

# Traffic Safety Facts

2005 Data

## Bicyclists and Other Cyclists

Bicyclists and other cyclists include riders of two-wheel non-motorized vehicles, tricycles, and unicycles powered solely by pedals. Throughout the remainder of this fact sheet the term pedalcyclists will be used to identify these cyclists.

The first automobile crash in the United States occurred in New York City in 1896, when a motor vehicle collided with a pedalcycle rider (*Famous First Facts*, by Joseph Kane). More than 49,000 pedalcyclists have died in traffic crashes in the United States since 1932 — the first year in which estimates of pedalcyclist fatalities were recorded. The 350 pedalcyclists killed in 1932 accounted for 1.3 percent of the 27,979 persons who died in traffic crashes that year.

*“The 784 bicyclist deaths in 2005 accounted for 2 percent of all traffic fatalities during the year.”*

In 2005, 784 pedalcyclists were killed and an additional 45,000 were injured in traffic crashes. Pedalcyclist deaths accounted for 2 percent of all traffic fatalities, and pedalcyclists made up 2 percent of all the people injured in traffic crashes during the year.

The number of pedalcyclist fatalities in 2005 was 6 percent lower than the 833 fatalities reported in 1995. The highest number of pedalcyclist fatalities ever recorded in the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) was 1,003 in 1975.

Pedalcyclists accounted for 13 percent of all non-motorist traffic fatalities in 2005.

Figure 1  
**Total Pedalcyclist Fatalities, 1995-2005**

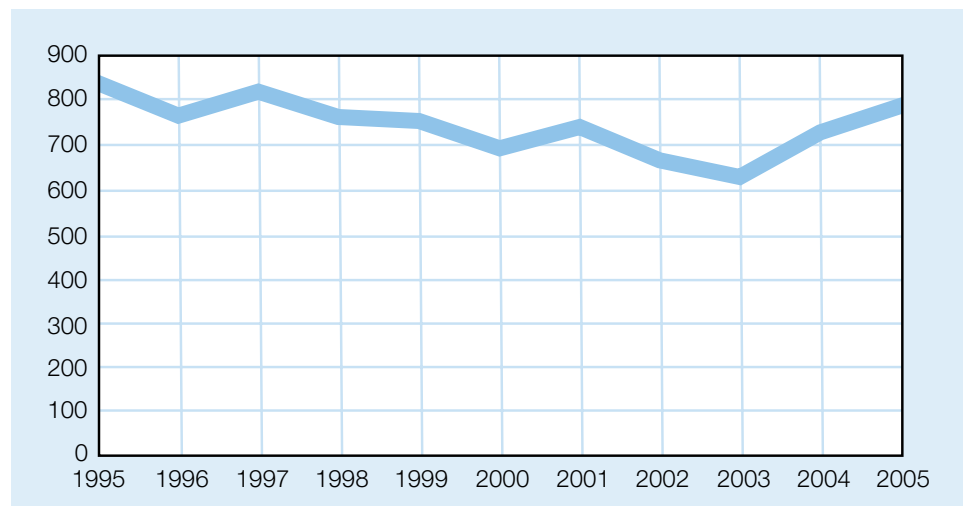


Table 1  
**Nonoccupant Traffic Fatalities, 1995-2005**

Year	Pedalcyclist	Pedestrian	Other	Total
1995	833	5,584	109	6,526
1996	765	5,449	154	6,368
1997	814	5,321	153	6,288
1998	760	5,228	131	6,119
1999	754	4,939	149	5,842
2000	693	4,763	141	5,597
2001	732	4,901	123	5,756
2002	665	4,851	114	5,630
2003	629	4,774	140	5,543
2004	727	4,675	130	5,532
2005	784	4,881	184	5,849

*“Nearly one-fifth of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 2005 were between 5 and 15 years old.”*

Pedalcyclist fatalities occurred more frequently in urban areas (69%), at non-intersection locations (70%), between the hours of 5 and 9 p.m. (31%), and during the months of June, July, and August (31%).

### Age

In 1995, the average age of pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes was 29.7; in 2005 the average age of those killed was 38.5. In contrast, in 1995 the average age of those injured was 22.7 and the average age of those injured in 2005 was 29.

Pedalcyclists under age 16 accounted for 18 percent of all pedalcyclists killed and 35 percent of those injured in traffic crashes in 2005. In comparison, pedalcyclists under age 16 accounted for 34 percent of all those killed in 1995.

Pedalcyclists 25 years of age and older have made up an increasing proportion of all pedalcyclist deaths since 1995. The proportion of pedalcyclist fatalities age 25 to 64 was 1.3 times higher in 2005 as in 1995 (59% and 46%, respectively).

Nearly one-fifth (17%) of the pedalcyclists killed in traffic crashes in 2005 were between 5 and 15 years old. The pedalcyclist fatality rate for this age group in 2005 was 3.0 per million population — about 14 percent higher than the rate for all pedalcyclists (2.64 per million population). The injury rate for this age group was 345 per million population, compared with 153 per million population for pedalcyclists of all ages.

*“Alcohol involvement was reported in more than one-fourth of the pedalcyclist fatalities in 2005.”*

## Alcohol-Related Data

Alcohol involvement — either for the driver or the pedalcyclist — was reported in more than one-third of the traffic crashes that resulted in pedalcyclist fatalities in 2005. In 30 percent of the crashes, either the driver or the cyclist was reported to have a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. Lower alcohol levels (BAC .01 to .07 g/dL) were reported in an additional 5 percent. Over one-fourth (27%) of the pedalcyclists killed had a BAC of .01 g/dL or higher, and over one-fifth (23%) had a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher.

## Gender

Most of the pedalcyclists killed or injured in 2005 were males (87% and 80%, respectively), and most were between the ages of 5 and 44 years (57% and 72%, respectively).

In 2005, the pedalcyclist fatality rate per capita was almost 7 times higher for males than for females, and the injury rate per capita was more than 4 times higher for males.

Table 2  
Pedalcyclists Killed and Injured and Fatality and Injury Rates by Age and Sex, 2005

Age	Male			Female			Total		
	Killed	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*	Killed	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*	Killed	Population (thousands)	Fatality Rate*
<5	7	10,381	0.67	4	9,922	0.4	11	20,304	0.54
5-9	25	9,993	2.5	13	9,545	1.36	38	19,539	1.94
10-15	84	12,931	6.5	11	12,313	0.89	95	25,244	3.76
16-20	44	10,696	4.11	3	10,137	0.3	47	20,834	2.26
21-24	35	8,702	4.02	6	8,155	0.74	41	16,857	2.43
25-34	62	20,421	3.04	14	19,722	0.71	76	40,143	1.89
35-44	132	21,940	6.02	18	21,922	0.82	150	43,862	3.42
45-54	143	20,895	6.84	13	21,587	0.6	156	42,482	3.67
55-64	73	14,627	4.99	8	15,729	0.51	81	30,356	2.67
65-74	42	8,529	4.92	6	10,110	0.59	48	18,640	2.58
75-84	27	5,279	5.11	2	7,775	0.26	29	13,054	2.22
85 +	4	1,604	2.49	0	3,492	0	4	5,096	0.78
Unknown	6	-	-	0	-	-	8	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>146,000</b>	<b>4.68</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>150,411</b>	<b>0.65</b>	<b>**** 784</b>	<b>296,410</b>	<b>2.64</b>
Age	Male			Female			Total		
	Injured	Population (thousands)	Injury Rate*	Injured	Population (thousands)	Injury Rate*	Injured	Population (thousands)	Injury Rate*
<5	**	10,381	13.5	**	9,922	12	**	20,304	12.77
5-9	3,000	9,993	316	1,000	9,545	117.4	4,000	19,539	218.9
10-15	9,000	12,931	682.1	2,000	12,313	192.1	11,000	25,244	443.1
16-20	4,000	10,696	388.4	2,000	10,137	190.2	6,000	20,834	292
21-24	2,000	8,702	214.8	1,000	8,155	89.62	3,000	16,857	154.3
25-34	4,000	20,421	210	1,000	19,722	37.27	5,000	40,143	125.1
35-44	3,000	21,940	142.5	1,000	21,922	25.91	4,000	43,862	84.25
45-54	5,000	20,895	226.3	1,000	21,587	37.29	6,000	42,482	130.2
55-64	5,000	14,627	352.5	1,000	15,729	35.2	6,000	30,356	188.1
65-74	1,000	8,529	90.65	**	10,110	8.51	1,000	18,640	46.1
75-84	**	5,279	37.06	**	7,775	2.12	**	13,054	16.25
85 +	**	1,604	***	**	3,492	***	**	5,096	***
<b>Total</b>	<b>36,000</b>	<b>146,000</b>	<b>249.4</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>150,411</b>	<b>60.02</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>296,410</b>	<b>153.3</b>

\* Rate per million population. \*\* Less than 500 injured. \*\*\* Less than 0.5 per million population. \*\*\*\*Includes 2 pedalcyclist fatalities of unknown sex. Source: Population — Bureau of the Census projections. Injury data is based on the General Estimate System (GES).

Table 3  
**Pedalcyclist Traffic Fatalities and Fatality Rates by State, 2005**

State	Total Traffic Fatalities	Resident Population (thousands)	Pedalcyclist Fatalities	Percent of Total	Pedalcyclist Fatalities per Million Population
Alabama	1,131	4,558	13	1.1	2.85
Alaska	72	664	1	1.4	1.51
Arizona	1,177	5,939	35	3	5.89
Arkansas	648	2,779	3	0.5	1.08
California	4,329	36,132	115	2.7	3.18
Colorado	606	4,665	8	1.3	1.71
Connecticut	274	3,510	3	1.1	0.85
Delaware	134	844	2	1.5	2.37
Dist of Columbia	48	551	3	6.3	5.45
Florida	3,543	17,790	124	3.5	6.97
Georgia	1,729	9,073	23	1.3	2.54
Hawaii	140	1,275	4	2.9	3.14
Idaho	275	1,429	3	1.1	2.1
Illinois	1,361	12,763	22	1.6	1.72
Indiana	938	6,272	13	1.4	2.07
Iowa	450	2,966	11	2.4	3.71
Kansas	428	2,745	4	0.9	1.46
Kentucky	985	4,173	12	1.2	2.88
Louisiana	955	4,524	21	2.2	4.64
Maine	169	1,322	3	1.8	2.27
Maryland	614	5,600	7	1.1	1.25
Massachusetts	442	6,399	5	1.1	0.78
Michigan	1,129	10,121	25	2.2	2.47
Minnesota	559	5,133	7	1.3	1.36
Mississippi	931	2,921	5	0.5	1.71
Missouri	1,257	5,800	8	0.6	1.38
Montana	251	936	4	1.6	4.28
Nebraska	276	1,759	3	1.1	1.71
Nevada	427	2,415	10	2.3	4.14
New Hampshire	166	1,310	3	1.8	2.29
New Jersey	748	8,718	17	2.3	1.95
New Mexico	488	1,928	5	1	2.59
New York	1,429	19,255	47	3.3	2.44
North Carolina	1,534	8,683	36	2.3	4.15
North Dakota	123	637	2	1.6	3.14
Ohio	1,323	11,464	13	1	1.13
Oklahoma	802	3,548	7	0.9	1.97
Oregon	488	3,641	11	2.3	3.02
Pennsylvania	1,616	12,430	18	1.1	1.45
Rhode Island	87	1,076	1	1.1	0.93
South Carolina	1,093	4,255	16	1.5	3.76
South Dakota	186	776	0	0	0
Tennessee	1,270	5,963	10	0.8	1.68
Texas	3,504	22,860	46	1.3	2.01
Utah	282	2,470	3	1.1	1.21
Vermont	73	623	0	0	0
Virginia	947	7,567	21	2.2	2.78
Washington	647	6,288	13	2	2.07
West Virginia	374	1,817	2	0.5	1.1
Wisconsin	815	5,536	14	1.7	2.53
Wyoming	170	509	2	1.2	3.93
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>43,443</b>	<b>296,410</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.64</b>
Puerto Rico	453	3,912	11	2.4	2.81

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

Sources: Fatalities — Fatality Analysis Reporting System, NHTSA. Population — Bureau of the Census.

## Important Safety Reminders

All bicyclists should wear properly fitted bicycle helmets every time they ride. A helmet is the single most effective way to prevent head injury resulting from a bicycle crash.

Bicyclists are considered vehicle operators; they are required to obey the same rules of the road as other vehicle operators, including obeying traffic signs, signals, and lane markings. When cycling in the street, cyclists must ride in the same direction as traffic.

Drivers of motor vehicles need to share the road with bicyclists. Be courteous – allow at least three feet clearance when passing a bicyclist on the road, look for cyclists before opening a car door or pulling out from a parking space, and yield to cyclists at intersections and as directed by signs and signals. Be especially watchful for cyclists when making turns, either left or right.

Bicyclists should increase their visibility to drivers by wearing fluorescent or brightly colored clothing during the day, dawn, and dusk. To be noticed when riding at night, use a front light and a red reflector or flashing rear light, and use retro-reflective tape or markings on equipment or clothing.

### For more information

Information on pedalcyclist traffic fatalities is available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis, NPO-101, 400 Seventh Street SW., Washington, DC 20590. NCSA information can also be obtained by telephone or by fax-on-demand at 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 [www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/nca](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/nca). To report a safety-related problem or to inquire about motor vehicle safety information, contact the Vehicle Safety Hotline at 888-327-4236.

Other fact sheets available from the National Center for Statistics and Analysis are *Overview, Alcohol, Children, Large Trucks, Motorcycles, Occupant Protection, Older Population, Pedestrians, School Transportation-Related Crashes, Speeding, State Alcohol Estimates, State Traffic Data, and Young Drivers*. 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*. The fact sheets and annual Traffic Safety Facts report can be accessed online at [www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/nca](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/nca).