8
NJ	773	49	3	2	2	5	1	9	3	19
NM	449	177	33	10	25	12	11	8	15	19
NY	1,522	486	13	32	185	15	26	39	14	85
NC	1,575	601	38	7	351	4	115	2	65	7
ND	97	33	4	0	17	0	1	0	0	5
OH	1,418	245	14	9	112	3	20	4	38	37
OK	734	306	48	3	41	8	73	9	13	12
OR	436	135	5	3	67	0	12	10	10	13
PA	1,614	729	40	19	151	17	150	109	132	66
RI	84	46	4	10	1	4	1	3	7	16
SC	1,053	495	51	0	142	11	121	19	46	37
SD	180	78	9	0	27	2	5	3	8	6
TN	1,175	293	16	12	61	9	69	32	25	54
TX	3,725	1,546	153	69	278	56	132	98	120	153
UT	328	100	28	0	13	5	3	9	7	13
VT	78	36	2	0	0	27	0	2	3	0
VA	914	251	36	14	101	6	43	4	27	14
WA	659	260	25	0	25	65	15	11	53	39
WV	439	136	7	0	58	3	25	16	10	12
WI	803	276	20	1	167	0	20	7	21	30
WY	176	71	25	0	7	2	3	0	0	1
USA*	42,815	13,713	1,350	424	3,832	524	1,755	883	1,512	1,512
PR	510	253	19	37	2	7	31	29	90	37

*Of the total number of speeding-related fatalities in 2002, 6,129 occurred on roads with posted speed limits between 55 and 65 mph, and 907 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.