

Traffic Safety Facts

2003 Data

Large Trucks

In 2003, 457,000 large trucks (gross vehicle weight rating greater than 10,000 pounds) were involved in traffic crashes in the United States; 4,669 were involved in fatal crashes. A total of 4,986 people died (12 percent of all the traffic fatalities reported in 2003) and an additional 122,000 were injured in those crashes.

In 2002, large trucks accounted for 4 percent of all registered vehicles and 8 percent of total vehicle miles traveled (2003 registered vehicle and vehicle miles traveled data not available). In 2003, large trucks accounted for 8 percent of all vehicles involved in fatal crashes and 4 percent of all vehicles involved in injury and property-damage-only crashes.

One out of nine traffic fatalities in 2003 resulted from a collision involving a large truck.

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Table 1
Involvement in Fatal and Injury Crashes and Involvement Rates for Large Trucks, 1993-2003

Year	Number of Large Trucks Involved in Fatal Crashes	Number of Large Trucks Registered	Vehicle Involvement Rate*	Vehicle Miles Traveled (millions)	Vehicle Involvement Rate*
1993	4,328	6,088,155	71.09	159,888	2.71
1994	4,644	6,587,885	70.49	170,216	2.73
1995	4,472	6,719,421	66.55	178,156	2.51
1996	4,755	7,012,615	67.81	182,971	2.60
1997	4,917	7,083,326	69.42	191,477	2.57
1998	4,955	7,732,270	64.08	196,380	2.52
1999	4,920	7,791,426	63.15	202,688	2.43
2000	4,995	8,022,649	62.26	205,520	2.43
2001	4,823	7,857,675	61.38	209,032	2.31
2002	4,587	7,927,280	57.86	214,530	2.14
2003	4,669	—	—	—	—
Year	Number of Large Trucks Involved in Injury Crashes	Number of Large Trucks Registered	Vehicle Involvement Rate*	Vehicle Miles Traveled (millions)	Vehicle Involvement Rate*
1993	97,000	6,088,155	1,585	159,888	60
1994	96,000	6,587,885	1,452	170,216	56
1995	84,000	6,719,421	1,244	178,156	47
1996	94,000	7,012,615	1,339	182,971	51
1997	96,000	7,083,326	1,349	191,477	50
1998	89,000	7,732,270	1,146	196,380	45
1999	101,000	7,791,426	1,292	202,688	50
2000	101,000	8,022,649	1,253	205,520	49
2001	90,000	7,857,675	1,143	209,032	43
2002	94,000	7,927,280	1,189	214,530	44
2003	89,000	—	—	—	—

*Rate per 100,000 registered vehicles. **Rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled.
 — = not available. Source: Vehicle miles traveled and registered vehicles — Federal Highway Administration.

Of the fatalities that resulted from crashes involving large trucks, 78 percent were occupants of another vehicle, 8 percent were nonoccupants, and 15 percent were occupants of a large truck.

Of the injuries that resulted from crashes involving large trucks, 75 percent were occupants of another vehicle, 3 percent were nonoccupants, and 22 percent were occupants of a large truck.

Table 2

Fatalities and Injuries in Crashes Involving Large Trucks, 2003

Type of Fatality	Number	Percentage of Total
Occupants of Large Trucks	723	15
Single-Vehicle Crashes	456	9
Multiple-Vehicle Crashes	267	5
Occupants of Other Vehicles in Crashes Involving Large Trucks	3,879	78
Nonoccupants (Pedestrians, Pedalcyclists, etc.)	384	8
Total	4,986	100
Type of Injury	Number	Percentage of Total
Occupants of Large Trucks	27,000	22
Single-Vehicle Crashes	11,000	9
Multiple-Vehicle Crashes	16,000	13
Occupants of Other Vehicles in Crashes Involving Large Trucks	92,000	75
Nonoccupants (Pedestrians, Pedalcyclists, etc.)	3,000	3
Total	122,000	100

“In 2003, large trucks were 2.7 times as likely as other vehicles to be struck in the rear in two-vehicle fatal crashes.”

Large trucks were much more likely to be involved in a fatal multiple-vehicle crash — as opposed to a fatal single-vehicle crash — than were passenger vehicles (84 percent of all large trucks involved in fatal crashes, compared with 62 percent of all passenger vehicles).

In 28 percent of the two-vehicle fatal crashes involving a large truck and another type of vehicle, both vehicles were impacted in the front. The truck was struck in the rear 2.7 times as often as the other vehicle (19 percent and 7 percent, respectively).

Table 3

Principal Impact Points in Two-Vehicle Fatal Crashes Involving Large Trucks, 2003

Impact Point on Large Truck	Impact Point on Other Vehicle				
	Front	Left Side	Right Side	Rear	Total
Front	28%	17%	13%	7%	65%
Left Side	9%	1%	1%	<1%	11%
Right Side	5%	<1%	<1%	<1%	6%
Rear	17%	1%	<1%	<1%	19%
Total	59%	20%	14%	7%	100%

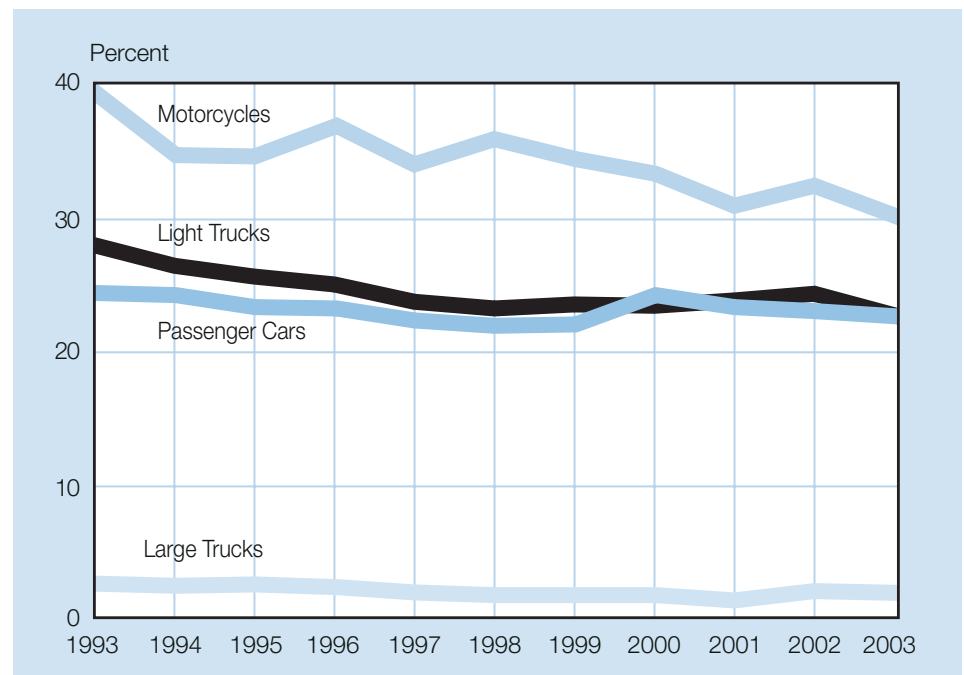
In almost half (49 percent) of the two-vehicle fatal crashes involving a large truck and another type of vehicle, both vehicles were proceeding straight at the time of the crash. In 10 percent of the crashes, the other vehicle was turning. In 9 percent, either the truck or the other vehicle was negotiating a curve. In 8 percent, either the truck or the other vehicle was stopped or parked in a traffic lane (6 percent and 3 percent, respectively).

Most of the fatal crashes involving large trucks occurred in rural areas (68 percent), during the daytime (66 percent), and on weekdays (78 percent). During the week, 73 percent of the crashes occurred during the daytime (6:00 AM to 5:59 PM). On weekends, 62 percent occurred at night (6:00 PM to 5:59 AM).

The percentage of large truck drivers involved in fatal crashes who had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.08 grams per deciliter (g/dl) or higher was 1 percent in 2003. For drivers of other types of vehicles involved in fatal crashes in 2003, the percentages of drivers with BAC levels 0.08 g/dl or higher were 22 percent for passenger cars, 22 percent for light trucks, and 29 percent for motorcycles.

“In 2003, 1 percent of the drivers of large trucks involved in fatal crashes had BAC levels above 0.08.”

Figure 1
Estimated Proportions of Drivers in Fatal Crashes with BAC 0.08 g/dl or Greater, 1993-2003



“Drivers of large trucks were less likely to have a previous license suspension or revocation than were passenger car drivers.”

Drivers of large trucks were less likely to have a previous license suspension or revocation than were passenger car drivers (7 percent and 13 percent, respectively).

More than one-fourth (27 percent) of all large truck drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2003 had at least one prior speeding conviction, compared to 19 percent of the passenger car drivers involved in fatal crashes.

Figure 2
Previous Driving Records of Drivers Involved in Fatal Traffic Crashes, by Type of Vehicle, 2003

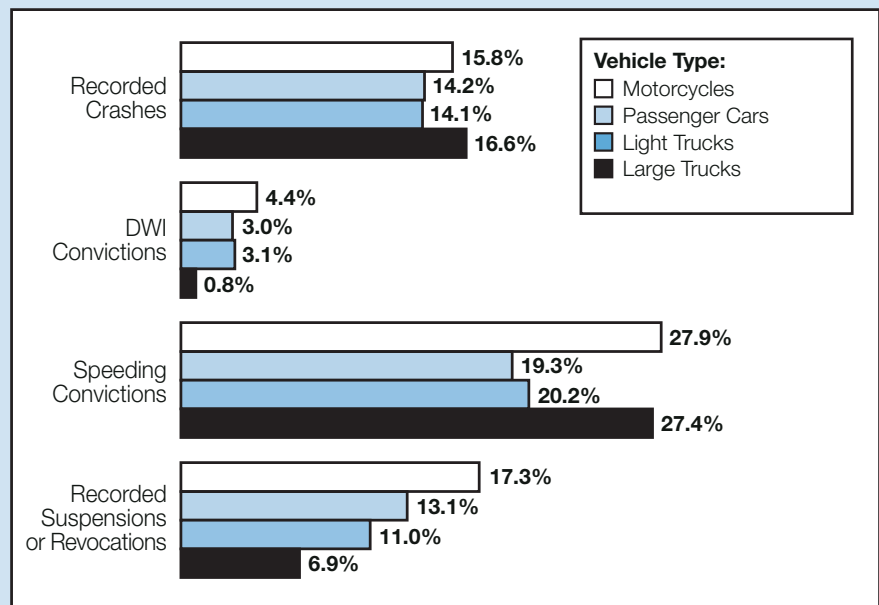


Table 4
Large Truck Involvement in Fatal Crashes by State, 2003

State	Total Vehicles Involved in Fatal Crashes	Large Trucks Involved in Fatal Crashes		
		Number	Percentage of Total Vehicles	Percentage of U.S. Total for Large Trucks
Alabama	1,387	148	10.7	3.2
Alaska	122	4	3.3	0.1
Arizona	1,512	102	6.7	2.2
Arkansas	810	99	12.2	2.1
California	5,725	332	5.8	7.1
Colorado	869	61	7.0	1.3
Connecticut	399	24	6.0	0.5
Delaware	234	15	6.4	0.3
District of Columbia	98	0	0.0	0.0
Florida	4,432	343	7.7	7.3
Georgia	2,277	208	9.1	4.5
Hawaii	169	4	2.4	0.1
Idaho	357	38	10.6	0.8
Illinois	2,012	178	8.8	3.8
Indiana	1,247	166	13.3	3.6
Iowa	564	61	10.8	1.3
Kansas	655	73	11.1	1.6
Kentucky	1,290	117	9.1	2.5
Louisiana	1,186	112	9.4	2.4
Maine	285	14	4.9	0.3
Maryland	1,000	63	6.3	1.3
Massachusetts	619	34	5.5	0.7
Michigan	1,887	110	5.8	2.4
Minnesota	880	62	7.0	1.3
Mississippi	1,121	66	5.9	1.4
Missouri	1,663	153	9.2	3.3
Montana	322	21	6.5	0.4
Nebraska	398	52	13.1	1.1
Nevada	498	36	7.2	0.8
New Hampshire	168	13	7.7	0.3
New Jersey	1,057	57	5.4	1.2
New Mexico	502	39	7.8	0.8
New York	1,989	147	7.4	3.1
North Carolina	2,138	158	7.4	3.4
North Dakota	138	14	10.1	0.3
Ohio	1,875	147	7.8	3.1
Oklahoma	930	104	11.2	2.2
Oregon	626	52	8.3	1.1
Pennsylvania	2,233	213	9.5	4.6
Rhode Island	143	6	4.2	0.1
South Carolina	1,344	96	7.1	2.1
South Dakota	227	14	6.2	0.3
Tennessee	1,623	113	7.0	2.4
Texas	5,040	438	8.7	9.4
Utah	377	18	4.8	0.4
Vermont	98	12	12.2	0.3
Virginia	1,311	121	9.2	2.6
Washington	798	39	4.9	0.8
West Virginia	544	55	10.1	1.2
Wisconsin	1,136	89	7.8	1.9
Wyoming	197	28	14.2	0.6
U.S. Total	58,512	4,669	8.0	100.0
Puerto Rico	643	26	4.0	—

Note: Totals may not equal sum of components due to independent rounding.

For more information:

Information on large truck traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NPO-101, 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/nca>. 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, Speeding, Young Drivers, Children, Pedestrians, Pedalcyclists, 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*.